

tacked the Prime Minister for attempting to act over Parliament's head regarding relations with the labor movement. Early this month Fanfani nearly accused the government of encouraging public disorders. With these moves the IMF — as recognized by Italian officials — is attempting to set up a center-left coalition government without Andreotti and the Italian Communist Party. Italian radio today warned that Italy's current government situation looks very much like that of Indira Gandhi — thus, Italians had better draw the right conclusions.

Why Topple Andreotti?

While the IMF's loan blackmail and accompanying destabilizations have severely weakened the Andreotti government, it has succeeded neither in destroying the political power of the Italian Communist Party nor in silencing the Andreotti government's commitment to a new monetary system and expanded trade and development. Talking to the European chiefs of state at the European Council meeting held in Rome earlier this week, Andreotti repeated Finance Minister Gaetano Stamatì's call last week for a gold-backed, European currency to substitute for the dollar as the reserve currency. Andreotti further called for a European-wide approach to such problems as unemployment, and industrial and energy development.

The PCI, on its part, continues to campaign for an Italian energy policy, independent of U.S. control in both *Rinascita* and *Unità*, its major publications. In a feature article two days ago, *Rinascita* charged that Italy had no

cogent energy policy "since the time of Enrico Mattei" — the anti-Atlanticist former head of ENI who during the 1950s, until his death in 1962, led the fight against the oil majors. *Rinascita* noted that it is well known that the environmentalists' "anti-fission campaign is financed by the oil companies." In an article written by PCIer Siegmund Ginzberg in *Unità*, declared that the IMF is an institution which, although bankrupted, is trying to impose "letters of intent" while the debt problems continues to grow to dangerous proportions. Nobody should forget, warns Ginzberg, that the 1929 crash was caused by the U.S. policy of having the debt paid.

Yesterday the Andreotti-linked paper *Il Tempo* featured a front-page interview with Giorgio Napolitano, correctly described as second only to General Secretary Enrico Berlinguer within the PCI. Napolitano stated in part: "I think that (regarding the PCI's NATO policy — ed.) we should feel increasingly responsible for a policy of active participation by Italy in the solution of all problems posed to the EEC ... (We want) an increasingly incisive European role within NATO and, generally, in the development of détente ... to arrive ultimately at the superseding of both (the Warsaw Pact and NATO) blocs.... We go beyond (Marxist) dogma because we take into account the problem of development and transformation of advanced capitalist societies.... We can, and must, use (Italy's state sector) for democratic planning, to guarantee socially advanced action of a socialist type, and a comprehensive development in the general interest."

New French Government Gives Gaullists Greater Maneuvering Room

FRANCE

French President Giscard d'Estaing last week removed top representatives of the three political parties which make up the ruling coalition, Interior Minister Poniatoski (Giscard's Independent Republicans), Minister of Regional Planning Lecanuet (Centrist), and the Minister of Justice Guichard (RPR Gaullist). The State Ministers were replaced by what the French press called "technocrats" supposedly to lessen the open strife between these parties.

The major features of the political situation which have emerged with the formation of the new cabinet call for the following conclusions:

1) Giscard has in effect recognized the impossibility of governing with the support of representatives of a disunited presidential coalition. The growing tensions between the Gaullist party on the one hand, and the Atlanticist parties on the other, were prohibitive of any united governmental action.

2) This fundamental contradiction between the pro-development tendency represented generally by the Gaullists, and the monetarist faction represented by the now-deposed Poniatoski and Lecanuet, will not magically disappear as a result of the change in government. Although the cutthroat exchanges within the cabinet itself may be eliminated, they will be increased in the National Assembly, where the rival parties, now with no major government representation, will have much more leeway for their mutual hostilities.

This second phenomenon will soon be verified when the Assembly will be called on to debate certain key issues this spring, in particular the dictatorial statutes of the International Monetary Fund and France's position with respect to the project for a supranational European assembly (both staunchly opposed by former Gaullist Prime Minister Debré and supported by Giscard). Should Giscard try to bypass these confrontations with rule by decree he would be faced with a major constitutional crisis since his own popular mandate has been fast reduced to a smaller and smaller fraction of the population.

