

'Perestroika' rips Ruhr industrial zone of Germany

There is a "restructuring" under way in the Ruhr industrial region of West Germany. The word for "restructuring" in Russian is *perestroika*. There, it is a euphemism for a war-economy mobilization. What is it all about in West Germany, and where will it lead? It would seem to mean the very opposite.

Is it the dismantling of this, the largest and still most productive industrial region in Europe, by way of mass layoffs of highly qualified operatives and shutdowns of entire steel plants, as many trade union officials fear?

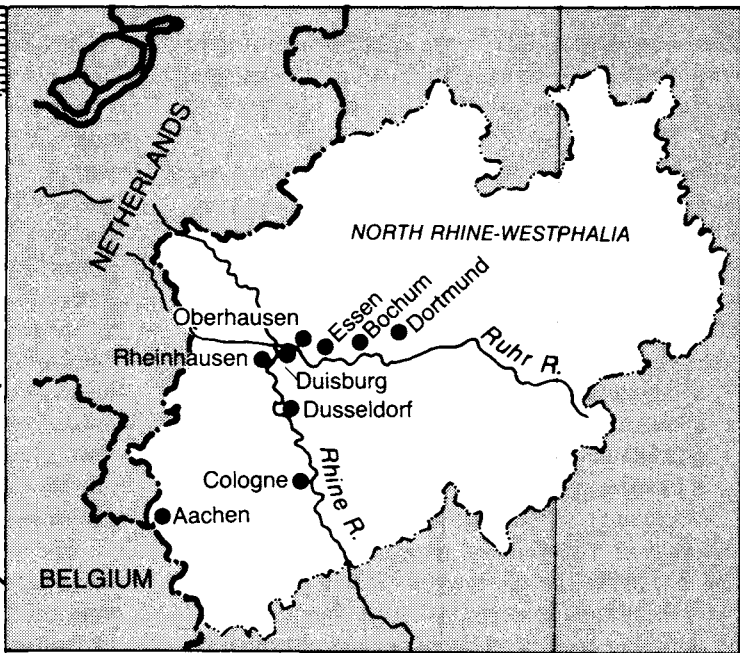
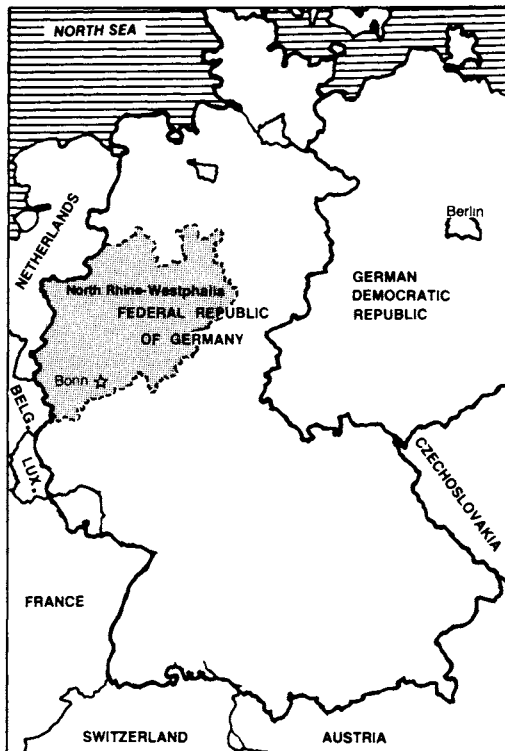
Is it the transformation of steel and coal sites on the Rhine and Ruhr rivers—decried as "outmoded," but in fact, producing with the most modern technology—into "futuristic high-tech areas," as the industrialists demand?

Is it the cleaning out of the "contaminated" Ruhr's smokestack industries, which produce "industrial garbage," as demanded by the Green Party?

Or is it a relapse into colonialistic "free-trade zones," which the hardline proponents of the alleged "free market" desire so much—i.e., "production" zones in which reckless managers, loan sharks, and drug pushers have a free hand and can dictate wage levels as in "cheap labor countries," free of troublesome tax and social laws?

Currently, it is a mixture of all those things. As can be seen from the propaganda of the West German Communist Party (DKP), i.e., what is desired by Moscow, the bottom line is that, if the future development in the Ruhr region continues in the same direction as now prescribed by leading political, corporate, and labor representatives, industrial West Germany will march into a "service society," and collapse into the status of a Soviet protectorate.

The ratio of industrial operatives in the Ruhr has fallen from over 50% in the 1950s to only 35% today. This has been accompanied by a collapse of coal mining to one-third and of steel production to only one-half of what it was only 25 years ago. In that period of time, almost half a million industrial jobs have been lost in the Ruhr. Deeply disappointed, residents have fled the region that once was living proof that the progress of mankind can be realized through qualified labor and technological progress.



The Ruhr region lies between the Ruhr and Rhine rivers in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia of the Federal Republic of Germany, and is the densest industrial concentration in the world. No sharper threat to the security of the Western alliance can be imagined than the dismantling of this capability.

Industrial zone of the future

After the spectacular German postwar reconstruction, the Ruhr region, the industrial heartland of West Europe, was considered a model worldwide and the industrial zone of the future. This persisted through the 1950s and most of the 1960s.

