

Editorial

Too many tombstones

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl's response to the assassination of Detlev Rohwedder was an angry comment on the number of tombstones of leading Germans who have been murdered while on the job. In the main, these were men of vision; for example, Jürgen Ponto, the head of Dresdner Bank who was planning major development projects for Africa when he was assassinated in 1977.

In the latest instance, Detlev Rohwedder was heading the effort to rebuild eastern Germany. As the head of the Treuhand (the German trust given responsibility for overseeing the privatization of east German enterprises), he had a leading role in charting the course for a unified Germany.

Why was he murdered? The answer most probably lies in the fact that he was shifting the policy of the Treuhand to prioritize job protection for east Germans who are threatened with massive unemployment, because of Treuhand policies of allowing the shutdown of industries which were unproductive by Western standards. In other words, Rohwedder had decided that the Treuhand had improperly initially set its priorities in accordance with the ideology of free-marketeters, and forgot necessary human values, such as the right of working people to a job.

This was a direct slap to the British and the Bush crowd, who have been trying to push the free market down the gullet of the Europeans.

The United States—acting under British tutelage—is so obsessively committed to Adam Smith free-trade ideology right now, that the Bush administration is perfectly willing to destroy Germany, rather than allow the Germans to apply the sound economic policies associated with Alexander Hamilton and Friedrich List, once commonly known to both nations.

The same stupidity has governed the hostile reaction of the Anglo-American crowd to German efforts to shore up the crumbling Soviet economy. They are particularly hostile to moves by the Germans along the lines which Lyndon LaRouche has indicated to be necessary—large-scale infrastructure development. They stupidly fail to realize that a crumbling Soviet em-

pire does not spell unchallenged hegemony for the West, but rather the opposite. The Soviet Union is a military force to be reckoned with, particularly in a condition where a nationalist leadership might perceive that the only possible defense of their nation from a Western takeover, to be that of launching a third world war.

German moves to form an economic alliance with the Soviets have a precedent in the post-World War I period. At that time, in 1922, they signed a major economic treaty, the Rapallo Treaty, with the Lenin government. It is this precedent to which former U.S. Defense Department official Frank Gaffney referred on April 11, in a commentary in the London *Guardian*, attacking the German government of today for launching a new Rapallo. He describes the new German-Soviet economic deals as a “portentous German-Soviet condominium.”

Gaffney stresses: “Rapprochement between Moscow and Bonn has ample precedent, most notably the Rapallo Treaty of 1922, which did much to set the stage for collusion between the two nations that led to the second world war.” Gaffney complains that the Soviets have vast natural resources, which will be open to the Germans. The present deals between Germany and the Soviet Union include running former East German state-owned plants, to produce goods for export to the Soviet Union. This will come under the governance of the Treuhand.

Did Gaffney mean to remind his readers that the signing of the first Rapallo plan led to the assassination of Dr. Walter Rathenau, then foreign minister in Germany, who was gunned down in the summer of 1922, just three months after he had placed his signature to the accord? Was this a threat?

While it is true that George Bush is the leading spokesman for a fascist new world order, this is, and has been over the past century, a British perspective. The image of an organ grinder and his monkey is not inappropriate for understanding the roles of British and American ruling circles. The American monkey may be a super-monkey in size, but it is definitely dancing to an ugly British tune.