

Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

A small town in Germany

The government's continuing appeasement strategy won't stop the Russian-run terrorists.

Amid the shock over the cold-blooded assassination of foreign ministry official Gerold von Braunmühl on Oct. 10, people expressed the hope that, finally, the politicians would wake up to the deathly threat posed by terrorism. Braunmühl was said to be one of the six highest-ranking diplomats in the foreign ministry, and he was in charge of a great deal in East-West affairs, as well as NATO and other defense-related questions.

This assassination was a direct attack on the government, equivalent to killing the foreign minister himself. How would Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher respond to this terrorist attack? Would he and his liberal Free Democratic Party stop their obstructionism against efficient anti-terrorist measures?

And—the most sensitive question—would the Bonn government begin to speak out on the Soviet role in terrorism and irregular warfare against the West?

None of this happened. Minister Genscher, in his speech of condolence at the official funeral ceremony for von Braunmühl on Oct. 16, had only this to say: "They [the terrorists] cannot speak for anyone, cannot act on anyone's orders, except for themselves. . . . They cannot rely on any nation in this world to explain their deeds."

Genscher is a liar. The propaganda pamphlets produced by the terrorists explaining their deeds sound exactly like the official hate diatribes of Soviet propaganda against the West.

On Sept. 24, Undersecretary of Defense Peter Kurt Würzbach stated in a parliamentary hearing that the government was in the possession of evidence of the Warsaw Pact's capabilities in irregular warfare.

Würzbach even identified the targets of Warsaw Pact sabotage units: "They have orders to foment uncertainty in a time of increasing tensions, which precede a crisis or a war, by eliminating the central facilities of electricity supply, of telecommunications, of the public sector, depots, and headquarters—but not only against the objects I just listed, but also against leading public figures, representatives of the political and military sphere. . . ."

The targets Würzbach named were the same targets that have been under continuing and escalating attack by "extremists" and "terrorists" in West Germany. Yet, even after the Oct. 10 assassination of von Braunmühl, who was such a "leading representative of the political and military sphere," no one would draw the obvious and necessary conclusion.

The Foreign Ministry keeps pointing to the document which was signed between Western and Eastern delegations (including the Soviet Union) at the Stockholm Conference on European Security in early September. This document announced the "mutual commitment of all the signatories to fight terrorism."

Given the facts of the East bloc's share in international terrorism, the document is worthless paper. It was

signed amid the bloodiest phase of terrorist attacks in France and West Germany to date. Any government basing its policy against terrorism on such a document, will encourage the Warsaw Pact to step up its irregular warfare against the West. The assassination of Gerold von Braunmühl is the first evidence pointing to Moscow's reaction to the "Stockholm document."

Another conclusion has to be drawn from the Oct. 10 murder. This terrorist attack recalls the series of assassinations which hit West Germany in the late 1960s and the first half of the 1970s. In May 1968, Bonn's ambassador to Saigon, Rüdiger von Collenberg, was murdered. In April 1970, Ambassador Count of Sprei was shot dead by communist extremists in Guatemala. And in April 1975, Embassy Councillor Hillegaart and Military Attaché von Mirbach were assassinated by German terrorists, who stormed Bonn's embassy in Stockholm.

The period between 1968 and 1975 were the years when appeasement toward Moscow was installed as the central aspect of West German policy. In 1968, West Germany visibly distanced itself from the United States over the issue of the war in Vietnam, and began official talks with the Warsaw Pact on "common security in Europe."

In 1975, the government signed the final documents of the Helsinki Accords, which officially recognized Moscow's grip over Eastern Europe. Strangely enough, terrorist attacks on West German diplomats stopped exactly then.

The fact that such attacks are being resumed now, means that Moscow wants Bonn to give its signature to new, far-reaching agreements. And so far, the gutless fellows of this small town in Germany seem inclined to do so.