

in the two superpowers' arms-reduction tallies which might cripple the warhead modernization program. The Warsaw Pact also made it known that about 200 SS-22 missiles (with a range of 1,000-1,300 kilometers and one-megaton warheads) have already been deployed in East Germany and Czechoslovakia, obviously assigned to French military targets.

What kind of assurances did Mitterrand receive from his U.S. partner? Secretary of State George Shultz's declaration last summer that the administration would not rule out the inclusion of the French and British strategic forces in the Intermediate Nuclear Force arms-control talks, though quickly denied by the State Department, has inflicted serious political damage. And the numerous visits by Shultz and Henry Kissinger to Paris during 1983 only confirmed the belief of French leaders that, whatever President Reagan said on March 23, military security has to be thought of in terms of MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction).

During the last half of 1983 the Soviet pressure on France increased in scope and brutality: this includes the Islamic terrorist attacks in Marseilles; direct threats to the President's life; social and political destabilization by the Communist Party (PCF) and the Communist-led CGT labor federation; and scandals to demoralize the population, such as the attempt by Soviet asset Jacques Verges, the defense lawyer for Nazi butcher Klaus Barbie, to use the trial to discredit French Resistance figures.

François Mitterrand is weakened not only by his governmental alliance with the PCF, but by the kind of alliance he has struck inside his cabinet with all kinds of KGB/Pugwash operatives, like the pro-terrorist Régis Debray, one-worldist Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson, and the Malthusian freak Jacques Attali. But the main reason he is trying to appease the Soviets by offering them a move to ban beam weapons, is that he was told to do so, through various channels, by the U.S. State Department and the Eastern Establishment.

Who has developed a campaign against beam weapons in the entourage of President Mitterrand? On May 27, the Socialist Party (PSF) weekly *L'Unité* published a prominent attack against President Reagan's "Star Wars" as leading to "a dangerous arms race." The author, Hugo Sada, had recently returned from a trip to the United States with former Cooperation Minister Jean-Pierre Cot, one of the favorite French Socialists of the New York Council on Foreign Relations circles. This followed a slanderous article against the Parti Ouvrier Européen (POE), depicted as a fascist organization in *L'Unité* of the week before. The POE, which has links to *EIR* founder Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., is a leading spokesman for the beam-weapons policy in France. The chief editor of *L'Unité*, Claude Estier, had also returned from a tour in the United States with a parliamentary delegation which met with Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth Dam, Kissinger protégé Robert McFarlane of the National Security Council, *Washington Post* editors, and others.

## A turning point for

by Susan Maitra

The plenary session of the Indian National Congress—the first in nearly 10 years—gives every evidence of opening a new chapter in the history of the political party and mass movement that won India's independence and has shaped its remarkable development.

Events leading into the three-day session, which began Dec. 27 in Calcutta, underscore that conclusion. The Dec. 24 announcement of the government's plan to establish 2000-MWe nuclear-power stations in each of the four main regions of the country, including the coal-dominated eastern region, marked both an advance in India's self-reliant nuclear program (see *EIR*, Jan. 17) and an indication of the quality of approach that will be increasingly reflected in economic planning decisions.

Moreover, by-election victories in different parts of the country on Dec. 23 increased the certainty that the National Congress will retain the mandate to push forward India's development in the upcoming 1985 general election. The Congress's decisive victories in 8 of the 11 elections held in the states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and West Bengal, are demoralizing the spectrum of opposition groups, from the right-wing Hindu fanatics of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to the left-of-Moscow Communist Party of India (Marxist), the CPI(M).

Since the BJP is the only one of the lot that even pretends to be a national party, its inability to win in any of the seats it contested, or even pose a serious threat, was most damaging. These defeats certified the BJP's declining appeal among the electorate of North India, first manifested in the party's miserable performance in the June elections in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The BJP took the entire gamut of rightist politicians down with it, notably the leaders of the rich-peasant-based Lok Dal, which has been forced to reconsider its electoral alliance with the BJP. The prognosis: the fracture of any hope of a viable right opposition front.

