

# How The World's Press Covered The Dortmund Pronuclear Demo

*Factory councillors and other trade unionists from all parts of West Germany gathered in Dortmund on Thursday, Nov. 10 to demonstrate their unanimous support for the development of nuclear technology and for ending the present de facto moratorium on nuclear power plant construction. Attendance was estimated at*

## LABOR IN THE PRESS

*50,000, making it one of the largest single labor rallies held in West Germany's postwar history.*

*The following is a grid of press reports and analysis of the demonstration.*

*The Journal of Commerce, New York financial daily, "German Workers Urge Construction of Nuclear Plants," Nov. 11:*

More than 40,000 West German labor union members Thursday demonstrated for the swift building of nuclear and coal-fed power plants to help secure jobs and meet the growing demand for energy...

*The Daily Telegraph, London, "Pro-Atom Demo in West Germany," Nov. 11:*

About 45,000 people gathered in a football stadium in Dortmund yesterday for the biggest rally in favour of West Germany's nuclear programme yet seen.

The demonstrators, most of them power workers fearful for their jobs, streamed into the stadium past small knots of nuclear opponents...(Reuters)

*The New York Times, New York, Nov. 15:*

...And last week, 40,000 union members and their leaders met at Dortmund to support the Government stand and protest the expected loss of business and jobs.

Arrayed against these two allies, however, is a strong ecology-minded faction that has called for a three-year moratorium on construction of nuclear facilities to reassess the country's need and the dangers it faces from the use of this source of power....

*Les Echos, Paris financial daily, "A Nuclear Yes; Spectacular Turnaround in the BRD," Nov. 14:*

...How could one explain this sudden political aboutface on the other side of the Rhine which is of enormous importance, not only for the future of energy in the Federal Republic, but also for France, considering that the motion in the BRD would have greatly helped the proponents of a suspension of nuclear activity in France... Today, one must also add the change in mood on the other side of the Rhine. The recent outrages of terrorism have provoked a backlash of public opinion. Not only has the authority of the Chancellor been singularly increased, but the population, which is impressed by the security measures and by the daily articles in the press,

has a tendency to associate the extremist and terrorist movement with the action of the ecologists hostile to nuclear energy.

*Il Giornale, Milan daily, article by Giornale's Bonn correspondent, Topa, Nov. 12:*

More than 50,000 workers demonstrated yesterday in Dortmund led by the heads of the Construction, Metalworkers, Mining, Chemical and Public Sector unions. By referring to the SPD party congress the union members emphasized that they will oppose any further slow-down in the construction of nuclear plants. They demanded that the government prepare a legislative foundation that will be against the actions of groups like the Citizens Initiatives ("grassroots" antinuclear groups —ed.). They said that energy policy is the basis of economic development and full employment... The Dortmund demonstration will strengthen (Chancellor) Schmidt's position, which is already strong.

*Frankfurter Rundschau, Frankfurt daily, Nov. 11:*

...The Dortmund demonstration had been originally planned as a pure "procoal and coal power plant demonstration." In view of the DGB (West German Trade Union Federation) resolution on energy that was valid

## ...And Why The U.S. Press Didn't

A call to the major wire services, press, and electronic media to ascertain their plans to cover the 50,000-strong pro-nuclear rally at Dortmund, West Germany yielded some interesting responses. "The Associated Press covers the fall of the sparrow," rhapsodized Associated Press Foreign Editor Nate Polowetsky, "so we don't need you to tell us about any demonstrations, thanks." However, the reader of the next day's newspapers or the radio-television news viewer would have searched in vain for any mention of the largest rally ever on the nuclear power question.

The *New York Times* Foreign Desk said that it had a reporter on the scene and planned coverage. But all that appeared was a one-line mention of the demonstration during the following week, buried in a "news analysis" piece falsely representing the "anti-nuclear environmentalists" as the stronger force in West Germany.

A reporter for *Time* magazine, asked why the news media displayed no interest in covering the historic event, answered, "Frankly, we in the press are so bored with the pro-antinuclear thing that we don't want to bother. You always feel like you wrote the same story last week." Why didn't all manner of anti-technology protests generate the same ennui? The reporter responded, "Well, there you get some spice."

then, the DGB leadership and various trade unions feared the demonstration would balloon into an antiunion meeting. In order to prevent that, as one learns from the inside, they decided it was "better to put themselves at the head of the movement," with the goal of channeling the mass demonstration and not allowing the issues of environmental protection and other moderating arguments from being left totally behind in the discussion on energy and growth."

