

NEW SOLIDARITY INTERNATIONAL PRESS SERVICE

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BRANDT FILES NEW SUITS AGAINST ELC

WIESBADEN, W. GERMANY, NOV. 25 (IPS)--A SPOKESMAN FOR THE EUROPEAN LABOR COMMITTEES (ELC) ANNOUNCED HERE TODAY THAT WILLY BRANDT, CHAIRMAN OF THE WEST GERMAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SPD), AND EUGEN LODERER, THE HEAD OF THE GERMAN METALWORKERS UNION IG METALL, AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THEIR MAJOR LIBEL SUITS AGAINST THE EDITORS OF THE ELC GERMAN LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER, NEUE SOLIDARITAT, HAVE FILED LAWSUITS AGAINST NINE INDIVIDUAL ELC MEMBERS.

THE ELC MEMBERS ARE CHARGED WITH POSTERING, LEAFLETING, AND DISTRIBUTING NEWSPAPER ARTICLES PORTRAYING BRANDT AS A TRAITOR TO THE WORKING CLASS, COLLABORATING WITH ROCKEFELLER TO PUSH FASCIST ECONOMIC POLICIES. AS SUCH THE CHARGES ARE ESSENTIALLY THE SAME AS IN THE MAJOR BRANDT-LODERER SUITS. SPECIFICALLY:

***THREE ELC MEMBERS IN WATTENSCHIED IN THE RUHR REGION RECEIVED NOTIFICATION TODAY THAT THEY WERE BEING CHARGED WITH DISTRIBUTING A LEAFLET LABELLING BRANDT AS A "NUREMBERG CRIMINAL" AT AN SPD RALLY APRIL 14 DURING THE NORTH RHINE WESTPHALIA STATE ELECTION CAMPAIGN.**

***TWO ELC MEMBERS IN FRANKFURT RECEIVED WORD THAT THEY WERE BEING CHARGED FOR SLANDERING BRANDT.**

***TWO ELC MEMBERS IN MUNICH RECEIVED NOTIFICATION THAT THEY HAD BEEN FINED 7,500DM AND 3,000--WITHOUT A TRIAL--FOR SIMILAR CHARGES.**

***TWO ELC MEMBERS IN HANOVER ALSO RECEIVED NOTIFICATION THAT THEY WERE BEING FINED. IN THIS CASE THE CHARGES STEM FROM PICKET SIGNS WHICH ALLEGEDLY SLANDERED BRANDT.**

THE ELC SPOKESMAN NOTED THAT THE STATE PROSECUTOR IN THE WATTENSCHIED CASES HAD MADE THE HIGHLY UNUSUAL REQUEST THAT IF THE DEFENDANTS SHOULD BE FOUND GUILTY AND SENTENCED TO JAIL, THEY SHOULD BE DENIED PROBATION. THE REASON FOR THIS, THE PROSECUTOR CHARGED, IS THAT THE DEFENDANTS HAVE DEMONSTRATED THAT THEY REFUSE TO STOP SLANDERING BRANDT AND LODERER.

THE ELC SPOKESMAN INDICATED THAT THE IMPOSITION OF SUCH OUTRAGIOUSLY HIGH FINES FOR POSTERING, THE RARE REQUEST FOR A NO PROBATION--USUALLY MADE ONLY IN THE MOST SEVERE CRIMINAL CASES--AND THE SIMULTANEOUS HANDING DOWN OF THESE INDICTMENTS THROUGHOUT GERMANY, ARE INDICATIONS OF A COORDINATED EFFORT BY THE STATE PROSECUTION AGENCIES, ADVISED BY THE SPD CHAIRMAN BRANDT TO JAIL ELC MEMBERS AND OTHERWISE RESTRICT THE POLITICAL ORGANIZING OF THE ELC.

THESE ACTIONS, THE ELC SPOKESMAN CONTINUED, OCCUR AT THE SAME TIME THAT THE STATE PROSECUTOR IN LOWER SAXONY HAS DROPPED THE INVESTIGATION OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE MAOIST THUGS OF THE KPD AND KBW AGAINST THE ELC. THESE ORGANIZATIONS HAVE CONDUCTED SA-STYLE ATTACKS ON ELC POLITICAL ASSEMBLIES IN HANOVER.

THE COMBINED ACTIONS SET AN EXTREMELY DANGEROUS PRECEDENT THE ELC SPOKESMAN SAID, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF GERMAN POLITICAL HISTORY OVER THE LAST 50 YEARS.

"ALL CONCERNED CITIZENS OUTRAGED BY THIS BLATANT ATTACK ON CIVIL LIBERTIES", SAID THE ELC SPOKESMAN, "SHOULD LODGE THEIR VIGOROUS PROTESTS WITH THE APPROPRIATE GERMAN OFFICIALS IN THEIR COUNTRY, I.E. CONSULATES, EMBASSIES, ETC."

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