

Ostrovsky reports that "Ran H." tried to convince Barschel, who had earlier that year run afoul of top-secret arms deals involving West German and Israeli foreign intelligence with Iran, became infuriated over them and tried to block access for the arms-dealers to the ports of Schleswig-Holstein. At the meeting in Barschel's hotel room on Oct. 10, Barschel told the Mossad agent he would not change his mind, but, rather make the entire scandal public. This, according to Ostrovsky, was Barschel's death sentence: He was killed by a combination of spiked wine, sleeping pills pumped into his stomach, and a fever-inducing drug inserted into his rectum, following which the agents placed his body into ice cold bathwater in the hotel room.

One might believe that Barschel was assassinated and still discard Ostrovsky's story as not fully trustworthy, because he leaves out all aspects of East German foreign intelligence, which has its own accounts of Barschel's numerous trips to the former East bloc, and because Ostrovsky omits the role of Oliver North and that side of the East-West arms deals in the early 1980s, in collaboration with the East Germans and Israelis (and others, like the British).

Toxicologist speaks out

Another spectacular development early in October 1994 provides definitive evidence that Barschel was assassinated: a recent, unpublished forensic medical investigation carried out by Prof. Hans Brandenberger, of Zurich, Switzerland. Brandenberger, vice chairman of the International Association of Forensic Toxicologists, came to the conclusion that Barschel could not possibly have taken the lethal drug himself because, by the time the lethal doses were administered, he was already in a deep coma. This seems to corroborate hypotheses in the immediate aftermath of finding Barschel's corpse: Certain perforations that were discovered in the outer lining of Barschel's stomach were typical of effects created when tubes are artificially inserted in somebody's stomach. Moreover, no remains of medication were detected in his salivary tissues and his esophagus, which would have been the case had he orally ingested the drug.

Brandenberger's report compelled two senior members of the German Christian Democratic party's parliamentary group in Bonn, Horst Eylmann and Josef Hollerith, to call for Barschel's remains to be exhumed, in order to conduct a more thorough forensic medical investigation. To do so, and find evidence of what caused his death, would still be possible: Traces of lethal substances can be found even after decades after an individual has died.

Waiting for the full text of Brandenberger's report to be made public, and noticing a certain nervousness emerging in the German political establishment, which can no longer maintain its "it was suicide, nothing else" line, this author and others are eager to learn more about this dark affair in the coming weeks. The true scandal has only just begun to come to the surface.

China's nuclear test: Empire smiles back

by Ramtanu Maitra and Susan Maitra

The Oct. 7 underground nuclear test by China, carried out in the desolate Lop Nor region, has posed a dilemma for China-watchers in Asia, and especially for those who have been promoting a changed image of China based on the liberalization and globalization of its economy. Although the latest test, the 41st by China and the third of its kind in one full calendar year, is part of China's continuing effort to upgrade its nuclear arsenal—Cold War or no Cold War—its timing would appear paradoxical.

The test explosion, scheduled months before, occurred only three days after Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen signed agreements in Washington with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher on missile proliferation and cooperation on weapons-grade fissile materials cut-off. Both these were analyzed by some commentators as a sign of Beijing's increasing willingness to accept Washington's policy doctrine on nuclear and missile issues. The test explosion toppled that appellation. The Beijing leadership did not abandon its test plan even though China's foreign minister was in the process of conveying a different image in Washington.

For its part, the Chinese official news daily *Xinhua* reported the explosion in a most matter-of-fact way. But in the rest of Asia, a few were rudely awakened. With the clock for acquisition of Hongkong ticking away, China's shadow is looming larger over the so-called economically fastest-growing area in the world.

New Delhi, by contrast, reacted like a bemused spectator. In 1962, India was led into a nicely laid trap by the Mao-Zhou combine, through some quickly maneuvered military forays along the undelineated Himalayan borders, with the ostensible purpose of exploding the myth of India's growing stature as a non-aligned nation as well as to reveal the pathetic state of the Indian Army, brought about by Nehru and his defense minister, Krishna Menon. Since then, Indian cynicism about Beijing leaders' "good will" has kept it in good stead. It is understood by most Indian policymakers that Beijing never gives away its winning cards for something non-tangible and, instead, will use them to extract concessions, in the economic, political, or military sphere. The Oct. 7 test is looked at in that light in India.

