
WEST GERMANY

Chancellor slams the decoupling effort

by John Sigerson

Henry A. Kissinger's plan to withdraw the U.S. nuclear umbrella from Western Europe was on the top of the agenda at the March 5 talks between President Reagan and West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl. According to a senior administration official, Kohl made it clear to the President that Kissinger's proposals to withdraw up to half the American troops stationed in Europe are "counterproductive."

"I find it bizarre that anyone would suggest we need a major overhaul of NATO," the Reagan official said. In view of the furor over Kissinger's proposal to "reshape" the NATO military alliance, published in the March 5 issue of *Time* magazine, it was necessary to reaffirm the relationship between the United States and Europe. "There should never be any doubt in Europe about American commitment to Europe, nor should there ever be any doubt in the United States about the importance of an American presence in Europe," Reagan and Kohl agreed.

Beam fight in Europe

Sweeping changes under way in Western Europe could undo Kissinger's plan to leave Europe prey to Moscow. West German defense experts of flag-officer rank have reported to *EIR* that Bonn government circles have made a complete re-evaluation of the importance of the U.S. strategy to develop beam-weapon defenses, announced last March 23 by President Reagan.

Bonn sources say that the recent visit of President Reagan's science adviser, George Keyworth, was helpful in making the commitment of the Reagan administration to beam-weapon defense unmistakably clear (see Report from Bonn, page 43). "But this was not the only thing that caused the shift. There has simply been a general change of attitude in favor of beam weapons," said one retired General Staff officer. The only group in Europe publicly advocating beam-weapons defense has been the European Labor Party, chaired by Helga Zepp-LaRouche.

This shift was announced officially, if in somewhat softened form, by the U.S. Supreme Allied Commander-Europe, Gen. Bernard Rogers, who told a local West German newspaper, the *Saarbrücken Zeitung*, that his experience as Army Chief of Staff "gave me the conviction that we certainly can be successful in developing systems against ballistic missiles.

"What does our deterrence really consist in? We have always said, 'We have the weapons systems. If you Russians fire missiles against us, then we will have enough left over to fire back at you.' Wouldn't it be better morally to be able to say to the Russians, 'Fire your missiles, we'll just destroy them before they arrive.'" Rogers also said that he believes such systems would be effective for defense in Western Europe, a fact Soviet propaganda organs have been hysterically denying.

British back Kissinger

In Britain, the *Daily Telegraph* complained that "the best response to Dr. Kissinger is some hard thinking, not a wall of protest." The *Financial Times* pleaded that "he means well; his recipes might not be the right ones, but . . . the Kissinger ideas deserve serious consideration."

Peregrine Worsthorne, "conservative" columnist in the *Sunday Telegraph*, mooted a withdrawal of Europe from all military alliances with the United States. "It makes some sense for the United States to want to conscript us into the global battle against the U.S.S.R. But would not our interests be better served by refusing to comply? . . . A separate relationship with the Soviet Union and a less close one with the U.S. are no longer options that only leftists can be expected to espouse." Worsthorne concluded that "the common interest might best be served by early divorce while relations are still amicable."

Retorted Karl Feldmeyer, military correspondent for the prestigious West Germany's daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, on March 6: "In the final analysis, it is the U.S. nuclear umbrella that counts. Only the risk this umbrella creates is credible and unassailable for the Soviet Union. Only it can prevent Moscow from imposing its will upon Western Europe—be it by political or military force."

If the U.S. nuclear umbrella did not exist, Moscow would gain "hegemony over Europe which would considerably exceed its domination up to the shores of the Elbe River," Feldmeyer continued. Moscow might thereby effect "a change in the geostrategic situation—everything would militate toward a new quality in Moscow's power."

The Soviets would win a position vis-à-vis the United States "which would be completely different from the current parity, as counted according to missiles and megatons." Moscow's new advantage, he writes, would in fact be a decisive one: "Only then, the Soviet Union would have won the rivalry it has been facing with America since the collapse of the wartime alliance."

A commentator in the Swiss daily *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* declared that Kissinger "ought to know what the European answer would be to a radical reduction of America's commitment to the old continent, in view of past experience: There would be no revival in the desire for joint defense, but rather a flight into 'relaxation of tension,' which is just a nice way of saying *accommodation* to the will of the 'other' power."