

Who's covering up the new Berlin crisis?

by Carol White

Speaking before a national television audience on April 27, Lyndon H. LaRouche warned the American public that a new Berlin crisis is in the making. LaRouche's broadcast, warning of the danger of a crisis worse than that faced by President Kennedy in 1961, broke the U.S. press blackout of the worsening situation.

In his fifth nationwide television broadcast since announcing for president on the Democratic Party ticket, LaRouche said: "Last week a U.S. military helicopter was shot at over the West German border. During the same week, the government of East Germany announced it was breaking the four-power agreements covering air travel into West Berlin. There are many other small incidents, building up for recent weeks, in the same way the 1961 Berlin Crisis was built up.

"Some of these incidents have been reported in the U.S. news media. The most important developments have not been covered by your local newspaper or TV news. Washington has been trying to conceal the fact that we are moving up to the edge of a new Berlin Crisis. So, even issues which have been leading news stories in major European newspapers were not known to most of you in our country until you watched this broadcast.

"This new Berlin Crisis is only one of many major developments which our government is presently covering up. The Soviet empire is in a countdown toward something probably as bad, or even much worse, than the thermonuclear eyeballings of the 1961-63 period."

Die Zeit points to crisis

The day before LaRouche's address, on April 26, the Hamburg-based weekly *Die Zeit* became the first major Europe and West Germany as the emergence of a new Berlin Crisis. *Die Zeit* drew attention to the seriousness of the Soviet moves to impede Western air travel through the Berlin corridor.

Thousands of Germans have left the East for the West in recent months. The dogmatic leadership of the SED [East German Communist Party] has been urging the Soviet Union to close down on the flow of people. The decision in the Kremlin seems to have been taken. In recent days, *Pravda* has toughened up its tone considerably. This is just what a Western correspondent in Moscow might have reported in August 1961.

August 1961 is well known as the eve of the East-West showdown known as the Berlin Crisis.

Traditionally the Soviets have signaled an aggressive turn by precipitating incidents in Berlin. The 1961 Cuban Missile Crisis followed the building of the Berlin Wall, and a similar pattern of provocations in 1967 and 1968 preceded the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. In 1948, shortly before the famous Berlin Blockade when the world went to the brink of war, a British civilian airliner was shot down, and 15 people died. Other planes, including civilian ones, were downed in 1952, 1953, and 1961—before each Berlin crisis of the past 35 years. It is in this light that analysts are studying the Soviet response to the U.S. military helicopter which is admitted by the U.S. Department of Defense to have strayed "inadvertently" more than six miles over the border into Czechoslovakia on April 20.

Typically, U.S. and East bloc helicopter flights parallel each other on either side of the border. An incident such as occurred last week, with one side violating the other's territory, would normally be responded to by helicopter interception. The use of MiG fighter planes was unprecedented. One line of investigation, suggested by a U.S. intelligence source, is the possibility that the Soviets used electronic means to entice the helicopter into Czech territory in order to provoke the incident.

This would be in line with an article appearing in the East German periodical *Militärwesen*, which challenged the West's right to fly civilian airplanes into Berlin.

The article was cited by *Die Zeit* on April 20 in a comment by their Berlin correspondent Joachim Nawrocki. He wrote: "It is certainly no accident that during the same month when the Soviet disruption maneuvers began, an article appearing in the GDR periodical *Militärwesen* contains reference to a joint-GDR declaration dating back to 1957. According to that declaration, 'the existing Four-Power Agreements are of a temporary and limited nature' and 'do not affect the principle of recognition of the air sovereignty of the German Democratic Republic.' The article's author, legal specialist Lieutenant Colonel Hoeckendorff, claims that the air corridors had been granted to the Allies 'in order to supply their troops stationed in West Berlin from the air; and that civilian traffic in those corridors has practically no legal basis.'"

There have been other indications of alarm in the West German press. On April 24, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, newspaper of record in the German Federal Republic, ran an editorial warning of the danger of a Soviet surgical strike into West Germany which could occur with the rapidity of Turkey's move into Cyprus in 1974 (see excerpts below). But the press is primarily governed by a policy of pretending the crisis does not exist—including virtually total silence from the French press following the murder of a French officer in East Berlin which the French government itself called "deliberate." One French journalist told *EIR* that he wrote a front-page article on the outrageous incident, only to find it buried in the back pages the next day.

The reasons for Western Europe's silence are not hard to find. The Soviet Union has made it absolutely clear to any and all European representatives, including delegations visiting Moscow, that Europe is slated for destruction if it sticks with the United States. The sharpest signal that West Germany got the message came at the recent Nuclear Planning Group meeting, where Defense Minister Manfred Wörner broke ranks with the United States, and attacked the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative program as unworkable and provocative toward the Soviets.

Wörner's line has been echoed faithfully throughout much of the German press. On April 20 the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* published an editorial attacking the Reagan policy, citing such unreliable sources as Hans Bethe, Richard Garwin, and Victor Weisskopf to claim that beam weapons cannot protect against so-called missile saturation, and anyway are dangerous politically. This mood of appeasement of the Soviets is also reflected in the *Die Zeit* editorial dealing with the emerging Berlin crisis. *Die Zeit* calls for reshaping the alliance thus: "A pan-European concept must include West European partnership with America, but it must exclude complicity in a purely ideologically determined American policy toward the East. It must include the Soviet Union and take account of Soviet security interests. . . ."

State Department: head in the sand

Not only the U.S. press failed to cover the seriousness of the crisis; the response in Washington political circles has ranged from sluggish to openly cynical. When asked by *EIR* correspondent Stanley Ezrol on April 25 about the significance of the *Militärwesen* questioning of the four-power agreement, State Department spokesman Alan Romberg said he was unaware of the article, and not interested in looking into the matter.

The State Department's Lawrence Eagleburger, one of the Kissinger crew overpopulating that bastion of KGB influence, is deliberately fueling the German mood of appeasement by using every occasion to reiterate the Kissinger line that the United States should decouple from Europe. In the April 26 issue of *Die Zeit*, Eagleburger gave still another interview telling Europeans that they have nothing to expect from the United States, which is now shifting to a Pacific policy.

Using President Reagan's China trip to fan European fears in the face of a situation rapidly escalating to a potential superpower conflict, Eagleburger asserts Henry Kissinger's treachery as official U.S. government policy, asserting that it is good for Europe to have its own military capabilities, an independent identity and the opportunity to launch its own initiatives in place of—the U.S. nuclear umbrella!

Soviet strike could succeed

The lead editorial of the daily Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung April 24 described the danger of a Soviet surgical strike into West Germany. The paper compared that possibility to the Cyprus war of 1974, when Turkey was able to seize over half of the island in three days, presenting the world with a fait accompli.

If one analyzes this process, one understands that it could well make sense to conduct a war in Central Europe, limited in time and space. . . . The aggressor would limit himself to taking a few dozen kilometers of territory, and then, after a few days, he would just stay there. . . .

The way the Western decision-making apparatus works, the inertia is so great that an early cease-fire declared by the aggressor would hardly fail in attaining its deceptive effect—deceptive, because it would seem as if only a territory the size of a few Texas ranches would be lost, whereas in reality the political and moral backbone of the Federal Republic of Germany would be broken by the loss of such a strip of land. The way the world is, no one would begin a major war over a few kilometers of land. Once it caught its breath, however, Western Europe would soon discover that its freedom had become a good deal like that of Finland. Of course, such a thing would only happen with a changed temperament of leadership in the Kremlin. But then, who could have predicted a Khomeini?