

East and West fingerpointing as Barschel case reopens

by Edward Spannaus

On both sides of the Atlantic, and on both sides of the formerly divided Germany, intense nervousness is appearing as new revelations surface concerning the death of German official Uwe Barschel in 1987. At the time of his death, Barschel was reportedly involved with a collection of arms dealers involving both the Communist bloc and western intelligence agencies. Now that the case (originally ruled a "suicide") has been officially reopened by a court in Germany's northernmost state, Schleswig-Holstein, accusations are flying between officials of the former East and West Germany, accompanied by suggestions that Barschel was murdered either by the CIA or by the former East German secret police, the Stasi.

In fact, Barschel was somehow enmeshed in a high-level joint *East-West* weapons network, which involved not only East and West Germany (particularly Rostock and Kiel), but also Sweden, Britain, the United States, Israel, and Iran. On the East German side, Barschel was known to have been meeting with Alexander Schalck-Golodkowski, the Stasi officer who was East Germany's deputy foreign trade minister. Schalck-Golodkowski controlled the trading company IMES, which had come under scrutiny when documents were seized in a September 1985 raid at the offices of Swedish businessman Karl-Erik Schmitz in Malmö, across the Baltic from Rostock, at the southern tip of Sweden.

The Malmö raid was part of a crackdown by Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme on illegal arms dealing running from Sweden into Iran, among other locations. Palme's actions against this arms network were unquestionably a factor contributing to his assassination on Feb. 28, 1986. And that assassination is undoubtedly closely related to the murder of Barschel some 18 months later.

The Stasi files

Shortly after Palme was eliminated, a diversionary operation was launched by Department X (Ten) of the Stasi to finger then-U.S. presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche as the person who was allegedly behind the assassination. Not coincidentally, Department X—which was responsible for political dirty tricks as well as disinformation—is also reported to have targeted Uwe Barschel, and may have carried out similar diversionary actions in that case.

Since the official reopening of the Barschel case on Dec. 21 by officials in Lübeck, Schleswig-Holstein (the state which Barschel once headed as governor), the issue of the Stasi files has become exceedingly prominent. Some of the files dealing with the mid-1980s period cannot be located; some people are suggesting that U.S. agencies may have come into possession of them.

While many are pointing fingers at the Stasi and the East German secret services, a onetime close aide to former East German foreign intelligence (HVA) head Markus Wolf has said that the West should open up its own files, rather than trying to blame the East. These comments came from Peter Feuchtenberger, who worked for the HVA on dirty tricks and disinformation, in an interview with the German *Focus* weekly.

Feuchtenberger, whose name has been mentioned in various German news media reports as being the mysterious "Roloff" whom Barschel was to meet in Geneva on Oct. 10, 1987, told *Focus*: "What is all this nonsense about the Stasi killing Barschel? The western agencies should just put everything [they have] on the table."

The national daily *Die Welt* suggested in an early January editorial that it could not be ruled out that Barschel had become an obstacle for more than one intelligence agency. The *Die Welt* editorial likened the mysteries in the Barschel case, to those that surround the John F. Kennedy assassination, and commented that indeed, Uwe Barschel might have been a target of the "Stasi, KGB, Mossad, CIA, and others," such as arms dealers who had a vested interest in keeping Schleswig-Holstein as an illegal arms hub. Barschel might therefore be called a "victim of international intelligence agencies," *Die Welt* concluded.

The American angle

One of the groupings which has a lot to lose if the Barschel case is thoroughly pursued, is the "secret government" apparatus run by Vice President George Bush in the early and mid-1980s. The "Enterprise" run by Oliver North, Richard Secord, and former CIA agent Tom Clines under Bush's supervision had regular dealings with Schalck-Golodkowski's IMES trading company. A shipload of East bloc arms found on board the ship *Pia Vesta* in Central America

in 1986 had been picked up in Rostock; the ship was chartered by documented agents of the North-Secord-Clines arms network. IMES was also known to have worked closely with several CIA covert airlines in the early 1980s.

One of the more bizarre aspects of the Barschel case is the recent publication in the German press of a "CIA telegram" purportedly involving Barschel. A number of German papers, and the *New York Times*, have reported that the Stasi had intercepted a cable from a CIA officer in Switzerland which reports on an Oct. 10, 1987 meeting between Barschel and Israeli and Iranian arms dealers in Geneva. (The next day, Barschel was found dead in a bathtub in a Geneva hotel.)

