

## Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

### Schalck-Golodkowski amassed a fortune

*The Bonn government is trying to protect George Bush and Oliver North's friends in Germany.*

An old saying holds that "the truth will come out in the end." But the Bonn establishment seems committed to proving the contrary: for example, the case of Alexander Schalck-Golodkowski, the East German regime's most successful dealer in the gray zone between East and West over 1965-90.

Schalck-Golodkowski, a colonel in the HVA, the East German foreign intelligence agency, made, according to the final report of a special parliamentary investigation committee that has just been published, states, an illegal net profit in the range of DM 27 billion (\$17 billion), and most of that in the 1980s. He had the assistance of numerous West German agencies and firms, during which many western laws were violated. But the majority of the committee, with the exception of Ingrid Koeppel, argues that Schalck-Golodkowski can't be tried because he never broke laws in the east. (Naturally, he didn't.)

This strange interpretation of the western law has less to do with the many loopholes in the law than with the fact that the Bonn establishment, and certain people across the Atlantic, don't want the case to be debated in public. Such a debate would expose the dirty side of illegal East-West cooperation, especially the 1980s "arms for hostages" deals which involved George Bush. Many of those secret deals from 1981 on were handled through East German outlets such as the "import-export" firm IMES, which was run by the KoKo (Kommerzielle Koordination) of Schalck-Golodkowski.

The huge KoKo arms storage area

in the city of Kavelstorf, near the Baltic seaport of Rostock, played a leading role in the infamous "northern route" of secret, illegal arms shipments to all parts of the world, including those "clients" in the Mideast and Ibero-America that Oliver North and Richard Secord had on their lists to be supplied. IMES had many "partner firms" in the West, such as the Swiss firm Intrac, which was run by Ottokar Hermann and assisted in the transfer of top-notch dual-use technologies from the West to the Soviet bloc in the 1980s, and maybe also in the 1970s. The Intrac case is interesting, because it leads into one of the darkest moments of postwar West German history—Oct. 12, 1987, when Uwe Barschel, a former governor of Schleswig-Holstein and senior member of the Christian Democracy, was found dead at the Beau Rivage Hotel in Geneva.

Barschel's private notebook, found in his hotel room, contained a hint that he went to meet a certain "Rohloff" in Geneva to receive information that would help him, Barschel, to blow "one of the biggest political scandals into the open," as he told a friend on the phone shortly before he was killed under yet-unclarified circumstances in the evening hours of Oct. 11. Barschel was scheduled to testify on Oct. 12 before a special investigating committee of the state parliament of Schleswig-Holstein.

Now, as far as the "Rohloff" in Barschel's private notes is concerned, top-secret files of HVA department XVIII/8 that were seized in late 1989 or early 1990 listed a Swiss agent with the codename "Rohloff." "Rohloff"

was the Swiss businessman Ottokar Hermann, who had been assigned that codename in the mid-1960s. The Schalck-Golodkowski empire was established on directives of the East German regime in 1965.

Hermann, a.k.a. "Rohloff," had many business partners and contacts in other western countries, and a closer look at those contacts may shed some light on these East-West affairs. For example, Intrac had a joint venture in the 1980s with West Germany's Hoesch Steel company and the East German firm FUBA. This is not to imply that Hoesch and its directors were involved in illegal arms deals, but they knew particular details about the economy and other sectors of the East German regime.

Unlike the western entrepreneurs who occupied influential posts in East Germany after the fall of the regime in 1990, Hoesch chairman Detlev Rohwedder had enough insight to realize that the radical free-market approach that Bonn was committed to (in arrangement with its western allies, primarily Margaret Thatcher and Bush) for transforming the eastern economy, would lead to disaster. As head of the Berlin Treuhand agency (in charge of the eastern state sector), he tried to convince Bonn to replace privatization with a state-centered approach that would stabilize the East's employment and production.

But before this change, which Anglo-American circles objected to out of fear of the economic potential of the combined Germans, could be discussed, Rohwedder was shot dead on April 1, 1991. One cannot rule out that he used inside knowledge obtained by his cooperation with Intrac, to force discussion on policy for the East.

The Bonn establishment has so far blocked investigation of these matters. But the little that is already known is quite explosive.