

# cd-europe

## bulletin

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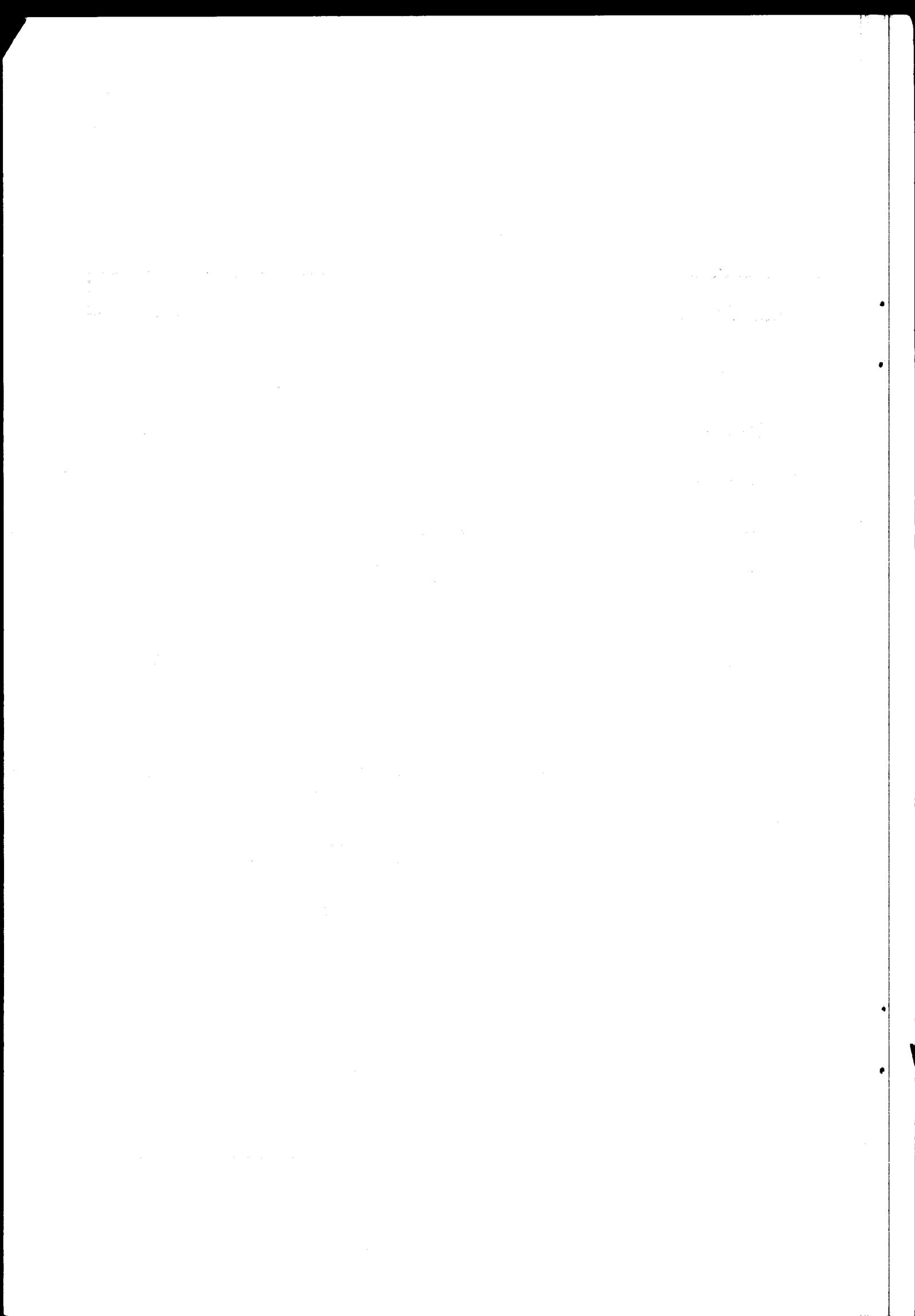
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PART-SESSION 13-17 OCTOBER

COUNCIL'S WORDS AND ACTION PROVE CONTRADICTION IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEBATE

Following its initiative in the September debate, when the CD Group asked for an extended debate on the economic and social situation in the Community, the Group condemned the inadequacy of national policies to deal with the economic crisis and challenged the Council both on its optimistic attitude and the disparity between its pronouncements and acts.

