

Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

An adviser who came in from the East

A profile of Wolfgang Seiffert begins to answer the question: Who is behind the pro-Soviet conservatives in West Germany?

An aspect of the West German political landscape which is coming to the fore is the existence of a "Moscow Faction" among the Christian Democrats of Chancellor Helmut Kohl. These are politicians who foresee a military disengagement of the United States from Germany, and propose a "historic deal" between Bonn and Moscow. Meeting the Soviet need for Western high-technology, they claim, would allow a settlement on mutual security between Moscow and Bonn at a "lower level of armaments."

These arguments originate mainly in the community of ex-advisers of the East German regime, who moved to West Germany in the past 10 years. The most prominent of these "advisers who came in from the East" is Prof. Wolfgang Seiffert, an economics expert working with Kohl's Christian Democrats. Seiffert was one of the chief economic experts in East Germany for some 20 years between 1958 and 1978. Specializing in Warsaw Pact economic affairs, he also prepared numerous "joint ventures" between the two Germanys, allowing a transfer of high-technology from the West.

In February 1978, Seiffert moved west to settle as a professor of international law at the University of Kiel. Since then, he has published detailed plans for broadened economic cooperation between East and West in numerous essays and books—proposals which have been discussed a lot among conservatives in West Germany.

In his latest book, *The Whole Germany*, published in November, Seif-

fert writes that Gorbachov's planned reform of the Soviet economy will run into bottlenecks under conditions of a new arms race with the United States. If Gorbachov can't stop—as Reykjavik showed—Reagan's SDI project, he will have to make sure that the powerful West German economy does not work for America's strategic defense, writes Seiffert.

Gorbachov would have to make an "irresistible offer" to Bonn to drive a wedge into the German-American alliance. This offer would be the reunification of Germany. The price to the West Germans would have to be intense cooperation between the reunified German economy and Gorbachov's "new economic policy." Such an arrangement would also please Bonn's security interests under conditions of U.S. disengagement from Europe, insinuates Seiffert, adding that such a deal could promote a "profound historic friendship between the German and the Soviet peoples."

This sounds like Gorbachov's talk about "our common home, Europe," which he claims defines common political, economic and cultural interests of "all Europeans from the Atlantic to the Urals." No doubt: Wolfgang Seiffert is a co-thinker of Gorbachov's "new economic policy" team.

A look into the political career of Wolfgang Seiffert tells the story. Recruited to the German Army in 1944, he was taken prisoner of war by the Soviets in early 1945, and underwent re-education in the Red Army's POW camps. From the exclusive camp at

Gorky, where he got to know many who played a leading role in the East German regime later, Seiffert returned to Germany as an "anti-fascist," assigned to help build a Germany under Soviet control. Seiffert's special task from 1949 on was to recruit youth in the western parts of Germany for the FDJ (Freie Deutsche Jugend), a communist-run youth front then headed by Erich Honecker—today's ruler of the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The manifesto of the FDJ stated: "The real fatherland of the German youth is the G.D.R."

In 1950, Seiffert was editor-in-chief of *Junges Deutschland*, the official magazine of the FDJ published in Frankfurt, West Germany.

Since the FDJ was, on orders from the East, inciting riots against West Germany's rearmament and its integration into NATO, the youth group was banned as anti-constitutional in 1952. A year later, Seiffert was arrested by West German police, tried, and sentenced to four years in jail in 1955. In early 1956, Seiffert escaped and made his way to the G.D.R., where his prior contact with Erich Honecker helped him to make a career in the pro-Soviet regime. In 1956 also, the West German Communist Party (KPD) was banned by the Bonn government.

When in 1968, the KPD was re-founded under the new name DKP, Seiffert worked for his own legalization, to "return to the West." The 1955-56 arrest warrant against Seiffert was dropped by West German President Gustav Heinemann (a Social Democrat) in September 1969. But it took another five years for Seiffert to move west—a period he used to build his image as an "East German dissident." It is this image which many in West Germany doubt: It is rather believed that he was sent west on another "special assignment," as in 1949.