

Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

East Germans reach the Rhine

At meetings in Bonn, the Social Democrats are discussing a rapprochement with their Communist comrades from the East.

A high-ranking delegation of the East German Socialist Unity Party (SED), led by that party's foreign policy expert, Hermann Axen, arrived in Bonn on Sept. 20 to meet the West German Social Democrats, who were represented by their top defense and disarmament spokesmen, Egon Bahr, Karsten Voigt, and Hermann Scheer.

The official agenda listed "talks about the chance to ban chemical weapons"; but the real subject of discussion was more far-reaching and ominous for the future of the Western alliance: the "rapprochement" between the socialist and communist sections of the German labor movement.

The importance attached to the discussions was shown by the fact that the SED sent Central Committee member Hermann Axen and the SPD its key operative for East-West contacts, Egon Bahr. A hint of the behind-the-scenes discussions was dropped by Bahr himself several weeks ago, in an essay published in the communist theoretical magazine *Problems of Peace and Socialism*, published in Prague under Soviet editorial control. Bahr called for "trans-European collaboration between Social Democrats, Socialists, and Communists for disarmament in Eastern and Western Europe."

This collaboration—under Moscow's watchful eye—is aimed to oust the United States from Europe and to prevent the realization of the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative. Voigt and Scheer, who both already met the SED in East Berlin on July 2-3 and are now

doing so again in Bonn, have accused the Reagan administration of "trying to impose the Strategic Defense Initiative under thread-bare pretexts."

Another ranking member of the SPD and deputy in the European Parliament, Heidemarie Wiczorek-Zeul, claimed that "the U.S.A. is spreading a pattern of international militarization . . . which will destroy all European and socialist values, if the Europeans and socialists don't put up decisive resistance and alternatives to it."

And when the first official meeting between the SED and SPD took place in the northern German state of Schleswig-Holstein on April 27-28 (see *EIR's* "Report from Bonn" of May 5), "far-reaching agreement was found that the U.S. Euromissiles be withdrawn, that nuclear-free zones be established in Central Europe, and that the American GIs be pulled out of Europe."

Numerous prominent SPD spokesmen have accused President Reagan of "verbal aggression against the East," but have protested only rather vaguely against the verbal aggression from Moscow directed against the alleged "rise of German revanchism."

The most dramatic public statement of the SPD-SED gameplan came from Princeton-educated Social Democrat Horst Ehmke, who addressed the East German parliament on March 10 with the following revealing remarks, regretting the altercation between the German Communists and Social Democrats during the period of Hitler's rise to power:

"As a Social Democrat, I address here in the first place the split in the German and European labor movement, without which fascism would never have succeeded in gaining influence in Europe, and Hitler never would have succeeded in gaining power in Germany. Without Hitler, Germany would never have been partitioned."

Ehmke emphasized that he regretted that the German socialist movement remained split into SPD and SED today, and indicated that the present partition of Europe into two military blocs was a result of this historic split in the socialist labor movement. In other words: Overcome this partition, and you can also overcome the partition of today's Europe.

Ehmke's speech to the East German parliament was the first official contact on the parliamentary level between the SPD and SED since 1946. Also in March, SPD leaders Hans-Jochen Vogel, Bahr, Voigt, and Scheer went to Moscow for meetings with ranking Soviet officials, then on to Leipzig and Pankow in East Germany. Vogel and Bahr met for a full five hours with SED chief Erich Honecker, while Voigt was received by Egon Krenz, the head of the SED's youth organization and Honecker's "crown prince."

Since those meetings in the spring, the rapprochement between SED and SPD has proceeded apace, including the discussions between the two parties in Schleswig-Holstein, under Bahr's direction.

On Sept. 20, the SED advanced its political influence further to the West—to the capital city of Bonn. It is time that those who are committed to preserve both the Western alliance and West German membership in it pull out their dossiers on the socialist merger across the Iron Curtain, before it is too late.