

NATO summit: Gorbachov was the only winner

by Rainer Apel

Who is the winner of the NATO 40th birthday summit in Brussels? Germany's Chancellor Kohl and Foreign Minister Genscher believe they won, at least a bit. U.S. President Bush and his Secretary of State Baker are convinced they definitely won. At the concluding press conference, Bush said there were "no winners, no losers."

Whatever the NATO governments believe, one thing is certain, namely, that Gorbachov and the Soviet General Staff won. Some of their longstanding strategic goals, following the INF Treaty, were made the basis of the so-called "NATO birthday compromise."

Gorbachov wins military decoupling

Strategic goal number-one of the Soviets has always been the military decoupling of the United States from Europe. This has been achieved under the irritating name, the "Bush arms control initiative," which, contrary to the overall media accounts, was not drafted by the President himself, but by Adm. William Crowe, National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, Secretary of State James Baker, and Defense Secretary Richard Cheney. They worked it out, in close consultations and intense shuttle diplomacy between Washington, D.C. and Moscow, presented it to the President at his weekend resort in Kennebunkport, Maine, and he made it the agenda of his European trip. It comes as no surprise that Gorbachovite Bonn Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher accepted the plan immediately. After Bush's Brussels speech, he proclaimed, "The internal dynamic of this proposal is so strong, that no one can hold it back."

The Bush conventional reductions proposal is a military-strategic disaster for the Western alliance, by offering to reduce and demobilize American and Soviet forces stationed in Western and Eastern Europe, respectively, to 275,000

each. The initiative affects at least 30,000, but (given total U.S. *combat* troop strength of 180,000 in Western Europe) likely even up to 50,000 men in strike-capable or forward-based positions.

Most of these units, ground and air forces, are stationed in West Germany. Rumors have it that the United States would, under Bush's scheme, pull out the equivalent of two divisions (approximately 40,000 men) from West German territory. A staff member at the Bonn Foreign Ministry confirmed the main direction of the troop cuts in a discussion with *EIR*, declaring, "The troop cuts will mainly have to occur in West Germany, otherwise the Soviets would not accept the Bush proposal."

It can therefore be assumed that Bush means the withdrawal of half of the combat troops in West Germany. His talk about a "20% cut" conceals the real issue.

NATO's forward defense in Central Europe is dumped, with the Bush scheme.

Strategic goal number-two of Moscow has been to drastically reduce and move toward the elimination of the Europe-based dual-capable U.S. Air Force units, the only remaining effective post-INF American nuclear capability in the European theater. This principal interest of the Soviets has been accepted by Bush's offer to cut 15% of U.S. strike aircraft and helicopters in Europe. A subsidiary Soviet goal has been to include the French and British air potentials in talks on arms cuts. It is not known whether the Bush-Baker team conceded that to Gorbachov, but the Soviets are increasing the pressure on the United States by insisting that, as Major General Kukelyev declared in Moscow May 30 and Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze one day later in Paris, "The question of the British and French potentials must not be kept out, if there is to be any agreement."

The third strategic goal of the Soviets has been to decouple the West Germans from their French and British allies. So far, the United States does not seem to have officially accepted that, but here also, the Soviets insist that ground and air forces of the two European nuclear powers be withdrawn from West Germany as well. Shevardnadze unequivocally declared in Paris May 31, "I recall that the British and French forces [in Germany] represent 100,000 men, and this disturbs the balance. All this must be subject to discussion, but I am certain that the problem can be solved, once there is a mutual commitment to solve it."

Demobilization

A very dramatic aspect of the Bush formula is his promise to "demobilize" the units withdrawn from Europe. There are two fundamental "asymmetries" differentiating the U.S. and Russian forces: 1) The Soviet military is conscript-based, whereas the U.S. military is a professional, volunteer army; demobilized Soviet troops are conscripts, who join the Soviet ready reserves, mobilizable within weeks of the order. The U.S.A. requires at least one year to re-form any demobilized division. 2) The Soviets have enormous combat-ready troop formations in the Western U.S.S.R. who could be moved to forward bases in the East Germany and Czechoslovakia, nullifying the "cuts" within hours. Remaining U.S. forces would first have to be remobilized in a process which could take several days at least.

