

Atlanticists Forced to Back East-West Trade

Sept. 4 (IPS)-- In the aftermath of the Copenhagen NATO meeting last week, where forces under the direction of U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger made explicit moves to wreck East-West trade and push for thermonuclear confrontation, West German anti-Atlanticists have renewed their offensive in the opposite direction.

Similarly, anti-Rockefeller factions in the U.S. have taken steps to reaffirm their support for detente based on expanded East-West trade.

Rockefeller is now forced to operate in a controlled environment created by the panic over the collapsing dollar and by months of organizing by working class forces for a monetary system to replace it.

The pressure created by this controlled environment is so great that even avowed Atlanticists like West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and Christian Democratic Union head Helmut Kohl were forced this week to stand behind East West trade.

Schmidt on NATO

When asked at a press conference this week during his visit to New York City whether he was in agreement with the policies laid out at last week's NATO meetings, a nervous Schmidt announced, "I don't know where such a policy (the sabotage of East-West trade) came from, but I will say that I reject such a policy out of hand."

"Strategically, cooperation between the two sectors greatly enhances the prospects of peace," the West German Chancellor elaborated. "From an economic point of view East-West trade is extremely advantageous (to West Germany)."

Schmidt's sober statements are a reflection of the pressure he is feeling from the faction of his own Social Democratic Party (SPD), led by parliamentary fraction leader Herbert Wehner. And pro East-West trade forces the CDU opposition led by CDU leader

Gerhard Stoltenberg. The penalty for toeing the Schlesinger line is a swift political demise.

Similarly, CDU chairman and another long-time Rockefeller agent Kohl, flanked by CDU officials Weizaecker and Marx, told a Bonn press conference that "economic cooperation was a very important theme of discussion" during his just-concluded 10-day visit to the Soviet Union. "I asked them (the Soviets) what are the exact points in their upcoming five-year plan," the CDU chairman said. "Their answers show that a long term orientation by the German economy is necessary here." Kohl, who had previously been an outspoken opponent of the Stoltenberg faction, also reported that he had an extraordinary two-hour long conversation with the Soviet head of the BRD-USSR Economic Commission, the body that facilitates trade deals. Weizaecker the second in command of the CDU delegation, in an implicit denunciation of the Copenhagen policy told the press "solutions cannot be reached through threats, only through cooperation of the three great camps: the industrialized nations, the Comecon sector, and the Third World." The office of CDU parliamentarian Lamberback told IPS this week, that the Kohl visit to the Soviet Union represented a major commitment on the part of the party to East-West trade and detente. In addition, Lamberback's office stated that CDU'ers who had advanced the Schlesinger line against East-West trade at last week's NATO meetings, were speaking for themselves and not for the CDU.

The industrial layers who back the CDU are also adamantly opposed to Schlesinger. Industrialists and economists at the large West German concerns of Krupp, Telefunken, and Bund Deutsche Industrie became angry

and hysterical when briefed on NATO Copenhagen discussions. "If what you say is true, (about moves to wreck detente), one industrial spokesman told IPS, "its unbelievable!" Each spokesman affirmed his companys commitment to continued detente. In this context, even the raving Maoist Franz Josef Strauss, the head of the Christian Socialist Union, has been forced to curb his anti-Communist diatribes. In an opposite editorial this week in the major West German business daily Handelsblatt, Strauss reiterated CDU-proposals for economic austerity. Significantly, the would-be Fuhrer omitted his usual attacks on the communist menace.

Meanwhile in the U.S., Sargent Shriver, the Democratic presidential hopeful, took off for Moscow this week ostensibly to look into his private hotel-building enterprises in the USSR. The Soviets used the visit of Shriver, one of the major anti-Rockefeller spokesmen as a means to tell Schlesinger-Kissinger what they thought of their efforts to wreck detente.

In the two-hour meeting with Shriver, Kosygin blasted the Kissinger blackmail proposal to barter U.S. grain for Soviet oil. Shriver told the press that the Soviets "want to purchase grain for cash and if we (the U.S.) don't sell it to them someone else will." He reported that Kosygin predicted that US-USSR trade would double over the next five years—an opinion which he, Shriver, shared.

While Kosygin discussed future trade arrangements with Shriver, Under Secretary of State Robinson, the man personally dispatched by Kissinger to secure the grain deal, was shuffled from one lower level bureaucrat to another. "Things may take a while," Robinson was quoted in the U.S. press as saying, "maybe a little longer than I thought."