

Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

After the Weizsäcker fiasco

Diplomats and the media are attacked for covering up what Moscow is really doing.

A useful by-product of the Moscow visit of State President Richard von Weizsäcker is that, even for appeasement elements here, the discrepancy between the groveling of the German delegation and the clubs and kicks the Soviets used against them could not but be noticed. Thus, the conservative Bonn daily, *Die Welt*, wrote July 10 that *perestroika* (Russian for "restructuring") may mean a lot of things, but "definitely not freedom and more human rights." The newspaper expressed hope that "a lot of the past euphoria" over Gorbachov may now vanish.

The same day, the liberal *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, used the term "attack" to describe the very rude treatment the Soviets gave the German delegation in Moscow. And the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, a Soviet-leaning daily, stated in its lead editorial July 10, "After Stalin, Gorbachov may prove to be the toughest of all Soviet rulers." His remarks on Germany were a "mixture of warnings and threats," and there was no such thing as "special German presents" to be received at the Kremlin, as Weizsäcker came to realize.

Another extremely sober article appeared on page 1 of *Die Welt* on July 13, stating that the Soviets seem to have given up on Reagan and "are deliberating whether to wait for the next U.S. President" to be elected. No INF agreement, therefore?

The same day, a lead editorial in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* harshly attacked "The Big Silence" one finds when trying to trace down as-

pects of very real Soviet policy actions that are not talked about among Bonn's appeasement circles, "because they don't fit in the official picture of the new Soviet policy."

The specific affair referred to in this article occurred in mid-June, when Soviet ambassadors marched into the foreign ministries of all European NATO member-countries, to convey Gorbachov's ultimatum not to cooperate in the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative, nor to initiate any other missile defense project. Moreover, as the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* revealed, the government here gave orders to keep the affair secret: "The foreign ministry decreed that, for the time being, there should be silence on the incident."

Since, in the foreign ministry's universe, nothing can be that is not desired, namely, that under Gorbachov, too, the Soviet Union intervenes on arbitrary impulse with the same bullying impertinence as ever, the order was given: "Let us give no publicity to this Soviet outrage."

The affair was kept under total secrecy, through the cooperation of the media with the foreign ministry. The media includes the influential dailies quoted here, naturally.

But the events around the Weizsäcker visit caused fissures in this "pact of silence." "The case documents," the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* came to realize, "that there is no institution of control for things occurring under the surface of German-Soviet relations." Instead, there is a "cartel of silence and appeasement that shapes

opinion on the Soviet Union here and elsewhere." It added that it is an "open secret in Moscow that numerous correspondents, especially those from West Germany, are bashed by their home editors, because they report too critically; what is requested, instead, is 'more positive coverage' of Gorbachov's reform policy."

Well said, and it is all true. For years and years, this magazine, *EIR*, has been largely the only one to call the Kremlin leaders by their real name, and to also attack the "cartel of silence and appeasement" that has come under long-overdue attack in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.

A related change is visible inside the government. First, Chancellor Helmut Kohl's national security adviser, Horst Teltschik, stirred up the media, the appeasers, and the Soviets, when he reported some very basic and not even sensational facts on the Red Army's armaments policy. Teltschik said on July 8 that in spite of recent Soviet arms control proposals, the Red Army was increasing its nuclear missile forces, improving capabilities for precision targeting, building a new nuclear submarine every 37 days, and increasing its war-fighting capabilities in all weapons categories.

Teltschik advised Western caution on Gorbachov's *perestroika* policy, and specifically recommended that the debate on SDI be resumed in West Germany. Gorbachov, he observed, was investing at least \$1 billion a year into laser-weapon technologies.

Teltschik's charges were repeated by Defense Minister Manfred Wörner on July 13, in a keynote address to a security policy seminar in Bonn. Had there not been this unsavory "cartel of silence," all of these public remarks could have been made three or four weeks earlier—the day the Soviets delivered their outrageous ultimatum.