The Ruhr was not only a leading force in revitalizing the destroyed German economy, but thus provided the impulse for economic growth to the whole of Western Europe's economy. The Ruhr boasted vast scientific and technological resources, as well as basic industry. The legendary Technical High School in Aachen, various private and state-run research laboratories, modern technical equipment, a dense transportation network, and an army of highly skilled workers and engineers were the foundation of its growth.

The extreme export dependency of the West German economy resulting from a scarcity of raw materials was understood as a continuous challenge—and successfully met. The Ruhr was compelled to maintain a margin of technological advantage on the world market. "We are condemned here to continuously march at the top of technological progress." This was the corporate philosophy on the Rhine and the Ruhr; it had been assimilated by everybody involved, managers, engineers, skilled labor, and their families.

On the drawing boards of the planning staffs, new plant and machinery were developed for the industrial expansion of the region. Resourceful scientists and engineers developed

totally new concepts and technologies, like the High Temperature Gas-Cooled Nuclear Reactor (HTGR). Leading architects were busy mapping out and preparing the construction of new cities in the vicinity of the Ruhr that would absorb the expected large population growth.

This dynamic was not only desirable, but necessary, since a continuously growing world economy and rapidly expanding export markets demanded increasingly high-quality goods "Made in Germany." There was not only a demand for specific goods, but a chance to develop whole continents through German technology.

The construction of the steel city of Rourkela in India, where today almost half a million people live and work, was wholly planned in the Ruhr. It created the potential for opening up the vast Indian subcontinent to German industrial exports. Machine tool firms from the Ruhr succeeded in taking one leading position after another in Africa and Asia. The predominantly Ruhr-based German nuclear construction industry successfully established the basis for a future collaboration with the Ibero-American continent by delivering nuclear power plants to Argentina and Brazil.

The 'dying of the mines'

The general perception that every crisis always includes a chance for new beginnings, and can be overcome through resolute political action and new scientific-technological

achievements, suffered its first cracks at the beginning of the 1960s, when suddenly, petroleum prices went into a tailspin, and Ruhr coal ceased to be competitive. The "dying of the mines" started in the Ruhr.

More than 160,000 miners who lost their jobs were able to find new jobs in other industries for the time being, especially in the expanding machine tool and heavy equipment sectors, and also in newly created branches like the large Opel auto plant in Bochum. This resulted even in a slight net gain in employment in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) through 1970, despite the huge losses of mining jobs. However, in the following years, politicians, industrialists, and labor representatives, apparently united in their commitment to saving German coal mining, were not able or willing to practically realize the only prudent solution available—the development of HTGR nuclear technology.

Everybody had known for a long time that the high-quality, but expensive, coal of the Ruhr would not be competitive with cheap surface-mined coal from abroad, if it was only used as coking coal for steel production, or as fuel for energy production. To solve this problem over the long run, scientists from the Ruhr had developed a brilliant conception: the thorium-fueled High Temperature Gas-Cooled Reactor.

Since Ruhr coal was "too precious to be burned," it should be given a new future as raw material for the chemical industry. Its energy value would be replaced by the "safest, hottest, and cleanest nuclear reactor in the world." This quite elegant solution was not only cost-effective, but meant the beginning of nuclear energy production, desired by everybody at the time, which was and still is key to the very existence of the resource-scarce industrial nation of West Germany.

While the process heat produced by the Thorium High Temperature Reactor (THTR) was to solve problems with coal and steel, the electricity from light water fission reactors was to cover fast-growing energy demand from industry and households. In the 1990s at the latest, the "fast breeder," distinguished by its unique capability to produce both electricity and nuclear fuel in abundance, was to finally render the energy-hungry Ruhr economy independent of expensive (and politically disadvantageous) imports.

Moscow wins for the first time

But things turned out otherwise. It was not engineers, scientists, and technicians who determined developments, but "pragmatic" politicians and managers. All of them, and not only the Social Democratic variety, suddenly developed a strong Eastward preference.

Two of the main actors should be mentioned: Krupp's "strongman," Berthold Beitz, and the former president of the German Association for Industry and Trade (DIHT), Otto Wolff von Amerongen. In 1986, Beitz, who likes to go hunting in the Carpathian Mountains with Soviet leaders, received an honorary doctoral degree from the East German university of Greifswald for his many efforts to improve

relations with the East; Otto Wolff von Amerongen, who ran the East Committee of German Industry even during the "Cold War," has various channels into the East that can be traced back to the 1920s, when his father shaped the Rapallo policy of economic relations with the fledgling Soviet regime. With this background, it becomes clear why leading political and corporate representatives in the Ruhr did not pursue a policy of achieving economic independence, and more and more gave up their commitment to using German technology as a positive contribution to the development of the world. Short-sighted cost-benefit calculations served as justification for an economic policy that was designed to produce dependence on the export markets to be had in the East. This same economic policy increasingly risked the future of whole branches of industry, and created a politically dangerous economic situation.

The energy policy is exemplary. As a reaction to the "coal crisis" provoked by the calculated reduction of oil prices, the vital development of nuclear energy was not taken up. "Inexpensive" imports of oil and natural gas were given priority over the use of German-made nuclear power plants, technologically among the best in the world. The development of the HTGR for mass production was delayed until this completely safe reactor type was practically killed by the environmentalist movement that was started in the early 1970s with a helping hand from Moscow. The fast breeder program is even worse off, and may be totally eliminated.

