

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 newsmen 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.

But, as has occurred often during her one year in power, Bhutto's gestures are confusing. On the one hand, through the so-called feelers, she is appealing to "like-minded" politicians in the opposition to bury the hatchet, while on the other, she has taken into her cabinet two opposition members who voted for her in the National Assembly during the no-confidence motion and drew the wrath of the COP. The latter move is widely read in Pakistan, particularly in Punjab, as yet another indication that Prime Minister Bhutto is keen to confront the opposition and not have a dialogue with them.

Prime Minister Bhutto's major headaches are located in Punjab and Sind. (This, however, does not mean that she has the other two provinces, Baluchistan and the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), under her control.)

Opposition from Punjab

Punjab, the most populous and prosperous province in Pakistan, is under the control of the IJI, although the ruling party had won more National Assembly seats in Punjab than the IJI.

Nawaz Sharif, the Punjab chief minister and secretary-general of the Islami Jamhoorie Ittehad, is a man with few scruples. Backed by money-power and friends in powerful places in the Army and abroad, Sharif has declared a virtual war against Bhutto and her government. A protégé of the late Gen. Zia ul-Haq and scion of the wealthy Ittefaq group of industries, Sharif can be crude and vulgar when he chooses to be. Besides being powerful, Sharif is also scheming. He has appointed a public relations firm in the United States, paying a tidy packet of money every month, to lobby for the opposition in Washington. His hatred toward the Bhuttos is well known; he has publicly promised his followers that he will throw the remaining members of the Bhutto family into the Arabian Sea.

The Sind cauldron

In Sind, the home province of Benazir Bhutto and the only province where the PPP secured an absolute majority in the provincial polls, an urban political phenomenon, Mohajir Qaum Movement (MQM), has become a thorn in the side of the PPP.

The MQM is nominally a non-political grouping of those Muslims who migrated from India following partition in 1947, and has since emerged as a well-knit group with bases in Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkar in Sind. Because of a large concentration of population in the cities of Sind, which otherwise consists of vast tracts of semi-desert arid lands, the MQM has emerged as a political force. Its strength became clear in last year's election, when it captured 13 National Assembly seats and more than 25% of the Sind Provincial Assembly seats. An Urdu-speaking group in the midst of the Sindhi-speaking provincial majority, MQM has for years challenged the Sindhi nationalists and various secessionist groups. Shunning political alliances, MQM has remained an

unadulterated Mohajir grouping, trying to exert its urban muscle to control the major commercial centers of Sind.

This situation has put the ruling party on the defensive on its own turf. While the PPP, which promotes a strong and unified Pakistan, has long been at loggerheads with the Sindhi secessionists, the MQM's anti-Sindhi postures and insistence on controlling the populous urban centers of Sind has made the grouping unpalatable to the PPP rank and file.

Following the 1988 elections, Bhutto needed the MQM's support to form the government, and entered into an agreement promising to meet a long list of MQM demands. Though the MQM continued to support the government in the National Assembly, MQM leaders have been complaining for some time that the prime minister has done next to nothing to fulfill the post-election agreement.

Meanwhile, months of violence involving the MQM and the Sindhis, which continues to this day, have seen hundreds dead in both rural and urban areas of the province. It was this more than anything else that finally snapped the uneasy MQM-PPP alliance. Though the MQM is now firmly in the opposition camp, it is debatable how long they can remain in a camp dominated by the Punjab-led opposition.

More specifically, the situation in Sind is fast heading toward a point of no return, and neither Bhutto nor her party stalwarts in Sind have shown any effort, besides blaming each other, to tackle it. It is evident that the PPP workers on the group in Sind are becoming increasingly polarized against the MQM; bloodletting between the two groups has already started.

Prime Minister Bhutto has so far shown little ability to handle either the MQM or Nawaz Sharif. It is also evident that the IJI, disruptive as it is, has a strong base in the Punjab. This was made clear a few days after the COP's failure to unseat Bhutto, when IJI scored an unexpected victory in the by-election contest for the Jehanian National Assembly seat in Punjab. The seat had fallen vacant following the death of an elected PPP member, yet in the by-election, the IJI candidate, Irshan Hussain Maitla, won the seat by 2,900 votes. Although the PPP has charged "irregularities" in the poll, some PPP insiders acknowledge that the loss of the seat is indeed "a blow."

Continuation of the stalemate between the ruling party and the Opposition has dangerous consequences. Recently Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mirza Aslam Beg reminded newsmen that his suggestion following the November elections to form a broad-based government is still a valid one. PPP officials, however, ruled out the idea of a coalition government with the COP at the federal level. And in another corner, the former Jamaat-e-Islami chief and prominent Jamaat leader during the days of Zia ul-Haq, Mian Tufail Ahmad, has declared that Pakistan has had enough of democracy. Orthodox Muslims, modest in numbers but with connections to the Army, have long been sharpening their knives against the PPP.