Chronic instability in France, exacerbated by recent

austerity measures of Prime Minister Barre, will above all benefit those factions in the political parties which put forward a program of social and economic progress. Those factions have a sole representative in the new government with the appointment of René Monory to the key post of Minister of Industry. Monory, a Senator affiliated with the Centrist party, publicly favored debt moratoria for the Third World countries and a return to a gold-based monetary system in an article which appeared on the front page of *Le Monde* last summer.

The composition of the new cabinet will reinforce the position of Barre, a non-party man, who is now ensured enough relative personal weight to be able to counteract to a greater extent President Giscard's Atlanticism. However, Barre is likely to exercise this power only if the Gaullists mount the decisive offensive required to force him to do so. Otherwise, this "apolitical" form of government is precisely what Gaullist leader Michel Debré has repeatedly warned will deliver France into the hands of the Union of the Left of the Socialist and Communist parties or an equally disastrous Giscardian-Socialist coalition.

In an attempt to destroy that option, Debré issued pointed accusations against the Union of the Left at the

Gaullist party (RPR) Central Committee meeting last weekend. He pointed to the "political and ideological links of the Socialist Party with Washington" and added that "certain Communist leaders are not pure either" in this respect. In so doing Debré is aiming at busting up the Union of the Left and attracting the Communist base in particular to an alliance with the Gaullists around a national program for industrial development.

Debré's return to the forefront of the political scene also means that Jacques Chirac, the newly elected mayor of Paris and Chairman of the RPR, may be compelled to abandon his virulent anti-communist line which is to be used to turn France into a battleground for a phony "left" versus "right" scenario.

Debré additionally stated that "the RPR must first of all count on itself. It must organize, attack, propose, and perfect its image. To attack ... is to demonstrate the disunion of the socialist-communist coalition on methods, objectives, men. It is to demonstrate the scandal of their false unity." His accusations were taken up in the Chirac-linked right-wing paper *Valeurs Actuelles* which traced the connection of PCF foreign policy chief Jean Kanapa and Socialist Party zero-growther Michel Rocard with the New York Council on Foreign Relations.

Showdown With Workers Builds On Production Constriction

After the French municipal elections which resulted in the victory of the Union of the Left, the mood of labor has radically shifted from a depressive stance to one of expectancy, French trade union militants are saying. A number of sharp conflicts in the country have taken on a definite political character as direct challenges to the no-investment policies of the government of President Giscard D'Estaing.

The Elf-Erap oil refinery in the town of Arbès near Bordeaux has been occupied by workers since March 18. At issue is whether the plant will close down or receive state investment funds for modernization. Management states that the company is financially strapped particularly with the government's tight-credit policy. Throughout the Gironde region, strikes and support actions have been going on for occupation.

The head of the Regional Council in Gironde, Chaban Delmas, former Prime Minister under Georges Pompidou and a defeated challenger of Giscard D'Estaing in the 1974 presidential race, has expressed full support for the strikers, and has demanded that the government

allocate the necessary funds for the refinery's modernization. Chaban was joined not only by all the Socialist and Communist Mayors of the area but also by some local Republican Independant elected officials.

The conservative daily *Le Figaro*, which opposes the strike, has nevertheless not hesitated to lay bare the real issue: France, like the European Economic Community as a whole, has agreed to plans, like those in the steel industry, which call for a 30 percent cutback in refinery production and construction.

Meanwhile, dockers shut down the port of Dunkirk following the decision by the steel complex Usinor to ignore standard practices to hire workers of the Communist-controlled CGT union confederation. Dockers are now occupying the entire port and blocking deliveries to all firms in the region. The CGT National Dockers Federation struck nationwide as a warning March 26. Mayor of Dunkirk, Claude Prouvoeur, a member of the Gaullist RPR Party, wrote to Prime Minister Barre asking that he personally intervene and pressure Usinor to open negotiations with the unions.