

FRG ENFORCED ADOPTION CHARGES EVOKE REACTION

NEUES DEUTSCHLAND Denial

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[A.Z. commentary: "The Slander Campaign Against the GDR and What Is Behind It"]

[Text] Certain political circles in the FRG, particularly the firebrands of the CDU/CSU and the mass media connected with them, have recently launched a large-scale slander campaign against the GDR. In the most shameful Nazi style they are outdoing themselves in their propaganda without noticing that they are continuously contradicting themselves.

These people pass themselves off as disciples of humanity and with their anticommunist rabble-rousing are actually playing the role of the devil with people's feelings.

It is not the first time that such an incitement campaign has been pushed to the extreme right before Christmas. An appropriate "object" was carefully selected: "children." This way anticommunism will sell better. The moment for the campaign was not picked by accident. First, the people around Strauss want to prepare the 1976 federal election campaign with the proper drumbeats. Second, their actions are aimed at wrecking the detente process. And last but not least, an attempt is involved at deflecting attention from their own serious domestic problems. The entire abominable slander campaign characterizes its authors. The question arises: What financial group paid DER SPIEGEL to act as the trigger for the slander campaign this time. No wonder people in many countries are now reflecting over what would happen if the wirepullers of such a campaign were to gain the upper hand. What is to happen if these people--who on the whole let commonsense prevail--do not determine the political guidelines but rather those who let Franz-Josef Strauss' notorious Sonthofen speech appeal to them?

The unbridled incitement is being justified by the alleged "forced adoption" of children in the GDR. Obviously this so-called campaign regarding the kidnaping of children is to appeal to those people in the GDR who are to be readied for the dirtiest goals. Obviously the spirit of the brown past is to be revived. And, unfortunately, this danger persists as long as the successors of Goebbels are able to manipulate public opinion in the FRG. With Hitler it was the Jews and the Bolsheviks. Today it is the "forced adoptions" and other primitive anticommunist lies which are to herd the voters into the arms of the extreme right. This is indeed a CDU/CSU plan which would reflect great credit on such an unscrupulous crook as Goebbels.

The campaign has been doubtlessly prepared for a long time. It is to distort the picture which the GDR offers to millions of visitors from the FRG, West Berlin and other capitalist countries. It cannot be assumed that this incitement against the GDR is aimed at promoting visitor traffic. And, indeed, such reflections cannot be entirely refuted. From 1 January 1975 until today, the GDR has permitted 3 million FRG citizens to visit our republic, including 1 million with automobiles. Does someone believe that uncurbed provocations will yield positive effects? It really is interesting that the entire incitement is taking place at a time in which the GDR has taken further constructive steps to normalize relations with the FRG and the West Berlin Senat.

That much on the substance of the issue. But what about the details of the slanders? Not a single word is true. There is no approval for adoption of the children of such people who have left the republic, violating the laws and deserted their children.

First, adoption, that is, the act of taking children as one's own, is a perfectly normal practice which exists in almost all countries, including the GDR and the FRG. But the slanderers are not concerned about this. This also is well-known in the FRG, and this is why some politicians and journalists there demand that the issue be referred to instead as one of withdrawing the right to educate or care for children. This also exists in both the GDR and the FRG. Section 51 of the GDR family code provides for such a decision by the proper court of law as an extreme measure in cases of gross culpable neglect of parental duties. This is a practice normal in all civilized countries.

Does someone really want to seriously maintain that there is no corresponding practice in the FRG? He who nevertheless maintains such a thing does not know his own laws. Hence, we recommend that he study the civil code from which, as a matter of fact, the FRANKFURTER RUNDSCHAU quoted the pertinent excerpts on 19 December.

It reads there, for example, about the possibility of releasing children for adoption without the consent of the parents, that this can be done "when the obligations to the children are grossly neglected and when the parents' behavior toward the children indicates indifference and when nonimplementation of the adoption would involve disproportionate disadvantages for the child." Section 1947 of the civil code also stipulates that the parents' consent must be substituted, that is, need not be obtained "if the violation of the obligations is not continuous but particularly grave and if the child presumably cannot be permanently entrusted to the care of the parent." This can even be done without instructions from the parents, "if the parent has changed his place of residence without leaving behind his new address and if the place of residence cannot be established by the youth office in a period of 3 months despite appropriate investigation."

That much on the legal provisions of the civil code is applicable in the FRG. As far as the alleged "forced adoption" of the children of fugitives from the GDR is concerned, it can only be repeated: There is no such thing. The GDR Foreign Ministry has explicitly clarified this in its statement of 17 December. Official FRG quarters now are compelled to admit this.

But charges are being leveled hypocritically precisely against the GDR, where the children live happily and safely, which offers them a safe home and which also provides protection, assistance and shelter to the deserted and seriously injured children of unscrupulous fugitives from the republic, from the country of the dwarf school people want to sling mud at the state which guarantees with its educational system-- from day care centers, general-educational polytechnical schools up to university study--equal opportunities for advancement to all the people's children; from a country where the cases of the ill treatment of children reaches record figures, where drugs, pornography and crime extremely endanger the youth, people want to defame that state which adopted as one of its first laws the bill to protect and promote youth and has implemented it.

Yes, with the campaign of lies people want last but not least to deflect attention from the defects of their own society. As is well known, there is a profound economic crisis in the FRG; there are inflation and unemployment, the university misery, the rejection of codetermination, the inferior position of women in society, grave shortcomings in vocational training; the practice of professional [employment] bans, even vis-a-vis SPD members; the liability of clan and kin vis-a-vis progressive forces whose daughters and sons lack the same opportunities others have. These as well as additional antidemocratic measures have naturally nothing in common with a state based on law and humanity. Only recently Prof Dr Alfred Grosser, a bourgeois French scientist and political scientist, asked about this topic, responded with the sarcastic remark: "Possibly my hearing is poor." He saw in the FRG not so much the state of law but rather "the danger of a new German authoritarian state."

As far as the anticommunist incitement against the GDR is concerned, it is necessary finally to point out the following: Those very people who are now affecting so much sympathy shed no tears when unscrupulous parents and human traffickers exposed children or even killed them while illegally leaving the GDR--for example, by administering dope or locking them in containers.

The entire maneuver and its timing are obvious enough. DER SPIEGEL, which for a long time pretended to be a liberal publication, has turned into a canvasser for the CDU/CSU. This is something new. It is important to fan the anticommunist incitement anew. What is involved is ammunition for the CSU/CDU election campaign. And it involves an action by forces hostile to detente in the FRG against peaceful coexistence, against the normalization of the relations between the GDR and the FRG--a normalization which precisely now has made progress with the new agreements between the GDR and FRG governments.

It remains to be hoped that those forces in the FRG which do not join in pulling the cart of incitement against the GDR but allow themselves to be guided by commonsense and realism will rebuff such provocations.