

Eyewitness Report:

SPD Energy Conference Backs Schmidt, Bucks Carter

WEST GERMANY

COLOGNE, BRD, May 1 (NSIPS) — Leading functionaries from West Germany's trade unions, industry, and the Social Democratic Party (SPD) are now convinced that U.S. President Carter's energy programs, are, to put it politely, "less than democratic." This was the unmistakable consensus at the SPD's conference on "Energy, Employment, and Quality of Life," held in this Rhineland city late last week. Originally called together by SPD Chairman Willy Brandt in order to give a forum for such zero-growth advocates as former World Bank associate Erhard Epper and others, the conference was turned on its head by Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and his allies, ending in a rout for every species of such Naderite.

The centerpieces of the first day of the conference were addresses by Adolf Schmidt, influential head of the mining and energy union, and Prof. Mandel of the Rheinisch-Westfälische Elektrizitätswerke, West Germany's most important power company. Schmidt voiced full support for the government's nuclear energy programs: "I am explicitly for growth as the goal of economic policy... We know from experience in our own country and from comparisons of other industrial countries, that a growing national product without growing energy consumption is inconceivable. All scientific prognoses must proceed on the basis that this close connection will continue to exist in the future."

On the second day, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt explained that the principles of Bonn's nuclear policy have remained unchanged since 1972, when it was worked out in collaboration with Adolf Schmidt and one of the Chancellor's close industrialist allies, Ernst Wolff Mommsen. With this, Schmidt was implying that Rockefeller's managed oil crisis in 1973-74 did not alter this policy.

The environmentalist agents within the SPD nevertheless felt obligated to carry out their scripts. Horst Ehmke, just back from Paris where he probably met with his cohort François Mitterrand, unabashedly claimed that zero growth for the Third World "would not be a catastrophe." Erhard Epper went further to claim that industrialization in the developing countries was wrong, because of the "limits of private financing" for Third World customers "who cannot pay" for advanced West German technology.

The most passionate defender of the Rockefellers' bankrupt monetary system was Freimut Duwe of the RoRoRo publishing house. He argued that "previous development policy has led to a world-wide financial catastrophe for the majority of peoples and nations... The debt

is catastrophic!" This demagogic advocate of "labor-intensive" projects explained that "scarce energy releases human energy which we need for overcoming the technological imagination gap. Our hopes for paradise, for the fast breeder (and even nuclear fusion) produce an irrational attitude towards energy."

Juso Ploy Unsuccessful

Organizationally, these Carter agents had hoped to utilize last week's expulsion of Klaus-Uwe Benneter, head of the SPD's youth group (Jusos), in order to divide the party between "left" versus "right" positions, obscuring the real economic issues. Benneter was suspended by the SPD leadership for writing an article in which he not only attacked the SPD, but also claimed that the real "class enemy" is the opposition Christian Democratic Union (CDU) — which contains some of Chancellor Schmidt's most important industrialist allies. More than one SPDer at the conference privately admitted that Benneter's move was highly suspicious.

But Ehmke, Epper et al. have gotten nowhere with this maneuver. No mass exodus from the SPD has occurred, and the remaining Juso leadership has condemned Benneter's statements. When, at the conference, the vice president of the Naderite "Citizens' Initiative" group tried a similar ploy and attacked the Chancellor for having "lost the confidence of the people," he was hissed off the stage by an overwhelming majority of the SPD members present.

Industry Speaks Out

One industry spokesman had the courage to intimate that Jimmy Carter's energy programs are explicitly fascist. Klaus Barthelt of the nuclear firm Kraftwerke-Union, protagonist of West Germany's \$4 billion nuclear technology deal with Brazil, pointed out that Carter-style programs would force the "decoupling" of economic growth from the growth of energy consumption, "at the price of our freedom."

Barthelt went still further to attack the "systems analysis" view of the world upon which Carter bases his programs. "You could of course think of a considerable energy conservation if you took the standpoint that growth in electricity consumption is not necessary... The only question is how realistic the presuppositions are, how they can be realized and what their consequences are. But whoever makes such claims on the basis of systems-analysis theoretical constructions usually says that this strategy of energy conservation is achievable without losing jobs, comfort, and without massive economic disadvantages. Whoever says this must be either blind to the economic realities, or else he must really want something different than what he's saying."