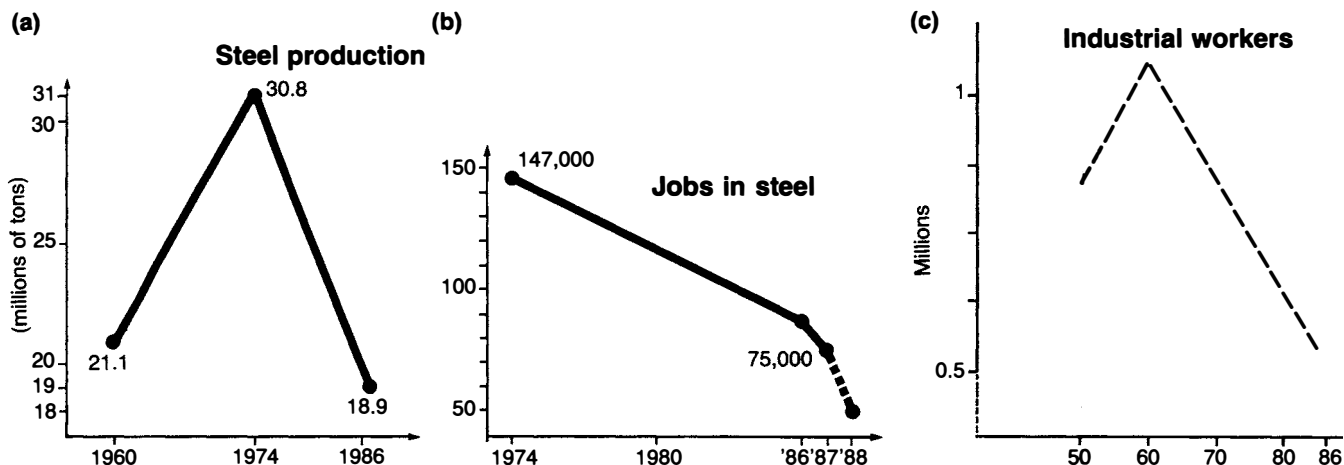
The "alternative policy" favored in the last 20 years includes storage of Ruhr coal not needed domestically, expansion of coal-powered energy plants, and rising imports of "inexpensive" energies, like oil and natural gas. The most spectacular coup in this regard was the "natural-gas-for-steel-pipes" barter deal signed in Bonn in 1978 between Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and Leonid Brezhnev. That deal increased Moscow's share of the West German natural gas supply to a massive 30%. In exchange, Moscow not only received steel pipe from the Mannesmann Corp., but also a 1 billion deutschemark line of credit from a German bank consortium led by Deutsche Bank.

Another Soviet coup will be completed shortly: the sell-out of HTGR technology. Until the early 1980s, the HTGR was considered the leading German "export hit." Even compared with Japan, Germany had a technological lead of several years concerning the HTGR. It was no accident that traditional "coal nations," like Australia, South Africa, and especially, thorium-rich India, were very interested in the German HTGR. But, now, the technological lead is almost lost, and nobody speaks of nuclear shipments to the Third World any more. On the other hand, the East bloc has won the bidding: In the spring of 1987, the first treaty was struck for construction of HTGR nuclear power plants in the Soviet Union. HTGR technology will also be shipped to Poland and East Germany.

The consequences of this striking blunder in energy and

FIGURE 1

Collapse of Ruhr region



Source: State Statistical Office, North Rhine-Westphalia

economic policy are enormous: The Federal Republic of Germany has not only lost much of its economic independence, and is now suffering a growing dependence on the East bloc, but has also paid incredible amounts of money for this folly. At the moment, for lack of nuclear power, the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) alone subsidizes coal mining to a tune of more than DM 1 billion a year; and concerning power generation, the German economy, because of the use of domestic coal reserves and massively overblown security and environmental protection criteria, has to carry energy costs of DM 9 billion a year above those of France, which produces 70% of its power in nuclear plants.

The collapse of steel production

While the “coal crisis” caused by the reduction of oil prices in the early 1960s destroyed the Ruhr’s mines, the rigged “oil crisis” of the early 1970s, producing a rise in oil prices of 400%, slammed the Ruhr’s steel industry. Whereas rising energy costs could be absorbed to a certain degree by technological innovations, the demand for steel did not recover, because, in addition, exports of machine tools, heavy equipment, and other industrial goods was increasingly strangled by rising worldwide indebtedness.

Since the resumption of German steel production after the war, production figures in the Ruhr region, which traditionally produced 60% of German steel, had continuously increased. In 1960, the Ruhr produced 21.1 million tons; in the record year 1974, it produced 30.8 million tons, an increase of roughly 50%. But from that point on, things went downhill (Figure 1a). By 1987, steel production was down 11.9 million tons, a fall of almost 40%, to 18.9 million

tons—the level of the early postwar years!

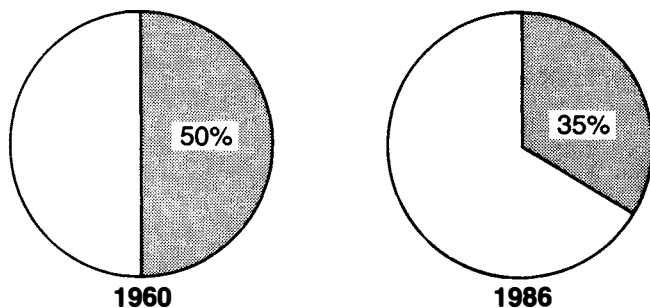
Even more dramatic has been the collapse in employment in the steel sector over the last 15 years. In the early 1970s, at the high point of steel production, the Ruhr region employed 147,000 steelworkers; at the end of 1987, this was down to 75,000, and it is a foregone conclusion that in 1988, another 25,000 steel jobs will be lost in the Ruhr. This means that, in the Ruhr alone, almost 100,000 steelworkers had to give up their jobs within less than 20 years (Figure 1b).

