

there is a close relationship between external and social peace. Our country is defensible only as long as the social and domestic peace is maintained.

Defense goes with detente, and neither can be ignored. Military imbalance produces insecurity, and defense is a precondition of detente, but whoever says that detente is either ended or dead, I have to ask him just where he wants to let us be driven. Foreign Minister Genscher has spoken of this. I am very sorry that Genscher is not here, so that he himself could say that no difference exists within the government on the evaluation of military security. We want him back in a good state of health because we cannot do without him.

Genscher had said that "Our treaties related to detente will be fulfilled." This policy is not an episode, but is laid out for the long term. Both East and West have an interest in continuing detente.

Manfred Woerner: There is only alleged unity here. How do you explain Herbert Wehner's interview to the "Radio In The American Sector" where he attacks the idea of an axis (between Bonn and Washington—ed.)?

Apel: We have published the government's answers. I am not going to allow myself to be distracted by this sort of question. Formulations sometimes used may be irritating, but I must say that when it comes to irritating formulations, you of the opposition are masters of it.

Herbert Wehner: I do not attack anyone among you for wanting war. But I warn you not to endanger the relatively political detente we have achieved thus far. The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe has not been fully exploited yet. The Brezhnev proposals ... indicate that Moscow, too, thinks that the CSCE can be further developed

How the Germans

"I know the Soviet leadership. They are responsible men and do not intend to start a war." With these words to the West German Bundestag (parliament) on Feb. 15, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt rejected the entire basis of British and American NATO policy and its pretext, "Soviet expansionism."

Ten days earlier, Schmidt's party whip in parliament, Herbert Wehner, told a Dutch reporter that blaming the Soviets for lack of progress at Mutual Balanced Force Reduction talks in Vienna was simply a "fraud." "The Soviets do not have their tanks" in Central Europe "in order to conduct an aggressive war ... The Soviets have made proposals ... the Western side people have not reacted ...

"I find it improper to put the Soviets alone in the defendant's dock about this question of armament and disarmament," Wehner went on. "Do not overlook the American radio stations, Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, who beam their broadcasts into the East bloc ... When it comes to riots in Poland because of the tight economic situation ... then Radio Free Europe acts as though it is based on Polish territory and gives advice to the rioters ... It is a frightful thing.... Taken with critical developments in Iran — I am brave enough to admit that one really must shudder ... a crisis could develop once again in Europe that could conjure up a confrontation between both superpowers."

Such statements now form the cornerstone of West German political-military thinking. The Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces pose no offensive military threat, unless provoked intolerably. The problem is NATO and its policy of provocation. NATO policy must change.

That view formed the cornerstone of the views expressed by government spokesmen in the March 9 and 10 Bundestag debate; but that debate was prepared over approximately a two-month period by a series of statements — primarily issued by parliamentary leader Herbert Wehner — which defined the terms of the debate. *Executive Intelligence Review's* West German bureau followed the situation closely. Based on their reporting, the following reviews the past months' developments.

West German dissatisfaction with NATO policy has been growing since 1975, with the secret introduction of the MC14-4 "limited nuclear war" or "counterforce" doctrine into NATO policy planning. That dissatisfaction crystalized more recently with the announcement from Washington that "counterforce" is official U.S. military doctrine for deployment in Europe. That announcement coincided with British and American playing of the "China card" — "counterforce" in Asia

developed their view

— also of grave concern to Germany and other European nations.

Since counterforce means NATO “sacrifice” of Central Europe in a “limited nuclear exchange” with the Soviets, West Germany has reacted sharply, in the interests of national preservation, as well as world peace. This signifies a determination on their part to change NATO policy from one of “counterforce”-confrontation and “rollback” of Soviet bloc frontiers to one of detente-in-fact.

The Schmidt government is now openly confronting the U.S. and Great Britain in a battle for control of NATO.

West Germany is in a powerful position to win this battle. At home, Helmut Schmidt enjoys unprecedented support from the BRD electorate — polls place his support at 70 percent of the population. By comparison, the beloved Konrad Adenauer never enjoyed more than 62 percent support in similar polls. Schmidt is virtually impregnable to destabilizations of the “spy scandal” or other sorts which have been the traditional Anglo-American answer to dissidents within the alliance.

Feb. 23: No Washington-Bonn Axis

The policy difference was exhibited publicly on Feb. 23. West German Defense Minister Hans Apel was returning from a hurried visit to the United States when he was asked “about a stronger Bonn-Washington axis as the new backbone for NATO.” Such an axis to revitalize NATO would entail West German acquisition of more advanced weapons systems, including nuclear weapons systems.

“That would bring about the end of NATO,” replied Apel. “It would also weaken West Germany’s international position, mainly among Warsaw Pact states. There would be mistrust in the East, which probably could not be overcome, and everyone would think we are only doing that to get a grab on nuclear weapons. We are not a nuclear state and do not want to become one.”

A military commander in Apel’s ministry who took part in the Washington trip was blunt about what transpired in the talks. In an interview with NSIPS reporters, he stated: “We do not agree that it is good to use China as a lever for confrontation with the Soviet Union.... What China is doing right now is not in the interest of world security as a whole. We also argued that there is no use in anyone, and in particular the U.S., trying to use China this way. If we were to do that, then the

Kremlin could get the impression that it is surrounded by hostile forces.”

