

French Electric Workers Strike Against Giscard Gov't. Austerity

Dec. 15 — Workers from the state-owned French electricity company (EGF) went out on a two-day strike Dec. 14 and 15 to protest the Giscard government's refusal to support a two per cent cost of living escalator for the workers. The strike by EGF workers, which is reported by the French press to have been from 70 to 90 per cent effective, is taken as ample proof that the French working class has no intention of accepting the austerity called for by the French government. The French daily *Le Monde* today suggests that if the government continues to reject the two per cent cost of living escalator for the public sector industries, the current EGF action may quickly spread to the coal miners, railroad workers and the Paris public transport workers. The EGF strike has already been reported as "one of the most vigorous ever in this industry" by the *Agence France Presse* wire service. Cuts in service were reported at 30 per cent by *Le Monde*, and Paris subway service was down for two hours today.

Mitterand:

Gaullist RPR A Fascist Political Movement

Dec. 16 — François Mitterand, head of the French Socialist Party, told the French press Dec. 14 that the French economic and political structure "is cracking under the thrust of the (economic) crisis." He warned that the French economy is now experiencing a "British-style spiraling movement" — a vicious cycle of indebtedness, currency devaluation, inflation, recession, and further indebtedness, according to *L'Aurore* Dec. 14. It is in the context of such debilitating economic processes, warned Mitterand, that right-wing and extreme right-wing movements are born.

Mitterand compares the current political

environment to the 1930's during which authoritarian political movements were created in a number of countries. Such is the case with the newly created Gaullist *Rassemblement pour la Republique*, Mitterand hysterically told the press. "Men are free to put themselves in that situation or not (regarding membership in the RPR — Ed.). I do not blame anyone. But to put oneself in that situation in order to give expression to the difficulties of groups doomed to failure, is to endanger oneself with regard to democratic procedures.

"In 1934 also, the (fascist) leagues made a lot of noise, but nevertheless, the (Socialist-Communist) Popular Front won the elections." The same thing will happen in France today, Mitterand concluded.

Giscard Proposes To Stop Nuclear Technology Export To Third World

Dec. 16 — French President Giscard d'Estaing is seriously considering abandoning the sale of nuclear plants to Pakistan and Iran, according to a report by correspondent James Hoaglund in today's *Washington Post*. Hoaglund reports that this proposed reversal of French policy would serve the two-fold purpose of "removing one of the few remaining points of friction between Paris and Washington" and effecting a complete turnabout in a policy, first established by General de Gaulle, of selling nuclear technology to developing countries. That policy which was most recently defended by former Prime Minister Jacques Chirac in the face of U.S. threats to cut off aid with Pakistan if the Franco-Pakistani nuclear deal went through. The French President's decision, says Hoaglund, was forced by the recent moralistic warning by U.S. President-elect Jimmy Carter against nuclear proliferation. Hoaglund also reports that France has already lost ground in their nuclear and armaments contracts with Libya, which is negotiating a series of new deals with the Soviet Union.

Realignment in the Italian Communist Party

Exclusive to NSIPS

Dec. 16 (NSIPS) — The Italian Communist Party, the largest Communist Party in the West with over one million members, and the major de facto parliamentary support for the minority Christian Democratic government of Premier Andreotti, is undergoing a quiet but decisive change in leadership. The reins of power in Italy's second largest party, commanding over 32 per cent of the electorate, are being taken over by a coalition of leaders with historical ties to the industrial working class and a party grouping linked to Italy's public sector industry. This process was dramatically reflected in last week's plenum of the Italian Communist Party Central Committee.

The just concluded plenum demonstrated for all informed observers that the transfer of power from the pro-NATO, pro-austerity grouping which dominated the Thirteenth Party Congress in early 1975 to a leadership committed to increasing political and economic rapprochement with the Soviet Union is nearly completed. In what analysts described as a classic "Stalinist" script, the nominal general secretary of the party Enrico Berlinguer remained silent throughout while other leaders, many of them displaced during the party's more recent anti-Soviet postures, laid down the new line and put words into the mouth of "Comrade Berlinguer" which thoroughly belie his own past policies. The

sequence is thought to have had the behind-the-scenes blessing of pro-Soviet party president Luigi Longo, who during Berlinguer's heyday had been reduced to a virtual figurehead.

