

Socialist International maps out new plan to help Communist parties

by Mark Burdman

With backing of the Soviet and British governments, the Socialist International is on a mobilization to sabotage the revolutionary political processes now breaking out in Central and Eastern Europe. This mobilization was mapped out during a gathering of the European branch of the Socialist International, the so-called "Euro-socialists," held in Milan, Italy during the week of Oct. 30.

Well-informed Central European sources warn that the new *Ostpolitik* offensive of the Euro-socialists is part of a broader strategy by the international social-democratic movement, to ally with the communist parties of East and West Europe, in a new global strategic "convergence." In line with this, the head of the Italian Communist Party (PCI), Achille Occhetto, announced on Nov. 14 that his party will soon hold a new convention, to "re-found" itself, and will change its name, dropping the designation "communist." The purpose of this, PCI leaders frankly stated, would be so that the PCI could officially join the Socialist International. The London *Guardian* reported that this was the subject of the discussions which Occhetto had during the week of Nov. 6 with British Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock. PCI sources report that Occhetto will discuss the matter with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov when the latter visits Rome at the end of November.

Re-creating the Second International

The Milan "Euro-socialist" meeting was held under the coordination of Willy Brandt, the former West German chancellor. Participants included Spain's Prime Minister Felipe González, France's Jacques Delors (president of the European Commission of the European Community), Italy's Bettino Craxi, and Austria's Franz Vranitsky. The theme of the meeting was to formulate a "Euro-socialist" policy approach toward the economic and political crises in the East bloc. According to reports in the Italian press, Brandt insisted that initiatives toward Eastern Europe *not* be taken by individual Western European countries, but rather as joint initiatives that would involve a central role for the Socialist International.

On Nov. 3, Brandt announced that the Socialist International would be sending a delegation to Moscow during the first days of 1990, headed by France's Pierre Mauroy. Brandt

told the press that an invitation had been extended for such a visit by the Soviet leadership, when Brandt visited the U.S.S.R. last October, and this invitation has been rapidly accepted. Brandt also stated that the Socialist International will be holding its next global meeting in Geneva, Switzerland at the end of November, at which time it will officially issue its platform for policy toward eastern Europe.

The U.S.S.R., meanwhile, is playing the "Socialist International card" as its trump. At the Oct. 19 meeting of the Politburo of the Soviet Communist Party, a leading agenda item was the upgrading of relations between the party and the Socialist International, according to an Oct. 20 Radio Moscow news item. Radio Moscow said that this decision had been taken on the basis of a report issued to the Politburo by Gorbachov, on the subject of his meetings earlier that month with Willy Brandt.

France's *Le Monde* reported on Nov. 3 that a growing number of Soviet "reformers" are citing the social-democracies, particularly those of West Germany and Sweden, as potential models for the U.S.S.R. One related proposal circulating in such circles, says *Le Monde*, is for the re-creation of the old unified Second International, which existed until the time of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and the launching, of the competing Third, or Communist, International.

Occhetto's Nov. 14 announcement on the PCI "name change," and his end-of-November discussions with Gorbachov, should be seen in this light.

Countering 'Food for Peace'

One obvious focus of the "Euro-socialists" has been to counter the "Food for Peace" initiative of Lyndon LaRouche and associates. In a speech in Berlin in October 1988, LaRouche had called for providing food aid to the Soviet Union, in exchange for Soviet recognition of a Western economic development program for Poland and the reunification of Germany.

The Milan daily *Corriere della Sera* on Nov. 4 cited Willy Brandt saying that an urgent priority of the "Euro-socialists" will be to create a "Food Bank" that can mobilize immediate food aid to those countries in Eastern Europe most in need.

