

## Northern Flank by Tore Fredin

### Socialists out in Norway

*Now that Prime Minister Brundtland is gone, does the new conservative coalition have a functioning alternative?*

**T**he government shift in Norway after its national elections on Sept. 11 means that the Socialist International will lose one of its few remaining strongholds. This is a crucial development, especially considering that outgoing Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland has functioned as a radical international spokesman for the ecological fascism promoted and enforced by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Her possibilities on that front will now be emphatically diminished, similar to the way that the loss of the prime minister's office in Sweden paralyzed Olof Palme, when he was forced to resign in 1976.

For Gro Harlem Brundtland and the Socialist International it never rains, but it pours. The decision by the Norwegian Nobel Peace Prize Committee to award the Peace Prize to Dalai Lama of Tibet, was a well directed kick against the bloody regime in Beijing, whose barbarian population-reduction policy has been supported by Mrs. Brundtland.

An added benefit of the government change, is the possibility of strengthening Norway's collaboration within NATO.

How does the conservative coalition alternative look? The party leader of the conservative Høyre party, Mr. Syse, will be a central personality, not only in his function of keeping the coalition together as the new prime minister, but also because he will have to handle the leader of the protest Progress party, Carl I. Hagen, with a more

diplomatic touch than his predecessor Kaare Willock did. Hagen was the real winner of the elections. His party increased its parliamentary seats from 2 to 22.

The three non-socialist coalition parties are thus dependent upon the votes by the Progress party in the parliament, but at the same time, Hagen and his crew are not considered by conservatives to be "clean." Thus the Progress party has not been allowed to participate in the new government, in spite of its clear non-socialist profile.

Hagen has responded by not giving the new government his general support. He has stated that his faction in the parliament will vote according to policy content rather than according to political color. However, the party will still keep its election promise to topple the Brundtland government by supporting the vote of no confidence against the Social Democratic government.

The test of fire for the non-socialist parties has been the question of the "Europe 1992" single European market push. Norway is not a member of the European Community—a complicating factor—and the three coalition parties seem to keep an open mind on all forms of collaboration with the EC.

Within the coalition it is the Center party which shows a healthy skepticism about the supranational power which the Europe 1992 plan puts into the hands of the international cartels. One should hope that the Center party is strong enough to lead a fight for a

Europe of the producers. This is a live possibility, since Norwegian farmers, the base of the Center party, show strong resistance against deregulation of the agricultural market.

Northern Norway's crucial fishing industry was badly damaged by the radical environmentalist "save the seals" policy of Gro Harlem Brundtland. Now, hopefully, the resulting over-population of seals can be stopped, and the fishing industry can get back to working normally.

Hagen of the Progress party has suggested that infrastructure projects, like roads, bridges, communications, and other state projects, should be started earlier than scheduled in order to solve the unemployment crisis in Norway. What Hagen still does not seem to understand, is how to protect the Norwegian real economy in a world in which the whole financial system already has collapsed.

The Progress party is a necessary ingredient to secure the needed non-socialist coalition against its "green" opposition, since the coalition will not be able to obtain a majority vote against the Social Democrats without the Progress party's support. This is all the more urgent, since the current array of forces could potentially precipitate a total deadlock in the parliament, because the Norwegian constitution prohibits any form of early elections.

So, since Hagen's practical understanding of economics is far better than his theoretical, the coalition should not miss the chance to put forth concrete proposals in which the earning of money, rather than the making of money, is the focus. Sound development projects for the Norwegian economy could potentially even split the Social Democrat; not everyone is aspiring to become a darling of the World Bank and the IMF, like Mrs. Brundtland.