

Bush troop cut plan would keep Red Army in East Germany

In President George Bush's State of the Union Address on Jan. 31, the President announced that he intended to reduce the U.S. troop presence in Western Europe to 195,000, and that he expected the Soviet Union to do the same in Eastern Europe, a topic he had already discussed with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachov. What does this mean for the security of the Federal Republic of Germany? And what does it mean for the process of German unity?

First, it should be noted that the presence of U.S. troops in the Federal Republic in the previous quantity and quality was an absolute necessity, and will continue to be so as long as the Soviet "Western Group of Forces" remains in East Germany with their capacity for *blitzkrieg* operations. But how long will the Soviet leadership be in the position to maintain this massive offensive military presence on the Elbe?

This has nothing to do with "peace policy" or "disarmament." Rather, it has to do with the rapidly progressing life-and-death crisis of the Soviet empire. The Soviet leadership—with or without Gorbachov—is faced with such an enormous "energy loss" and deterioration of forces as a result of the crisis, that the postwar *status quo* in Central Europe cannot be maintained. The Soviet leadership well knows that, ultimately, the attempt to rigidly maintain *all* strategic positions in an objectively weakened condition will lead to a further dissipation of the already-shrinking forces and thus possibly, the loss of all positions. Moscow's strategy consists of winning time to regenerate its own crisis-shaken position.

Therefore, Moscow is ready to make concessions on strategic "space." But this strategic "exchange," of time for space, is being completed under the most difficult of conditions, and there will not be any generous "prepayments." They will seek to disguise their own weakness, to bluff, and will only pull back if important considerations are given in return or their own position actually becomes fully untenable.

Cause and effect must not be confused. The actual dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the collapse of the communist system in Central Europe is the result of revolutionary convulsions that can no longer be contained, not of Gorbachov's "reform policy." Gorbachov's portentous statement on Jan. 30, that he accepted German unity "in principle," means, first, that he recognizes that the situation in East Germany cannot economically and politically be maintained, and, second, that he will attempt to play for time while he "allows" the economic rehabilitation of East Germany by the Federal Republic.

Concretely and practically, the Soviet position means that German unity must not be forced by the pressure of the "street"—Gorbachov's understanding of the right of self-determining Germans—but that the victorious powers of the Second World War must have the final say. This was formulated with illuminating clarity by Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov in Gorbachov's presence.

Thatcher, Bush echo Russians

Even the casual observer must be struck with the astonishing similarity of Gorbachov's statements on German unity, following his passionate embrace of East German Prime Minister Hans Modrow, to the statements made by British Prime Minister Thatcher and the Bush administration on the German question. German unity has never been contested "in principle" in London or Washington either—only it takes second priority to "stability," to "balance," and the rights of the superpowers, and

duck. But I am happy to note, that since then, Mitterrand and the government in France, have taken some very important steps for rapprochement to the West German position. This increased French understanding of the needs of the situation is reflected perhaps best in the decision of the president of the European Community Jacques Delors, who will allow East Germany to become the 13th member of the European Community, without any particular administrative and technical process. These are political steps that reflect the attempts of the people in the streets to define revolutionary-political solutions to these questions.

Because of the pressure of time, I cannot go into the

details of the various countries in the former Soviet glaxis in Eastern Europe. But I would like to sum up. First, there is total disagreement between the elites and the masses inside the Soviet Union. Second, we are witnessing a collapse of the authority of the Soviet state, and of course the proof of that is what you've seen last year in Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, this year in the Baltic region, in Lithuania especially, in the Transcaucasus. And then we have the crippling of the collective consciousness which necessarily leads to a failure and a collapse. The fact that the Gorbachov people have tried to put an end to the extreme hostility against the West, have tried to open up to the West, will not be enough

there is no reason to hurry. Mrs. Thatcher typically refers to the third millennium.

