

'Strategy of tension' hits Germany, as arson attack provokes mass riots

by Rainer Apel

The nighttime arson attack against a building in Solingen, in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) on May 29, killing two Turkish women and three girls, and the ensuing wild rioting, mark a new phase in the destabilization of Germany—to the ultimate benefit of enemies inside and outside the country.

As in the deadly arson attack in Moelln in November 1992, the Solingen incident is said to originate from the right-wing, militant milieu of the German political underground. This is what experts say, who also never tire of alleging that right-wing extremism overlaps with the "Skin milieu" and is therefore far more amorphous than its left-wing counterpart and harder to contain. This official reading is adding to the political confusion and providing a key element of the "strategy of tension" that has already worked to destabilize Italy.

Paralysis from the government

"All it takes is two liters of gasoline, and all of German policy is paralyzed," said a senior analyst in Germany, commenting on the absence of any policy initiatives to deal with the crisis on the part of the Kohl government. The fact that politicians and the elite have chosen to "opt out" of the need to respond to the dangerous strategic situation—the war in Bosnia most of all—and hide behind meaningless statements about "shock" and "terror," documents that so far, the "strategy of tension" has worked well against Germany.

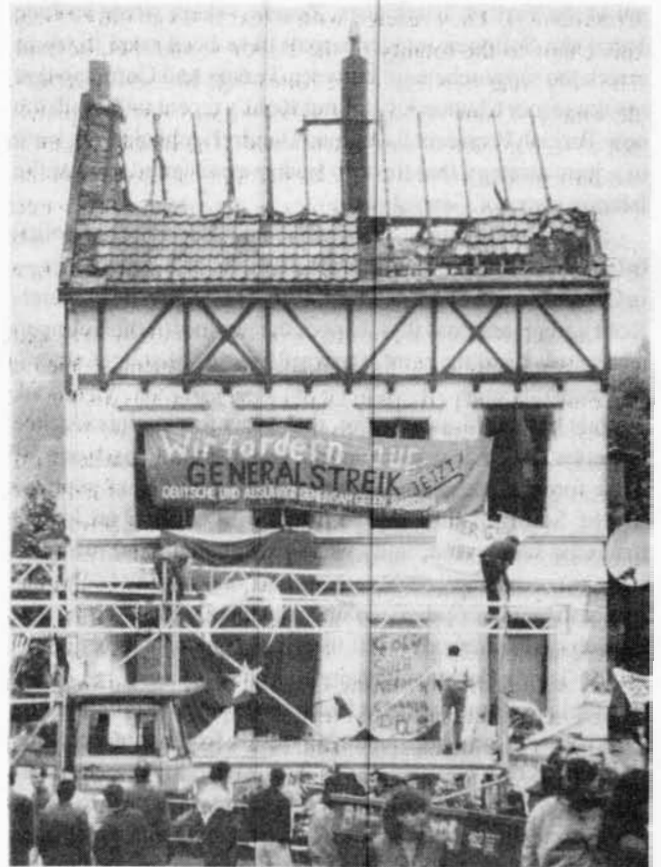
The underground political groups that are feeding the destabilization, especially the most militant currents among them, are not amorphous: There is growing, documented evidence of a national infrastructure as well as significant international connections, including the U.S. Ku Klux Klan. Klansmen have been quite successful in building control structures in German right-wing terrorist circles that are more of a "derivative" kind, rather than the direct control that has been the trademark of left-wing terrorism.

"Left" and "right" are two sides of the same coin, as was proven in Solingen in the days after the arson. First, leftist Turks and Germans worked together to block streets and highways in the Solingen region, blaming alleged "state-backed xenophobia" for the incident.

This mass action by leftist Turks drew rightist Turks onto the scene, sniffing a chance of exploiting the momentary lawlessness to "settle old accounts" with the radical left. The

arrival of Turkish groups like the infamous Grey Wolves was welcomed by the leftists as a chance for settling their own accounts with their rivals. The intervention of police and special anti-riot forces was seen as an obstacle by rioting Germans and Turks alike. They all turned against the police and firefighters. For two nights after the arson, regular police and special police units were unable to restore order.

Even NRW State Minister of Internal Security Herbert Schnoor, an ultraliberal Social Democrat who usually would blame "society" for violence, felt compelled to charge that the Solingen riots had been staged by "provocateurs." But if



Scene of the terrorist attack in Solingen that killed five Turks. The banner, hoisted by an alliance of leftist Turks and Germans, reads: "We demand a general strike now—Germans and Foreigners Together Against Racism."

there were provocateurs, whom did they work for? A key role was played, for example, by the leftist Turkish terrorists of Devrimci Sol (DevSol), and the communist TKP-ML.

