

'Social convulsions' for Europe?

Susan Welsh describes plans for 1968-style upheavals in Germany and Italy, and the moves already taken.

With the forced resignation of the mayor of West Berlin, Dietrich Stobbe, on Jan. 15, the Socialist International and the Washington, D.C. Heritage Foundation scored an initial success in their effort to put Western Europe through what one member called "the most profound social crisis since 1967-68." Through waves of "social convulsions," they intend to topple, or at least neutralize, West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing.

Willy Brandt, chairman of the Socialist International, "wants a social convulsion in Europe around which to reorganize and reinvigorate the Social Democracy for the entire period ahead," said a leading American Social Democrat.

What the Heritage Foundation and the Eurosoci- alists hope to do is to isolate President Reagan from his best potential European allies, Schmidt and Giscard. The Heritage/Socialists have a common social and economic philosophy, favoring a "post-industrial society" and the elimination of "big industry" and "big government." Thus, they are united against Giscard and Schmidt, who have fought for policies of high-technology growth and state-aided export expansion.

Using such geopolitical situations as the aftermath of the Iran hostage affair, the threat of "permanent revolution" in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the threatened economic collapse of the United States, the Heritage/Socialists hope to channel Reagan away from his inaugural pledge to work for world peace and national sovereignty, and push him toward the cold-war and austerity policies exemplified by Britain's "Iron Lady," Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. While the Heritage Foundation hopes to dominate the Reagan administration with these battle conditions, the Socialists plan to take over the Democratic Party and use it as a weapon to keep President Reagan destabilized and under control.

A "new axis" will be built, a new "concert of powers," said one high-ranking official of the Heritage Foundation to a reporter recently. This will consist of West Germany without Schmidt, Great Britain under Thatcher, and the United States under Reagan and Alexander Haig. Thatcher's "mission" will be to draw Reagan into "a right-wing alliance to stabilize the free world. . . . It is very important that this relationship between Reagan

and Thatcher be established early and that it be primary to creating the new alliance."

This "reactionary" prospect does not dismay the left operatives of the Socialist International in the least. At their Dec. 5-7 meeting in Washington, D.C., entitled "Eurosoci- alism and America," the Eurosoci- alists hailed the incoming Reagan administration for the opportunities it provides them. Anthony Wedgwood Benn, the leader of the left wing of Britain's Labour Party, declared: "I can't help stressing how ripe conditions are to build a mass movement. If now is not the time, then it will never be. If you can't mobilize an opposition to Reagan, then you are not the kind of people you are. . . . What Thatcher did is radicalize the Labour Party, the mainstream of the party; the party has gone back to its roots, radicalized by its struggle, and Reagan will radicalize the Democratic Party."

At the center of the Heritage/Socialist strategy is the wrecking of Europe's political parties, to the extent that these parties constitute the base of support of leaders like Chancellor Schmidt. This is especially the case in West Germany, where Schmidt's Social Democratic Party (SPD) is chaired by leftist Willy Brandt. The British Labour Party, affiliated to the Socialist International, is on the verge of splitting after a year of radicalization of the left wing. This is expected to be the first major party split, leading to similar developments throughout Europe.

A Heritage representative was perfectly frank about his scenario for collapsing the Schmidt government first laid out at a conference jointly sponsored by the Heritage Foundation and the Hans Seidel Foundation, the think tank of Franz Josef Strauss's Christian Social Union, that was held in Munich Dec. 18-20. According to the Heritage representative, "First, provoke a left-right fight inside the SPD. Then have the Free Democratic Party leave the coalition. . . . The FDP then walks over to the CDU-CSU [conservative the centrists in the SPD and says 'let's government. . . .']

"The small minority of the left, the radicals, the environmentalists, the left wing of the SPD, they are actually forcing a realignment which will give power to our people. The more Brandt screams from the left,

it helps us build the center. We are looking to a Germany in which we build a new center formation. The parties themselves may stay, but they will split apart from within. The SPD is finished. It is in the beginning stages of the same crisis as the British Labour Party.”

