

German Trilateral toes Moscow line for 'independent' European defense

Since the Trilateral Commission met in Washington April 1-3 and received the blessing of the Reagan White House, the drive to decouple Western Europe from the United States has accelerated sharply. Decoupling is no longer merely a subject of debate in the foreign ministries of the continent; it is actually under way. Economic decoupling from the dollar is under current negotiation between some of the most powerful European bankers and Moscow. President Reagan's directed-energy defensive beam-weapons proposal has become the focus for demands for military decoupling from leading European politicians.

West Germany's Horst Ehmke, a Trilateral Commission member, recently issued a call for such decoupling, titled "A Policy for the Self-Defense of Europe." The essay, with its lying attacks on the United States and its alleged "sudden announcement of an armaments program for space," reads like a page out of the Soviet press. Hardly a surprise, given Ehmke's backing from the Trilateral Commission, a principal advocate of a "New Yalta" deal that would give Western Europe over to the Soviet Union. Ehmke's article is a policy paper prepared for the German Social Democratic Party (SPD), and was published in Europa-Archiv, the bi-weekly publication of the German Foreign Policy Association—the German counterpart of New York's Council on Foreign Relations. The publisher of Europa-Archiv is Trilateral Commission member Wolfgang Wagner, editor of the Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung.

Ehmke, a lawyer educated at Princeton University, today heads the Social Democratic Party's parliamentary caucus. A protégé of SPD chairman Willy Brandt, he ran the chancellery from 1969 to 1971 during Brandt's regime, and was responsible for appointing East German agent Günter Guillaume to a top staff position. When Guillaume's espionage role was exposed in 1974, the Brandt government fell. Could it bear that Ehmke's role in that affair bears some connection to his current role as a propagandist for the Soviet takeover of Europe?

Ehmke plays a chameleon-like role in German politics, cultivating his "Atlanticist" ties through constant visits to the United States, at the same time that he "builds bridges" to the radical SPD left and the Green party. Since the fall of

the Helmut Schmidt government in 1982, Ehmke has emerged increasingly as a spokesman for the decoupling policy—just as his erstwhile "Atlanticist" masters like Henry Kissinger and U.S. Ambassador to Bonn Arthur Burns have begun publicly to proclaim the need for European "independence" from Washington.

1) With the Ronald Reagan presidency, the United States has returned to a "policy of strength" which is expressed in armaments programs of unprecedented scope and in new military deliberations and doctrines which posit the—theoretical—viability and winnability of a military conflict between the superpowers. Correspondingly, arms control is subordinated to the effort to regain military superiority. Whether stated or not, it is the goal of this policy to make the United States, in the military sphere as in others, once more the number-one power in the world.

2) The Western Europeans welcome an America that represents an effective political and military counterweight against the growing military potential of the Soviet Union, with which the Europeans are compelled to live together on the Eurasian continent. The Europeans, however, do not want to be made into an instrument of American superpower policy.

3) The United States is combining its military efforts with a policy based on the belief that they can also, if necessary, pressure the Soviet Union with economic sanctions and psychological warfare aimed at the destabilization of Eastern Europe. . . . The forces in America advocating this policy see Europe's maintenance of détente as an expression of ideological cowardice which has brought the West nothing globally, but has only been exploited by the Soviet Union.

Washington's 'verbal excesses'

4) Powerful Western European forces, on the contrary, see in the American policy, above all in the verbal excesses of members of the Reagan administration, an expression of their insufficient ability to deal with the Soviet Union effectively and to put themselves in Europe's shoes. . . . They see in long-term cooperation with Eastern Europe, a cooperation which preserves Western Europe's own interests, the

only realistic possibility for overcoming, step by step, the division of Europe created by World War II and the Yalta agreement, and the tensions and dangers stemming from it. . . .