From the wording of the Stasi-intercepted cable, it appears to be from U.S. military intelligence rather than the CIA. It is addressed from the Military Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Bern, to "ITAC CO/JOINT STAFF"—an apparent reference to a U.S. Army intelligence unit known as the Intelligence Threat and Analysis Center. "Joint Staff" is the common designation for the staff component of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS).

Both Army intelligence, and sections of the JCS staff, were in fact deeply involved in covert intelligence operations in the early 1980s; many operations attributed to the "CIA" were in reality run by military intelligence and military special operations units. The North-Secord operation, run out of the National Security Council staff (actually a White House staff under George Bush), routinely utilized the JCS special operations unit. Indeed, both for legal and political reasons, the Bush-directed secret government machinery was set up so as to *bypass* the CIA: CIA director William Casey deliberately used these channels to circumvent more cautious CIA career officers.

Behind the 'CIA telegram'

Efforts by *EIR* to determine the authenticity of the "CIA telegram" produced some fascinating responses.

The CIA's Public Affairs Office unequivocally denied that the cable was theirs. "This is not a CIA cable," a CIA spokesman told *EIR* on Dec. 30, after reviewing a fax of the reproduction of the cable as produced in the *Berliner Zeitung*. The spokesman said that the CIA had received a number of calls about the cable, and he half-jokingly inquired whether the reporter was going to ask "if the CIA killed Barschel."

The Department of Defense (DOD), on the other hand, has refused to either confirm or deny the cable's authenticity. This attitude certainly implies that the cable—or some variant thereof—did in fact originate with U.S. military intelligence agencies.

A copy of the cable had been faxed to the DOD's Public Information office on Dec. 29. On Dec. 30, a DOD spokesman said he could not comment until someone from the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) had examined it. On Jan. 3, after consulting with the DIA, the spokesman told *EIR* only

that some of the acronyms used in the cable were familiar, but that he could not say anything more. The only acronyms he would confirm were "CONUS" (Continental United States), the "date-time" line, and the "JOINT STAFF" in the address line.

Asked about the authenticity of the cable, the spokesman stated that since he was looking at a fax of a xerox of a newspaper article of a cable that was seven years old, "I don't know whether it's possible to determine if it's authentic or not," adding, "There's no way it could be proven or disproven."

When the reporter remarked that on other occasions, he had been able to get the Public Information office to explain virtually all the markings and codings on DOD cables, the spokesman responded: "All I can say is that there are some commonly used acronyms on this xeroxed document. Other than that, I just don't have anything to say."

Various military specialists and other sources contacted by *EIR*, on the other hand, readily volunteered that the cable bears numerous indicia of a fabrication or a forgery.

"My gut reaction is that it's a fabrication," said one high-ranking military official who has spent time at the Joint Chiefs of Staff; he cited a number of important discrepancies, including the lack of necessary classification marking and contradictions among the classification codings on the cable as reproduced in the *Berliner Zeitung*. "It's obviously doctored," said another military official who has also served with the JCS, observing that there are just too many inconsistencies in the administrative markings on the document for it to be authentic.

Among the half-dozen or so significant discrepancies noted, are the fact that the classification coding for the document corresponds to "unclassified," although non-coded words would indicate that it is "top secret." Also, a number of required classification markings are entirely absent.

The code "Perch" (English for "*Barsch*," referring to Barschel) would not be used in any military or intelligence communication, according to a number of sources consulted. It is too simple and too obvious. In military intelligence, code names are assigned, not chosen or made up, and there is no logic to them. An intelligence officer would have to assign a code name from a pre-existing list of codes, and the center would have a corresponding list for decoding purposes.

Although the document is described in the German press as discussing a meeting which took place at 2130 hours on the evening of Oct. 10, the cable is dated for the morning of Oct. 9.

According to initial reports in the German press, the cable was intercepted and decoded by the Stasi. Despite the obvious problems with it, there is probably enough verisimilitude attached to the cable to make certain U.S. circles very nervous—especially those around George Bush and Oliver North, who had no qualms about secret dealings with Communist bloc arms dealers.