

EXCLUSIVE**ENERGY**

World Nuclear Drive Makes Headway

The Iranian Atomic Energy Organization and the West German manufacturer of nuclear reactors, Kraftwerk Union, have signed a letter of intent for the construction of four 1,200-megawatt nuclear power reactors in Iran. The deal, which is estimated to amount to over \$8 billion until the last phase of construction in 1983-1984, is by far the largest single nuclear deal ever signed.

According to the West German business daily *Handelsblatt*, diplomatic circles in Tehran have described the deal as an intentional message from Shah Reza Palevi to U.S. President Carter, whom the Shah visited only a few days later. This is the same message which has been communicated in various ways to the U.S. from the governments of West Germany, France, Japan, Mexico and other Latin American countries: unless the United States drops Energy Secretary Schlesinger's program to halt nuclear energy development both domestically and abroad, America will be renouncing its claims to world political and economic leadership.

The United States should take the lead from world leaders like Helmut Schmidt, the West German Chancellor.

After receiving a resounding popular mandate last week from over 50,000 trade unionists demonstrating in Dortmund for nuclear energy, Schmidt announced a campaign to unblock 25 billion deutschmarks (\$10.5 billion) in nuclear and conventional power investments that have been frozen by court suits brought by environmentalists. During his speech before 400 delegates at the Social Democratic Party's annual congress, Schmidt called on "every citizen" to support this campaign, and stressed that if West Germany wants to remain competitive on the world markets, it must maintain the highest world levels of technology, along with a correspondingly high level of wages.

Schmidt's nuclear policies are directly responsible for the fact that West Germany is now the leading exporter to Iran, with Japan in second place and the United States trailing in third. Last week's West German-Iran deal brings to a total of more than \$11.5 billion the value of deals for nuclear reactors signed by Iran with both West Germany and France in the last year.

From the French Side

In France, Schmidt's policies have also been adopted, in spite of the persistence of anti-German and anti-nuclear propaganda issued by Socialist Party leader François Mitterrand and his allies. Jacques Chirac, the

Gaullist Mayor of Paris, recently told a predominantly Communist audience in central France that any moratorium on nuclear power plants would not only eliminate crucial high-technology jobs, but would aggravate France's energy problems and wipe out French nuclear export markets. Referring to Mitterrand's allegation that "nuclear energy pollutes," Chirac declared that "Mitterrand should know that nuclear energy is actually the least polluting of all."

French and Italian newspapers acknowledge that the Nov. 10 mass rally in Dortmund was international proof that labor and industry can successfully cooperate in this nuclear drive. The Paris financial daily *Les Echos*, in a Nov. 15 article titled "A Nuclear Yes; Spectacular Turnaround in the BRD," commented that public opinion in West Germany now rightly "associates the extremist and terrorist movement with the action of ecologists hostile to nuclear energy." According to a recent poll, 57 percent of all West Germans support nuclear power, only 27 percent oppose it, with the remainder undecided.

A New Climate

West German newspapers admit that the antinuclear leadership of the German Trade Union Federation only joined the Dortmund demonstration after a large number of local factory councils had organized the event with the help of the nuclear and electricity industry.

The British Trades Union Council has drawn a lesson from this, and last week delivered a memorandum to the British Labour Party's Energy Commission demanding the immediate construction of more nuclear power plants. In view of the future scarcity of uranium supplies, the memorandum said, "rapid industrial development of the fast breeder reactor" is essential, and part of the proceeds from Britain's North Sea oil sales should be devoted to investment in nuclear power. In a separate statement, Sir John Hill, chairman of the U.K. Atomic Energy Authority, urged immediate work on fast breeder development, warning, "When the energy shortage becomes real it will be the poor people of the world who will suffer most, and those who have delayed the construction of additional energy sources will have much to answer for in their misdirected attacks."

West German trade-union support for nuclear energy has made possible a dramatic shift in the policies of the West German Social Democratic Party (SPD). Two months ago the SPD Executive Committee presented a resolution favoring an immediate halt to all nuclear

power plant construction until a reprocessing facility has been completed about six years from now. But the dynamic created at Dortmund enabled Chancellor Schmidt to alter the resolution even before it reached the floor of the SPD's Nov. 15-18 annual congress. The

“compromise” resolution finally adopted by the party states that nuclear plants can be built once construction begins on a reprocessing plant, while in “special cases” it will be possible to resume construction immediately — virtually a carte blanche for Schmidt's policies.