

Heinrich Geissler, General Secretary of the CDU, has undergone a similar transformation. As late as Oct. 16, Geissler was saying that Chancellor Schmidt was "obsolete" and "ripe for resignation." Two days later, he changed his mind and insisted that "in this situation, terms like government and opposition cease to exist."

Franz Josef Strauss, however, leader of the CDU's Bavarian sister-party, the CSU, remains a question

mark in this emerging constellation. During the hijacking, Strauss was visiting Saudi Arabia on Prince Fahd's invitation, and therefore was unable to intervene to sabotage collaboration between government and opposition, a role he has often taken. So far he has merely complained that he was not sufficiently informed by the all-party "crisis staff" while he was away.

Gov't Crisis Looms In Portugal

President Ramalho Eanes opened the Portuguese Parliament's session Oct. 15 with a warning that he "will not hesitate to assume broad political powers" if the nation's political parties fail to agree on a program to solve the country's ongoing crisis. Declaring that he has the backing of the military, Eanes reminded the parties that they do not "have much time" and said that he would not stand by and see Portugal sink into chaos.

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Under the Portuguese Constitution, the President can either dissolve the Parliament or appoint a new prime minister to form a new government or both. Eanes' strong speech comes amid increasing general discontent with the Socialist monopoly government of Second International Prime Minister Mario Soares, and ever more insistent rumors that his government will hardly be able to survive beyond October, as four cabinet members have resigned within recent months.

Soares has been under constant fire from the Portuguese Communist Party for attempting to implement the policies dictated by the International Monetary Fund of denationalization and undoing earlier agrarian reforms. He is now facing fierce opposition from both the pro-working-class and the pro-IMF factions within his own Socialist Party.

Reflecting the healthy anti-Soares sentiment within the Socialist rank and file, last week 20 members of the party's Central Committee denounced Soares's IMF policies as a "continuous right-wing praxis" not to be tolerated in a socialist party. The Central Committee members' denunciation represented a de facto alliance with the communists, and followed by only a month the resignation of Agricultural Minister Antonio Lopez Cardoso over disagreement with the government's program that would give 80 percent of the expropriated

land back to its former owners. Lopez Cardoso and his faction, *Fraternidad Obrera* (Workers' Fraternity), have been given eight days to leave the party "voluntarily" or face expulsion.

Facing the threat head on, Lopez Cardoso called a press conference Oct. 20 in which he demanded an extraordinary national congress to discuss the Socialist Party's internal crisis. "We do not have to choose between the Socialist Party and *Fraternidad Obrera*," said Cardoso, and warned that the members of his faction include "four deputies, 12 members of the national commission, and thousands of followers" within the party's ranks.

The most recent shake-up within Soares's cabinet came a week and a half ago, when Foreign Minister Jose Medeiro Ferreira resigned his post. Medeiro's resignation was followed by a resignation threat from new Agricultural Minister Barreto, the architect of the government's agrarian counterreform, and a barrage of editorials from the Socialist press condemning the Prime Minister's inability to impose the IMF austerity package.

It is universally acknowledged that Soares cannot continue to rule alone. It remains open, however, what government or coalition will succeed him. Prior to his speech, President Eanes conducted meetings with all party leaders, including the Communist Secretary General Alvaro Cunhal. Although it had been reported that Eanes intended to form a government leaving out the Communist Party and the trade-union movement—80 percent of which is under Communist control—Eanes gave no indication of this during his speech, and in fact called for an alliance between workers, industrialists, and all political parties to elaborate a viable economic program. Eanes's speech was backed by Communist leader Cunhal, on the grounds that now "the basis exists to contain the offensive against the conquests of the revolution and the capitalist restoration policies of Soares's government."