When President Bush announced that he intended to limit U.S. and Soviet troops in Europe to 195,000 each, he did not forget to add that he anticipated no further troop reduction. The "upper limit" is thus simultaneously a "lower limit" for superpower troops in Europe. Five years ago, against the background of the Strategic Defense Initiative plans for NATO overall at the time and a still-functioning Warsaw Pact, that would have been worth discussing. But now, Bush's proposal means the imposition of the presence of 195,000—unwanted—Soviet soldiers in Central Europe!

On closer examination of Bush's proposal, it emerges additionally that the space in which the 195,000 troops of the Soviets and the United States will be stationed, essentially merges together in West and East Germany. Given the present condition of the Soviet Union, it is in no position to maintain its troop presence in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The pressure from those peoples against the troops is simply too great. Also, the Soviet troop presence in Poland will obviously be reduced, so that in the foreseeable future there will only be Soviet logistical groups stationed there.

Thus, the Bush proposal aims, in its end result, at a continuing massive troop presence of the Soviet Western Group in East Germany. Conversely, it is now obvious that, in comparison with the Federal Republic, the small U.S. military presence in Great Britain, the Benelux states, Italy, Greece, and Turkey, as well as on the Iberian peninsula, will be further reduced. The mass of U.S. forces in Europe will stay in Germany.

The Bush proposal is in blatant contradiction to three foreseeable and in no way speculative strategic trends: 1) the further drain on Soviet forces that is to be expected through the intensifying economic and political crisis within the Soviet Union, which will make its forward military presence in East Germany increasingly difficult

but not mechanically impossible; 2) the expected rejection of further Soviet military occupation of East Germany by the population there; and, finally, 3) the process of German unity.

To keep the Russians in?

We cannot escape the impression that Bush's proposal fundamentally alters the character of the U.S. troop presence in Germany. The Bush plan seems to have turned the previous NATO goal, "to keep the Russians out," into its opposite. Indeed, we might think that the dictum expressing Lord Ismay's goal for NATO, "to keep the Germans down," has been completely adopted by Bush. Unfortunately, all this indicates that Bush and Gorbachov came to the understanding at Malta to deploy, in the absence of any political and economic possibilities for influence and organization, their military presence in both parts of Germany in order to assert their power interests against the process of German unity and the coming into existence of a pan-European economic space from "Portugal to Poland."

Heretofore, the U.S. troop presence in the Federal Republic was commensurate with the objective and massive threat to Western Europe by the military power of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. This threat is now in a process of change, but certainly hasn't ceased. The potential of Soviet military power, especially of the Western Group of Forces, is essentially intact. In harmony with the three strategic trends mentioned above—with regard to the Soviet Union, East Germany, and the process of German unity—Western security policy must aim, not at maintaining the Soviet military presence in east Central Europe, and especially in East Germany, but rather at ending that presence outside the borders of the Soviet Union.

Then, the Soviet Union can, as Lyndon LaRouche proposed in 1988, expect economic cooperation from West and Central Europe that will allow it to find a way out of its present life-and-death crisis.—*Michael Liebig*

to avoid this collapse.

We have in the Russian population, very important residues of messianic outlooks. Those messianic outlooks are still there. The question is that these messianic outlooks could lead the Soviet Union back to the path of military confrontation, especially under circumstances in which the military caste would assume power, or the state security apparatus. Up to now Gorbachov of course has been acting in close coordination with the state security apparatus but that could change and then you'd get the messianic element of that also becoming the dominant one.

Why don't we just take a look for a moment at the classi-

cal strategic factors, and see which way they point, negatively or positively. First is that the conditions of domination in the political structures have now been massively called into question. Secondly, again, there is no agreement between the masses and the elites. The human potential is no longer loyal, everybody wants to leave the sinking ship. The question of morale, the psychological factor, is at an absolute zero point. There's no spirit of self-sacrifice as in the Great Patriotic War, the Second World War. The level of psychology overall is depressive.

The third question is strategic potential. There we have to see that the Soviet available strategic potential is completely