
Gen. Paul-Albert Scherer

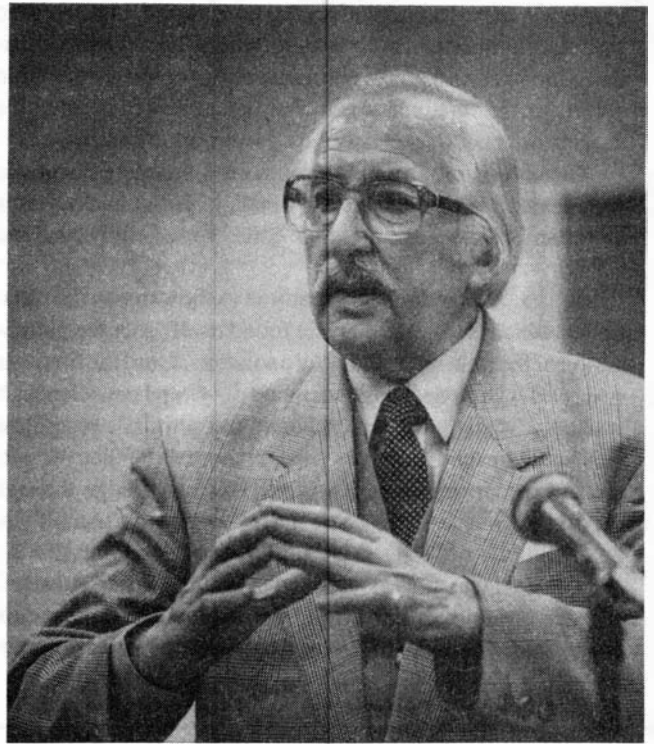
'The key to peace remains in Moscow'

Excerpts from the speech by Gen. Paul-Albert Scherer (ret.), former head of German military intelligence.

More clarity, more penetrating insight, and the gaining of crucial knowledge in our attitude of resistance against the *Zeitgeist*—an attitude which is more necessary now than ever before—are the objectives of this assembly and labor-intensive conference, which comes at a critical point in time. I would like to attempt, in my own way—as an analyst of security policy for some 40 years, and following my life experiences as an observer of the era, having been born in that so fateful year for Europe, 1918—to deepen our perceptive capacities concerning security policy matters. We all suffer more or less from a partial narrowing of our in fact quite fantastic possibilities for perceiving things. The modern media industry, on commercial grounds, has bombarded us with largely superficial and one-sided, negative, or otherwise primed-up information. If leading personnel—by which I mean generally those in positions of social power—shall, and will, in view of their immense burden of responsibility, promptly recognize the subtle challenges of our era, then all that remains for them is a systematic study of all obtainable high-quality information which can be of assistance in making official and private decisions. That requires one to give up one's leisure time, to enhance one's learning over long periods, and to reject worthless news commodities, as I have experienced these here and there in my journalistic side-career, and later on as an intelligence officer.

A few basic assumptions seem to me necessary at the outset as the basis of my security-policy analysis:

First, the current state of social consciousness has a more determining influence on the course of history, than does the bare reality of actual events. Psychological manipulation has made use of scientific knowledge about how to influence people through group dynamics, and through shaping information for specific layers of the population. Some examples: The propaganda operation set into motion beginning in the mid-1980s by Gorbachov—or better, by the KGB—around a grandiose plan for total disarmament, successfully blinded considerable parts of the West by means of the cult-figure effect, and resulted in a serious long-term weakening of western defense preparedness. A half-century before that, we had Hitler's devilish accomplishments in stupefying the people through extensive use of the radio. Nations are whipped up



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into a frenzy, and their thoughts poisoned by criminal individuals and parts of the elites. Reproaches for collective guilt are merely convenient, provocative inventions for more hatred and revenge within the general framework of this enemy-image mill.

Second, as always, everything is subject to the dictates of rapid transience. Nothing is fixed. The laws of nature, of the universe, of our Earth are magnitudes determining the course of events. But above and beyond these truisms, the following assumption is of fundamental import: Catastrophes are entirely normal occurrences. Human beings, through self-deception and wishful thinking, tend to hold themselves back from gaining clear knowledge of such events. Of course, the inclination to self-deception and false imaginings about social harmony are certainly not acquired through poor education alone, but rather, to a certain extent they also serve the primitive mechanism of individual self-protection.

