

## Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

### When will Germany finally grow up?

*Trying not to risk trouble with either side, a nation's foreign policy is collapsing.*

The conduct of London's diplomacy, seconded by Paris and Moscow, in the new Balkans War has helped to sharpen awareness in Germany of the strategic problems posed by British geopolitics. But it has also helped to expose the fact that the German political establishment which grew out of the Allied-controlled reeducation of the Germans after World War II, lacks the moral backbone to develop a genuine foreign and economic policy—one that would pose an alternative to the geopolitical shambles that has been misnamed "peacemaking" in Bosnia.

There are a few exceptions in the German policymaking establishment: One of these is Christian Schwarz-Schilling, who resigned as minister of postal affairs in December 1992, in protest against Chancellor Helmut Kohl's inaction on the Bosnian drama. Most media and his fellow Christian Democrats waved this spectacular act aside, referring to the fact that Schwarz-Schilling would not have survived the cabinet reshuffle announced by Chancellor Kohl for early 1993, so that his pro-Bosnian views were "fairly irrelevant."

Schwarz-Schilling has remained active on the Bosnia issue for the past two years, and his critics of late 1993 belong to that majority faction in the establishment that does not like being reminded of the unresolved issue.

Schwarz-Schilling played a catalyst's role behind a resolution calling for an end to the unprincipled international "peacemaking" policy and for concrete humanitarian, political, and

military action on Bihac. The resolution was passed by the delegates of the national Christian Democratic Union party convention in Bonn on Nov. 28, proving that commitment to the right cause can rally broad support even in Germany where the establishment prefers not to commit itself.

The resolution stated that the genocidal practices documented by the Serbs in the battle over Bihac, can no longer be tolerated by the community of civilized nations. It called for a clear-cut ultimatum to the Serbs to cease all fire on the Bosnian city and withdraw their troops and equipment instantly, or risk "air attacks on the artillery positions around Bihac and in nearby Croatia [Serbian-occupied Krajina region], as well as on the battle tanks that are attacking."

The resolution invoked a "lifting of the arms embargo" against Bosnia, as a step to "repair the military imbalance between aggressor and victim of the aggression." Finally, it demanded humanitarian emergency relief measures like repairing the water and energy supply system of Bihac, bringing food and medical goods into the city, and funding relief measures for the "several hundred thousand refugees" among the Bosnian civilians from the Serbian aggression since 1992.

The resolution also contained a delicate formulation recalling that Chancellor Kohl had called for lifting the arms embargo against Bosnia at the Copenhagen summit of the European Union in June 1993.

Exactly there, in Kohl's European

Union policy, lies the crux: Bonn's foreign policy practice is—to use a formulation repeated over and over in recent weeks by Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel—"to agree with the Americans as far as the principles are concerned but at the same time act in concert with the European partners." Kinkel also said after meetings in Bonn with Russia's pro-Serbian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev on Nov. 25, that "the Russian point of view has to be taken into consideration as well."

This means that Bonn is paying lip-service to the Americans and the Bosnian cry for help, but acts together with the British, French, and Russians on the "Bosnian problem," i.e., avoiding anything that would embarrass the Serbs seriously.

But Kinkel is only the foreign minister; what does Kohl think? At the Nov. 28 CDU convention—the same that supported Schwarz-Schilling's resolution on Bosnia—Kohl called the escalation around Bihac a "shame of Europe." But in his first parliamentary address since the Oct. 16 elections, Kohl said on Nov. 23 that "for the first time in history" the Germans could be proud of having "excellent relations with Washington, Paris, London, and Moscow. We are living in concord with all our neighbors."

It remains a riddle how the Kohl government, which after all represents one of the bigger nations with 80 million citizens, plans to play a role in world politics while trying not to have a policy of its own but always stating its sympathy with the next neighbor that knocks on Bonn's door.

At a time of deepening tensions between the Clinton administration and the British, who are seconded by an influential faction of France and Russia, this "dancing at all wedding parties" will lead to disaster for Germany.