At the other end of the spectrum was the Congress's stunning victory over the ruling CPI(M) in West Bengal in two electoral contests. Besides the explicit repudiation of the ruling CPI(M), it is significant that the voters turned to the Congress and not one of the other left parties, even though petty squabbling in the state Congress organization had kept

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it from any active role in the campaign. Jyoti Basu, the CPI(M) front man and West Bengal chief minister who maintains personal contacts with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, has recently accused Mrs. Gandhi of becoming increasingly pro-United States in her foreign policy. Reportedly stunned by the surge of Congress sentiment on their own turf, the leftist leaders were then confronted with a resurgent Indian National Congress—no longer the sectarian-tinged “Congress(I),” as Mrs. Gandhi has recently insisted—at the Calcutta session.

In her direction of the plenary session, in her speeches to the 26,000 party workers in attendance, in her press conferences and presidential address, Indian Prime Minister and Congress Party President Mrs. Indira Gandhi's firm leadership of the party was reaffirmed. At the same time, Rajiv Gandhi, who has been patiently and persistently rebuilding the Congress Party grass-roots organization over the past year, emerged as a tough and effective leader.

The political, economic, and international resolutions Mrs. Gandhi motivated for passage were sharp and uncompromising on basic policy. Provoking “shades of Castro!” editorials in at least one section of the Indian press, the international resolution spelled out the threats to the integrity of India on both the regional and global planes and reviewed India's basic foreign policy planks—including the Non-Aligned initiative for world economic reform, and an appeal to the superpowers to quickly take up their responsibility to resume negotiations. The economic resolution, passed unanimously after seven hours of debate, re-emphasized the objectives of faster growth and social justice in an economy increasingly recognized to be ready for new qualitative strides. The political resolution, particularly scathing on the issue of unholy opposition alliances, with the emphasis on those right-wing forces promoting communalism and regionalism, was widely viewed as an implicit opening to the left.

Yet just as pundits were identifying the prime minister's new “left turn,” Rajiv Gandhi, the prime minister's son, delivered a blistering attack on the CPI(M) government in West Bengal for economic incompetence and duplicity. And the following day, in her presidential address, the prime minister made a point of exposing the fraud of the left parties

who declared their allegiance on foreign policy and their opposition on domestic policy, and who “make no secret of their determination to remove us from power,” she added, including “actual eagerness to ally with groups whom, at other times, they themselves castigated as rightist, reactionary, and communal. . . .”

“It does not need much thought to perceive that foreign policy is but a projection and extension of domestic policy,” Mrs. Gandhi stated. The point was not likely to have been lost either on the visiting Soviet delegation, one of a half-dozen fraternal delegations from East bloc nations and France. The Soviet delegation had arrived with a fresh resolution reaffirming Soviet political, economic, and defense support to India from no less than the Politburo, and the delegation leader had just delivered a speech lauding Mrs. Gandhi's foreign policy.

Political pundits have still not figured out what to make of such apparently contradictory goings-on. At Mrs. Gandhi's concluding press conference, one miffed commentator asked her to comment on the discrepancies between the “conciliatory” reference to the left in the political resolution and the harsh tone of the speeches. “It was not a question of being conciliatory or otherwise,” Mrs. Gandhi said. “We are not pro- or anti- anybody. It is a question of policies—wherever the policies are wrong, either in West Bengal or elsewhere, and whenever secularism is threatened, we have to oppose. A party by itself is not the evil, but its actions and policies make it so. Those creating communal disharmony have to be countered.”

While the pundits continue debating, whether she is heading to the “right” or “left,” Mrs. Gandhi most likely means just what she says. As she emphasized in her presidential speech—where she reviewed the political and economic history of independent India from the 1883 Calcutta meeting that founded the Congress, and discussed the challenges confronting the nation—the Congress is not merely a political party. The Congress is a mass movement, the same one that won freedom and built up independent India and whose members identify themselves as Congress men or women by, as she put it, “a sense of dedication, a willing identification with a cause higher than oneself.”

It was the broadest and most urgent issues, namely, advancing national integration and speeding economic development, which Mrs. Gandhi sought to put forth in Calcutta as the rallying cry, not only for the Congress Party in the next election, but for the nation. As she put it in her presidential address: “The very freedom and the integrity of the nation are in double jeopardy—from outside threats, and from those who are focusing on small questions diverting attention from the larger issues on which the solution of the smaller and specific depends.” Indira Gandhi's determination and manifest capability to rekindle the spirit and drive of the national movement in India will mark the 77th plenary session of the Indian National Congress as a turning point.