The Group Chairman, Mr BERTRAND, pointing to the meagre results in employment policy and social regional policy, questioned the credibility of a Council which reduces the budgets of both the Social and the Regional Fund. Since the size of these budgets is evidence of a political choice - said Mr Bertrand - how can the citizens of Europe believe in the Council's political resolve? Cuts to the Social Fund were in direct contradiction with policy aims and the Council's immobilism belied its official declarations. A new initiative from the Commission and proposals for a new solidarity were needed to prove that progress in Community cooperation can be resumed.

The Group's views on the economic problems were expressed by Mr ARTZINGER. Despite attempts to coordinate short-term economic measures in the Member States, as harmonized by the Commission, it might be asked, he said, whether the coordination was adequate to the challenge posed by the present crisis.

If policy leaders in the Member States repeat on every occasion that the present recession is on an international scale and cannot be dealt with effectively on a domestic basis, then the logical conclusion must be drawn and more use made of such international, and particularly European, mechanisms as are available.

As for national recovery programmes, these did not all appear to be following the same line, or to be particularly effective means of combating the recession: Christian Democrats were therefore asking for the EEC Commission to be strengthened so that coordination could be improved.

A European economic model and worker participation

by Luigi GIRARDIN

The European Christian-Democratic Movement, a peoples' movement opposed to fascism, representing millions of workers and citizens belonging to the poorest classes, intends to demand, bringing all its political strength to bear in the European Community, the opening of a new process of more equitable economic development which must give priority to the social objective in all economic activity, abandoning positions of privilege, self-interest and speculation within the system which have a negative influence on productive

activity. The present unfavourable economic situation, from which our workers are suffering more than anyone else, must be countered by a policy designed not only to correct the short-term economic trends but also to change the structures of our economy and social organization.

As an alternative to the capitalist or collectivist systems which have both shown in practice the negative effects of concepts now overtaken by the times and by industrial and social progress, there must emerge a new European model of development based primarily on participation by the workers in economic and productive management. In the complex modern organization of our economy, capital has lost its original personal characteristic, and commercial companies with a high or medium level of financial concentration are dominated by the wishes and decisions of managers and are oriented towards the achievement of maximum profits with increasing vertical integration.

At least until now, the socialist system has shown the inadequacy of the principle on which it is based to cope with a reality characterized essentially by a tendency to level the living conditions of workers downwards without creating a genuine and competitive alternative to the capitalist system.

Today in Europe, a more or less permanent social conflict conditions the production process, and without the participation of workers in this process, it is impossible to imagine a harmonious and more equitable development of the economic system.

Experience of this participation has differed in the individual Member States, but a Community strategy could facilitate the development of this concept and a practical introduction of participation.

To achieve these objectives, a precise and clear resolve by the public forces will not be sufficient; there must also be, above all, agreement with the social forces at European level on the objectives and the instruments to attain them, in order to achieve an identity of views.

The tripartite conference which has been announced for 18 November next should be the start of this process, but we must also abandon the academic method now and seek instead agreement and joint decisions.

There must now be no delays; faster progress is needed towards implementation of the proposals already made for Community decisions in the social sector. While European agricultural policy today accounts for three-quarters of the Community budget, social policy must not be held back but, on the contrary, stepped up by a programme of action for occupational retraining of workers, compensatory payments for the unemployed, readaptation and all the other measures needed if migrant workers, who have given so much and made so many sacrifices to the development of the European economy, are not to be abandoned.