Thus, Bush's remark in Mainz on May 31, before a mixed U.S.-German audience of 2,000 guests invited by Chancellor Helmut Kohl, that he believed the U.S. "ought to strive to improve the openness with which we and the Soviets conduct our military activities," was rather cynical. With the proposals Bush has already made, he surrendered the future of Western Europe to Gorbachov and the Soviet General Staff.

The future of Germany

The magnitude of the treason merely reflected in Bush's proposals cannot be overstated. This is the first phase of a total U.S. troop pullout, and what Henry Kissinger would claim is Germany's "neutralization." In fact, Germany is ceded to the Soviet Empire. Without Germany, the remainder of Europe is indefensible. Therefore, no Red Army invasion would be necessary for the Kremlin to loot the continent; it would demand, and receive, what it wished from the European economies at the price it wished to pay, and no other. Therefore, the Soviet war machine can, in the future, base itself on Western European economic potentials—as great or greater than those of the United States. The Soviet Union becomes the world's only superpower.

First, the Bush proposals pave the way for what people have called the "fourth zero option," a full withdrawal of American troops from Europe over the next six to eight years.

Even a partial withdrawal of the Americans will have overwhelming psychological effects among Germans. The

debate over the possibility of a withdrawal has already had such psychological effects. Apart from the Genscher types, who agree with this policy of retreat, there are longstanding pro-American politicians such as Alfred Dregger, who must be asking themselves, "Why are the Americans doing this to us?"

Dregger is trying to "control the damage," to slow things down and put things off, but the dynamic of the American withdrawal cannot be stopped by practical politics. There is a danger that even conservative politicians of the Christian Union parties, embittered, may now turned away from the United States and seek an arrangement with Moscow, under the slogan, "Let's make the best of a bad thing, since it is going to happen anyway."

Bush did not view the Federal Republic of Germany, as he insisted in Mainz, as "a partner in a leading role." The deal was made with the Russians, not the Germans, and a mixture of threats and enticements was used to bring the Kohl government to accept the inevitable. Ironically, an important portion of this business between Bush and Kohl, according to reports, consisted of the fact that the visit of the American President would help the much-beleaguered Chancellor to get through the June 18 European parliamentary elections and perhaps even carry him through the 1990 federal parliamentary elections—in short, it would keep him in power.

The second act of the scenario is to be the visit of Gorbachov to Germany on June 12, his part of the manipulation of the German mind. He will probably make another offer on "the German question" (probably very vague, leaving room for all kinds of speculation and illusions).

In Bush's Mainz speech, there were some remarks which betrayed the cynical character of the American sellout. Bush spoke positively of the outcome of Yalta, where Stalin had promised free elections in Poland. Gorbachov, of course, is now staging them. He also spoke about how, just as France and Germany were reconciled after 1945, so East and West could be now. From Bush's circle of advisers, we have already begun to hear the idea of doing away with the confrontation between the two alliances and replacing it with a *pact* between NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Obviously, the Brussels proposals are located in a larger strategic panorama, a "New Yalta," and not merely a "clearing up of important questions in Europe." Since the INF treaty was signed by Reagan, the Bush priorities appear as follows: 1) the halving of strategic nuclear weapons; 2) the abolition, or at least, large scaling back of the SDI; 3) nuclear disarmament of the French and British forces; 4) joint superpower "management" of a series of crises in the Third World (including Red China).

As for the last point, China is a complete wild card, while point 3 has led to heavy disagreement within the West itself, since both the English and the French regimes up to now have strongly rejected the idea that Bush can include their weapons in his negotiations with the Soviets.