In July 1991, the 4,000-member DevSol had set off alarm bells when it called on other left-wing organizations to jointly "attack German-Turkish relations" and to cooperate in the underground creation of joint "autonomous self-defense structures." As recently as May 24, five days before the Solingen tragedy, German police searched DevSol facilities in several cities around Solingen, finding that the group had a well-built underground structure. As to the TKP-ML group, its watchword is: "Death to German imperialism."

Ostensibly, the violent alliance of leftist Turks and Germans in the Solingen rioting was the first joint exercise of the type that DevSol had called for in 1991. Their mutual target is the "Fourth Reich" which the united Germany allegedly represents. This resonates with international anti-German propaganda, suggesting that the provocateurs' stringpullers should be sought among enemies of the united Germany in the West and in the East.

Geopolitical aims exposed

Ironically, it was not a German newspaper, but the journal of the Turkish Islamicists, *Zaman*, which wrote on June 1 that the Solingen incidents may have been used to try to wreck the rapprochement between Turkey and Germany that resulted from Chancellor Helmut Kohl's recent talks with the new Turkish President Suleyman Demirel, especially in view of a joint strategy that the two leaders envisioned toward the Islamic states of Central Asia.

Zaman wrote that vital strategic and economic geopolitical interests—American, French, British, and Israeli ones—in Central Asia and the Mideast were affected by the Demirel-Kohl agreement, and that, hence, the authors of the Solingen arson attack and the riots afterward have to be sought among the geopoliticians.

It is known, *Zaman* wrote, that many foreign intelligence agencies operate in Germany's underground, and one of these foreign agents may have prompted neo-Nazi youth to set the Solingen fire. Another article by *Zaman* on June 8 made the same point, and even *Sabah*, usually not pro-German in its coverage, on June 9 warned Turks living in Germany not to launch counter-violence against German skinheads, hinting that somebody used these arson attacks to set a trap to ruin Turko-German relations.

Turkish Prime Minister Erdal Inonu on May 31 called on Turkish protesters in Germany to refrain from violence. "The purpose of this act [the arson] is to create a separation between the Turkish and German communities and to force Turks to leave there," he told Turkish Radio and Television (TRT). "We need to behave carefully, with responsibility. We must fulfill this hard duty by showing reactions which express our grief within civilized limits, and by continuing to ask for the necessary measures."

Swiss voters approve modernizing Air Force

by Alexander Hartmann

On June 6, Swiss voters rejected two pacifist initiatives that would have severely crippled the ability of the Swiss Air Force and Army to modernize their equipment. With 55% of the eligible voters voting, an initiative against buying new fighter planes was defeated with 57% opposed, and 55% objected to proposed legislation that would have prevented the allocation of new land for the Army. This is a larger margin than generally expected; several months ago, when petitioners gathered 200,000 signatures in only 12 days, many expected both initiatives to pass without trouble. About 30,000—mostly teenagers—attended an open-air rock festival organized in support of the initiatives. Serbian atrocities against defenseless Bosnian civilians were one of the factors tilting the balance against the initiatives.

The legislation proposed would have a) ruled out any decision on the purchase of new fighter planes of any kind before the year 2000, thus preventing the Air Force from getting new planes before about 2005; b) nullified the decision of both Parliament and government to purchase 34 McDonnell Douglas F/A-18 fighter planes worth \$2.5 billion; c) prevented the allocation of new land for military purposes and ordered the dismantling of a barrack built recently near St. Gallen; and d) put any construction on military premises (now governed by federal law) under the authority of the cantons.

Pro-military groups, among them reservist associations, rifle clubs, and all conservative parties, mobilized against the legislation and rallied more than 30,000 citizens in front of the Swiss Parliament in Bern, with banners reading: "Liberty Has Its Price," and "For Switzerland with an Army!" They pointed to the fact that, while the present Mirage fighter planes are already outdated now, by 2005, they will be about 50 years old, which would render them completely useless. As one military observer noted, "We will then be ready to take on Liechtenstein," which has about 25,000 inhabitants.

The initiative preventing the allocation of new land for military purposes would make it impossible to adapt the Swiss Army's strategy to new challenges, while changing the legal status of projects for the construction of military infrastructure would make it much more difficult, if not impossible, to adapt military buildings to new weapon technologies—for example, training soldiers on simulators.