CD GROUP DEFENDS INTERNATIONAL ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN MASS DISMISSALS AT AKZO AND PHILIPS

Following reports that two multinational companies, AKZO and Philips, were, because of the economic crisis, closing some departments and re-organizing their activities with the consequent dismissal of some ten thousand workers in Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, the European Parliament's Committee on Social Affairs and Employment tabled, on the initiative of its chairman, Mr Alfred BERTRAND, a question to the EEC Commission. Mr BERTRAND asked what was the likely number of redundancies and what measures the Commission intended to take in favour of those dismissed; and whether the Commission was prepared to support the trade unions and to use its right of initiative to speed up the implementation of the directive of 17 February 1975 on mass dismissals.

In the debate, Mr VAN DER GUN, on behalf of the CD Group, emphasized that, whenever the possibility of mass dismissal arose, care should be taken to ensure that the factors determining these dismissals were not exclusively economic and that social considerations were taken amply into account. In the case of multinationals, neither the Member State governments nor the trade unions had sufficient insight into the operations of these undertakings to be able to ensure rational discussion on the policy to be followed. Moreover, the AKZO management had refused discussion with trade unions at international level and was willing to deal only with the Belgian, German and Dutch trade unions which meant - Mr Van der Gun said - that consultation was being shifted from the stage at which the decisions are taken to the stage at which they are simply implemented.

Parliament could make its own contribution here by starting a debate on the matter and the Commission, for its part, should contact directly those responsible for decisions.

Mr BERTRAND: MANY GAPS TO FILL BEFORE POLITICAL COOPERATION BECOMES A REALITY

While it must be acknowledged that much progress has been made in co-operation among the Nine and that Europe's identity is shaping increasingly clearly on the world scene, it cannot be denied that many gaps still remain, particularly in certain sectors.

This is how Group Chairman Mr BERTRAND put the CD Group's broadly favourable attitude after the statement by the President-in-Office of the Council in the European Parliament.

In the Group's opinion the most notable lack is that of a genuine Mediterranean policy and the Nine's consequent inability to speak with one voice: Mr BERTRAND said this clearly and it was also the theme of Mr SCALBA's statement, reported below.

In this connection, the problem of direct elections to the European Parliament should not be left to the officials of Member States. In drawing up the proposal, Parliament had assumed responsibility for achieving its own elections: if there was some aspect with which the Council did not agree, it was up to the Council to discuss it with Parliament.

Mr BERTRAND described the fact of the Nine being represented jointly, by the President of the Council, at the United Nations conference on cooperation and development as one of the positive outcomes of political cooperation.

Mr LUCKER: CD GROUP AGAINST ALL VIOLENCE IN SPAIN

After stressing the political role of the EEC Commission in the crisis surrounding the death sentences in Spain, Mr LUCKER, Vice-chairman of the Group, made the following statement:

'This House has always been a guarantor of human rights and has condemned special courts and military summary courts with the insufficient possibilities of defence which they entail. Respect for human rights, to which also belong the rights of defence for those standing trial, is an indispensable element in our European tradition, culture and civilization. Any country wishing to join this Community must respect those rights. At the same time we condemn just as firmly all terror and violence aimed at attaining political goals, no matter what side it stems from. I would like to add that the Christian-Democratic Group includes the murder of policemen in this category of acts of terror and we object just as strongly to this form of terrorism used by certain organizations as a means of attaining political goals in Spain.

For the future, we can do two things: firstly together with the democratic forces in Spain which remain in touch with the European Parliament and with the CD Group, we should do everything possible to find a way out for the Spanish people towards democracy in freedom; secondly, we can play our part by ensuring that Spain and its people can one day take their place among the peoples of the Community, for we remain convinced that Spain and the Spanish people with their culture and tradition, belong here'.

CD GROUP CALLS COUNCIL'S BUDGET CUTS ARBITRARY AND HAPHAZARD

In the short preliminary debate on the Community's draft budget the CD Group expressed its disappointment at the considerable cuts introduced by the Council in all sectors compared with the Commission's proposal.

