

## Schmidt Speech Sparks Heated Debate in West German Parliament

Three days of heated debate have just ended in the West German Parliament following the Jan. 19 speech of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt on détente and global economic growth. For the first time, spokesmen from Schmidt's camp publicly confronted pro-American, cold warriors in the Christian Democratic Union, who denounced the Chancellor's readiness to collaborate with European forces in reaching firm accords with the Soviet Union and Third World in place of firm support for the Carter Administration in Washington.

On Jan. 21, Chancellor Schmidt defended his government policy by addressing the problem of world inflation, affirming that long-term capital investments can effect economic growth. "I agree with Carter, (Japanese Prime Minister) Fukuda and (French President) Giscard," he stated, "that we must coordinate our economies. However, we can not solve the problems of weak nations through central bank funds, but only by using the capital markets." The present world economic crisis, he emphasized, unlike the depression of the 1930s, cannot be resolved by Keynesian methods precisely because inflationary pressures are now continuously in operation.

"We are under strong pressure," he admitted, "from Carter..." to reflate. Nevertheless, we will "assume our European responsibility, not only for economic reasons, but also for internal and foreign policy considerations."

The Chancellor noted that his preference for long-term investments had been echoed by Gerhard Stoltenberg, a prominent spokesman for the industrial wing of the Christian Democratic opposition. At the same time Schmidt launched repeated attacks on CDU General Secretary Kurt Biedenkopf for attempting to put responsibility for domestic crisis symptoms on the shoulders of the trade unions and government bureaucracy. Schmidt targeted Biedenkopf, a long-term associate of the Georgetown University think-tank, by asserting: "Without (our government officials,) without our trade unions, we would not have freedom."

### *Split Christian Democrats*

It is now openly recognized that the Christian Democrats (CDU) are fractured into two camps. In Oct. 1976, the tensions between Europeanist and pro-American forces reached such a crisis in the opposition

that a short-lived formal split was declared between the CDU and its Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union, chaired by West Germany's neo-fascist leader, Franz Josef Strauss. Although this break was patched up soon after by Strauss and CDU chairman Kohl, none of the fundamental disagreements coursing throughout the party have been resolved.

Most recently, Strauss has announced that he intends to leave the Lower House of the Federal Parliament this summer to become Minister President of Bavaria. Bavaria's CDU General Secretary announced Jan. 20 that he is resigning and speculations are rife in the nation's press about who will replace him.

Moreover, one widely read economics weekly reported in December that the industry-based forces in both the CDU and CSU were quickly consolidating by strengthening the CDU's renowned "Economics Committee." This report declared that the "Economics Committee" of the CDU now boasts 80 members in the Federal CDU Parliamentary fraction, and are striving to get control over key party fraction committees.

On Jan. 20, Gerhard Stoltenberg addressed the Parliamentary debate session, defending at length his decision to continue construction of a fission power plant in the state of Schleswig-Holstein, where he is Prime Minister. A series of violent demonstrations by Maoist-dominated environmentalist groups called into question the completion of this plant, located in the town of Brokdorf. "I would like to warn all those who have attacked the Schleswig-Holstein provincial government out of short-sighted tactical considerations that we have done nothing more than to implement the government declaration of Chancellor Schmidt" of Dec. 16, he stated.

At that time, Schmidt gave a high priority to the rapid development of nuclear energy resources, although following the violent incidents at Brokdorf the Social Democrats have postponed rapid implementation of their nuclear energy program until satisfactory solutions have been worked out on the disposal of nuclear waste materials.

Stoltenberg ironically noted that he had been attacked by Hans Koschnick, Social Democratic mayor of Bremen for defying the environmentalists, although the city of Bremen receives 50 per cent of its energy needs from a government financed nuclear power installation.