

Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

Left-wing and right-wing neutralists

Two parallel movements with identical programs are emerging in the Federal Republic of Germany.

For several years, a strong left-wing movement against German membership in NATO has been building in West Germany. Its organizational core is provided by the Green party, the Social Democrats (SPD), and the tiny German Communist Party (DKP). With some variants, their program is the same: withdrawal of U.S. nuclear weapons and troops from German territory, no Franco-German military cooperation based on nuclear defense, reduced status of Germany in NATO and eventual neutrality, negotiations with the Soviets and the Western allies on a reunification or confederation of the two postwar German states.

This left-wing neutralism is boosted now by the prospect of a "red-green" municipal government between SPD and Greens in West Berlin, after the Christian Democrats lost their majority in the Jan. 29 elections. A left-wing coalition in Berlin would help shape a similar constellation for the rest of West Germany and would put a saw on the chair of Chancellor Kohl.

Ironically, what could topple Kohl is the current dissent between his own and the Bush administration over Libya, the Lance missiles, and trade and monetary relations. Kohl's three-party government coalition has been upset by this transatlantic controversy, because each of the three parties has different views on each of the issues. When James Baker visited Bonn Feb. 12 and put Kohl under pressure on the Lance question, rumors had it that "if the U.S. increases its pressure, it will make Kohl's position untenable, and a less pro-American government will take over." The next NATO summit

in London in May, which is to decide on the Lance missile, is said to determine Kohl's fate in Bonn.

Kohl's alternative within the rules of the pragmatist policy game usually played in Bonn would be to back down in the face of mounting U.S. demands. But this would move him into another trap, laid by the right-wing neutralist current outside and inside his Christian Democratic party. Kohl would be accused of "selling out to the Americans," and his position in Bonn would become untenable, by summer or fall.

The right-wing neutralist movement is getting stronger, and its impact on political debates in Bonn has grown in tandem with the rise of the "red-green" option. The right-wing brand of neutralism is building around the German Republikaner (REP) party, which scored a shocking 7.5% of the vote in the West Berlin elections of Jan. 29, and has become the driving force behind "right-wing" pressure on Kohl. It works closely with the "Moscow faction" inside the Christian Democratic party, and its program looks almost the same as the left-wing neutralists' program.

The February *Der Republikaner*, the REP party magazine, blasted Kohl for pursuing the pro-Western tradition of the first postwar Chancellor Konrad Adenauer (1949-63), supposedly at the expense of "German interests." The magazine openly pushed a neutralist solution for Germany and a policy of reunification on Moscow's terms, writing: "There are many paid propagandists and officials clinging to their posts, who declared again and again

that it was the Kremlin that blocked every step toward the reunification of Germany. This has to be corrected:

"1) Why, after the diverse Russian offers between 1952 and 1954 for a reunified, militarily non-aligned Germany, was, for example, not even an attempt made to probe in Moscow what was behind these offers?"

"2) How can the Kremlin ever take the Bonn commitment to reunification seriously, if the current German government also declares the Western alliance bonds to be the 'state doctrine' of West Germany? If the official Bonn propaganda and the mass media place these Western bonds above everything else and thereby tries to tie in our people?"

This positive reference to the Stalin Note of March 1952 on a neutralized, reunified Germany appears at a time when Moscow is expected to air a similar proposal on the German question before, during, or shortly after Gorbachov's scheduled visit to Bonn in June.

In the background of the Berlin vote and the REP's results, evidence can be found of a more direct tie into the East bloc. Former East German resident (until 1981) and filmmaker Michael Häsler, now REP media adviser, produced the party's main campaign TV spot. His biography points directly at the Eastern intelligence angle: He was trained by, and worked with, Konrad Wolf, the late brother of Markus Wolf, head of the East German foreign intelligence apparatus (1958-87).

Konrad Wolf always put special emphasis on the pro-Soviet group of neutralists among German POWs in Soviet camps (Nationalkomitee Freies Deutschland) from summer 1943 on, which was one of the fundamentals of "German-Soviet friendship" in East Germany after the end of the war.