Third, in the consumer-oriented states of the free western sort, dominated as they are by hedonism as the new idol of the *Zeitgeist*, the ability to govern has become increasingly difficult and more restricted. Populism—the practice of propitiating enraged constituencies—permits at best only short-lived, belated decisions to remove grievances and make structural changes, after systemic problems have already become visible. All preventive implementation of countermeasures, or the realization of far-sighted planning in the face of recognized, future negative developments, has been seri-

ously delayed or rendered impossible. As [former] Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban once observed, "Human beings and nations only begin to act wisely, after all other possibilities have been exhausted." A civilization, once destabilized in this way, will naturally have a difficult time adequately ensuring its future survival. . . .

Facing up to the future

It makes no sense for us to keep our eyes shut. In the course of a probable dramatic upcoming transitional period of threats, which we must jointly show that we are ready to stand up to, the big opportunities will probably only arise toward the very end. The key to the door of peace in freedom, however, will remain, poorly guarded, in Moscow. We are not yet at the end-point or end-phase of a snowballing development in Russia, but rather we are only now entering the second part of a torturous process of social dissolution. It is so torturous, because a type of state similar in mentality to the ancient state of Sparta (a rather rare occurrence in world history), where blood was drunk for breakfast and the children raised away from their parents, is not easily broken up, given its rigorous militarist norms and grounding in the collectivity. In Cambodia, the anti-human Pol Pot system is still holding on around the edges. . . .

The world's security-policy perspectives in the period immediately ahead require much foresight among leaders, a loyal solidarity in the security alliance, and a rejection of all isolationism, rivalries, and political blackmail. The possible threats to peace in continental Europe can easily develop into attitudes of conflict along the north-south axis of greater Europe's central hub, as the latter has been identified by French geographers. Namely, the center lies not in Germany or in Poland, but rather in Lithuania. . . . The pressing, unsolved problem of NATO reform and of creating the appropriate preconditions for ensuring peace in [the Baltic, Belarus, and Ukraine] is now creeping into people's consciousness—not suddenly, but all the more oppressively. And this time, inactivity and lack of leadership—a disappointing repetition of the rabbit's paralysis before the snake, as is the case in the Balkans—is threatening our very existence.

In our overall evaluation of the risks, it would be dishonest to ignore the fact that chaotic shifts in the Russian situation could also pose an extreme threat to the people of continental Europe, even without a third world war. In our examination of the test scenarios of western intelligence services and think tanks—especially in the capitalist strongholds of United States and Great Britain, as they are so viewed from the standpoint of the cultivated enemy-image of the West—we must reckon on a higher degree of threat. For, no one really knows how strongly social paranoia, amid the possible chaos in the wake of the upcoming processes of change, may animate individual actors, or interlinked groups, on the Russian stage to take up the available weapons and direct them outward.

Robert Becker

Our resistance to National Socialism

Robert Becker is a member of the resistance organization Reichsbanner Schwarz-Rot-Gold (National Flag: Black, Red, Gold).

It is usually the practice to study the resistance against National Socialism only during the Nazi rule and especially during the war; but the Nazi regime did not come suddenly out of nowhere on Jan. 30, 1933! If the Hitler putsch is left out of consideration, then the danger of National Socialism starts to gain definite importance during the end phase of the Weimar Republic, from 1929-30 on. One has to look at what program the NSDAP [Nazi party] was advocating, what its political terrorist activity looked like, and what counter-strategies had been developed by the democratic parties, trade unions, and other groups. The powerful Communist Party and its militant organizations at the same time had started an attack against the republic—in competition with the Nazi organizations—to build their own dictatorship on the ruins of the republic.

The politics of the democratic parties was unclear, contradictory, and indecisive. This also created hardship for the large, militant mass organization Reichsbanner Schwarz-Rot-Gold, which had been founded in 1924, tolerated by the "Weimar parties" (Social Democrats, Center Party, Democratic Party), to defend freedom and democracy in the republic. Coming from many different groups, it became the biggest militant organization within a short period of time to block the way to power for nationalists, communists and right-wing extremists, who were "hiding behind a disgraceful stirring up of hatred against Jews" (appeal of April 15, 1924). Hundreds of thousands, even millions fought self-sacrificingly for years, but the political leadership prevented an ultimate confrontation for fear of a civil war, especially "shortly before the end," around June 20, 1932, the so-called *Preussenschlag*, and when Reichschancellor Kurt von Schleicher, at the end of 1932, offered to form a coalition of all opponents of Hitler (except the communists), irrespective of their different worldviews, and, supported by the Reichswehr, to eliminate the National Socialists totally. This was the last chance, or maybe the last straw.

The entire situation is highlighted by a statement of the last leader of the Reichsbanner, who fled from persecution in 1933, first to Prague and later to England, and who did not