

Synarchists Activate Neo-Nazis in Europe

by Rainer Apel

When the neo-Nazi National Democratic Party (NPD) of Germany received 9.2% of the vote in the Saxony state elections on Sept. 19, 2004, giving them 12 seats in the state parliament, it came as a shock to the rest of the German electorate. A governmental initiative in 2001 to get the party banned had failed miserably before the Constitutional Court. It was thrown out by the Court in 2003 because a good part of the documentation in the government's lawsuit was based on NPD statements and texts that were written by state police informants themselves. What's more, the Court found that no fewer than 30 of the 210 members of NPD executive were police informants.

Insiders suggested that the Court's ruling was an emergency brake, preventing a broader debate in the public about the murky overlaps between police and neo-Nazis.

A broad debate on that phenomenon would help to lift the veil over one of the best-kept secrets of the post-1945 period: namely, that essential sections of the old Nazi apparatus and its international connections, especially the secret intelligence sections, survived the Nazi regime at the end of the war. They survived because of the protection they received, especially from influential sections of the intelligence agencies of Great Britain and of the United States (from the Truman era on), with substantial support by the intelligence agencies of Spain, Italy, Benelux, and Scandinavia.

During the mid-1960s, for example, the control which the British MI-6 had over the leaders of the German NPD—whose chairman was a direct informant of the agency—accompanied the party's entry into numerous state parliaments. And in 1969, the NPD almost succeeded in getting elected to the national parliament, just missing the mandatory 5% margin of votes. From the early 1970s on, the NPD was in a constant decline, losing its seats in the state parliaments, and losing party members.

But the NPD and other neo-Nazi groups saw a revival in eastern Germany, after the collapse of the East German regime in 1989-90. The neo-Nazi movement in Spain, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, Britain, and the United States pumped millions of hate propaganda pamphlets, audiotapes, compact discs, posters, and the like into eastern Germany, where the police and state-protection agencies were weak in the first weeks after reunification, while the old state apparatus was being dismantled.

An ever-growing pattern of street violence and desecra-

tion of Jewish cemeteries and concentration camp remembrance sites, mostly in eastern Germany, then prompted the 2001 government motion for a ban of the NPD, which was the largest and best-organized of the neo-Nazi groups.

New Provocations

The NPD has interpreted its September 2004 election success in Saxony as a blank for new provocations. For example, it decided to incorporate the extreme militants of the neo-Nazi underground into the party, and one of their leaders was voted onto the national party executive. Another example was the high-profile NPD attendance at the Nov. 19 "Blue Shirts March" of the Spanish Falange, honoring the founder of the Spanish fascist movement, José Antonio Primo de Rivera. Leaders of the Forza Nuova party of Italy, and of other neo-fascist parties of Europe and Ibero-America, also attended the event.

A day after the March, Udo Voigt, chairman of the German NPD, and José Fernando Cantalapiedra, Falange party chairman, signed a pact for the formation of a European-wide neo-Nazi movement. Termed an "axis Madrid-Berlin," the proponents of the new pact also met at a Madrid cemetery, to honor the dead of the "Blue Division" of Spanish volunteers in the Nazi aggression against the Soviet Union in 1941, and the dead of the "Legion Condor" of German volunteers, who fought on behalf of the Spanish fascists during the 1936-39 Spanish Civil War.

The most recent provocation was the NPD's refusal to take part in a moment of silence for all victims of National Socialism, in the state parliament of Saxony on Jan. 21. The party's 12 parliamentarians first walked out, and then returned for a debate in the parliament, which they tried to use as a platform for their planned Feb. 13 mass rally in protest of the Anglo-American air raids on Dresden, Germany on Feb. 13, 1945. Saxony NPD chairman Holger Apfel voiced solidarity with the victims of American air raids after 1945, from North Korea to Vietnam and Iraq, calling the British and Americans "mass murderers." Jürgen Gansel, another NPD member, then spoke of a "bombing holocaust" against the civilian population of Dresden in 1945, creating a false connection between the Nazi Holocaust against the Jews, and the German civilian deaths from Allied air raids during World War II.

Cornelius Weiss, chairman of the Saxon state parliamentary group of the Social Democrats, responded to the provocation by elaborating on a warning by early-19th-Century German poet Heinrich Heine, who denounced the 1919 Karlsbad Decrees against anti-monarchist intellectuals with the words: "Today they burn the books, tomorrow they'll burn the people!" Weiss said that first the Nazis burned the books in 1933, then they flew air raids against Spanish civilians in 1936. The historical lesson, Weiss said, is to work for a present and a future of conciliation and cooperation which makes a repetition of such cruelties impossible.