

West Germany confronts a Russian blitzkrieg

by Konstantin George

On Monday, July 23, the defense minister of the second most important NATO country warned that the Russians are making plans for a blitzkrieg invasion of his nation. This shocking and alarming news has failed to arouse even a yawn in Washington, where the United States' elected officials have been put to sleep by the appeasement policies of George Shultz and Henry Kissinger.

West German Defense Minister Manfred Wörner, speaking at an International Defense Policy Forum in the West German Baltic Sea port of Kiel, declared categorically that the huge Russian military maneuvers which have been ongoing since late June, "serve the purpose of testing surprise attacks on the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany. In addition they are part of a war of nerves and of political game playing. This is shown by the fact that the maneuvers . . . were held in an unusual proximity to the German-German border and that they are proceeding under the direct command of Soviet Defense Minister Marshal Ustinov."

Wörner was immediately denounced for telling the truth by the Soviet military paper, *Red Star*, which accused him of "spreading complete fabrications." *Red Star* cited Wörner's "claims that Soviet troops were practicing a 'surprise attack' on the F.R.G. (West Germany) to seize some West German city in order to break the political will of the population. . . ."

Soviet military moves

While Washington sleeps, all Soviet moves at this point are focused on crushing the influence of the Western Alliance in West Germany. The facts reported below leave no doubt that Soviet diplomacy is deployed on orders from the military command—a command reorganized to bring to the fore a group of younger officers whose careers were built on the doctrine of a Soviet blitzkrieg attack on West Germany.

The buildup to strategic confrontation is underscored by

Soviet military behavior in the aftermath of the maneuvers from June 28 to July 5, which involved the Soviet forces in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, the Baltic, and all western military districts of the U.S.S.R., and were the biggest since the end of the Second World War.

- Immediately upon "conclusion," the maneuvers were effectively, as the West German daily *Die Welt* of July 20 stressed, joined by maneuvers of *all* components of the Soviet Strategic Forces. "This maneuver of primarily conventionally armed ground forces was joined immediately afterwards by a maneuver of the strategic forces of the Red Army (long-range aircraft, land-based missile forces, missile submarine forces, as well as airborne troops for long-distance operations). Since July 18, Soviet forces earmarked for strategic air warfare are conducting a maneuver, which is both real and 'on paper.'"

- The Soviets are also conducting an unprecedented strengthening of their air force in Eastern Europe and the western Soviet Union, involving mainly two classes of fighter-bombers, the SU-24 "Fencer," with a range capable of reaching the British Isles from Soviet territory, and the "Flogger" and long-range "Backfire" bombers, squadrons of which were used extensively in coordination with the Northern and Baltic fleets during the largest North Atlantic Soviet military maneuvers in history last April. One "Fencer" air regiment each (42-45 planes) has recently been added to the Soviet tactical air armies attached (according to the Soviet doctrine whereby tactical air armies are attached to corresponding ground forces) to the "Northern Group of Soviet Forces" (stationed in Poland) and the "Southern Group of Soviet Forces" (stationed in Hungary), as but one example of the steady, ominous buildup of combat aircraft with a low-flying deep strike profile, ideally suited for a surprise attack.

This "pre-blitzkrieg" type of air force buildup is causing

alarm in West Germany. The massive Soviet buildup of troops, armor, munitions, and equipment, and the early 1984 unit reorganization of the Soviet forces stationed in East Germany, the most extensive since the war (cf. this author's article in *EIR*, July 17), all point irrefutably to blitzkrieg preparations. *Die Welt* warned on July 19 that "three new air armies have been created," noting the Soviet emphasis on the "Fencer," "Flogger" and "Backfire."

● Massive military construction is under way in East Germany, according to informed sources. This was more than alluded to in an April 1984 interview of East German Major General W. Kaiser in an East German military review. There is also a heavy emphasis on "troop accommodations" and expansion of air bases—the requisites for the lightning quick and massive additions of troops, logistics, and aircraft that would precede a war.

