

Giscard, Schmidt renew drive for peace

On a state visit to Bulgaria last week, West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt praised Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev's efforts for world peace and disarmament and endorsed a Soviet proposal for a Pan-European conference on transportation, the environment, and energy.

Schmidt's renewed detente diplomacy comes on the heels of the April 25-27 Franco-Soviet summit in Moscow, where French President Giscard d'Estaing and Soviet President Brezhnev reached agreements on economic, scientific, technological, and political cooperation to keep regional "hot spots" from flaring into world war. The summit restored the momentum of the early 1979 organizing by Schmidt and Giscard to make the European Monetary System they founded the basis of a European "superpower for peace," in the context of an Eurasian alliance of industrial republics from the Atlantic to the Urals.

Schmidt followed up his endorsement of the Soviet proposal for an energy conference with a major policy address to the European Nuclear Conference on May 7. Nuclear development, he said, is the key to world peace. This statement has significant implications for the West German Chancellor who earlier had allowed the events around the Three Mile Island nuclear plant near Harrisburg, Pa. to dampen his support for fission energy.

A Franco-German drive for nuclear development, in collaboration with the Soviet Union, provides the critical leverage to defeat the program identified with U.S. Energy Secretary James Schlesinger for energy cutbacks and rationing.

More generally, the renewed Franco-German peace initiatives, highlighted by joint Bonn-Paris diplomatic deployments into the Balkans in close concert with Moscow, hold the most significant current potential for reversing the war designs of the London-Peking-Washington axis.

In March of this year, Schmidt was threatened with NATO reprisals if the new EMS were used to challenge the global financial hegemony of London's genocidal International Monetary Fund—precisely what it was designed to do. At the same time, domestic troubles were stirred up in West Germany, from the "environmentalist" left and the Hapsburg "right" demanding a Cold War buildup.

It was Giscard's affirmation of an independent foreign policy and collaboration with the Soviets which has provided the crucial leverage to Schmidt. And Giscard himself is using the success of his Moscow visit as the takeoff point to organize the French population

behind the European Monetary System, and circumvent the free-enterprise "right" and environmentalist "left" opposition to the Franco-German EMS alliance. Giscard is now touring the country and has come out in support of Mexican President Lopez Portillo's proposal for a producer-consumer conference on energy.

Now the French and Germans have resumed their combined efforts to use high-technology economic growth as the means for solving Third World conflicts and, potentially, their own countries' economic problems. The diplomatic offensive includes, besides the Balkans initiatives, an European-Arab-African summit, which is quietly backed by the USSR; Franco-Spanish diplomatic activity to resolve the Western Sahara dispute in the Maghreb; French Foreign Ministry declarations against Israel's war provocations; and discussions on the best means of restraining Peking.

No retreat from prosperity

"I believe that all European states regardless of the alliance they belong to should all be taken equally seriously and the Federal Government is doing just that," said West German government spokesman Klaus Boelling on NDR radio on May 5.

Schmidt's visit to Soviet ally Bulgaria from May 2-4 illustrated that commitment to East-West detente and followed a visit there by France's State Secretary Olivier Stirn. During a dinner in Schmidt's honor, Bulgaria's First Secretary Todor Zhivkov attacked the Camp David accords between Egypt and Israel as the diplomacy of certain Western forces that "want to turn back the clock of history."

Schmidt, who earlier this year was blackmailed into paying lip service to the agreements, answered: "By and large I can agree with what Mr. Zhivkov just said." Then Schmidt said that West Germany "especially favors the energy aspect" of Soviet President Brezhnev's proposal for a Pan-European conference.

On the agenda of the talks between Schmidt and Zhivkov were the progress of the MBFR disarmament talks in Europe, the upcoming 1980 Madrid conference, dubbed Helsinki II, and the potential for joint economic ventures in the Third World.

Prior to the meeting, Zhivkov had been in Greece where he and Greek Prime Minister Karamanlis agreed to hold a conference on peace and cooperation in the Balkans with the participation of Turkey and Yugoslavia.

Immediately upon his return from Bulgaria, Schmidt addressed the European Nuclear Conference attended

by 2,300 representatives from 46 nations including the Soviet Union and China. In his policy address to the conference, Schmidt said, "it will come to a worldwide distribution fight over shrinking energy supplies if the industrial countries do not develop nuclear energy. An unjustifiable situation would result, in which worldwide conflicts would not be excluded, including conflicts between major powers, if the industrial countries give up the part which nuclear energy has to play in meeting their energy requirements.

"No retreat from prosperity can solve our problems or those of anyone else. No industrial country, East or West, can afford to do without nuclear energy. A general ban on nuclear energy would not only endanger technological progress and many of the preconditions for development, but also seriously question the possibilities for increasing development aid."

In conclusion, Schmidt called for an international conference on reactor security to include the East bloc nations, which would "also work out the guidelines to training Third World nuclear power technicians."

In the coming weeks, Schmidt will be traveling to Hungary, whose official in charge of international economic relations, the former Ambassador to Moscow Josef Marjai, was in Paris for talks with Prime Minister Barre on April 23-26.

The aim is peace

In France, it was Foreign Minister Jean François-Poncet who addressed the National Assembly on the results of Giscard's trip to Moscow. He reaffirmed France's commitment to detente with the USSR and then described France's role in Africa and the Mideast in a way sharply contrasting to the policy of NATO expansion into the Third World put forth by Britain's Margaret Thatcher and her Washington emulators: "The aim is a peace that would allow the Arab nations to recover their occupied territories, would allow Israel its security, and to the Palestinian people the right to return to the land it has claims on."

Neither France nor West Germany see any need to

"go south" to protect NATO's strategic energy supplies as Thatcher, Henry Kissinger and other Cold Warriors insist. And this policy toward the Middle East is being closely coordinated with the Arab nations. Speaking from Spain on May 5, Defense Minister Jarallah of the Soviet Union, was blunt: "If the United States intends to create military intervention forces to bend the Arab countries to their wishes and interests, we can assure you that they will not be able to take out one barrel of oil."

Jarallah's next stop on his European tour was Paris.

But it is the French President who has done the most to outline how Europe intends to cooperate with the OPEC countries and Mexico to ensure that Mideast oil is used for development and not as a target for NATO-Israeli attacks. On May 4, while on a tour of southwest France, Giscard described the recent visit to Paris of a Mexican ministerial delegation: "I told the ministers that I fully supported the proposal by Mexican President Lopez Portillo to get a world conference on the energy issues. ... In the next few weeks France will be having discussions with the ministers responsible for energy questions in the oil-producing countries to see with them what is the best way to get an international equilibrium set up in the market."

On nuclear energy, "the French are for it," said Giscard, "and that is a completely certain fact. They understand that France, which has no replacement for nuclear energy, must go for that energy until the year 2000, and then, after the year 2000, new energies will be available."

Giscard's tour of France included attending May 6 celebrations commemorating the national heroine, Joan of Arc, who in the 15th century successfully rallied the French army to repel an English invasion. On May 26 he will attend another commemoration in Rouen. Before then Giscard will be in Alsace where he is expected to outline his concept of Europe and the European Monetary System.

—Kathy Stevens