6) . . . The Western Europeans at the same time see themselves as the victims of a reckless American financial and economic policy, which is not only holding back the economic upswing so urgently longed for in view of the 12 million unemployed in Western Europe, but also indirectly involves the Western Europeans in financing the giant American armaments program. . . . Given the state of the discussion within the Alliance, it is not surprising that Europe's importance is sinking in the American view. This tendency is strengthened by certain factors in domestic American politics. The generation of European immigrants is dying off, along with the generation of Americans that came to know Europe first-hand during the post-war period. Still more important is the fact that the Europe-oriented East Coast is losing influence to regions of America oriented toward the South or the West. (Asia)

America's own security would be decisively weakened if it turned over to Soviet influence the European coast of the Atlantic and the second greatest industrial potential in the world. Her superpower status would be decisively reduced. Should the Americans decide this question otherwise some day, they would make a mistake of historic dimensions, without the Europeans being able to deter them. . . .

Europeans dare not allow themselves any illusions. On the basis of their geographic situation as the westernmost point of the Eurasian continent, they are further urged into the alliance with the United States as a counterweight to Soviet power. Whatever security efforts the Western Europeans may make, their geopolitical and geo-strategic position makes it as good as impossible for them to present a sufficient counterweight on their own. They lack the territorial depth for deterrence against the Soviet strength on the continent, and they lack the wherewithal to globally secure the life-or-death lines of communication. To mount an adequate nuclear deterrence capacity, or to mount sufficient armed forces to protect the sea and air lanes, would financially overstretch them.

The Western Europeans in addition must never forget that the security project of a "European Defense Community," which arose at the beginning of the European unification effort, collapsed, and that the "Political Union" of Europe is still a long way away. . . .

NATO was founded as a defensive alliance. The goal of its policy is to avert war and to make peace. To that end, the policy resolved upon by the Alliance and laid down in the 1967 Harmel Report combines efforts for an adequate defense with efforts toward détente and cooperation. This policy serves the vital interests of Europe, which would be obliterated by a military conflict between the superpowers.

Today there exists the danger that the United States will

unilaterally break with this policy and seek to subordinate the Alliance to its superpower interests—as defined by the present American administration. That would contradict, to use President Kennedy's phrase once more, a "partnership of equals." Such a partnership presupposes not only constant, comprehensive consultations, but also an effective participation on the part of the Europeans in the policy, strategy, and planning of the Alliance. If an American administration disseminates military doctrines which are incompatible with the jointly determined policy, or unilaterally announces a policy of economic sanctions against the Soviet Union and then attempts to impose them against its own allies, it is violating this basic principle. Unilateral actions by a superpower which only indirectly affect the Western European alliance partner, such as the sudden announcement of an armaments program for space or the military intervention in Grenada, also weaken the solidarity of the alliance.

A special problem for the Western European alliance partner consists of its extensive dependence on American "intelligence," especially to the extent that this stems from the most modern American technology. The Western Europeans must strive for more thorough, regular participation in the American intelligence process than is the case today. . . .

The militarization of security problems, moreover, has led to colossal budget deficits in the United States, whose effects have a negative influence on the economic security of both Europe and the Third World.

Former American President Richard Nixon has referred to the fact that the cruise missiles and Pershing II missiles stationed in the Federal Republic and Italy also cover part of the Middle East. The Western Europeans must insist on an American assurance that these weapons, so long as they are stationed on Western European soil, will only be used in the event of an attack on Western Europe and then only with the agreement of the countries in which they are stationed.

Such a clarification is all the more necessary as leading spokesmen for the Reagan administration have repeatedly considered a "horizontal escalation," the extension of a war in one region of the world to another—for example, the extension of a Mideast conflict to Europe. Such a thesis is irreconcilable with the security interests of the Western Europeans. . . .

Do nothing to annoy the East

Far-ranging conclusions follow: The Europeans, for this reason among others, must reject any military doctrine, armed forces structure, and weaponry which the East bloc countries would be compelled to view as an offensive potential.

Already the "mere" verbal aggression of the Reagan administration against the East bloc has been a major cause of the rapid growth of the peace movement in Western Europe. The contribution of the American administration to the collapse of the Geneva negotiations on Euro-strategic weapons has further intensified mistrust. . . .