But since the Socialist International has taken the lead in pushing “ecological-fascist” global initiatives that are reducing world food production, where are they going to find the food? From June 20-22 of this year, the Socialist International had its 100th anniversary meeting in Stockholm, and proclaimed “environmentalism” as the “new mission” of the movement for the coming years. Socialist International speakers endorsed the Soviet government’s proposal for “international ecological security” and embraced precisely those approaches which would guarantee a collapse of food production—including “sustainable development,” “ecologically balanced development,” “appropriate technologies,” “intensified energy conservation,” and a phasing out of use of fertilizers and chemical pesticides. The conference’s policy document stated that controlling “world population growth” would be a high priority.

Mrs. Thatcher, Social Democrat

In West Germany, the predominant factions in the Social Democratic Party (SPD), working in parallel with the West German Green Party, are going to absurd lengths to destroy the political breakthroughs that have occurred in association with the opening of parts of the Berlin Wall. One typical act, was SPD Mayor of West Berlin Walter Momper’s attack on Chancellor Helmut Kohl for using the expression “the German people.” Momper insisted that there exists a separate “East German people” that is not favorable to the reunification of Germany. For those who have seen the signs carried by East German demonstrators in Leipzig on the night of Nov. 13, calling for, “Free elections in a united Germany,” and who have seen the joyous scenes of East and West Germans embracing each other at the border crossing-points, Momper seems not only to be a liar, but a fool.

Even more absurdly, the SPD is taking credit for having *caused* the process of revolutionary change in East Germany, through its “social-democratic ideas,” and through Brandt’s *Ostpolitik*. In fact, within West Germany, the SPD has been the main institutional supporter of the East German Communist party (SED) *nomenklatura*, having for years maintained an SPD-SED party-to-party “round-table” structure. Should the protocols of some of these agreements be published now, side by side with the past period’s SPD statements of support for the unpopular SED boss Egon Krenz, the SPD could suffer major political embarrassments in West Germany.

But full blame should not fall on the shoulders of Momper, SPD head Hans-Jochen Vogel, Brandt, and the rest. Britain’s great conservative anti-socialist, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, has come up with a new scheme to head off the reunification of Germany. According to highly informed British sources, Mrs. Thatcher has become a social-democrat, and advocates that East Germany be encouraged to transform itself into a “social-democratic” nation! Perhaps she plans to be a guest speaker at the next convention of the Italian Communist Party.

Political stalemate continues in Pakistan

by Ramtanu Maitra

The victory of the ruling Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) government over the Combined Opposition Parties (COP), by defeating a no-confidence motion on Nov. 1, has provided the duly elected government in Pakistan another lease on life. However, the rumblings heard in Pakistan suggest that unless Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto can come to grips with the ethnic and provincial problems that are making the country ungovernable, the well-deserved victory may turn out to be pyrrhic.

Prime Minister Bhutto is simultaneously facing pressures from abroad, as the International Monetary Fund demands further economic austerity measures, the drug traffickers escalate their own campaign against the country, and Washington, Moscow, and competing Afghan groups all jockey for power in the region.

The COP, led by the Islami Jamhooria Ittehad (IJI) chief and Punjab chief minister Nawaz Sharif, had sought to remove the Bhutto government by initiating a no-confidence motion in the National Assembly. The charges against the government, succinctly expressed by Syeda Abida Hussain, an independent member from Jhang, Punjab, who had supported Bhutto in forming the government about a year ago, were “inefficiency and corruption.” While inefficiency and corruption are certainly problems, the political crisis that the prime minister faces is more deep-rooted and cannot be decided by simply winning a no-confidence motion in the National Assembly.

Mixed signals

This became evident soon after, when Baluchistan Chief Minister Nawab Akbar Bugti, no friend of the federal government, told a newsman that “stranger things” will soon begin to happen. COP leader Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, a former PPP stalwart and chief minister of Sind province, did not mince his words in announcing the COP’s determination to continue with its efforts to unseat the government. As a gesture of reconciliation, Prime Minister Bhutto has reportedly sent out feelers to at least two prominent opposition leaders who had fought alongside her against the martial law regime of the late President Mohammed Zia ul-Haq, and asked them to resolve their differences with the ruling party.