These figures for the steel sector are comparable to the dramatic decline in the mining sector. Coal production in the Ruhr decreased from approximately 150 million tons in the 1950s to a meager 50 million tons today. Since 1961, about 240,000 miners have lost their jobs, 160,000 of them during the period of the “dying mines,” when other productive, well-paying jobs were still being rapidly created in other industries, principally in the machine tool and equipment sector. But that is the difference between today’s “steel crisis” and yesterday’s “coal crisis”: Today, qualified steelworkers are being thrown onto the streets, and asked to survive in a “service economy.”

The “outmoded” steelworkers and miners of the Ruhr are by no means the only victims of the “post-industrial” collapse; the entire West German economy has been hit. While in 1961, there were almost 950,000 industrial operatives in the Ruhr, this figure fell to 512,000 by 1986—a collapse of almost 50% (Figure 1c)! This deterioration also led to employment shifts in North Rhine-Westphalia. In 1985, out of 5.5 million employed persons in North Rhine-Westphalia, only 1.9 million were employed in the industrial sector. Thus, the ratio of industrial to other employment is approximately

FIGURE 2

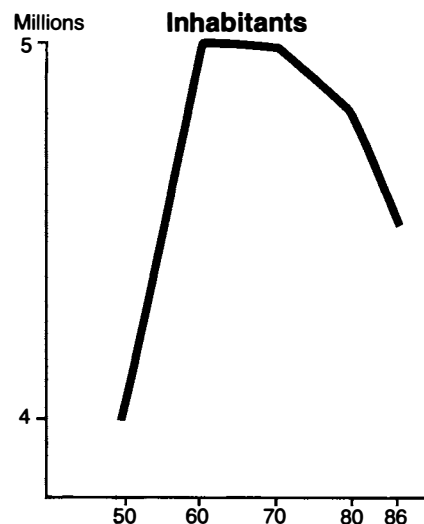
Percent of industrial workers fell drastically in Ruhr region since 1960



Source: State Statistical Office, North Rhine-Westphalia

FIGURE 3

Ruhr region population plunged in last decade



1 in 3, or 35%. In the 1960s, this ratio was more than 50% (Figure 2).

This decay in productive employment has also produced an unparalleled movement away from the big cities, which in some areas has taken on the dimension of depopulation. While the population in the Ruhr at its high point in 1960 was 5 million, it is now 4.6 million, a reduction of 8% (Figure 3). The decrease in the (former) industrial city of Duisburg has amounted to a downright exodus. Of 660,000 residents living in this city in 1961, only 450,000 will be left in the year 2000, according to an official estimate (Figure 4). One-third of Duisburg's inhabitants will have left the city in only 40 years.

The strategy of the think tanks

For a long time, the leading think tanks of the Western oligarchical families have called for the destruction and depopulation of the Ruhr region. The primary institution in this regard is the German Marshall Fund (GMF) of the United States, which, at many international conferences, has explicitly praised the "decline in employment and population" in Western industrialized nations, and proposed forms of production which the GMF terms "post-industrial," but which are in reality "pre-industrial."

The GMF is the paradigm of those Western think tanks Moscow delightedly thinks of as "useful fools." Its declared goal is the sabotage of the economic and scientific strength of the West, emphatically including West Germany's economic potential.

Former Chancellor Willy Brandt, the leading German

public figure of this institution, as early as the 1960s (unsuccessfully) used the slogan, "Blue Skies Over the Ruhr," both to win voters and to launch the "restructuring" of the region. As chancellor, Brandt, a decade later, caused astonishment when he introduced an "investment tax."

Brandt, at the instigation of the Rockefellers and former Occupation High Commissioner John J. McCloy of the Rockefellers' Chase Manhattan Bank, helped found the GMF in 1972, with the aid of Social Democrats Horst Ehmke and Egon Bahr, the latter the architect of *Ostpolitik*. The GMF was furnished with some DM 150 million by the German taxpayers, to pursue its policy of "strengthening the service economy," "deurbanization," "decentralization," and "promotion of environmental protection, citizens' initiatives, and alternative forms of production."

The "personalities" on the American side enjoy just as close contacts to the East as their German partners. Honorary members of the GMF include banker David Rockefeller, oil magnate Armand Hammer, and former High Commissioner McCloy. These are among the wealthiest and most influential representatives of the United States' Eastern Establishment.

In order to push through West Germany's "deindustrialization" the GMF helped to found the Green movement's Öko-Institut in Freiburg, issued research grants to the Christian Democratic-run Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Social Democratic-run Friedrich Ebert Foundation, and in 1980 sponsored a conference of Willy Brandt's Second International in Washington, where Horst Ehmke declared bluntly, "The Ruhr region does not need nuclear power, because its eastern part will lose its heavy industry anyway."