Speaking on behalf of the Group, Mr AIGNER remarked: 'My Group's first reaction to this draft budget of the Council is one of disappointment. The discrepancy between the pretty speeches, the lofty declarations of the Summits, and the harsh reality of everyday deliberations on financial questions is becoming increasingly apparent. We should not conceal this disappointment but

try to examine at least some aspects of the matter more closely in the dialogue with the Council. One argument which has been given a great deal of publicity, especially in the current economic situation, is that the European Community is costing more and more. That is not true : if one compares the Community's gross domestic product with the Community's budget, the ratio is decreasing. Another argument is the ratio between public expenditure by the Community and public expenditure by Member States. In 1973 the share of the Community budget in the public expenditure of all the Member States was 2.39%; this year's budget will be below 2%. These are the real facts and the Council should do everything in its power to ensure that erroneous arguments of this kind are no longer used in public debates.

This House has never underestimated the difficulties of the individual Member States, but we have always maintained that if the Member States were willing to transfer to the Community a real degree of sovereignty and real responsibilities, there would be a net gain for all tax-payers. We must therefore appeal to the Member States to allow more economical operation at Community level to replace activities at national level.'

After Mr AIGNER's introductory speech, the Group explained its position on the major aspects of Community policy.

Why does the Council decide to economize - wondered Mr MITTERDORFER à propos of regional policy - on the implementation of the one instrument available to the Community to eliminate regional imbalances through a structural policy? Mr MITTERDORFER recalled that in last year's Regional Fund debate in Parliament the CD Group had stated plainly that the Regional Fund was all that remained of the Community's ambitious projects and pointed out how each year the financial side of regional policy activities through the Fund was the subject of controversy and always, as this year, suffered cuts.

On energy and technology policy Mr SPRINGORUM emphasized the fundamental role of technology policy in a structural reform of the economy. Any structural reform must begin with a reform of technological knowledge, he said. But research comes even before that : in the long-term it represents the least costly method of avoiding unemployment and poverty. To economize on research was a fundamental mistake, said Mr SPRINGORUM. Senator NOE similarly pointed out that reductions in appropriations for research, for joint research centres and for nuclear power production would, in the short, medium and long-term, hamper the Community's progress towards self-sufficiency in the energy area.

On social questions, Mr PISONI stressed that if budget appropriations were not increased, the effect of the recession would be offloaded on just those sectors which should be aided through appropriations for various forms of social security benefits. Extending the theme to developing countries, Mr BERSANI said that the budgetary cuts seemed to be made in arbitrary and haphazard ways at the very time when something resembling overall Community policies were beginning to emerge.

Speaking on agricultural policy, Senator MARTENS remarked that it was the only sector in which the Community had been able to achieve a common policy with the objective, laid down in the Treaties, of ensuring a fair income for farmers. But the fact was, he said, that farmers' incomes were lower than those of other social categories; savings must not be made to the detriment of either farmers or consumers.

#### ENERGY POLICY: EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY SHATTERED

The Christian-Democratic Group was dismayed by, and profoundly opposed to, the attitude of one Community Member country, the United Kingdom, to the forthcoming Paris meeting between industrial countries, oil-producing countries and developing countries. The position of the United Kingdom was that it was agreeable to the Community's speaking with one voice on some problems, but on others it reserved the right to defend its interests directly. If this view were to prevail, we should be building a spurious Europe, a Europe of 'every man for himself'. A Community of solidarity would never be made like this. This new development might be the undoing of the Community's image in the outside world and of all Community cooperation. It was in these terms that, on behalf of the CD Group, Britain's attitude was condemned by the Group Chairman, Mr BERTRAND, and the chairman of the European Parliament's Energy Committee, Mr SPRINGORUM, in the plenary debate.

It was in this spirit that the Group tabled a resolution, which was adopted by a majority (Christian-Democrats, Conservatives, Liberals and European Progressive Democrats), calling for a concertation of the Member States' positions in preparation for the conference on international economic cooperation.

