

Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

It's Ollie North's turn to talk

Investigation of the 1987 death of former Schleswig-Holstein governor Uwe Barschel finally looks into the Iran-Contra deals.

On April 12, something happened that this author and many others have been waiting for, since October 1987: The official investigator in the Uwe Barschel murder case announced that he will interrogate Oliver North, about his secret, early 1980s deals with Iran, and his relations to Barschel, the former governor of the state of Schleswig-Holstein. This is one of nine "hot trails" which the investigative team headed by Prosecutor Heinrich Wille will pursue in the coming months.

The fact that North's name comes up now, officially, is a sensation, because certain political networks in Britain, Germany, and the United States have made every effort to prevent the investigators from pursuing the Iran-Contra trail.

Calling North to testify means placing under scrutiny exactly what *EIR* has emphasized in the Barschel case: the role of North's supervisor, George Bush, and of Bush's British nanny, Margaret Thatcher, in fostering terrorism, drug running, and political assassinations, through the so-called "asteroid" apparatus. In *EIR*'s *Special Report* of October 1996, "George Bush and the 12333 Serial Murder Ring," we wrote that "Bush and Thatcher personify the 'Western branch' of the political structures that fostered, deployed, and protected these criminal networks throughout their tenure in office."

But even when new forensic evidence made it impossible, in late 1994, for the German authorities to maintain their line that Barschel had died "by suicide . . . though a bizarre one," they insisted that a "do not cross" line be

drawn for the new investigation mandate of January 1995, which authorized Prosecutor Wille to pursue the "murder" trail. He was told to *look* at evidence that Barschel was assassinated in Geneva on Oct. 10, 1987—but not to *document* it!

Wille, with all the limitations imposed upon him, tried to do a serious job, and could not avoid those very sensitive aspects that the authorities expected him to ignore. Already in 1995, Wille had compiled massive evidence that Barschel was killed by a lethal drug "cocktail." This included evidence from rather simple forensic probes that should have been carried out in October 1987, but were not.

The most meaningful hints were those given by witnesses such as German arms dealer Joseph Messerer, who was supposed to have met Barschel in Geneva that October 1987 weekend, but could not, because Barschel was killed a few hours before. Messerer had testified in late 1987, but his hints about an arms-peddling link to Barschel's death were dismissed, as "leading nowhere." But the arms peddlers that Messerer named as having been in Geneva the day that Barschel was killed, were people who had business with Ollie North and his Iran-Contra team: Rafiq Dost, Ahmad Khomeini, and others.

Prosecutor Wille's team contacted Messerer again, and on April 26, 1995, he told them a story about a whiskey bottle filled with a poisonous drug, which, according to a person linked to the arms trade, had been used to murder Barschel,

Even more surprising for the in-

vestigators than Messerer's hearsay story as such, was that, indeed, among the pieces of evidence secured from the Geneva hotel room, was a small Jack Daniel's whiskey bottle, which, unlike many other pieces of evidence that had "disappeared" over the years, still existed and could be examined. The bottle had been empty when found in a waste-basket in Barschel's hotel room, and the Swiss investigators decided that it was unimportant. The bottle was never even looked at more closely, when the forensic investigation of Barschel's corpse proved that he had not had a single drop of whiskey. But the long-overdue examination of the bottle in 1995 showed traces of diphenhydramine, one of the drugs that had caused Barschel's death.

This is just one of many mysteries in the Barschel coverup, but the "bottle" story alone caused quite an uproar in Germany, when it was made known in mid-April 1997. This is, however, not the "hot lead" that caused the Wille team to shift the focus onto Oliver North.

Three witnesses had testified to the existence of a photograph that shows North standing next to Barschel and an East German intelligence officer. The occasion was secret East-West talks about arms deals in the context of the Iran-Contra scheme, the three independent witnesses declared.

Ostensibly in cooperation with relevant U.S. agencies, the Wille team managed to get access to North's mid-1980s calendar, and a check of the dates showed that North and Barschel indeed could have met on various occasions in 1986 or 1987. The photograph has not been found, but the fact that the East German officer shown in it either shot himself, or was shot, in the interim, suggests that there may be something rather special about this picture. Prosecutor Wille now wants Ollie North to tell them all about it.