

Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

Neo-Nazis find supporters abroad

A link between the skinheads and the former East German Stasi has been found—but there are also ties to Bush's CIA.

Yes, he helped to instigate German neo-Nazis and skinheads for violent attacks on foreigners, boasted Dennis Mahon, a Ku Klux Klan leader recently returned from a tour of Germany, in an interview in mid-November with the daily *Tulsa Tribune* of Oklahoma.

Mahon, the target of an official probe by the chief federal prosecutor of Germany for founding a "terrorist organization," also admitted in the *Tribune* having trained German neo-Nazis in guerrilla warfare and underground operations.

The KKK role adds a new element to the debate on extremism in Germany. So far, certain leads have implicated the KGB, the Stasi (the former East German regime's foreign intelligence), and also the Czechoslovak STP, in phony neo-Nazi incidents. It was known among anti-espionage experts that such "incidents" were coordinated closely with black propaganda claims that the West German state was a successor to the Nazi Third Reich.

The German weekly *Der Spiegel* put some of the facts together in a Nov. 18 report on the Stasi's role:

Some of the first East German contacts to the postwar Nazi groups date from 1951, when a young communist party youth leader named Erich Honecker met with two former leading Hitler Youth officials, trying to win them over for a "national struggle" against the West and the West German state. This was part of the "national revolutionary" campaign, fully coordinated with the Soviet KGB, launched to preempt the consolidation of the West German state

of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer.

Honecker later became the party's top secretary and leader of the East German state. It was his regime that was felled by the peaceful revolution of 1989. He escaped trial in early 1991 in a Soviet military plane, and is still receiving protection from Bush's global partner, Gorbachov.

The "national revolutionary" campaign Honecker helped to launch in 1951 failed, but the Stasi kept close contact with the neo-Nazis in West Germany through the years. Some light on that was shed by two incidents during the 1970s:

- In 1976, East Germany provided refuge to Egon Fischer, a vice chairman of the neo-Nazi NPD party's student group in West Germany, who had been working as a Stasi informant.

- In the late 1970s, the Stasi ran several agents in the neo-Nazi group Wehrsportgruppe Hoffmann. Close East German relations to Syria allowed members of the group to receive combat training in Lebanon.

With the authorization of Stasi vice chairman Gerhard Neiber, details of that neo-Nazi operation were handled by the same Stasi Section 22 that was also handling contacts to leftist Baader-Meinhof gang.

A special operation was launched on Feb. 19, 1983, in which the East Germans gave asylum to Odfried Hepp, who had shortly before escaped arrest by West Berlin police. In his debriefing by Stasi specialists, Hepp provided vital information that helped the Stasi to complete its "Who's Who in the Militant Right-wing Scene of

West Germany," a file containing 5,000 names of neo-Nazis.

Hepp, an accomplice in neo-Nazi bomb attacks on U.S. Army installations in the Rhine-Main region in 1982, was the first to receive a false identity, like the ones that the Stasi later gave to several "wanted" Baader-Meinhof terrorists. Transferred to Damascus, whence he moved to Tunis, Hepp worked as a Stasi informant on Arab terrorist groups. The French DST arrested him in Paris in 1985, extraditing him two years later.

So much for *Der Spiegel's* report. But what happened *after* the fall of the Honecker regime?

A German news correspondent in Washington, Peter W. Schroeder, who has experience with NATO and other western agencies, wrote this on the post-1989 Stasi in his informative 1990 book, *Europe Without America*: "They made contact to the West German residents of western secret services—preferably the CIA. . . . It has been leaked from the Senate committee for the control of the secret services in Washington that shortly after the fall of the G.D.R. regime of Honecker and already during the interim reign of his successor Egon Krenz, the CIA began reinforcing its espionage staff in Germany with East German spies that had been operating before in the former G.D.R. and in the Federal Republic."

The Bush administration, Schroeder wrote, was provided with an espionage network that could be used to compensate the inevitable loss of allied privileges caused by the unification of Germany.

Now, a most interesting link may be established soon between FBI and CIA backing for the Klan, and the fact that the CIA recruited an established underground network of the same Stasi that had run operations with West German neo-Nazis.