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## Book Review

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# The dream of a neutral Mitteleuropa: a 'deal' that Moscow will not accept

by George Gregory

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### Neutralität für Mitteleuropa—Das Ende Der Blöcke

J. Loeser, U. Schilling

C. Bertelsmann Publishers  
Munich 1984.

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This recent publication in the curio shop of West German military writings is not likely to find a publisher in the English language. But the West German "Green" nuclear-free zone neutralists, the Social Democrats, the Free Democrats, and the Christian Democratic/Christian Social Union parties all have their "Mitteleuropa" anti-American geopolitical currents, so it is likely that Washington, D.C. will increasingly be flooded with propaganda like that in this little volume.

In *Neutrality for Mitteleuropa*, Mitteleuropa would translate literally into the term "Central Europe," describing a geographical area roughly equivalent to the Benelux countries, the West and East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia. Former Major-General of the West German Army Jochen Loeser, the main author, proposes that the United States and the Soviet Union agree to dissolve their respective alliances, NATO and the Warsaw Pact, manage a mutual withdrawal of their armed forces, and create a de-nuclearized, neutralized Mitteleuropa "zone of peace" in this geographical area.

Crazy? Sure, but not only because of the bitterly anti-American program proposed. Loeser assures his reader he is not "anti-American," despite such outbursts as "the American dream to 'make the world safe for democracy' has become as much ideology as Marxism-Leninism," under the chapter heading "The End of the American Crusade." Loeser does not insist that there is no standard of American statesmanship appropriate to "make the world safe for democracy," merely that "the United States has not understood how to combine its high moral goals with the art of political leadership." Thus, Loeser insists that the Mitteleuropa geopolitical faction has no interest in the United States' learning that art of political leadership.

For internal consumption, Loeser is more concerned to

brush Konrad Adenauer aside, accusing him of having been a fool for expecting that the United States would back up his conviction that "the decision will fall in our time, whether freedom, human dignity, and the Western Christian tradition of humanity will be preserved, or whether the spirit of darkness and slavery, the anti-Christian tradition, will thrash a humanity lying upon the ground for a long, long time."

Now that *is* crazy: Here we find a German general proposing a Soviet/American "New Yalta" deal, sponsored on the American side by that anti-German "tradition" of U.S. postwar policy that disappointed the hopes of Konrad Adenauer; a German general proposing a deal, in which, according to his own description, Germany gets nothing by way of greater freedom, sovereignty, or security.

It is correct to suspect that Major-General Loeser was at least intellectually encouraged to publish his work for broad circulation by Henry Kissinger. Kissinger's Metternichian/Bismarckian diplomacy is the glue of Loeser's work, all the way to the Holy Alliance geographical features.

Maj.-Gen. Jochen Loeser used to be one of the top military advisers to the national executive of the liberal Free Democratic Party, whose national chairman is still Hans-Dietrich Genscher. He was asked to retire "prematurely" in the middle of the Helmut Schmidt chancellorship because, despite his FDP protection, he had become an intolerable "Traumtänzer"—a "dream dancer," as his friends say. Still, he was so important to his FDP friends, that he was assigned to build up the "European Institute for Security," (EIS) in Luxembourg. At EIS, Loeser lacked neither "connections" nor money. He spread the money around liberally in the form of contracts to former fellow-officers.

The EIS went nowhere, but Major-General Loeser worked up the connections and went to work for Horst Ahfeldt. Ahfeldt handled the military strategic section of Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker's section of the Pugwash movement in West Germany at the Max Planck Institute offices in Starnberg, near Munich.

Up to that point, Loeser was harmless. Then one day, about two years ago, McGeorge Bundy came to Bonn on behalf of the "non-first use" of nuclear weapons, and there was Maj.-Gen. (ret.) Jochen Loeser sitting at the table next

to Bundy for the press conference. From there, Loeser became a leading supporter of the West German Social Democracy's "Bismarck," Egon Bahr.

Loeser reminds his readers of the "Bahr Plan" for German reunification, reported in a 1973 article by Walter Hahn in *Orbis* (only in part reported, because apparently a large part of what Hahn then intended to report was given "classified" status by the U. S. government upon the urging of Defense Secretary James Schlesinger).