'Young Turks'

Since early 1983 the Soviets have brought in a "new breed" of young (average age 40-45) generals to assume key army combat command functions in East Germany.

The first step in the commander reorganization of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany (GSFG), as their troops in East Germany are called, immediately followed Ronald Reagan's November 1980 electoral victory. In December 1980, General Zaitsev, a World War II armored troop commander with combat experience from 1943 to 1945, was brought in to command the GSFG. Since 1980, and especially in the past 18 months, Zaitsev has brought in a group of young generals, some of whom he had known since the late 1960s when they served him as junior officers, when he was a division commander in Belorussia.

These "Young Turks," Generals Pyankov, Lobachev, Shein, E. I. Krylov, N. G. Madadurov, R. M. Savochkin, and I. Ya. Chelombeev, are all noted for having written key articles in the Soviet military publication *Voenny Vestnik* during 1977. Each of these articles advocated a Blitzkrieg Offensive Doctrine, stressing the "crucial importance of high-speed advances and, above all, surprise."

At that time, 1977, these generals were division commanders. Shein, for example, was the commander of a tank division in Czechoslovakia, and Pyankov was in the Trans-Caucasian Military District, where he emerged from the KAVKAZ 76 maneuvers in that region as the most praised and decorated officer, personally congratulated by then-Defense Minister Grechko, and then-First Deputy Chief of Staff K. Nikolai Ogarkov. General Lobachev was commander at that time of the elite guards Taman Division (whose mission is to protect Moscow and, of course, the Kremlin leadership). All have enjoyed meteoric rises in their careers since these articles appeared.

All these generals now have key functions in the Soviet Forces in East Germany. General B. Pyankov, for example, is now the commander of the all-armored (four armored di-

visions) Third Shock Army, headquartered in Magdeburg, opposite the Hanover region of West Germany.

Soviet officers at all levels, plus non-coms, and, of course, pilots of combat aircraft and helicopters have been continuously rotated into East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, after extensive combat and flying experience in Afghanistan. Similarly, the pilots of the East German Air Force have gained both flying and bombing and strafing experience through their flying missions in Ethiopia, in the Ogaden, and against Eritrean guerrillas.

It is these Generals Pyankov, Lobachev, Shein, et al., the "winners" of the 1976-77 so-called debate which developed the new Soviet blitzkrieg surprise attack doctrine, who are commanding the troops.

Diplomatic moves

It is against this background that the Soviet diplomatic moves must be measured. Moscow on July 10 issued a demarche charging West Germany with violation of the 1945 Potsdam Agreements and raising the threat of Soviet military intervention against West Germany. Within a week, the satellite Czech and Polish governments followed with demarche notes of their "own."

The language of the Polish statement, dictated in Moscow, was even more outrageous than the original Soviet note. "This decision [the Western European Union decision to lift the 1955 bans on West German conventional arms negotiated then between Bonn and its West European neighbors] is a violation of the Yalta and Potsdam Agreements [the Soviet Union had never mentioned Yalta], and creates a totally new situation in Europe." The Polish government, which, along with the Czech regime, has in the past few months replicated identically the Soviet smear campaign against West Germany as a "bastion of neo-Nazism and revanchism," then echoed the Soviet invasion pretext script: "The decision coincides with the revival of revanchist tendencies in the Federal Republic of Germany [F.R.G.] and their inclusion in the official Government policy. The F.R.G. is the only state in Europe which has as a program changes in the territorial and political order in Europe."

The escalating pressure on Bonn was not only being run through the satellites. On July 22, the Soviet government paper *Izvestia* added a new charge to the standard litany of "neo-Nazi" and "revanchist" in a barrage against West Germany, and accused the Bonn government of allowing the "use of its territory by the United States" for "Star Wars bases." This refers to plans to place on West German soil some of the ground-based facilities to be deployed as part of the U.S. laser-technology space- and ground-based anti-missile defense systems to safeguard the American and European populations from nuclear attack. The Soviet attacks were so strident that even the liberal *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* was forced to note front-page that Moscow was using the "language of the Cold War."