Method in confusion

During the second session on disarmament in 1992 at the United Nations, China had said it would consider joining the

disarmament process when the arsenals of the two major powers—the United States and Russia—come down to half. But China has made no move whatsoever to give up its tactical nuclear weapons, although the two big powers have done so. China is determined to modernize its nuclear weapons and, according to one well-informed source, efforts are concentrated on upgrading its missile guidance systems.

China has also noticed the recent shift in Washington's nuclear doctrine. The Clinton administration recently accepted the Pentagon's proposal of *not* subscribing to the "no-first-use" doctrine, also retaining the option of retaliating with nuclear weapons as a last resort even if faced with a non-nuclear threat from a non-nuclear state. The Russians have also abandoned the Brezhnev policy of "no-first-use" as a stated policy. China, on the other hand, has a stated "no-first-use" policy, and it has signed an agreement with Russia to that effect, in addition to their agreeing not to target nuclear weapons at each other.

These shifts in nuclear doctrine by the two major nuclear-armed states have made it evident to the Beijing leadership that START or no START, both major nuclear weapon states are keen to keep their nuclear weapons superiority, and it is, therefore, justified for China to modernize its nuclear arsenal. China considers the military arm to be as strong as its economic arm, and that considering the world political situation and the economic mess that the United States is in, China's extension of military might will go mostly uncontested.

Other fallout

The Chinese decision to derail the arrangements that the two major nuclear weapons states were making is not entirely disliked in India. Since the Chinese nuclear arsenal has more short-range and medium-range missiles, its nuclear might actually poses a danger to the region. The Indian argument against the nuclear non-proliferation doctrinaires is that India needs to keep its nuclear option open, because of the nuclear threat emanating from China in particular. Pakistan is considered a secondary threat, but since Washington has considerable control over Islamabad, and little over Beijing, the United States has always liked to insist that the nuclear problem is a South Asia problem, and China is not the issue.

Since the latest Chinese underground test, Washington may choose to accept New Delhi's argument. Under the circumstances, Washington's efforts to pressure India and Pakistan to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) will be easier to counter.

Washington's new nuclear doctrine is an eye-opener to the non-nuclear weapon states. The United States has *made it clear that it would not hesitate to strike back with nuclear weapons against a nation which has been kept out of the nuclear weapons arsenal through the imposition of the NPT.* China, for one, has made clear that it would not allow such a dangerous condition to prevail. In reality, as long as Washington and other nuclear-armed states hold on to nuclear



Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen in Washington on Oct. 4: The Beijing leadership carried out its nuclear test three days later.

deterrence as a valid defense doctrine, nuclear proliferation will be encouraged.

The test carried out by the Chinese may affect U.S. plans to extend the NPT indefinitely and unconditionally in 1995. With less than 100 days left before the last preparatory committee meeting for the extension of the NPT is held, the signatories among developing nations are unlikely to ignore the implications of the Chinese test and allow the nuclear superiority of the nuclear weapon states to continue indefinitely. Rumbles were already heard at the last preparatory meeting.

Also up for grabs is the comprehensive test ban treaty. Since the major nuclear-weapon states have advanced the technological aspect of their nuclear weapons, they may be ready to "generously" opt for the treaty to ban future tests. China has sent the message that the dismantling of nuclear weapons, non-proliferation, and the comprehensive test ban treaty should be dealt with as one package. Unless the nuclear doctrine is abandoned, both non-proliferation and a comprehensive test ban treaty are useless, because they will be violated by the nuclear weapon states themselves, as before.

In the coming NPT extension conference, India will exploit the new fissures caused by the Oct. 7 underground test. It will be interesting to see what a non-aligned nation and signatory of the NPT, such as Indonesia, will do.