

Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

A dialogue with 'inconvenient' regimes

Will Genscher's support for terrorist dictatorships lead to the development of an "Iranian bomb"?

Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher's diplomatic calendar is full these days. Apart from his upcoming trip to Moscow, preparations are underway for visits to Libya and Iran, the bastions of terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism.

Why does Genscher maintain friendly ties to the most brutal regimes in the world today? A spokesman for the foreign ministry explained to a worried journalist: "We think that a dialogue should also be maintained with inconvenient regimes."

But there is more to it than mere "dialogue." Genscher has built up extensive economic and political ties, as well as personal friendships, with these outlaw governments.

When Libyan zombies shot at demonstrators outside of the Libyan embassy in London and killed a female police officer, Genscher was making plans to visit dictator Qaddafi in Tripoli. This trip was called off upon special British request, but spokesmen from Genscher's ministry said that "the trip has been postponed, not canceled. It will take place at a more convenient time."

The Libyan foreign minister, Jalloud, following a meeting with Genscher in Bonn May 10, announced at a press conference that he regretted the postponement of Genscher's visit, and hoped it would occur soon. In case there is any reluctance on the part of the West German government to go ahead with the trip, the foreign minister added the not-so-veiled threat that there are German citizens living in Libya whose lives are in danger.

Meanwhile, Genscher is preparing to visit the Khomeini regime in Iran, which has erected concentration camps that use the Nazi-manufactured Zyklon-B poison gas, and which is slaughtering children in kamikaze missions against Iraq.

Genscher has good friends in high circles in Teheran, like Ruhollah Khomeini's son-in-law, Sadegh Tabatabai. In 1981, Genscher personally intervened to stop German court investigations into a Swiss-Iranian weapons deal involving Tabatabai. He claimed that Tabatabai was to be kept out of the case because he had a "special diplomatic status."

In February 1983, Genscher intervened in another German court case involving Tabatabai, who had been caught red-handed trying to smuggle 1.5 kilograms of raw opium through customs in his "diplomatic luggage." When all efforts failed to convince the court that Tabatabai deserved diplomatic immunity, Genscher decided to smuggle the Iranian into Switzerland on a German Lufthansa airliner.

But now the court has decided to re-open the case, and again Genscher got on the phone with Tabatabai in Teheran. His spokesmen in the Bonn foreign ministry put out the word that "investigating Tabatabai would interfere with his chances to win the election for prime minister of Iran—and he is a moderate, compared to others."

Why is Genscher so interested in Iran? For one thing, trade is booming. Iran and the East bloc are now the key customers of West Germany, which in 1983 regained the pre-1978 level of

trade with Iran (valued at about \$2.4 billion). A team of German nuclear power experts is currently in Iran to examine the prospects of resuming construction on the uncompleted nuclear power project at Buser. The project, run by the German company Siemens, is said to have won Khomeini's interest because he hopes it will enable him to build a nuclear bomb.

This is staunchly denied in Bonn, but Genscher's aides remain silent on the fact that Iran is already being supplied with conventional weapons from Germany. Iranian crude oil is being shipped to the Soviets, they sell it to the West Germans (5 million tons in 1983), use the earnings to buy German weapons through Switzerland, which are then delivered to Iran.

Asked about the evidence of Iranian crimes against humanity, and especially the use of children for kamikaze missions, Genscher's aides shrug their shoulders: "One should protest, but on what basis? There is no article in international law that explicitly outlaws the use of children in armed conflicts."

What a fraud! Article 77 in the International Convention on War (the 1946 Code of The Hague) outlaws the misuse of children as soldiers. It was passed because of the Nazis' mass slaughter of German children in the Hitler Youth at the end of World War II. The article has not been signed by Iran, however, nor by the Warsaw Pact countries, nor by the West German government.

Genscher's support for Libya and Iran is no surprise to anyone who knows his stand on Kampuchean mass murderer Pol Pot. As the news of Pol Pot's crimes against humanity began to leak out, Genscher—like the U.S. State Department—opted for the "pragmatic approach," and voted to give the dictator's representative a seat at the United Nations.