

## Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

### West Germany in a pincer

*Both the decouplers from the West and the Red Army from the East want the Federal Republic under Soviet domination.*

**T**he coalition government of Chancellor Helmut Kohl presently finds itself in a dangerous situation—having muddled through most of the summer of 1984, the government is now heading into the “September trap.” Decouplers from the West and the Red Army in the East have pushed and lured the Bonn government into this trap, from which Kohl’s pragmatist policies offer no escape. There are numerous indications that Bonn will face the fiercest test ever of its moral and political stability in the coming few weeks.

There is, first, the ongoing and escalating Soviet propaganda campaign against the alleged “resurfacing of revanchism and militarism in Germany,” which the Kohl government has somewhat ridiculously attempted to play down. Kohl, currently vacationing at the idyllic Wolfgang Lake in Austria, commented in an interview to Austrian radio that he viewed “this whole campaign as a mere reflection of uncertainties in Moscow, where the leadership has not yet been consolidated after Andropov’s death.”

The reality is that, at the same time that the propaganda machine in Moscow is firing one salvo after another against the alleged “resurfacing of militarism and revanchism in Germany,” Soviet troops stationed in East Germany are rehearsing a surprise attack on West Germany. Chancellor Kohl, who has always tried to compensate for his naiveté in foreign policy issues by borrowing appeasement policies from his vice chancellor, For-

eign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, has not noticed that Moscow has timed the maneuvers and the propaganda with the outbreak of the debate on eventual U.S. troop withdrawal from Western Europe which was launched several weeks ago by U.S. Sen. Samuel Nunn (D-Ga.), following the lead of Henry Kissinger. Nunn, by the way, has repeatedly been on the phone with Germany’s minister of defense, Manfred Wörner, to tell him that the debate on U.S. troop withdrawal would “improve the position of the Europeans in the Alliance.” Rather than realizing that such a withdrawal would mean certain doom in view of the posture of the Red Army, Wörner is reassuring startled generals in Bonn with Nunn’s false arguments.

There is another scandal boiling: Wörner recently lost a copy of the secret dossier on German defense planning for the period 1985-95 when briefing members of the parliamentary defense committee in Bonn. The dossier has not been found, but the country’s largest scandal magazine, *Der Spiegel*, came out with a special cover story in its Aug. 13 issue on the “limited defense preparedness” of the German armed forces. The report has launched a debate in the country about the capacity to resist any attack from the East, and the weaknesses of West German defense are suddenly the talk of the day.

The fact that *Der Spiegel* carried a cover story with exactly the same headline 22 years ago, at the time the

Soviets and the U.S. Eastern Establishment launched the Cuban Missile Crisis, and that the whole affair led to the ouster of Defense Minister Franz-Josef Strauss, should alarm Bonn—but, so far, it hasn’t.

Instead, all leading politicians seem to believe all is well as long as the visit of East Germany’s head, Erich Honecker, to West Germany on Sept. 26 remains scheduled. This historic encounter between the heads of the two German governments has already launched a heated debate on the prospects for German reunification, the “special maneuvering-space of the Germans in and between the military blocs,” and so on. The debate itself has been picked up by the Soviet propaganda machine as “just another striking proof that revanchists are on their way back to power in Bonn.”

Ironically, it was the same issue of *Der Spiegel* which revealed who is behind this exotic debate: Leading Soviet officials have encouraged West German conservatives to work on “a neutralized Germany equipped with a sovereign nuclear strike force” and on “the complete restructuring of Central Europe.” As *Der Spiegel* reports, the chief editor of *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, Chakovsky, met twice last year with a leading West German conservative, Prof. Helmut Diwald of Erlangen University, to discuss “German reunification.”

All of this documents that while Western decouplers talk of U.S. troop withdrawal, high-ranking Soviets are working overtime to build up the bogeyman of “revanchism” in Bonn, which they need for a military intervention into West Germany. There is no such thing as the “maneuvering-room” Chancellor Kohl has been talking about. Instead, Germany is being turned into the territory on which East-West maneuvers are proceeding!