
Soviet Penetration

New blueprint for disarming W. Germany

by Rainer Apel

The autumn offensive of the decouplers has definitely begun. On Sunday, Sept. 8, the deputy chairman of the West German Social Democratic Party (SPD), Johannes Rau, left Bonn for a three-day visit to Moscow, where he conferred with Soviet leaders, including Gorbachov, on the SPD's ideas for "new detente and disarmament policy initiatives." The Moscow media fawned over Rau as the new chancellor candidate of his party, who will probably topple the conservative Chancellor Helmut Kohl in the February 1987 national elections.

Well-timed with Rau's Moscow trip, leaks about the existence of a secret new SPD defense-policy blueprint made their way into the media. The blueprint, which originated in the SPD's defense policy commission, was written by the commission's chairman, Andreas von Bülow, and represents the most far reaching call for military-strategic decoupling of West Germany from the United States ever issued outside of Moscow itself. Von Bülow, undersecretary of defense in the government of Helmut Schmidt from 1978 to 1980, called for a full withdrawal of all American nuclear missiles from German soil, the dissolving of NATO's regular armed forces in Central Europe in favor of a lightly-armed militia, and the "step-by-step withdrawal of all American troops from Germany, except for a symbolic troop contingent to remain in West Berlin."

He called for the establishment of a "zone free of all chemical and nuclear weapons in Central Europe," the reduction of the mandatory draft in West Germany from its current 15 to 7-8 months by the 1990s, and the ditching of all so-called "aggressive weapon systems" in the armed forces, including all tanks, aircraft and short-range missiles.

The press spokesman of the Bonn Defense Ministry, Captain Hundt, reacted promptly, terming the blueprint "an outright invitation to the Soviet Union to launch aggression against Germany." Lothar Ruehl, under-secretary of defense of the current Bonn government, rejected the blueprint as "rendering Germany a mere victim of Soviet blackmail and threat."

Andreas von Bülow openly admits that the Soviets had a hand in his draft. He told the weekly *Die Zeit* on Sept. 12: "In private discussions between the SPD and Soviet politi-

cians, hints were given that one could discuss a withdrawal of 50% of the Soviet troops in Eastern Europe—a great chance for the Soviet Union to demonstrate that she does contribute to detente on her own initiative." The "private discussions" referred to took place between May 26-29, when SPD chairman Willy Brandt had talks with the Kremlin leadership and signed a kind of "popular front" pact between his own Socialist International and Gorbachov's international Communist movement. Von Bülow and Egon Bahr, the SPD's "little Kissinger," accompanied Brandt on this trip.

Thus, after years of agitation, the SPD's pro-Soviet wheel has now come full circle. In the spring of 1969, Egon Bahr and Henry Kissinger (in his new function as Nixon's NSC director) had discussed a five-year plan for U.S. troop withdrawal from Germany and Central Europe, and a kind of "security system in Europe" which would largely neutralize Germany. This plan was put into action with the "Ostpolitik" of Chancellor Willy Brandt, who was installed in September 1969. Bahr served Brandt as national security advisor, and also negotiated most of the treaties signed between the Brandt government and the Eastern European and Soviet governments.

In January 1984, Horst Ehmke, one of the SPD's foreign policy spokesmen, presented his blueprint "The Self-Assertion of Europe," which called for an end to "the vassal status" of German and West European relations to the United States. Ehmke's paper included the demand that "all weapon systems which could be interpreted by Moscow as offensive, shall be abandoned"—i.e., all modern weapon systems NATO has in Western Europe right now. On March 5, 1984, Kissinger's scandalous piece on "Reashaping NATO" appeared in *Time* magazine, which envisioned partial U.S. troop withdrawal from Europe, and declared this as "compatible with Europe's self-respect." In May 1984, Andreas von Bülow called for the replacement of NATO's regular troops at the German-German border by lightly-armed militia, and the SPD's parliamentary fraction chairman Hans-Jochen Vogel added the call for a "tank-free zone in Central Europe." In July 1984, the SPD established a joint commission with East Germany's Socialist Union Party (SED) on chemical weapons in Central Europe.

As the SPD's diplomatic activities into the East intensified into 1985, so did their polemics against President Reagan's defense policies. Brandt's May 26-29 Moscow trip set the stage for the unveiling in Bonn on June 19 of the first joint declaration by the SPD and the East German SED, for a "chemical-free zone in Central Europe."

Where will all this end? Karsten Voigt, the SPD's arms-control spokesman (and a frequent visitor to the European Affairs section at the U.S. Department of State) said on Sept. 11: "NATO membership has never been an end in itself; it makes sense only as long as Europe cannot be defended by its own means." According to Voigt's argumentation, full German membership in the Warsaw Pact would "make sense" at some time in the near future.