

Was Herrhausen killed by western intelligence?

by Jeffrey Steinberg

On the eve of the Group of Seven heads of state summit in Munich, sensational new revelations were aired on German television suggesting that Alfred Herrhausen, Germany's most important banker, may have been assassinated by western intelligence agencies. On July 1, ARD television aired a 45-minute, prime-time documentary on its "In Focus" program debunking the official police theory that Herrhausen, the Deutsche Bank chairman who was assassinated on Nov. 30, 1989, was the victim of a "third generation" Red Army Faction (RAF) hit squad.

The broadcast, while making no attempt to identify the actual killers of Herrhausen or the motives behind his murder, reinforced charges recently aired in the pages of *EIR* that Herrhausen was assassinated on orders of Anglo-American financial circles intent on blocking Germany from launching an independent economic development initiative into the former communist states of eastern Europe. Herrhausen, a close personal friend and leading economic adviser to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, was an architect of that policy initiative, which mirrored critical features of the plan for a European "Productive Triangle" for development spelled out by Lyndon LaRouche at a Berlin press conference in October 1988. In the aftermath of Herrhausen's murder and the April 1991 assassination of Detlev Karsten Rohwedder, the head of the German Treuhand (the agency in charge of the economic integration of eastern Germany), that policy initiative was all but abandoned by the Kohl government.

On April 3, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, citing comments by U.S. Pentagon official Col. Fletcher Prouty (ret.) and referencing the text of a speech that Herrhausen was scheduled to deliver in New York City one week after his assassination, charged in an *EIR* story that Herrhausen was murdered because of his development policy initiative for eastern Europe.

She called for the German government to reopen the probe of the Herrhausen murder, which in its strategic significance, Prouty said, "resembled the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963."

Five areas of evidence debunked

The ARD documentary systematically debunked the idea that the Herrhausen murder was the work of the RAF "third generation." It focused on five areas of evidence demonstrating that the existence of a "third generation" RAF is pure myth:

1) **The murder scene.** In all of the major Baader-Meinhof gang and RAF terrorist attacks prior to the mid-1980s, police always were able to discover forensic evidence linking known RAF terrorists to the incidents. Either fingerprints or other evidence always was obtained, leaving no doubt as to the RAF involvement. In the Herrhausen case, and in all the terrorist assaults claimed by the RAF "third generation," police were never able to establish any forensic proof that members of the group were on the scene. In fact, Christian Seidler, one of the few known members of the purported "third generation," disappeared from sight in the mid-1980s and has never been seen since. Seidler was one of the alleged assassins of Herrhausen.

2) **Links to the first and second generation RAF.** According to the official theory, old-time members of the RAF now in maximum security prisons in Germany ordered the Herrhausen killing and gave detailed instructions to the "third generation" RAF members who then allegedly carried out the sophisticated bomb attack. Prison officials interviewed on the ARD broadcast provided detailed explanations why such a command-and-control structure would have been impossible, given the conditions under which the RAF terrorists are held. The "command" over the killer squad, therefore,

had to have come from elsewhere.

3) **The RAF communiqué.** The RAF communiqué which took credit for the Herrhausen assassination was, according to terrorism experts familiar with the group, an artful forgery which drew upon publicly available communiqués from earlier RAF writings. In most of the major terrorist acts carried out by the first two generations of the group, the same typewriter and logo had been used. The typeface on the Herrhausen communiqué bore no resemblance to the earlier documents, and otherwise contained no formulations that would have demonstrated links to the RAF.

4) **The bomb.** According to Robert Schell, a bomb expert who was interviewed on the ARD broadcast, the laser detonator that police found at the scene of the Herrhausen assassination, and which was cited as evidence of RAF involvement, could not have been used to activate the bomb. By reviewing the pyrotechnics of the device, Schell, backed up by other experts, demonstrated that the bomb, which was packed inside a bicycle sitting on the side of the road, had to have been detonated by a remote control mechanism which was activated the instant that Herrhausen's armored limousine passed the spot.

