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## Investigative Leads

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# The terrorist threat to NATO maneuvers

by Paolo Serri

At 9:45 in the morning Aug. 14, the helicopter of West German Federal Attorney Kurt Rebmann was shot at and hit by a submachinegun burst while descending to its landing place in the yard of the Bundesanwaltschaft (Federal Attorney Office) in Karlsruhe, West Germany. Despite an unexplained attempt by Western German authorities to downplay the incident, the attack on Rebmann's helicopter is the worst threat to anti-terror and anti-espionage operations in Germany in recent years.

The day after the attack, the leading daily *Die Welt*, editorialized that this incident "reminds us of the assassination series of 1977 when [Federal Attorney] Buback, banker [Jürgen] Ponto and the [Industrialists' Organization's Hans-Martin] Schleyer fell victim to brutal criminals after intensive surveillance. The arrests [of RAF terrorists] in recent weeks indicate that a group is again operating in Germany after a long period abroad."

It has not yet been ascertained that the attempt against Rebmann's helicopter came from terrorists, who have consistently held Rebmann as a prime target. But the fact that no terrorist group has yet claimed responsibility does not justify dismissing the question.

Some West German security circles have evaluated the attempt as not only a warning to German authorities, but also as part of a broader "psychological warfare" pattern of operations. This warning must be seen in the context of an escalation of sabotage and terrorist actions against the September NATO maneuvers, which are to be held as usual on German territory, and the growing Soviet threats to West Germany.

There is good reason for this assessment of the attack on Rebmann. There is no question the shooting took place, although the police did not find any shells—something more indicative of an assassin than of usual terrorist operations. Also, *EIR* has learned that several weeks ago there was a very similar incident near the house of investigative Judge Kuhn in Karlsruhe. Kuhn specializes in espionage cases and secondarily in right-wing and neo-Nazi terrorism. During a shift change, the policemen protecting his house clearly heard a submachine gun burst from a nearby wood. As in the Rebmann case, no shells or any other evidence were found.

These reports coincide with indications from several Western intelligence and military sources that Soviet armed-forces leadership have intensified the deployment and acti-

vation of spetsnaz troops, the specially trained elite troops either already in place in Western Europe or ready to be infiltrated into the West for assassinations and sabotage operations prior to a full-scale military attack.

### 'Sabotage as warfare strategy'

These reports coincide with the current escalation of operations by the "peace movement" and other pro-terrorist circles in preparation for the Sept. 17-27 NATO annual maneuvers in West Germany. Early in the morning of Aug. 13, personnel at the U.S. and NATO Erbenheim, Wiesbaden air force base discovered sabotage of the newly installed approach lighting system of the airfield. Several communication cables were also cut. Over \$10,000 in damages were reported. The Erbenheim airbase is one of the operational bases for the upcoming maneuvers: Some 12 A-10 Thunderbolt II close support aircraft, normally stationed at the RAF Bentwood, England, base, are operating from the Wiesbaden base.

Self-proclaimed "anarchists" claimed responsibility for the sabotage in letters written to the Frankfurt and Wiesbaden newspapers. The letters called the action a "small step toward the resistance against the autumn maneuvers." In the same period last year, the Erbenheim base was the object of a similar sabotage.

The week of Aug. 6, a German guard at an American military base in Boeblingen was found dead of gunshot wounds, in a still unexplained incident.

At the end of July, some 1,200 "peaceniks" blocked an American ammunition train in the Bremen area. This kind of action has been advocated by the peace movement, together with more direct sabotage and terrorism, in order to disrupt the maneuvers. The peace movement has planned its operations in a series of public and secret preparatory conferences.

An "action week" has been announced for Sept. 22-29, to end with a 110-kilometer-long "human chain" to be formed around the key strategic area at the Fulda Gap. *Der Spiegel* reported Aug. 13 that "this time the armament opponents have planned warfare strategies and want for the first time to directly confront soldiers and disrupt the maneuvers."

Among the announced operations—unquestionably only part of the terrorism and sabotage planned—are:

- civil disobedience to create obstacles to the movement of troops and material;
- changes of street and bridge signs which might result in serious incidents;
- cementing of holes in bridges and streets built by NATO to be filled with explosives and detonated in case of wartime retreat;
- disturbance and destruction of communications between officers and troops, through sabotaging cables and antennas. This has been threatened by the "Working Group Action Autumn '84—Fulda Gap";
- use of kites and balloons to disturb and sabotage airflights.