A 1978 GMF study may have been lacking in scientific acuity, but not in political clarity. The study proposed “to change heavy industry-based production in the city of Dortmund in a way that small industries consuming less energy are promoted. . . . Dortmund must shrink—not only in terms of its dimensions, but also concerning its conceptions about the future.”

The policy of Western “deindustrialization” is not only pushed by the German Social Democracy and American billionaires. For, besides the above-mentioned “elite” of Ruhr managers and German bankers, part of this exotic mixture are influential “conservative” German Christian Democrats.

While “right-wing” Christian Social Union (CSU) leader Franz-Josef Strauss may refer to “economic and humanitarian” aid to justify a DM 1 billion credit line to East Germany, arranged by himself, or may explain his recent visit to Moscow by procuring orders for the troubled Airbus Corporation, former Christian Democratic Union (CDU) chairman in North Rhine-Westphalia, Kurt Biedenkopf, is only more outspoken. His Institute for Economic and Social Sciences (IWG), founded ten years ago in Bonn, advocates the same “future perspective” for the Ruhr region as the GMF: a far-reaching deindustrialization and depopulation of the region.

Biedenkopf was the founding dean of the “reform university” of Bochum in the 1960s, and together, with Environmental Secretary Toepfer, has recently become one of the more prominent spokesmen of the “green peace movement” inside the CDU. He also belongs to the “Moscow faction” of his party, and for him, the rate of growth in East-West trade cannot be high enough. This became evident in the fall of 1986, when high-ranking Soviet economic expert Igor Guriev delivered a speech in Bonn on *perestroika* and Gorbachov’s economic reform plans, at the invitation of Biedenkopf’s IWG. Guriev’s presentation was rated “sensational” by the audience, since he presented totally new perspectives for East-West trade.

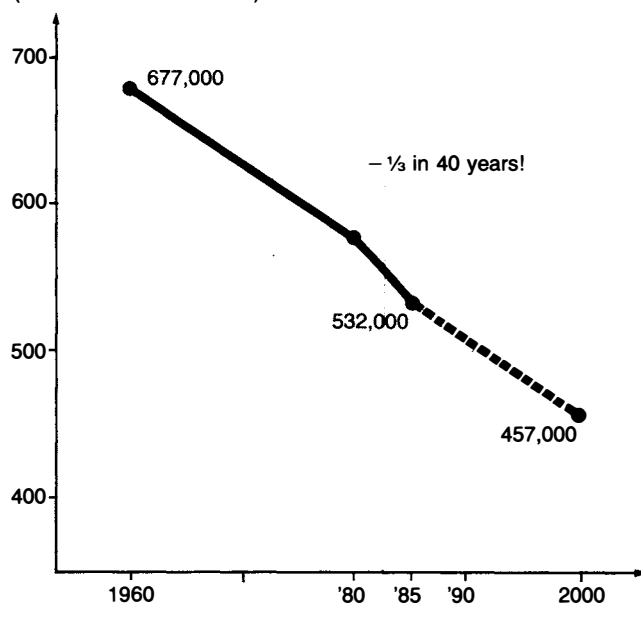
Duisburg: a European Hong Kong?

The economic strategy of almost all city governments in the Ruhr for years has conformed to the GMF strategy of elimination of the industrial sector. While city officials, chambers of industry and trade, and political parties issue frequent assurances that the “hard core” of the steel sector must not be given up, official development plans expose these eloquent declarations as lies.

Almost every city has issued a development plan “2000,” which are mostly copied from the Carter administration’s *Global 2000* report of 1979. Its authors committed themselves to reduce the world population by more than 2 billion people within only 20 years. The report *Duisburg 2000*, issued at end of 1987 by the City of Duisburg and the Lower Rhineland Chamber of Industry and Commerce, is exemplary of these “development” plans.

Maintaining steel

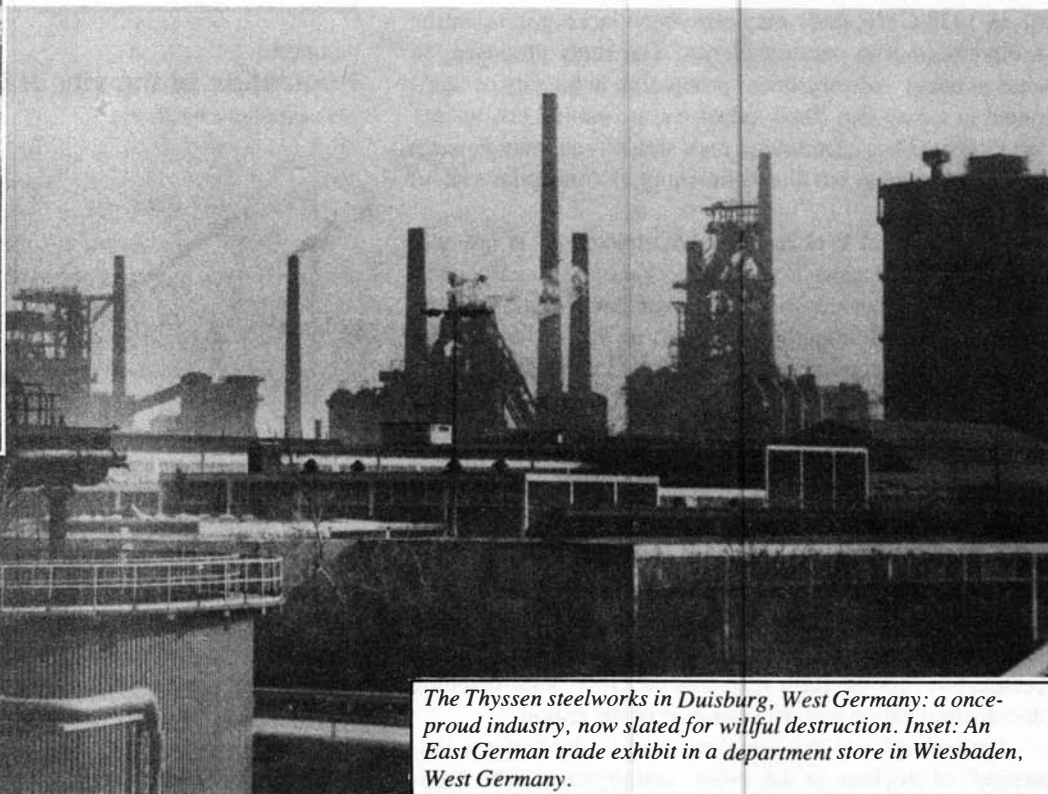
FIGURE 4
Population of the city of Duisburg: 1960-2000
(thousands of inhabitants)