Perjured witness comes forward

5) **Eyewitness testimony.** The most critical documentation aired on the ARD show centered upon the one living witness who allegedly provided police with details of the existence of the "third generation" RAF and their role in the Herrhausen murder. That witness, Siegfried Nonne, a longstanding but dubious police informant for state and federal agencies in Hesse, recanted on the ARD show his previous statements and detailed how police had bribed him and later threatened him with murder if he did not cooperate with the "RAF killed Herrhausen" hoax.

According to Nonne's statements, he was approached by officials of the Hesse state police and state prosecutor's office in March 1990. In the course of three meetings, he was told that authorities had badly mishandled the probe of the Herrhausen killing and needed him to make false statements that would help conceal some of those blunders. At an initial meeting with his police controller and a senior official of Landesverfassungsschutz (LfV), the state's investigative agency, Nonne claimed he was offered 100,000 deutsche-marks to say that he had safehoused the RAF killer squad in the weeks leading up to the Herrhausen murder.

Nonne told the ARD interviewer that he rejected the initial offer, but was told at a second meeting that he would be sent to a mental hospital "which he would never leave alive" if he did not cooperate. Nonne, who had a history of drug and alcohol abuse, was ultimately sent to a psychiatric hospital at Wiesloch. At the third meeting, in late March or early April 1990, Nonne agreed to cooperate with police and was put into a witness protection program.

According to the ARD report, Nonne named a hotel near

the city of Giessen where the final meeting took place, and ARD investigators were able to obtain registration records showing that at least one official of the LfV was at the hotel on the date in question.

In November 1991, stories began to appear in the German press suggesting that police were on the verge of making a breakthrough in the Herrhausen case. Then, on Jan. 21, 1992, newly appointed federal prosecutor von Stahl announced that his office, in collaboration with state prosecutor Gunther in Hesse, had discovered "new leads" in the case. At that point, Nonne was put forth as the "state's witness" in the Herrhausen murder, claiming that he had provided safehousing to four members of the "third generation" RAF during the eight-week period leading up to the November 1989 murder.

Nonne claimed that the four RAF members were: Christian Seidler, Andrea Klump, and two men only identified by the code-names "Peter" and "Stephan." Police claimed that a search of the basement of Nonne's building had turned up traces of explosives that were used in the Herrhausen bombing.

In the ARD interview, Nonne stated that all the evidence about the RAF safehousing had been manufactured. ARD investigators interviewing neighbors of Nonne were told that it would have been impossible for four people to have been safehoused in the informant's flat during the two months in question. As further proof, Nonne presented documents showing that his half-brother had been living with him through May 1990. The half-brother died in 1990.

Bundesverfassungsschutz (BfV, federal investigative police) chief Meier also appeared on the ARD broadcast. After admitting that there was no hard evidence demonstrating that a "third generation" RAF ever existed, Meier offered his evaluation that the Herrhausen assassination had been carried out by "professionals using the methods of a secret service." However, no forensic evidence and no evidence obtained from the East German archives suggested that the assassination was the work of the Stasi, the East German secret police agency that played a pivotal role in earlier RAF terrorism.

Who, then, had the capacity to assassinate Herrhausen and create the false trail leading to an apparently non-existent "third generation RAF"?

EIR has reviewed the political circumstances leading up to Herrhausen's murder and assembled a picture of who might have had the motive and capability to exterminate this pivotal figure.

Debt and development

Herrhausen was not only a close friend and economic adviser to Kohl. He was one of the most progressive bankers in the world. According to writer Michael Morrissey, a professor at the University of Kassel who has criticized the official German view that the RAF killed this banker, Herrhausen was an aggressive advocate of a partial debt moratori-

um for the nations of the Third World and the emerging new democracies of eastern Europe.

On June 6, 1989, he detailed his proposal for a partial debt cancellation in the German financial paper *Handelsblatt*. On Sept. 25, 1989, just two months before his murder, Herrhausen laid out his views at the annual meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Washington: "Mr. Reed, speaking for Citibank, has said they are a 'new money' bank. I can tell you that the Deutsche Bank is a 'debt reduction' bank."

According to Prouty, Morrissey, and others, at the time of his murder, Herrhausen was actively working to establish an eastern European development bank that would funnel earmarked loans and loan guarantees into carefully selected infrastructure projects in Poland and other eastern European countries, including East Germany.