Feb. 18: Apel at the Wehrkunde

That was not the first West German denunciation of the “China card” and related features of NATO’s encirclement strategy. Before an audience packed with high-ranking British and U.S. NATO officials demanding a heavy NATO arms buildup, Defense Minister Apel told the Wehrkunde Association meeting in Munich Feb. 18-19: “Today we live in a world with manifold competing claims and conflicts. New conflicts of interest stand out.... It is a world of mutual dependencies which make all states part of a global alliance of fate. He proceeded to outline West Germany’s alternative to current NATO policy. “This means a two-fold challenge: First ... a balance of power is the goal.

“Second, the Western nations must deal with the tasks of global interdependency. This means the construction of a global order of cooperation among industrial nations and the Third World, so that hunger and poverty can be fought together and so that the future of us all can be secured ...

“Detente ... means cooperation must be strengthened in such a way so that fields of conflict are reduced and finally eliminated... ”

“Economic power and the freedom to negotiate for economic policy are indispensable to contribute to the military balance of power, to detente, to a world economic system that functions efficiently, and to the North-South affair ... Without sufficient economic strength in the construction of a social order that is capable of functioning, the countries of the Third World will be prevented ... in their efforts towards the establishment of industry.”

Having defined the West German notion of proper NATO detente-policy, Apel launched the attack.

“We are against the division of the world into zones of influence according to the East-West conflict. We are for the independent development of the Third World ...

“I do not belong to those people who promise that something good will come out of the present rivalry between the People’s Republic of China and the Soviet Union, either for Europe or Asia ... The policy of the Federal Republic of Germany recognizes no ‘China card’... ,

“We will not send any weapons to China. Our position on this question is very clear. We have neither economic nor political interest in becoming a weapons

supplier to the Third World.... We are not carrying out a policy to postpone a Third World War, but to prevent one."

Apel's challenge was not sudden or unexpected. It was clearly and frankly expressed as early as Feb. 1 by Herbert Wehner that any anti-Soviet alliance between China and the U.S. (Wehner told a West German newspaper while Teng was in Washington) would be "completely disastrous." At approximately the same time, the Schmidt government cancelled NATO "Reforger" war-games, part of "counterforce maneuvers" on West German soil, due to bad weather."

On Feb. 5, in another press interview, Wehner specifically attacked NATO negotiators for stalling the MBFR Vienna talks. Proposals from the West are "still insufficient.... There is a philosophy," he continued, "according to which there is something threatening from the Soviet Union ... What they have (militarily in Central Europe) we have to take into account ... but all of it is exclusively defensive and not meant for aggression."

Chancellor Schmidt, Feb. 7, affirmed that between him and Wehner, there was "no controversy," telling a meeting of the Social Democratic parliamentary fraction (which Wehner heads) that if West Germany is forced to choose between the U.S. and the Soviet Union over the issue of China, relations with the Soviets will take precedence.

Meanwhile Wehner, in a barrage of statements given to TV and newspaper interviewers Feb. 6-10, hammered continuously at the present danger of world war. In one interview, he exposed secret NATO plans to run a computer-simulated model for World War III, termed "Wintex." In another, he said the war-threshold nature of the current world situation is comparable to that of September 1939, when Hitler's forces invaded Poland claiming falsely that they were merely "returning fire."

March 9-10: the debate

All this set the stage for the March 9 and 10 Bundestag debates, which became the scene of a rout of pro-NATO spokesmen for the opposition Christian Democratic Union. Below, we highlight key aspects of the debate, including interchanges not covered in the preceding excerpts.

On March 9, Hans Apel addressed the parliament on behalf of the ruling coalition. "Security, of course is one precondition for the well-being of a country. But war is not the father of all things, peace is."

On March 10, Chancellor Schmidt spoke: "Security

is always the security of the other person, too. There can be no security if the other side feels threatened. Therefore, we have to concentrate on building trust between nations."

Schmidt was quite explicit in placing the blame for international conflicts in the modern day. He praised the Soviet Union for its reaction to the Chinese invasion of Vietnam. "I can only approve the reservation and wisdom the Soviet Union has shown; let it be known that no one can ever profit from crises in Asia." Schmidt again scorned the China card, and in effect, absolved the Vietnamese of any responsibility — by denouncing the genocidal policy pursued by the toppled Pol Pot regime in Cambodia.

Such statements infuriated the Christian Democratic leadership composed of a significant number of Anglophiles steeped in the "security" doctrines of Henry Kissinger and Alexander Haig (and Teng Hsiao-ping: "War is inevitable."). Reportedly, CDU leader Kohl had prepared for the debate by studying one of Henry Kissinger's books.

Free Democratic spokesman Hoppe: "Both the daily Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and the CDU have said that detente is dead, but ... Europe is one of the few areas in the world politically, economically and militarily still intact. We have thus proved, we Europeans, that it is possible to secure the peace and defuse conflicts."

One new development revealed by Schmidt was that Soviet President Brezhnev had expanded his offer of a nonaggression pact with West Germany to include all 30-odd states in Eastern and Western Europe. "The proposed non aggression pact," said Schmidt, "goes far beyond what was implicit in the older limited proposal for banning first nuclear strikes ... (it) should be investigated more cautiously" than the first, which was rejected.

CDU spokesman Alois Mertes then said that "the Russians cannot be trusted. Russia considers all strangers as enemies of Russia ... and Wehner even criticized the Christian Democracy in front of the Communist regime in Prague ... There should not be any appeasement towards the East."

At this point, Chancellor Schmidt seized the floor. "Twenty years ago, I don't think you remember how it was then, when the attempt at detente failed, when the Paris summit meeting between East and West failed ... I would enjoy seeing you getting your fingers burned that way ..."

— *Vin Berg*
with James Cleary (New York)
and George Gregory (Wiesbaden)