Brandt caught in move against Schmidt

From this standpoint it becomes clear why Willy Brandt, the chairman of the Socialist International and of West Germany's SPD, personally masterminded the fall of the Social Democratic mayor of West Berlin, Dietrich Stobbe, as the liberal weekly *Der Spiegel* reported Jan. 19. Stobbe headed up a shaky coalition government in a city wracked with scandals and corruption. Stobbe, a former official in Chancellor Schmidt's office, ruled in a coalition with the Free Democratic Party, the same coalition that makes up the Bonn government. Stobbe's difficulties, therefore, will set up "shock waves" threatening the Schmidt government, as the *New York Times* commented Jan. 14, the day before the mayor resigned.

The real question posed by the West Berlin crisis, said Brandt in an interview to the daily *Die Welt* Jan. 19, is whether "Europe, and Germany especially, are still governable." Brandt intends to make sure they are not.

According to *Der Spiegel's* report, Brandt undermined the mayor's efforts to stabilize the city administration. He coordinated his strategy at a Dec. 2 meeting with his erstwhile enemy Herbert Wehner, the aging chairman of the SPD's parliamentary grouping in Bonn. Schmidt's coalition partner, Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher of the Free Democratic Party, concluded that a plot was underway to topple Chancellor Schmidt.

Wehner is the SPD's "gray eminence" who sits astride the party's competing factions, "holding the party together" by means of political deals. In 1974 he orchestrated the fall of Willy Brandt himself from the chancellorship, installing Helmut Schmidt.

Now the 75-year-old Wehner is expected to retire soon, which will further the scenario for a disintegration of the party, which will lose even its present degree of cohesion.

Brandt's and Wehner's next targets for destabilization were announced in the Swiss daily *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* Jan. 18: the city of Hamburg and the state of Hesse, where SPD-led governments are "doomed to fall" in a chain reaction following West Berlin. Hesse is governed by one of Brandt's main enemies, Holger Börner, the only remaining Schmidt ally among the SPD-governed states. Börner has been waging an exceptional fight for nuclear power and industrial expansion against the Brandt-allied leftists in the state party organization.

The Socialist-Heritage Foundation destabilization

of Europe calls for keeping Italy in a "state of permanent devolution"—in the words of one insider—while unleashing scandal after scandal against the Giscard government in France. The Socialists count on whipping up immigrant workers and university students into a replay of the 1968 rebellion that ended the government of President Charles de Gaulle, defeating Giscard in this spring's presidential elections and replacing him with Socialist Party Secretary General François Mitterrand.

If Giscard wins the election, these circles plan to "knock him off his high horse and isolate him." The Socialist Party will be radicalized and split, along the lines of Britain's Labour Party, and leftist Michel Rocard will replace Mitterrand. American socialist leaders have declared in recent interviews that they will work to rip up the constitution of the Fifth French Republic. Forged by de Gaulle, the constitution grants the president, who is elected for a seven-year term, broad-ranging powers in domestic and foreign policy and the ability to bypass the parliament in emergency situations.

This Article 16 of the constitution "is dangerous, sooner or later it will have to go . . . and seven years is just too long," said one source.

The Socialists have their strongest hold over Italy, where Socialist Party leader Bettino Craxi has used the recent outbreak of terrorism to dangerously undermine the institutions of the Italian republic. By foisting on the government of Christian Democrat Arnaldo Forlani his policy of negotiating with the Red Brigades terrorists, Craxi has created what one newspaper called a "parallel policy"—a dual government.

Paese Sera, a daily linked to the Communist Party, warned of "a parallel policy . . . unofficial, not assumed directly by the government, but encouraged by one of its parties, the PSI [Socialists alter ego [the

whose members served as emissaries for the terrorists to the press—S.W.]. A parallel policy that is secret—but not too secret—apparently dictated by humanitarian motives, but realized in a certificate of credit granted repeatedly to the Red Brigades. Thanks to this parallel policy, the Brigades have won today what they did not succeed in obtaining with the Moro case; that is, to be recognized as a kind of component, even if an abnormal one, of the Italian political system. Abnormal, yes, but qualified to determine the fate of a government posed on the brink of a crisis."

This "parallel policy" of subverting republican constitutional government is the same policy which Jimmy Carter perpetrated on the United States through his unconstitutional deal to release the terrorist-held hostages in Iran. The Socialists and their friends will now try to force President Reagan to accept it, as Italy's government has.