#### LOME CONVENTION IMPLIES INCREASED DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

The progress achieved with the Lomé Convention represents for Christian Democrats the confirmation of many of their expectations and of their ideological and political aims: the CD Group sees Lomé as important because it marks a trend towards new democratic models of cooperation and participation in the solution of international problems.

This is how Mr BERSANI described the CD Group's attitude in the European Parliament's adoption debate on the Lomé Convention between the EEC and ACP countries.

The political and economic importance attached by the Group to the Convention was evidenced by the concern expressed by Senator DESCHAMPS that its practical implementation was being unduly delayed: of the five-year terms originally laid down already only four remained, and plans for implementation were still not known. The time-limit of March 1980 set down in the Convention did not leave much room for manoeuvre, Senator DESCHAMPS concluded, urging everybody to bear that fact in mind.

GENERALIZED PREFERENCES AS AN INSTRUMENT OF DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION

World inflation which was constantly eroding the value of generalized tariff preferences, on the one hand, and the policies of the great powers who were much more generous in word than in deed, on the other, were two major obstacles to effective aid to poorer countries.

It was in these terms that Senator DESCHAMPS explained the CD Group's concern to safeguard aid for developing countries who are not signatories of the Lomé Convention. Mr ZELLER, stressing that generalized preferences were a method of helping the development of the third world, pointed to the unequal benefits drawn by the poor countries from these aids and to the need to clearly define long-term options in this area. He castigated the contrast between the generalized preferences ideology and the practical obstacles which some Member countries were putting in the way of imports from the third world. He called for a clearer and more statesman-like attitude in the Community to the problem of world development.

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT'S 'ROMAN WEEK'

A DELEGATION FROM THE GROUP VISITS B. LEIGHTON

During the annual Rome meeting of European Parliament committees, the Christian-Democratic Group sent a delegation to visit Bernado LEIGHTON, in hospital suffering from injuries sustained in a recent attack on himself and his wife.

Bernado LEIGHTON, who for several years now has been living in exile in Rome, is one of the founder-members of the Christian-Democratic movement in Chile and was Vice-Premier in the Frei Government.

The delegation which visited him consisted of Senator NOE', Mr SCHULZ and Mr DE KEERSMAEKER, accompanied by Mr Angelo BERNASSOLA, Assistant Secretary-General of the World CD Union.

AUDIENCE WITH THE POPE

The annual Rome meetings of the European Parliament's committees enabled a great many members of the European Parliament to attend a general audience given by Pope Paul VI.

Addressing the faithful, His Holiness made special mention of the European Parliamentarians, emphasizing the great importance and responsibility of their role in the construction of a united Europe.

The European Parliament representation included nearly all the CD Group Members present at the time in Rome.

## THE MEDITERRANEAN PROBLEM

by Senator Mario SCALBA<sup>1</sup>

At the Helsinki Conference, given the close interdependence between European security and Mediterranean security, a declaration was issued whereby all the signatory States undertook to base their policies towards the Mediterranean states on the same principles as had been adopted for the European countries.

However, since the Helsinki Conference, we have witnessed a course of events in marked contrast to the undertakings which were made concerning the Mediterranean.

First of all, there is the ever-increasing size of the Soviet fleet, with ships of all types, including landing craft. Secondly, the supply of arms to Libya - a country which no-one is threatening - in quantities out of all proportion to the size of that country's population. Thirdly, the Soviet Union's action aimed at torpedoing the new agreement between Egypt and Israel, even before it was signed.

On a more general level, it can be seen that even after Helsinki, there is an accelerating growth of land, sea and air weaponry, and not only of the conventional type. The oil embargo showed us that the use of oil as a weapon may have repercussions throughout the world. And although this weapon is not lethal, it can lead to the unemployment of millions of people and cause political upheavals which could spark off real wars.

