

## U.S.S.R.

### The Kremlin sends messages to the West

by Edith Hassman

For approximately one week, the Soviet Union has been sending definite signals to the West that Moscow is again beginning to view western Europe as an important war-preventing factor.

An article in *Izvestia* of Jan. 23 which counterposes the peace policy of West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt to the war lunacy ruling in Washington and London, is the first commentary approving Schmidt's activities since the Dec. 12 NATO decision on medium-range missile deployment, following which the Soviet Union charged West Germany with having capitulated to the dangerous Anglo-American "limited nuclear war" doctrine. In fact, the capitulation of West Germany to the missile deployment at that time was viewed so gravely in the Soviet Union that, as a Soviet official said in a recent private conversation, "had this not occurred, we would have handled the Afghanistan problem completely differently."

The *Izvestia* signal was not the last. A series of interviews and statements by prominent Soviet spokesmen for detente—notably representatives of the so-called Bonn lobby which President Brezhnev counts among his closest advisors—to West German, French and Italian newspapers followed. The common thread of those statements is that they aim at satisfying the West European request for an explanation of the causes of the Afghanistan intervention, while at the same time reassuring the Europeans of Moscow's continued desire for detente.

The motivation behind this shift is the appreciation on the part of the Soviet leadership that Carter (apart from the NATO decision) did not rally the continental West European and Japanese leaders behind his policy of economic boycott and military encirclement of the U.S.S.R. It is believed in Moscow that Helmut Schmidt in the weeks since Afghanistan has exerted a "moderat-

ing influence" on President Carter which lowered the risk of military confrontation.

At the same time, there is a revival of the independent "Rapallo" tradition in German industry which came to the fore in the visit of a delegation from Krupp and other big firms to Moscow just as the hysteria in Washington about economic sanctions was at its peak. This visit broke the rules of the Anglo-American game which aims at provoking an "encirclement complex" in the Soviet leadership.

Soviet television deviating from usual practice, gave extensive coverage to every detail of these visits. As a result, Central Committee Secretary Vadim Zagladin told the West German weekly *Stern*: "When Mr. Beitz from Krupp was recently here in Moscow, we had the feeling that he thinks exactly like us."

It is expected that Soviet economic planners will soon publish the dates on the long-term, large-scale development projects for exploiting the rich Siberian raw material and fuel deposits, and that the Soviet leadership will make the development of Siberia a political issue of international cooperation to give substantial backing to the detente forces in the West. The December issue of *Soviet Union Today* announced that within 15 years, Siberia's industrial output will match what the whole Soviet Union is producing today and that the U.S.S.R. welcomes international cooperation because it will "accelerate" this process.

The appointment of the president of the Siberian branch of the Academy of Sciences in Novosibirsk, Guri Marchuk, as the new head of the State Committee for Science and Technology, is also interpreted as a sign of the growing importance of Siberian economic development in the long-term, 20-25 year plans of the Soviet Union.

#### Moscow's 'two-track' foreign policy

Soviet President Brezhnev's interview to *Pravda* on Jan. 12 was a first indication that although the Soviet leadership at that time was predominantly committed to a war-winning posture vis-à-vis the West, this commitment was not irreversible and the Soviet Union still wanted to give a chance to the option of detente with Western Europe and Japan.

On Jan. 21, Central Committee Secretary Zagladin reasserted this desire in an interview with the Italian daily *La Repubblica*: "We are convinced that Europe, Japan, and the big countries of Latin America and Asia will succeed not only to stop the deterioration of detente, but also to relaunch it. Today the situation is different from the past. Today Europe and Japan are very important." In this interview, Zagladin endorsed the proposal of

Giscard d'Estaing for a pan-European disarmament conference.

Two days earlier, Jan. 19, Italian Communist Party General Secretary Enrico Berlinguer noted that "there are in Europe other parties which with varying resoluteness, resist the logic of the aggravation of tensions and seek the road of dialogue and detente . . . the Scandinavian countries, in some aspects France, the government of the Federal Republic of Germany, and many Socialist and Social Democratic parties." Berlinguer, speaking at a rally in Terni on the occasion of the 59th anniversary of the PCI, said "we must head toward a new equilibrium . . . to furnish industrial plants, advanced technology and finished goods to the countries that export oil. And at the same time they can establish agreements with these same countries to work together—investing their currency reserves—for the development of the zones of the Third World that are poor in raw materials; those zones called the fourth world.