In addition, the once-powerful Giorgio Amendola, the leader of the party's right-wing faction and the major mediator between Italy's Communists and such Rockefeller-linked institutions as the New York Council on Foreign Relations, was politically invisible at the plenum. According to press reports, Amendola is being eased out of control of the party's economic think-tank CESPE which he founded, along with his protégé, the pro-austerity economist and CESPE director Eugenio Peggio. Well-informed sources in Italy also note that the Communist Parties semi-dormant factory worker networks are being rejuvenated, with anti-Soviet functionaries being pushed aside to make room for emerging — and returning — working class leaders. This upheaval at the level of the party's sensitive trade-union base is reportedly providing the sociological leverage behind the "coup" in the Central Committee.

The delivery of the keynote address at the plenum by Gianni Cervetti, instead of Berlinguer, is in itself most unusual. During the 1975 Congress Cervetti was elevated to the Secretariat, the top party executive body, as a reputed protégé of Berlinguer, but he has close personal and political ties to Moscow. He emerged into prominence during the initial phases of the anti-Amendola shift which occurred two months ago at the last CC meeting.

Seasoning his remarks with frequent references to the assent of the mute "Comrade Berlinguer," Cervetti outlined an organizing plea for a united front of all Italian democratic parties in which the Communists would be prepared to enter a coalition government — an offer *formally* not unlike that put forward previously by the New York Council on Foreign Relations as a means to use the Communists to police austerity among Italy's workers. However, the Cervetti speech is not likely to please Berlinguer's erstwhile New York mentors, since Cervetti premised the Communists' government bid on agreement on a new economic policy — a policy defined in the official party daily *l'unita* on Dec. 13 as a new monetary system based on a decisive break with the dollar. Further, Cervetti stressed that the Communist Party must be "a governing party as well as a party of popular struggle," and defined the content of "popular struggle" by outlining a policy of education for Commu-

nist cadres. A special worker's conference was announced for a later date.

Following Cervetti's report, the two major presentations by Central Committee members which dominated the meeting were even more emphatic in breaking ground for a return to pro-Soviet policies. This first was by Armando Cossutta, a veteran of the Milan Resistance movement with a large personal power base who guided the party's role in Italian trade with Comecon for many years and whose exclusion from the Secretariat at the 1975 Congress was widely regarded as a deliberate signal of the party's distance from Moscow. In a parry at Berlinguer's oft-quoted pleading for an "autonomous West European communism," Cossutta lamented that there has been too much emphasis on the adjective "new" in describing the processes of the Italian Communists, forgetting the concept of internationalism "which remains one of the particular concepts of communist parties." Cossutta also called for accentuating the traditions of Gramsci and Lenin, precedents which (particularly in the case of Lenin) have been explicitly downplayed and rejected by the Italian Communists ever since Berlinguer at the Thirteenth Congress announced the party's willingness to tolerate NATO.

Berlinguer's pro-NATO, "Eurocommunist" policies were treated to even more pointed barbs by Ambrogio Donini, the head of the Party's Central Control Commission and the last surviving member of a group of older "Stalinist" party leadership who took an uncompromising pro-Soviet stance during the factional controversies of the 1960s. Since those battles were won by the Amendola-Berlinguer group, Donini has been silent or excluded from the press. Last week, however, he took the floor to denounce the terminology "Eurocommunism as the word does not come from our party," and implies a "division into two parts of the European working-class movement." Donini decried the fact that "some" have even asked for NATO to "protect" Italy's independence.

The new public form of the Italian Communists' policies was heralded with fanfare at last week's Congress of the Communist Party of San Marino, considered a virtual appendage of the mighty Italian CP. *Pravda* reports, with obvious satisfaction, that the Soviet delegation was "warmly greeted" by the San Marino party's head Barulli who in his keynote address welcomed the Soviets as representatives of a "bastion of peace and progress" and called for even more active Soviet support for international cooperation.

Portuguese Elections Results Stir Waters for Soares

Dec. 14 (NSIPS) — The ruling Portuguese Socialist Party received 33 per cent of the total votes in local elections in Portugal this week. The PSP's tally is down 2 per cent from the legislative elections last April. The Portuguese Communist Party won 18 per cent of the total vote with particularly high results in the industrial and agrarian reform areas concentrated in southern Portugal. The PCP's 18 percent total is 3 percent its total

in April and the party's daily *O'Diario* declared that the legislative elections have "increased the real possibilities for the defense of the democratic conquests" of the 1975 Portuguese Revolution. The party has now gained control of the majority of the local governing bodies throughout the Lisbon industrial belt and the Alentejo region.

The right-wing Popular Democratic Party (PPD) and