

Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

Neutralism building in West Germany

Some political observations on the rise of strong neutralist currents in the latest elections.

When the two superpowers signed the INF treaty, they also declared their mutual intent to transform the European political landscape of the four postwar decades. The new superpower condominium, the "new era in East-West relations" is, they decided, to have a new system of political parties. For Germany, the plan was to make neutralism the political mainstream for the new era.

Neutralism is on the rise here, as the most recent election results show. In the Jan. 29 municipal elections in the city-state of Berlin, two neutralist fringe parties, the left-wing Greens and the right-wing Republikaner, scored an unprecedented 19% of the vote together. In municipal elections in the state of Hesse on March 12, the Greens, the Republikaner and another right-wing neutralist grouping, the National Democrats, had 13% of the vote together.

Also the Social Democrats, visibly on a neutralist policy course, though less radical than the aforementioned "fringe parties," had slight vote gains in both elections. But the Christian Democrats of Chancellor Helmut Kohl, infected with neutralist views but still viewed as being pro-American and pro-NATO, lost close to 10% in Berlin and close to 7% in Hesse. In some districts, CDU losses were as high as 14-20%. In Frankfurt, the economic and social center of Hesse, the CDU lost almost 13% on March 12. Like West Berlin, Frankfurt will be governed now by a "red-green" coalition of the Social Democrats and the Greens.

The rise of the two right-wing neu-

tralist parties occurs at the expense of the conservative CDU, and this puts the writing on the wall for Chancellor Kohl, whose CDU is now almost certain to lose the November 1990 elections for national parliament.

It should be added that the Berlin and Hesse elections threw Kohl's Bonn coalition partner, the liberal Free Democrats, out of both parliaments. The same will happen in the next national elections, which makes it seem very likely that Bonn will be governed in 1991 by a red-green majority. It cannot even be ruled out that after the next round of elections in mid-June, Kohl may be overthrown by a "summer *putsch*," and replaced by a transition government, most likely under the CDU party vice-chairman Lothar Späth, for a period of 12-18 months till the next national elections.

The breakdown of the formerly pro-Western political landscape in Germany, with the Christian Democrats as its traditional core, is proceeding very fast. It is largely a media product. The majority of the constituency would not vote for a red-green coalition in Bonn, but due to the liberalist posture of Kohl's CDU, many voters get manipulated by the media into voting for one of the two right-wing neutralist fringe parties. The red-green march to power is done indirectly, by breaking down the conservative voter bloc.

The question comes up why the neutralist "fringe" parties are getting such broad coverage, where their campaign funds come from. The media are the institution most penetrated by the superpowers' secret intelli-

gence agencies. See how the propaganda for Gorbachov and for the INF treaty has been spread thick, and you know where the propaganda for neutralism and a "post-NATO era" is coming from. The two "fringe" parties, Republikaner and National Democrats, have become the "lead news item" out of nowhere overnight. Coverage in the state-controlled media of West Germany is a good substitute for election campaign funds.

But the neutralists also have money. Before the Berlin and Hesse elections, the National Democrats, a small party which is heavily in debt, but gets financed by another group, the Deutsche Volksunion, was able to spend 6 million deutschemarks for a mailing campaign reaching 24 million households. The Volksunion is run by Gerhard Frey, the owner of three big neo-Nazi publications who operates in the same intelligence service gray zone between East and West as François Genoud, the main publisher of old and new Nazi literature internationally. Residing in Lausanne, Switzerland, Genoud has "business contacts" with the East bloc, under the pretext of locating old Nazi documents. This includes forgeries like the "authentic diaries of Joseph Goebbels" recently published, as well as the big hoax of 1983, the "authentic Hitler diaries." Genoud also has contacts into secret intelligence milieux of the West, going back to the days when Allen Dulles had his wartime and postwar operations base in Switzerland.

It is less well known that the Republikaner of the former member of the Waffen-SS, Franz Schönhuber, are encouraged and financed through the same networks in the East and West that have helped to maintain Frey's and Genoud's operations for over two decades. One conduit of this network is the neo-Nazi publishing house in Lausanne, Courier du Continent.