industry is nowhere in evidence. At the center of the report is provision of “alternative work places” by promotion of industries for “environmental technologies” and “microelectronics.” The report proposes not only “technology parks,” but, as long demanded by the state government in Dusseldorf, the creation of a “free trade zone” on the site of the Krupp steelworks, whose survival is at stake.

Reviewing this “conception of the future,” what immediately comes to mind is the British Crown Colony of Hong Kong. Commentaries in the German press were quite to the point: “If the government and the labor and industry associations want to renounce cost-intensive regulations and agreements in a selected region, then this is certainly a competitive advantage, which investors will use.” This was the view of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on Feb. 12, 1988 concerning the “Duisburg Free Zone.” In plainer language, “There will only be investments if wages are cut and work regulations are discontinued.”

Or again, representatives of the “post-industrial” GMF bluntly stated what the future of the Ruhr in this regard is to be. “In my view, ‘free trade zones’ are a stopping point along the advancing ladder, as far as input and qualification are concerned. . . . If you pay people less than the minimum wage, but you give them a job, you will start an upward movement,” said Stuart Butler of the “right-wing,” Washington-based Heritage Foundation at a GMF conference in Washington in 1981. Sir Peter Hall, former president of the “left-wing” Fabian Society, elaborated on the same theme:



Günter Schiele

The Thyssen steelworks in Duisburg, West Germany: a once-proud industry, now slated for willful destruction. Inset: An East German trade exhibit in a department store in Wiesbaden, West Germany.

“The question is, if ‘free trade zones’ will do it the same way as, I believe, ‘sweat shops’ are doing it that currently exist illegally and employ illegal aliens.”

At this same conference, Sir Peter did not hide the fact that the GMF views the establishment of “free trade zones” and “sweat shops” as only the beginning of the complete destruction of industrial centers like the Ruhr.

“Once you have established ‘sweat shops’ and people who work there, they will spread relentlessly as in Hong Kong and Singapore,” said Sir Peter, adding that the propaganda barrage about “zero growth,” “decline of industry,” and “restriction of living standards” over the years will at last “lead to the demoralization of the population, because that is necessary for having them accept major encroachments without too many social upheavals. . . . Now, the German economic miracle will have to be dismantled. Germany will experience a planned collapse.”

The demoralization of the German population as demanded by the GMF in 1981 has almost been accomplished today, only seven years later. Smiles and astonishment have disappeared, horror is spreading. The “planned collapse” of the German economy is on the agenda; nothing else is intended by the “restructuring” of the Ruhr. The “carrot” offered to the cities of the Ruhr for eliminating their industrial base is the prospect of becoming an “environmental and technology center” where the “protection of the environment” not accidentally, has highest priority. Several examples can be given.

- **Dortmund**, one of the most famous former steel and industrial cities of Germany, has already become one of Germany’s largest “service” centers. The decision taken in the early 1980s by all political parties, against the longstanding plan to build a modern oxygen-blast steel plant at Hoesch, but instead to assuage enraged steelworkers and their families by constructing a gambling casino, was the moral death blow for this city. Dortmund is now the “city of banking and insurance,” and a “distribution and services center.”

- **Duisburg**, formerly one of the most productive steel-based industrial cities in the world, will be transformed into a “center for microelectronics and environmental technologies,” despite its ideal logistical position as an industrial site along the Rhine and Ruhr rivers. If a “free trade zone” is to be established inside the already planned “Duisburg Free Port,” where the unemployed will be hired at cut-throat wages bypassing existing labor, social, and tax laws, then the total destruction of this, the largest inland harbor in the world, will be unstoppable.

- **Oberhausen**, the city where the industrial giant Thyssen and the world-renowned machine tool company GHF are based, is supposed to use its enormous productive capacities to become the “largest center for environmental technologies in the world.”

This “evolution” of productive industrial centers into unproductive “environmental and technology centers” absorbing large quantities of potentially productive labor, has been

systematically planned and is centrally coordinated. This becomes clear from North Rhine-Westphalia's 1988 budget plan which state Treasury Secretary Reimut Jochimsen issued in October 1987. Jochimsen knows what he is doing. In the 1970s, during the height of the *Ostpolitik* and the "gas-for-pipes" deal, he worked for three years on the planning staff of then-Chancellor Willy Brandt, and later served as an undersecretary in the Helmut Schmidt government, moving to Dusseldorf in 1980.

