

Eye on Washington by Konstantin George

Closeup on Genscher

Hans-Dietrich Genscher, West German foreign minister and chairman of that country's liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP), arrived in Washington on May 6 with a set of definite goals to accomplish before his visit to Moscow later this month. Genscher, who lived and worked as a functionary of the puppet "Liberal Party" in the Soviet Occupation Zone and East Germany through the early fifties, had clearly stated these priorities before his departure.

On April 29, Genscher insisted on German TV that the "problem" of the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) would be accorded the highest priority, and he would attempt to "dissuade" the United States from developing an antiballistic-missile defense system. Genscher declared that such an ABM system could "only" defend the United States and not Europe, would create a "Fortress America," and "lead to decoupling." This Neville Chamberlain-style appeasement of Soviet demands to sabotage the SDI is supported by all five German parties in the country's parliament, the Bundestag.

Genscher was true to his word. On May 7 he met with the director of the Office of Technology Assessment, John Gibbons, and all the assistant directors of the OTA, including Lionel "Skip" Johns, the assistant director of the Energy, Materials, and International Security Division, who helped prepare the April 1984 OTA background paper, "Directed Energy Missile Defense in Space"—a negative assessment of the SDI written by Ashton B. Carter of MIT. Genscher was presented with a copy of the paper at the talks.

Two days after Genscher's visit, the OTA released the proceedings of a recent panel report on arms control questions. That panel was headed by

one of the East Coast Establishment's overseers of Henry Kissinger, McGeorge Bundy, former national security adviser from 1961 to 1965. As the May 10 *New York Times* said, this report is "part of a wider study of military activity in space conducted by OTA."

The rest of the meeting concerned "genetic engineering," which Washington wags described as Genscher requesting how thinner children with smaller, normal-sized ears could be developed. OTA spokesmen would not offer details on this aspect of the talks, but apparently it dealt with the theme of biological warfare.

I asked an OTA official whether the subject of euthanasia—or "dying with dignity," as the liberals euphemistically refer to the murder of the elderly—came up in the discussion. The answer: "The theme of 'dying with dignity' didn't come up, but if it had, we're sure he [Genscher] would agree. The foreign minister is a very sensitive man." The OTA, the spokesman reported, is "familiar with the problem of the aging" in general, and in Germany in particular, whose declining population has a very high average age. The spokesman concluded: "We also discussed the danger of nuclear power, you know like . . . Three Mile Island. . . ."

Directly interfaced with the Genscher visit, a party of about 16 leading Soviet scientists was holding continuous rounds of meetings with U.S. scientists in and around Washington. The group included the acknowledged head of the Soviet beam-weapons program, Academician Yevgeni Velikhov; it was chaperoned by Paul Warnke, former chairman of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and a leading Washington lawyer. Both Warnke and his former law partner of many years, Clark Clifford, a protégé of Averell Harriman, have played key background controller and "shadow" roles in many post-

war administrations. Warnke was present for a weekend round of talks with Velikhov, et al. at the Harriman estate of Airlie House in Warrenton, Virginia.

'I gotta meet some Russians'

On the evening of May 7, the Genscher visit and that of Velikhov and Company merged. At 6 p.m., I was starting to chat with OTA Director Gibbons, who broke in to say, "Sorry, I'd love to talk, but I've got to run now to meet some Russians." "You mean Velikhov and Co.?" "Yep, that's right. I gotta run," he said, and raced to the meeting. In the morning with Genscher, in the evening with the Russians. It's a small world.

The next morning Genscher had a breakfast meeting on Capitol Hill with two senators, Richard Lugar, the chairman of the Western Europe subcommittee of Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and the septuagenarian Senate veteran, Strom Thurmond of South Carolina. Lugar's aide Jeff Burgener was not exactly talkative about the content of these talks, but he did say that they covered U.S. and West German conventional forces, troop strengths in Central Europe, and U.S. nuclear force levels.

Starting at 10:30 that morning and continuing for several hours, Genscher held talks with Secretary of State George Shultz. The agenda included the Strategic Defense Initiative, U.S.-German relations, the U.S. dollar, high interest rates, and very significantly, the use of the European Currency Unit (ECU) as a possible alternative reserve currency to the dollar. That very subject had been discussed some weeks earlier in Moscow at a meeting between German bankers and Soviet officials, to prepare the ground for the financial decoupling of Europe from the United States.