*Die Welt, Hamburg daily, "Shift in Fission Construction," by Heinz Heck, Nov. 11:*

Only four weeks ago, one could not be sure that a moratorium (on nuclear power plant construction—ed.) would not go through...Until yesterday, the DGB was on a full moratorium line. (DGB chairman) Vetter had written in the Trade Union Monthly that the DGB would not consider the disposal problem solved even if the government security reactor commission said it is solved...if the DGB changed it is only because of Dortmund...Dortmund made it clear how far the DGB was from its own base.

*Frankfurter Rundschau, Frankfurt daily, Lead Editorial, "Jumping on the Band Wagon," Nov. 12:*

The chairman of a factory council in an energy company could not hold back his joy. "We have made it quite clear to them," he said, "that it is high time for them to jump on the wagon if they didn't want to totally miss it." By "them," he didn't mean the employers, but the DGB executive committee and the ...power-filled princes of the trade unions like Loderer and Kluncker. The union

leadership just made the jump. Not a few of them, however, should be clear about certain things, i.e. that in times of relatively high unemployment power constellations can easily emerge in which the weight can rapidly shift from the factory councils to big business. It was obviously not a pleasant discussion about the future which got the DGB to shift energy policy and go for the Dortmund demonstration, a demonstration of 40,000 from the energy companies and power companies who are afraid about their jobs and don't want to hear anything else but good news about the future of nuclear power development. It is not a good sign indeed when one is not only forced under pressure from members of affected areas to switch from a policy that was well-formulated only months ago...but forced to do so at that at a meeting that itself was forced against the will of the union leadership, and only tolerated against their will, because it was feared it could become an antiunion meeting. ...and then the fact that the predominant share of the costs for the trips and food, if the demonstrators paid at all, come from business, is tough enough to take on top of everything else.

*Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich daily, Nov. 12:*

...It was a totally unjustified retreat...energy is so insecure, so dangerous...it was a total capitulation of the coalition parties (the ruling Social Democrats and Free Democrats—ed.) just to get out of a tough situation. A grand coalition of the electricity and power companies and factory councils, in concerted action, have forced the parties into total capitulation...under the threat of sliding back into the Middle Ages without nuclear energy.

## Lack Of Evidence Doesn't Deter Press 'Probe' Of Teamsters

*Press attacks on the International Brotherhood of Teamsters have escalated over the past few weeks. Articles dealing with alleged Teamster "corruption," "mob connections" and continuing leaks that IBT President Frank Fitzsimmons is about to retire, have clearly been timed to intersect and bolster a new spurt of activity among so-called Teamster dissidents, in Prod and the Teamster for a Democratic Union, with the hopes of isolating and containing the leadership of the union.*

*With nothing but spurious charges and innuendo to go with, the press smear job on the IBT has looked like this:*

*During the week of November 6, the Kansas City Star ran a six part series page one exposé on alleged Teamster "mob" connections. On Wednesday, Nov. 9, the Star "Special Investigative Team," including reporters J.J. Maloney, Mike McGraw, and Richard Johnson, asserted that the Teamsters, with their "mob" associates, have "infiltrated" Las Vegas, Nevada. The following are some brief excerpts from that 2,500-word article:*

....Welcome to Las Vegas, the city that labor built and organized crime helps run.

For decades this city has tried to erase a lingering stigma tracing back to the days in 1940 when Buggy

Siegel, formerly of Murder, Inc., began to build the lavish Flamingo Hotel and Casino.

A full-time staff of state investigators and auditors connected with the Nevada Gaming Control Board has achieved a national reputation for honesty and integrity in its ceaseless effort to combat the infiltration of organized crime into the state gambling industry, which rakes in considerably more than \$1 billion a year.

Now, with massive federal investigations going on, it would appear those efforts have been to no avail, and it would also appear that Nevada's image may be in for a severe drubbing. A few details:

The State Department of Labor has placed a moratorium on loans from the Teamsters Central States, Southeast and Southwest pension funds to Nevada gaming interests. To date the pension funds have pumped more than \$260 million into Nevada, often in the form of low-interest, highly controversial loans.

*This installment of the series pays special attention to the business of one Morris Shenker, a lawyer based in St. Louis, whom the Star alleges is a key target of the federal investigations into Las Vegas. On Shenker's connections to the teamsters:*

Shenker has been the defender of St. Louis underworld