Jochimsen's budget proposal which, in his own words, clearly affirms "the priority of securing the future of the mining industry," is exemplary of what today is generally understood as "economic policy of the future." The allocation of funds is fascinating: Of the available DM 2.2 billion, 50% will be spent for "promotion of the energy sector," including nuclear energy, 25% for "promotion of new technologies," 10% for promotion of medium-sized industry and job training, while the state itself, as expressly stated, is satisfied with only 5%.

What a monstrous fraud!

A look at the priorities established in the budget, in which "ecological innovation" ranks before "economic innovation," reveals the real character of this budget proposal, which reads like a prayer book of the Green Party. It is full of "future initiatives," "innovative thrusts," "model projects," and "technology programs," which all sound wonderful, but they have one thing in common: They are uneconomical and unproductive.

The most obvious fraud is the chapter on "promotion of the energy sector." Out of the sizable DM 1.25 billion planned for "support of the mining and energy sectors" in 1988, only 3% (DM 38.3 million) is scheduled for direct aid in the form of "investment grants" for the mining industry. The rest are subsidies of different kinds.

What about nuclear power? While a whole section of the proposal is devoted to it, a closer look provides a surprise: The economic budget of Western Europe's largest industrial region provides less than DM 25 million, not even 1%, for nuclear energy!

The cynicism becomes worse when you look at the way these funds are split up: DM 15 million for "license procedures," and DM 5 million for "safety inspections required after Chernobyl." This is all the more absurd, given that one of the Ruhr region's reactors, the THTR-300 in Hamm, in flawless operation for years, is considered one of the safest reactor types in the world. Another reactor, the fast breeder in Kalkar, which has been completed for a year, is not operating at all because the state government denied it an operating license.

In addition, it is discovered that almost DM 100 million is planned for non-nuclear coal gasification, and a whopping DM 18.2 million for "alternative energy sources" under the rubric "NRW technology program and rational use of energy." Almost a quarter of the budget will go for "ecological

and economic structural change," at DM 579 million.

Of the approximately DM 300 million provided for "support of industry and trade, especially medium-sized industry," almost DM 30 million will be spent for purposes that have nothing at all to do with a productive economy. DM 9.4 million will go for "consumer information," DM 9 million for "support of film industry," DM 6 million for the conduct of fairs, and DM 3 million for "model projects" like "novel business-oriented creation of companies." Behind this pompous title you find "companies" like "ecologically oriented carpentry shops," "stores of natural and quality goods trading in ecological products of daily need" (as if Germany did not have enough "health-food stores" and "Third World shops"), "firms providing jobs for the mentally ill," and "production cooperatives for construction and maintenance."

Given the "priority for securing the future of mining," what prospects will the steel industry have? None, of course, because first, the corresponding title, "Future Initiatives for Mining Regions," while listed first for publicity reasons, provides for only a meager DM 187 million, and second, none of this money is scheduled for restoring the steel industry. These funds will serve only to "make the effects of future mass layoffs more socially bearable." By the end of 1988, an additional 25,000 jobs in the steel sector will be lost.

Conservatively estimated, approximately 75% of the budget will go into unproductive "support" programs—in face of the fact that the reduction of productive jobs continues steadily and is even accelerating. Since the high point of industrial employment in the Ruhr region was reached in 1961, loss of productive jobs averaged 20% in each of the two following decades. In the 1980s, however, this shocking decline was reached after only seven years. In 1986, only about 500,000 persons were industrially employed in the Ruhr, slightly more than half of those employed 25 years ago.

Faced with this ugly truth, the state government's sole commitment is to sweeten it for the rightly enraged citizens. The projects supported by the government, in fact, are "services," although "production-oriented," a formulation that says nothing, but sounds better. In the view of the economics minister, such "production-oriented" services primarily include "financial matters, fairs, market organization, and information," followed finally by "research, development, and qualification," as he stated in a speech to the Social Democratic Party's state parliamentary caucus on Feb. 2, 1988.

The drive to the East

If you believe the statistics published by the state government of North Rhine-Westphalia, this trend toward "service economy" reveals itself to be a "drive to the East." In his government declaration of 1985, Gov. Johannes Rau had declared "strengthening of export policy" to be one of the priorities of "ecological and economic change." We have already dealt with the meaning of "ecological and economic

change.” What then does “strengthening of export policy” mean?

The “NRW export policy concept” issued by Secretary Jochimsen in 1987 is probably more telling than the secretary would like. The preference for Moscow cannot be overlooked. At first you notice that, in 1981, the East bloc ranks fourth as a “priority region” for North Rhine-Westphalia’s economy, and in the following years only fifth, i.e., the lowest rank; in 1980, it had not yet been mentioned at all. In 1985, it moved up to fourth rank again, and suddenly made a giant leap in 1986. Now, the East bloc ranks second, only behind the European Community, while the United States has dropped to fourth place. Obviously, the Dusseldorf government thinks little of winning back traditional export markets in Ibero-America and Africa by way of a new world economic order. Ibero-America is ranked last, while Africa is not even mentioned.