That "Bahr Plan" was: 1) recognition of East Germany as a separate state; 2) an accord between the Federal Republic and East Germany pledging non-use of force; 3) on the basis of normalization of relations between West Germany and the East bloc nations, the initiation of negotiations on a mutual reduction of U. S. and Soviet armed forces in West and East Germany, respectively (in which the U. S. nuclear guarantee for West Germany would be kept in place); and finally 4) the establishment of a "collective security system in Mitteleuropa." France and England would not be included in the system, for the collective security system would be non-nuclear. At this stage, both NATO and the Warsaw pact would be dissolved.

The "Bahr Plan" is still running strong, and Egon Bahr himself has been in the West German press recently with the quip that "the German question can not be considered an open question for as long as the Federal Republic is a member of NATO."

It is clear to Bahr as well as to Loeser that a "deal" between the United States (Kissinger et al.) and Moscow is the *sine qua non* for a New Yalta.

In the real world, however, such "deals" are never settled at a negotiation table. Such a deal is the result (Berlin Wall 1961, Cuba Missile Crisis 1962) of confrontation/brinkmanship "crisis management." Or, Kissingerian crisis-management, described by Loeser (p. 122) as follows: "The Americans and Soviets are playing for time and are refusing to comprehend that, in the nuclear era, they have lost their capacities to overcome the other." Therefore, proposes Loeser, faced with escalating confrontation to the point of capitulation of one or the other power, both the Soviets and the Americans should make a "deal," carve up the world into zones of influence and agree to pull their knives away from each other's throats in Mitteleuropa, leaving a neutralized, denuclearized, non-aligned zone.

"In recent years, there was a recognizable intention to isolate individual crisis spots and not to exploit the emerging weakness of the respective world power, in order to pressure him on other fields. Cuba and Vietnam have been practically shoved aside as material for strategic crises. When the U.S.A. lost control over the Iranian crisis, the Soviet Union held back and did not pull Teheran over to its side. On the other hand, the Reagan administration again struck a course in the direction of overcoming [the Soviets], when it attempted to exploit the Afghan and Poland crises, and Soviet dependence on Western technology. . . . The superpowers, *in recogni-*

*tion of their weakness of leadership* and the burden of rising costs of armaments, find themselves on a total strategic defensive. They are going to have to manage their global conflict, by dividing up [the world] region by region into zones of influence, *if the regions concerned offer them no alternative*. . . . If both superpowers increasingly recognize that it is senseless to try to dominate the world, but that their rivalry for determining influence continues, they will have to strive to achieve a stable status in those regions where neither can allow the other to gain the upper hand. . . . In this way, the superpowers gain free capacities to concentrate on other fields in which a balance of interests does not yet seem possible [emphasis added]."

The way the confrontation/New Yalta deal works in the real world is quite different. The tempo of the Soviet war-mobilization, whatever the high costs and exacerbated internal problems it may momentarily entail, is aimed at bringing Western Europe under Soviet hegemony, and not into any "neutral" Mitteleuropa configuration. The Soviets are intent upon achieving this aim, either 1) as a result of capitulation of the United States in a direct military showdown, or 2) through an agreement with the Kissingers and Bundys to redraw the world map (New Yalta). This is the political shape of the strategic regime of Mutual and Assured Destruction/Flexible Response, and in the real world, options 1) and 2) are identical.

Moscow is not now certain that it could actually win and survive a military showdown with the United States, obviously; but because it is committed to achieving that capability, and is deploying the mass and quality of offensive and defensive systems that are the components of that capability, it is certain that it can name a price for a "deal" with the New Yalta schemers which is nothing less than full hegemony over Western Europe.

If there is a way to convince the Soviet Union that this won't work, that way would be to overcome the "weakness of leadership" of the United States, by initiating an economic, military, and cultural renaissance in the West. Militarily, that means Western Europe develops the scientific/technological commitment to defend itself against the nuclear-blackmail/warfighting threat from the Soviets, which would remain even were a nuclear-free zone to be declared in "Mitteleuropa."

Major-General Loeser proposes, instead, a scheme which promises to the Soviets that they might win someday—but not now. However, the Soviets will only accept that scheme rather than total victory now, if they face an unshakeable American commitment to defend Western Europe against Soviet hegemony. But, if America is willing to defend Europe, why should America not be capable of overcoming its "weakness of leadership?" If America is *not* willing to defend Western Europe, then the Soviets will go for total victory now: they will accept no deal short of total hegemony over the continent, and will certainly not see any pressing need to accept Major-General Loeser's proposed neutralist "deal."