

## Report from Bonn by George Gregory

### Another SDI delegation to Washington

*The German defense community is waking up to the fact that it's the only path for survival—but no Easter SDI deal is likely.*

**T**he prospects for the long-postponed birth of an Strategic Defense Initiative agreement between Bonn and Washington by the Easter holidays are not good. No better, in fact, than they were for the agreement promised before Christmas 1985, nor in the weeks following the visit of a West German delegation led by Horst Teltschick in the Fall of 1985. To tell the truth, the prospects for an SDI agreement are as miserable as they became after that famous Bonn National Security Council resolution of Dec. 18, 1985, which sent Economics Minister Martin Bangemann off to Washington to fall on his nose when he tried to treat SDI as a subsumed commercial project embedded in a general "technology cooperation agreement."

Bangemann, it became known at that time, considered the SDI accord an odious business. Its only saving virtue was, that it monopolized the political and strategic dimensions of Bonn's treatment of SDI in the hands of liberal Free Democratic Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher. Free Democrat Economics Minister Bangemann was actually spending most of his time granting new Federal Export Guarantee coverage for upcoming mega-mark deals with the Soviet Union.

Nevertheless, in the first week of March, the negotiating team led by Bonn economics ministry assistant undersecretary Schomerus flew off to Washington for the second time in two weeks. That adds up to five or six big West German delegations, scientific, industrial, military, and foreign policy personalities, visiting Washington

in as many months. Such delegations demand time, patience, good-will, hospitality, openness, respect, and above all, trust of the SDIO.

All that is left over after these demands have been met is petty-mindedness, a lack of a grasp of strategic realities, and impertinence. The Bonn defense ministry knows that the SDIO is getting tired of West German delegations who "never seem to know what they want."

The new delegation led by Schomerus apparently has "new negotiating guidelines." But for any guidelines to be "new" would require a real power shift in Bonn. Foreign Minister Genscher is more committed to modernizing the Soviet economy than he is to stable defense and the effectiveness of the U.S. security guarantee for Western Europe. Washington will have taken note that a West German delegation flew off the same week in the opposite direction, to Moscow, where—one hears—West German Special Ambassador for Disarmament Ruth was told that Moscow will not let East German leader Erich Honecker visit the Federal Republic until the SDI is dropped from Bonn's strategic agenda. That is a point of view Foreign Minister Genscher is known to sympathize with.

Reportedly, Genscher will use his persuasive powers with U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz directly in an effort to produce some kind of SDI agreement (compared here to two liberal mules trying to impregnate each other). Once that power play is consummated, it is difficult to imagine what West German Defense Minister

Wörner might discuss with Caspar Weinberger.

Bonn defense ministry sources freely admit in background discussion, that the guidelines Genscher has worked out for the commercial negotiating team are nonsense.

The Schomerus group was incensed on its first trip to Washington, because the Pentagon resists letting West German firms have the utilization rights to results of research in a U.S. SDI contract. Bonn's foreign ministry would like to be able to "influence" the development of SDI, but does not want to be "involved" or directly "participate" in SDI, which is "purely an American program," as they insist. Bonn's foreign ministry says Bonn does not want to put money into SDI, and that money = "participation," but Bonn's foreign ministry does not want to "participate," whether it costs money or not.

What all of this nonsense ignores, say the defense ministry people, is that the United States already gave away enough technical information "to fill a five-year information gap," which is worth several hundred million, if not billion, German marks. This was a gift made to the delegation last year under Kohl's security adviser Horst Teltschick. This fact is contained in confidential reports to the Bonn cabinet by the Teltschick group. There is speculation in the defense community in Bonn, that Genscher has insisted these reports remain confidential, because that enhances their value as a bargaining chip in his pocket in dealings with the Soviets. It is suggested by those who speculate on such matters, that the Soviets in turn find Genscher's use of those confidential reports in that way even more useful to them than learning the various technical specifications of equipment contained in the reports.