

Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

A united ticket for the conservatives?

Will Strauss walk out of Kohl's coalition and seek a conservative electoral partner outside Bavaria? Maybe he will.

On Jan. 25, 1987, elections for the next national parliament in West Germany will take place. A good portion of voters, between 5% and 12%, have turned their back on Chancellor Helmut-Kohl's party, the CDU (Christian Democrats) since 1983 because of his appeasement of liberalism. More and more voters dislike Kohl's policy of sacrificing one conservative position after the other.

The role of the liberal Free Democrats (FDP) has become disproportionate in the coalition government that was formed after the last elections in March 1983. Consequently, Chancellor Kohl's views have been determined by FDP Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, and the conservative wing of the CDU is considered a nuisance, a source of constant troubles.

In particular, the conservatives are viewed as an obstacle to a continuation of the policy of appeasement toward the Soviets. They are viewed as too pro-American, too much oriented to NATO. They are considered trouble-makers against disarmament, and as fanatical supporters of the American Strategic Defense Initiative. They are, all in all, considered a "relic from the Cold War period."

The liberal wing of the CDU, which works with the FDP and Genscher and is appropriately characterized as "the Genscherites," keeps battling with the "steel-helmet group," as they call the conservative wing.

Many conservatives took revenge by deserting the CDU in all municipal

and state elections after March 1983, causing a 5%-12% drop in CDU votes. The party's liberal leadership should have seen the writing on the wall, but it didn't. The head of a major opinion polling institute explained this paradox to *EIR* in the late summer of 1985: "Obviously, the CDU leadership even welcomes the desertion of the conservatives, because they think that relieves them of many problems. Without the conservatives, they believe things are less complicated."

Indeed: Without the conservatives, liberalized politics could proceed much faster among the Christian Democrats. This assumption became a policy in 1985 and throughout this year. Preparing for the national elections in January 1987, conservatives of the "steel-helmet group" were kicked off CDU slates. In most cases, those who were kicked off were staunch opponents of Foreign Minister Genscher's appeasement policy. Thus, the national president of the German Refugee Association, Herbert Hupka, was sacrificed, and other prominent conservatives such as Hans Graf Huyn and Ludwig Graf Stauffenberg. They were replaced by liberal Christian Democrats. The same happened to Werner Broll, the party's spokesman on domestic security, who has been calling for tighter anti-terrorism laws.

Several other prominent Christian Democrats were or are going to be ousted from their posts. One of the most shocking affairs in this respect was the ouster of Heinrich Lummer,

security affairs official in West Berlin, a staunch conservative who had long been targeted for ouster by leftists and members of the anarchist underground in the city. Peter Lorenz, also from West Berlin, will be ousted from his post as undersecretary in the German Affairs Ministry, because he is known to be a critic of Foreign Minister Genscher's friendly policy towards the East German regime of Erich Honecker.

Many other such examples could be given. The main question now is, how the various conservative voter blocs of the CDU will react in the face of these purges. Many hopes have been set on Franz-Josef Strauss, the chairman of the CSU (Christian Social Union), the independent Bavarian state section of the Christian Democrats. Will he, who has often attacked the Genscherites on key issues such as Libya, the SDI, Berlin, and the sabotage of anti-riot and anti-terror laws, have the courage to present a conservative election alternative to the CDU "Genscherites?"

On Aug. 14, the CSU walked out of the joint program commission with the Christian Democrats. This means that each party may run on a program of its own in the 1987 elections. But will Strauss run outside of the state of Bavaria? One of Strauss's closest advisers, Prof. Guenther Rohrmoser, called on the CSU to walk out of the coalition government itself, should Chancellor Kohl decide to keep Genscher as foreign minister. Rohrmoser urged Strauss: "The CSU must either expand nationally, or seek a partner to agree with outside of Bavaria." This advice has posed the question to many whether Strauss would collaborate with the most powerful political formation among German conservatives, the "Patriots for Germany." Maybe he would.