This also fits the economic policy pattern that emerges from several official state visits and North Rhine-Westphalia’s participation in fairs abroad. In 1987, NRW participated in 15 fairs abroad, mostly large industrial fairs, among them, seven—almost half—were in the East bloc. The only fair in the United States that the state government was interested in 1987 was a “kitchen and bathroom fair” in Atlanta, Georgia.

The situation is even clearer if you consider the official tours of state delegations. In 1986, four such visits took place: one to Moscow led by Governor Rau, two to China, and one to the United States, the last a mere obligatory visit in North Rhine-Westphalia’s “partner state,” North Carolina. For 1987-

88, five tours are planned, three to China, including one led by Rau, who will also go to Hungary and India.

Classification and preferences are by no means arbitrary, but correspond to export flows, in which the EC naturally ranks first by a large margin. But immediately following it is the East bloc. In 1986, North Rhine-Westphalia exported to the East bloc (excluding East Germany) goods worth more than DM 12 billion, significantly more than to the United States (DM 9.5 billion). (See **Figure 5**.) This “drive to the East” becomes even more obvious if you consider North Rhine-Westphalia’s share of Germany’s total exports. Currently, NRW contributes a record share of 45% of German exports to China, 40% to the Soviet Union, 34% to Poland, 31.5% to Czechoslovakia, and 28% to Hungary. If you compare corresponding figures to Japan (16.6%) and to the United States (17.2%), which rank among the lowest overall, it becomes clear that North Rhine-Westphalia’s economy has already been decoupled from the two most important Western allies and trading partners outside of Europe.

Engine of a new world economic order

However, there is a real alternative to this type of *perestroika*, which is transforming the Ruhr region into a Soviet protectorate: That is its integration into a new, just world economic order. During recent labor unrest at the Thyssen steel plant in Rheinhausen, NRW, organizers of the “Patriots for Germany” distributed stickers featuring a drawing of the African continent and the slogan, “Steel for the World, Jobs for Us.” What it would mean for the German steel industry were Africa to be developed is clear in one figure: Constructing a railway grid in Africa would require 60 million tons of steel, double Germany’s current yearly output.

Of course, the Ruhr must be “restructured.” But this means a renaissance for coal, using it as a precious raw material for the chemical industry, by way of high-temperature reactors. This means modernizing the steel industry to satisfy the huge demand for quality and specialty steels around the world. This means expansion of plant construction along dimensions which allow assembly line construction of nuclear power plants and complete factory units. This means revolutionizing the machine tool sector through laser technology. And finally, the development of new materials and technologies for the aerospace industry.

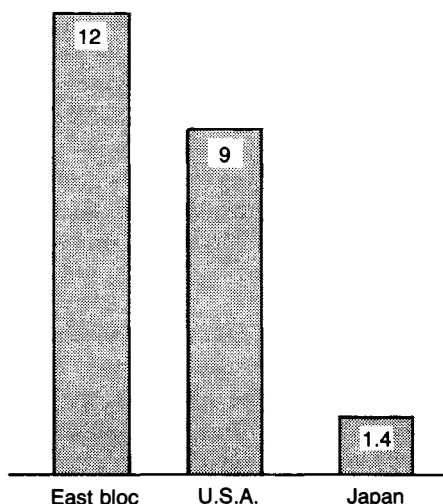
Technically, accomplishing all this would be trivial, once exports were cranked up to meet the development needs of the Third World, development prompted by a reform of the world monetary system and the establishment of a new, just economic order.

The Ruhr, with all its highly-skilled workers and engineers, its huge scientific and economic potential, and its extraordinary transportation infrastructure, which connects it with every country in Europe and those abroad, can and must play a leading role in world development. Otherwise, the people of the Ruhr will soon have to be retrained once again—to speak Russian.

FIGURE 5

North Rhine-Westphalia exports outside the European Community (1986): Most go to East bloc

(in billions of deutschemarks)



SPETSNAZ



SPETSNAZ

In the Pentagon's "authoritative" report on the Soviet military threat, *Soviet Military Power 1988*, the word *spetsnaz* never even appears. But *spetsnaz* are Russian "green berets." Infiltrated into Western Europe, *spetsnaz* have new weapons that can wipe out NATO'S mobility, firepower, and depth of defense, before Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov launches his general assault.

ELECTROMAGNETIC PULSE WEAPONS

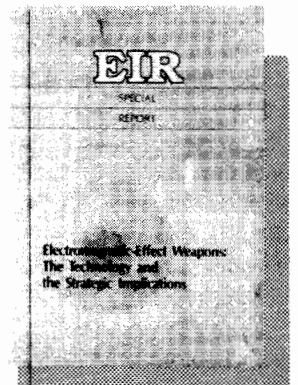
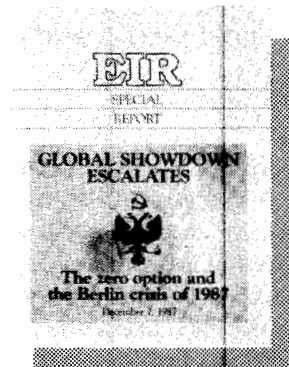
At least the Pentagon report mentions them—but only their "defensive" applications. In fact, they can be transported by *spetsnaz*, finely tuned to kill, paralyze, or disorient masses of people, or to destroy electronics and communications. With EMP, as strategic weaponry or in the hands of *spetsnaz*, the Russians won't need to fire a single nuclear missile to take Europe.

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