

by strategic and "tactical" nuclear weapons.

This is only one of the many East-West discussion areas showing new signs of life. Polish diplomatic officials, for example, have delivered a note to the British embassy, proposing that the European Economic Community begin formal relations with the CMEA. The proposal is similar to one rejected by the Community six months ago — but that was under very different international political circumstances.

CMEA spokesmen have been repeatedly emphasizing the need for progress on the pan-European conferences, which they hope will be adopted at the Helsinki follow-up meeting to be held in Belgrade this June. East German radio has suggested that the most appropriate form for a broad discussion of the proposal is the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, a body which includes representatives from both East and West Europe. Although it is still unclear whether this is indeed being discussed at the Commission's session in Geneva which began this April 20, the CMEA is using this as a forum for a detailed discussion of long-term prospects for their

five-year plans.

There are also some encouraging signs in relations between East Germany and West Germany. West German government spokesman Klaus Bölling has announced that an 80-point program on cooperation with East Germany would be issued soon. Although the details are not yet known, a further deemphasis of the Berlin question as a point of contention is likely to be one feature.

From the East German side, the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* recently published a response to a letter written by a Leipzig worker asking "Why are there so many capitalist firms settling into the DDR? What is happening to our economy?" The paper replied that these firms, especially the chemical firm Hoechst with its polychloriviny plant, are a concrete expression of détente; they draw the DDR more broadly into the international division of labor. With regards to that Hoechst plant, another newspaper, the *Financial Times*, notes that Hoechst's West German production is now being included in East Germany's 5-year planning books as basic data.

## Mitterrand Declares War On Left Socialist Faction; Union Of The Left Faces Crisis

---

### FRANCE

---

François Mitterrand, the General Secretary of the French Socialist Party (SP) and leader of the Second International, declared war this week on the pro-Communist faction in his own party, the CERES. Mitterrand's efforts appear somewhat as a desperate gambit in the context of the up-coming renegotiation of the Union of the Left's (Communist, Socialist and Left Radical parties) Common Program. It is well known that these parties hold widely differing views.

In articles in two SP publications this week, Mitterrand declared that the existence of "organized tendencies" in the party will no longer be tolerated, since they increasingly function as parties within the party. Mitterrand called on the tendencies — leaving no doubts that he means the CERES — to commit themselves to self-dissolution before the party's congress takes place in June. The CERES faction is being accused of making "unnecessary" electoral and programmatic concessions to the French Communist Party (PCF).

The leader of the CERES group, Jean-Pierre Chevènement issued his response in an interview in *Le Matin de Paris* April 19: Mitterrand is making a grave error. "I think that if Mitterrand cuts himself off from the most dynamic part of the Socialist Party, far from giving himself a guarantee for the future, he will be sawing off the very branch on which he sits." Chevènement added that Mitterrand's ultimatum to the CERES "is unacceptable."

But Mitterrand is in a dilemma. The longer he waits to purge the CERES group, the more impossible a task it will become; CERES will grow at faster rates than the SP majority tendency as worsening economic conditions in the country draw more and more workers into the PCF and CERES.

Mitterrand's declaration of war on the CERES will correctly be understood by the PCF rank and file and secondary leadership levels as a war cry against them. As the Common Program comes up for renegotiation, the opportunist pro-Atlanticist faction of the PCF centered around General Secretary Georges Marchais is equally anxious to quickly settle the matter lest its base call the unholy alliance into question altogether. At preliminary talks between the leaderships of the parties to set up a date and agenda for final renegotiation talks, Marchais' secretary and Politburo member Charles Fiterman made clear that the PCF will be willing to make certain concessions to meet the SP, provided all the issues can be settled quickly, without much ado and public debate. In a preliminary indication of how the PCF leadership will compromise, Marchais declared this week that the PCF is now willing to accept the creation of a European Parliament, provided its powers are limited. In return, the PCF expects the SP to accede to the PCF's demand that more nationalizations be included in the Common Program, particularly in the steel sector.

The Communist-led trade union, the CGT is adamantly and urgently demanding such nationalizations of the steel sector. Crippled by an overall debt amounting to more than 100 percent of the sector's annual turnover, the steel industry and its workers are faced with the grim prospect of tens of thousands of layoffs in the short and mid-term future.