### Schmidt's 'cool head'

As part of the same thrust, *Izvestia's* Kondrashov credited Chancellor Schmidt in an article Jan. 23 later for his call to keep a "cool head" and handle the present crisis without "nervousness." Although "Bonn was together with Washington" in December, "forcing through the plan to deploy American missiles in Western Europe," and although Bonn remains allied with Washington, Kondrashov emphasizes that the Germans now "fear that the Americans will completely throw overboard a detente policy for a policy of confrontation in the thick of the anti-Soviet, anti-Afghan, anti-Iranian hysteria." But especially for a country like West Germany, "there is no reasonable alternative to detente. Confrontation is an alternative without reason, even insane."

On Jan. 25, *Izvestia's* Bonn correspondent Grigoryants welcomed Schmidt's call for talks with the East to reduce the threat of confrontation: "In a recent government declaration, Chancellor H. Schmidt underlined the necessity to continue the dialogue with the Soviet Union in response to the demand of the opposition to harden the line in relations to the Socialist countries. In difficult times it is especially necessary to keep in contact with one another." Grigoryants summarizes Bonn's current position as one of "safeguarding the fruits of detente and continuation of the former policy of negotiations with the Socialist countries in search for mutually acceptable solutions."

To top off this rehabilitation of West Germany in the eyes of the Soviet Union, the former Soviet Ambassador to Bonn, Valentin Falin, said on Soviet TV on Jan. 25 that the relations between Moscow and Bonn are "very good."

To state that the Soviet Union shifted to a "two track" foreign policy from a predominantly war-winning posture which it held during the first half of January, does not ignore the fact that there is a growing "detente-weariness" among the powerful "orthodox" Marxist-Leninist party barons like Mikhail Suslov or Boris Ponomarev who suspect that any detente talk from the West at this moment fulfills only the function of a tranquilizer, lessening Soviet vigilance concerning the Anglo-American war preparations. Certain military leaders who share this Marxist-Leninist conviction, would also rather place their trust in the throw-weight of their missiles than in the word of a "class enemy."

### Detente, but a new style

Furthermore, the arrest of Soviet dissident Sakharov on Jan. 22 which led to the early end of French Gaullist Chaban-Delmas' "good will" tour of the Soviet Union on behalf of President Giscard, shows that the two tracks very often conflict with each other. Sakharov's arrest certainly signals that "old style" detente à la Willy Brandt or Kennedy where the Soviet Union, in exchange for certain "favors" by the West, tolerated a certain level of dissident activity in the East Bloc, is definitely dead.

"Two track" foreign policy means that the Soviet Union on the one hand has to restrain the lunatic Carter administration by keeping up an incredibly tough military posture vis-à-vis the United States, while at the same time reassuring the Europeans that this tough stand in respect to Washington does not mean an end to detente and a return to cold war.

It means that in the context of gearing up for a war economy, the "economic reform faction" associated with Prime Minister Kosygin is rapidly losing influence, without this implying necessarily that cooperation with foreign countries will be reduced. One subfeature of what some Western analysts call a "return to Stalinist war economy" is that certain networks of "economic liberals" who are too much discredited through their connection to the various "one-world" projects of the United Nations, will be cleaned out in that process, too.

Neither the West Europeans nor the Soviet leadership nourishes the illusion, however, that there can be a "new Spring" of detente which would turn Europe into an island of peace, while the Carter administration continues its military encirclement policy, sells arms to China and equips the Afghan rebels. According to the London *Daily Mail*, Brezhnev told Chaban-Delmas concerning the possibility of Washington selling nuclear arms to China: "Believe me, after the destruction of Chinese nuclear sites by our missiles, there won't be much time for the Americans to choose between the defense of their Chinese allies, and peaceful coexistence with us."