Perhaps more important, just before his assassination, Herrhausen engineered a move against the City of London through Deutsche Bank's buyup of Morgan Grenfell for DM 2.7 billion (\$1.7 billion). *Der Spiegel* labeled the takeover "the most important strategic decision of the Deutsche Bank since World War II."

According to Prouty, who capped a career in the intelligence field with a brief stint as an investment banker, the Deutsche Bank takeover of Morgan Grenfell "shook the hell out of the City. This action hurt the London banks more than anything else the Germans did since the end of the [Second World] War. Herrhausen's idea was to use the clout of Morgan Grenfell to boost his own capabilities."

In a speech that he was scheduled to deliver at the annual meeting of the American Council on Germany in New York City on Dec. 4, 1989, Herrhausen had planned to spell out in detail the direction in which he intended to steer Deutsche Bank.

Although the *New York Times* obtained a copy of the text of that speech and published excerpts, they avoided those parts that dealt with his vision for integrating eastern Europe. Herrhausen's main topic was Europe's response to the "peaceful revolution from below" then sweeping the former communist states of eastern Europe and spreading into the Soviet Union. He warned that "freedom is a comprehensive concept and cannot be confined to just one sector of national life." It must include "a standard of living hitherto refused."

Returning to his theme at the IMF meeting in Washington, Herrhausen emphasized that the first step toward helping in the economic reconstruction of the East was to reduce the debt. Taking up the case of Poland, he stated, "for domestic reform to have at least a chance of success, the debt problem needs to be solved promptly. In the past, the banks have agreed to regular reschedulings, but now the onus is on government lenders assembled in the Paris Club to come up with a helpful contribution. They account for roughly two-thirds of the country's external debt. If there is to be a permanent solution, this will require enlarging the strategies hitherto

adopted to include a reduction of debt or debt service."

Echoing a proposal first presented by LaRouche in Berlin a year earlier, Herrhausen called for the creation of a development bank based in Warsaw, Poland: "I proposed, on the occasion of this year's annual meeting of the World Bank and the IMF in Washington, the establishment of a development bank on the spot, that is in Warsaw. Its job would be to bundle incoming aid and deploy it in accordance with strict efficiency criteria. I could well imagine that such an institution might be set up along the lines of the German Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, the Reconstruction Loan Corp., whose origin goes back to the Marshall Plan."

Herrhausen was moving aggressively to craft a western European policy response to the rapidly unfolding events in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. That policy contrasted sharply with the views then pouring out of London and Wall Street. Just weeks before the Herrhausen murder, leading British spokesmen like Conor Cruise O'Brien and Transportation Minister Nicholas Ridley had warned in near-psychotic terms about the specter of a "Fourth Reich" emerging under the guise of German economic largesse toward the East. Ridley was bounced out of the Thatcher cabinet for his ill-chosen words, but everyone in London knew that Ridley was speaking for Margaret Thatcher and the British Crown.

Did the Herrhausen initiatives "shake the hell" out of London sufficiently to warrant his execution on orders from London and New York bankers?

Prouty, who has spent years delving into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and other world leaders—Prouty was the inspiration for the "Mr. X" character in Oliver Stone's recent movie "JFK" and advised Stone on the film—believes that the London and New York bankers, working through the international assassination bureau, may have killed Herrhausen. "The business of murdering world leaders is a big business. It has been going on for years and it still continues," he recently told *EIR*. "People like Alfred Herrhausen are killed for big reasons. The people that order such executions, at the highest levels, feel sanctified and justified when they order such an act. It's always based on strong motives. Herrhausen said in blunt terms what logically had to be done. He was not under the thumb of the City."

Beyond Herrhausen

After the ARD revelations, the German daily *Mainzer Allgemeine Zeitung* on July 3 raised a question. If the "third generation RAF" is a myth, concocted to conceal the authorship of the Herrhausen assassination, what about the other killings claimed by the same phantom RAF? They cited: MTU chairman Ernst Zimmermann (February 1985), Siemens director Karl-Heinz Bekurts (July 1986), German Foreign Ministry official Gerold von Braunmühl (October 1986), and Treuhand chairman Rohwedder (April 1991).

As Helga Zepp-LaRouche wrote in *EIR* on April 3, it is time to reopen the files on these assassinations.