West Germany's potential to assume a leading interna-

tional role in counteracting Carter's fantastic military scenarios was thrown into sharp relief by an interchange between a systems analyst from Essen, Klaus Meyer-Abich, and Karl Kaiser of the Institute for Foreign Policy. Meyer-Abich transmitted a veiled threat from Carter: West Germany ought to concentrate on domestic energy conservation, so as to reduce "the international conflict potential." "Will that really help?" was Kaiser's pointed response. "A Middle East crisis could break out Monday." He proceeded to argue in favor of the government's export of nuclear technology "both to secure the

nation's energy supply and as economic cooperation aimed at development and peace."

Contrary to past instances, most of the press and media have been open about the fact that Schmidt's policies are now hegemonic. In an American television interview Schmidt said that "The Federal Republic will sell its nuclear technology to anyone who wants to buy it." A West German radio station has stated flatly that "American and German energy interests are not the same."

— George Gregory

'Brandt Era' Comes To Close In West Berlin

The resignation this week of West Berlin Lord Mayor Klaus Schütz is the outcome of a long-seething confrontation between two factions in West Germany's governing Social Democratic Party for control of the city. The estimation of a number of informed observers is that Schütz's decision to resign, following a series of financial and mismanagement scandals, constitutes a decisive defeat for SPD chairman and former West Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt, and a victory for Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt.

The right-wing daily *Die Welt* called Schütz's resignation "the end of the Brandt era in West Berlin." It is well known that Brandt's international reputation, which soared with the 1961 crisis around the Berlin Wall, began under the personal sponsorship of Supreme Allied Commander for Germany, John J. McCloy, who was also a director for Chase Manhattan Bank. The Brandt machine in West Berlin has been committed to the use of the city as a source of provocations against the Warsaw Pact. Now, with the replacement of Schütz by Schmidt's man Dieter Stobbe, the likelihood that West Berlin will emerge as a major source of tension between NATO and the Warsaw Pact has been greatly reduced.

In a special feature on the city in the London *Sunday Times* May 1, the suggestion was floated that West Berlin become a center for negotiations on European-wide East-West trade. The Times reported that the Japanese as well as a number of Soviet Bloc countries are attempting to set up trade fairs there, and the Chamber of Commerce and the business community are very receptive to the idea.

Within West Germany's Social Democratic Party, the fight around Berlin is just one of a number of issues which have brought Schmidt and Brandt onto a collision course. Brandt is a firm supporter of the U.S. Carter Administration on energy, environmental and monetary policy, and is actively coordinating with the U.S. Administration to weaken Schmidt, who recently has been

thrust into the position of Europe's leading spokesman against Carter's international economic programs. At the same time that a large number of Italian newspapers predicted this week that Schmidt will be in an all-out fight with Carter at the May 8 western summit meeting, Brandt has been coordinating an extremist fringe of the SPD to topple Schmidt.

The Italian daily *Corriere della Sera* responded to the news of Schütz's resignation by reporting that "this Brandt-Schmidt dualism, which seemed destined to emerge from the underground labyrinth to which it had been long confined, has now surfaced to aggravate the SPD crisis." Schmidt, the paper asserts, "has crossed the Rubicon" and decided that he will consolidate his control of the party at all costs. If necessary, *Corriere* claims, he is willing to enter into a Grand Coalition with industrial-tied Christian Democrats, presently in the parliamentary opposition, to defeat his extremist opponents within the SPD.

SPD Business Manager Egon Bahr, a former member of the cabinet when Brandt was Chancellor, has made a number of efforts to undercut Schmidt on Brandt's behalf. Before Stobbe's appointment, Bahr went to West Berlin and attempted to rally support around another candidate, Juergen Wischnewski. The *Süddeutsche Zeitung* commented in an editorial that Schmidt made a mistake in appointing Bahr business manager earlier this year, since he is only an "operative" and has no base in the party.

The conflict between the chief figures in the party also includes a fight over legislation and judicial means to fight "terrorism." The regional daily *Mainzer Allgemeine Zeitung* allowed a potentially explosive leak through this week on the disagreements over terrorism. Recently, Chancellor Schmidt called together a conference of security and judicial experts from all parties to work out a joint policy on the terrorist threat. Brandt chose, according to the daily, to boycott the proceedings.