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west germany

German Social Democracy Coming Apart; Schmidt Cannot Survive

WIESBADEN, BRD, July 7 (IPS) — West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, hellbent on carrying out Rockefeller's orders to impose Schachtian economics on Europe, is rapidly destroying the West German Social Democratic Party (SPD), his official party machine. By bringing the so-called "sewer faction" (rightwing of the SPD) out into the open to support his budget austerity and unemployment thrusts, the hapless Schmidt hopes to save the party and its hegemony over the working class just long enough to prevent a mass-strike eruption. His problem lies in the need to try to minimize the influence of the European Labour Committees (ELC), which are already widely recognized to be the working-class alternative by the SPD's leftwing and youth group, the JUSOS, and which now threaten to win wide recognition from trade unionists as well.

Hysteria and Flight

It is now clear that Schmidt's Social Democratic/Free Democratic Coalition will not survive over the next three months. Within a few days of the SPD executive meeting in Bonn, three leading SPD figures dropped out of governmental or party posts. Wednesday, Erhard Eppler, Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, resigned from the cabinet in the wake of heavy personal attacks from the other ministers.

Two days later, oldtimer Heinz Kuehn, a leading member of the rightwing "Sewer Faction" out of which Schmidt himself comes and Prime Minister and Party Head of the largely working-class state of North-Rhein Westphalia, announced his intention to retire soon from party life. Immediately, the SPD Vice-President of the State gave up his party job to take a managerial post in a major bank.

The international battle between the Rockefeller-CIA apparatus and the organizing activity of the ELC in Germany are gutting SPD party life. Chancellor Schmidt, his allegiance firmly pledged to Rockefeller, has already created a deep rift of distrust between the masses of workers in the Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund (DGB — German Trade Union Federation) and official SPD party machine, by openly overseeing the rapid spread of mass unemployment. But the "Sewer Faction" is growing fearful for its neck, fearful that the largely inert trade-union party membership will turn toward the ELC's united front program for socialist reconstruction, thus

destroying their de facto control.

The Sewer inhabitants, largely led by regional party chief of Franconia Bruno Friderich, are making a concerted effort to cut off the spread of the ELC's program. The ELC's program calls for expanded trade with the Soviet bloc, financed by European monetization of gold reserves, as the means of halting Rockefeller in Europe. In preparation for the SPD executive meeting, Friderich circulated a resolution which would have permitted regional party machines, as opposed to the national executive, to purge JUSO locals from the SPD at will. Schmidt used the occasion to unleash a harsh diatribe against the JUSOS, ironically accusing the JUSOS of breaking up the party, while former Chancellor Willy Brandt sat next to him silently watching. The resolution was voted down.

Dilemma Of The SPD

The Sewer faction of the SPD was groomed by Allied Occupation authorities during the 1950s to deemphasize the SPD's largely working-class electoral base, by grafting onto the party a moderate, inert non-working-class limb. Recently, in the town of Goettingen, a desperate clique of Sewer faction members formed the "Godesberg Circle," in memory of the 1960 Godesberg Program which was intended formally to alter the SPD from a workers' to a "people's" party. The problem which the Sewer now faces is that, while they see the intervention of the ELC into the JUSOS and SPD leftwing as a threat to the catch-all "people's party" which they want to defend, if they create too much party strife their "people's" constituency will go home to the ranks of the Christian Democracy.

The Sewer has no consistent policy. It wavers between propping up the popular figure of former Chancellor Willy Brandt as a unity figure at public meetings, and moving to expel leftwing tendencies. Either way, they face rapid growth and penetration by the European Labour Committees.

In the city of Cologne, a JUSO member who was meeting regularly with ELC representatives was brought before an SPD panel to determine if he should be expelled. The SPDers balked and decided to leave him alone. In the nearby city of Dortmund, high school and working youth in the SPD-run Falkan organization were ordered to cease meeting with the ELC. As soon as the

order went out, a number of the Falkans got in touch with the local ELC branch to find out why the Labour Committees are considered so dangerous.

At other locations, the SPD has attempted to neutralize the ELC's impact on "normal" party life by inviting ELC representatives formally to address party meetings. The effect of this in Frankfurt startled SPD functionaries considerably, when a local leftwing SPD circle printed a rather confused discussion paper which included the demand for increased cooperation of the European Social Democracies with the Italian and French Communist Parties — one significant aspect of the ELC organizing drive.

Even more troublesome for Schmidt has been the disaffection in the DGB. The reliable card-carrying Metal Worker unionists appointed to Schmidt's cabinet

have been entirely ineffectual in stemming workers' primary concern — rising unemployment. In an effort to appease the DGB, Schmidt appointed Egon Bahr as the successor to the resigned Eppler. Bahr, the brains behind Brandt's policy of detente, represents to the DGB the potential prospect of opening trade with the Soviet union as a means of fighting unemployment. The DGB has continually used the prospects of trade with the East as a way to persuade workers that unemployment will not go out of control.

Once again, the problem which Schmidt has created for himself is that any indication, no matter how tentative, that West Germany might move towards expanded trade with the East will give greater circulation and credence to the ELC's program for defeating Rockefeller's depression.

American Sociologist Tours BRD With CIA Line on LC

July 15 (IPS) — The CIA has fielded University of Wisconsin sociologist Gunther Roth in an attempt to short-circuit European Labor Committee organizing in West Germany. Roth, associated with a crew of government-funded American sociologists, is apparently touring Germany this summer as a lecturer retailing the CIA line on the National Caucus of Labor Committees.

Roth surfaced recently in Duesseldorf. There he gave a forum on the American left, which he claimed was witnessing the emergence of several terrorist cult groups: the Symbionese Liberation Army, the Weathermen — and the NCLC. The transparent purpose of his lectures is to set up the ELC for police attack and prevent an even wider spread of Labor Committee influence by saturating the population with CIA slanders.

Born in Germany, Roth taught at Berlin's Free

University. At this notorious hangout of CIA academics and "radicals," during the late 1960s period of ferment, Roth was associated with agent "Red Rudi" Deutsche. At the time of the "People's Park" events in 1969, Roth was brought to Berkeley by Bennet Berger, a sociologist who specializes in childrearing studies for government agencies. The Labor Committee is investigating further links between Roth and the CIA.

Roth's hoary CIA fairy-tale about the NCLC will have little effect when confronted with the ELC's emphatically non-terrorist organizing. Perhaps Roth's lectures will be a source of "extra credit" to the desperate Maoists of the West German Communist Party-Marxist Leninist who are currently offering classes in several cities on how to cope with the Labor Committee. [See IPS No. 10.]