

## Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

### The spies that come in from the West

*Germany's foreign intelligence service warns of the urgent need to fight industrial espionage by the United States.*

An important report was presented to the government a few days before the "changing of the guard" in Washington. It was a sobering analysis of threats posed to the functioning of industry, science, and administration in Germany, by both Russian intelligence agencies and the CIA and other agencies of the United States.

The survey, written by experts of the BND (foreign intelligence service), warned that the policy outlined by former CIA heads William Webster and Robert Gates would be continued under incoming CIA director R. James Woolsey, Jr. The doctrine is that, after the Cold War, the main targets of the CIA abroad are the economic and technological potentials of western rivals (Germany and Japan, especially) to the United States on world markets.

The BND report, only aspects of which have been leaked so far, points to the leading role of the U.S. National Security Agency in eavesdropping, with the aim of passing on vital information to firms in the United States. Operating along policy directives that define industrial espionage against allied states as a "legitimate means of industrial policy," the NSA can draw on an annual budget of \$23 billion, the BND said. The working title of the report is "Enhancement of the Economic Competitiveness of the U.S.A. Through the Intelligence Agencies."

The report came as a sobering surprise to many who naively refer to "close U.S.-German friendship" and believe that relations, which took a bad turn under George Bush, will improve under Bill Clinton. It mirrors statements by Sen. Dennis DeConcini

(D-Ariz.) on U.S. television in late December.

DeConcini, who is now chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, a post that involves oversight responsibility for the CIA and its budget, endorsed a "more active role" for the CIA and other agencies in global espionage. He said that such agencies and the incoming Clinton administration should be prepared to help U.S. companies if competitive information "became available," and to "retaliate" for other states spying against U.S. economic interests.

The "hypothetical case" which the TV program, TechnoPolitics, presented to DeConcini, was not hypothetical at all: The scenario concerned information about secret contract bids by Europe's leading jetliner producer, Airbus Industrie, which "accidentally" fell into the hands of U.S. agents, who then passed it on to a competing manufacturer in the United States, such as Boeing Corp.

It has been mooted that the surprise cancellation of two recent contracts—one between the U.S. Navy and the French computer electronics firm, Bull, and another between NorthWest Airlines and Airbus—could be traced back to intervention by U.S. intelligence agencies.

But DeConcini went even further. "Say our CIA or some intelligence gathering can find out what the Bull company in France is doing on some high technology that isn't related to defense work, some high-technology communication system or something. We go in and get it. Now we have it. Who do we give it to?" he asked. Passing information of that type to one

or several companies "that are in that kind of business" would run into conflict with existing U.S. anti-trust laws and regulations governing the CIA and other agencies, he said. Changes in these laws would be necessary to "remove barriers so we can be competitive," he declared.

Edward E. Luttwak, a U.S. expert on espionage and counterterrorism at Georgetown University, hit in the same direction in an essay in the Jan. 12 *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. Classic geopolitics would soon have to be replaced by "geo-economics," a policy taking economic and scientific potentials of other states into serious account, in one's foreign policy considerations and strategic planning, he wrote.

The changes that DeConcini is seeking would open the door to all-out industrial espionage no longer restricted to U.S. military interests, and are reportedly being put on a priority agenda for the new President.

Relevant circles in Germany have been aware of this U.S. policy, but discussion was always kept top-secret—until the BND report. One of the few exceptions came from Herbert Hellenbroich, president of the Bundesverfassungsschutz (counter-espionage agency). In a November 1986 television special on the history and role of the BND, he said that among the tasks after the Cold War was the necessity to counter industrial espionage by western allies. Hellenbroich explicitly referred to the doctrine that Gates inherited from Webster, which was the basis of such covert U.S. operations.

And the CIA is not relying only on its own agents. Sources point out that the United States has recruited at least 500-800 spies and other agents of the former East German foreign intelligence (Stasi) since reunification in late 1990.