Today, the European Community as such is the largest power bordering the Mediterranean. Geography, history, culture and economics all provide a justification for special relations between the European Community and the other Mediterranean states and it is in the Community's interest that these states should be above all independent and prosperous. But there are dangers to peace, due to a policy which tends to weaken the national independence of the Mediterranean states.

A threat to the independence of these states may also come from the supply of arms. What is the Community doing in this situation? The Commission talks of a global Mediterranean policy; but a global Community policy on the Mediterranean just does not exist because the essential element is lacking, namely 'policy' with a capital 'P'.

The European Community, therefore, needs to abandon its empirical, piecemeal approach to foreign affairs. It has to find - and quickly - a global foreign policy, beginning with the Mediterranean, because while we stand here discussing the form that political cooperation should take, events

<sup>1</sup>Former Italian Prime Minister, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee.

may be taking place in the Mediterranean which could drastically alter the present political situation and actually threaten the future, the very existence, of the Community.

We cannot wait until 1980 to achieve political union, to give the European Community a foreign policy, for history moves much faster than that.

I believe that a political initiative by the Community aimed specifically at the Mediterranean is absolutely essential. But what form should it take?

The European Community could examine the possibility of calling a conference of the Mediterranean countries aimed at strengthening the security and independence of all concerned, but above all at getting the great powers to respect the independence of the Mediterranean nations. In order to do this, or to take any other political initiative, we must pass from the stage of cooperation to that of union. It must also be remembered that we cannot distinguish between economics and politics. Such a distinction is impossible, particularly when economic policies and systems are used, at the international and other levels, as political weapons.

## ELECTIONS AROUND EUROPE

### SWITZERLAND: CD NOW THE STRONGEST PARLIAMENTARY PARTY

With 46 National councillors and 17 States councillors, the People's Christian-Democratic Party (PDC) of Switzerland has become the most important political group in the Federal Assembly (the Parliament). It missed by two seats the highest representation it has ever achieved (48 National councillors and 17 States councillors in 1951 and 1963). According to many political commentators the PDC may rightly be considered, together with the Socialist Party, the winner of the 1975 elections: these clearly demonstrated the further polarization towards the two major parties, already noted in the spring regional elections. The 1975 elections, despite a low turnout, must be seen as the rout of the extremist parties of both left and right and an expression of electoral support for the ruling coalition parties.

Apart from achieving the aim declared in its electoral campaign of becoming the strongest party in the country, the PDC was able to attain some other objectives: endorsement by the vote of women, for whom the party was able to gain one more seat in the National Council; increased support in all the major centres, with a new seat in Zurich; advancement to second-strongest party in Basle; and a near miss for a fourth seat in the industrial region of Aargau. Even in Geneva, Western Switzerland's main population centre, the party, despite the loss of one seat, had a clear gain in votes.

### AUSTRIA: A STRONG DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION - by Peter DIEM<sup>1</sup>

The elections to the National Council (Parliament) held on 5 October 1975 showed that an absolute majority of voters support the Socialist Party. With 50.4% of the valid vote, the Austrian Socialist Party reached a record in its electoral history, while the People's Party (CD) obtained 43%, or the lowest vote it has yet recorded. The Socialist Party now holds 93 seats (in 1971 it had 93, reduced to 92 following the population census held in that year); the People's Party has 80 seats (80 in 1971, subsequently reduced to 79); the Liberal Party has 10 seats (in 1971 10, subsequently increased to 12). The Communist Party, with only 1.2% of the vote, failed to obtain a seat.

The Socialist Party will therefore be ruling alone in a third Kreisky Government to hold office.

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<sup>1</sup> Head of Planning and Research Department of the Austrian CD

The People's Party has, as stated by its Chairman, Mr Taus, the support of two million electors: this represents a mandate which lays upon the Movement the responsibility to take its duties seriously in the conviction that, with a consistent policy, it can attain its objective of gaining power in 1979. The aim of the policy will be to work out the People's Party's basic attitudes vis-à-vis Socialism and to explain them to the electorate in a way that will increase its support in the next elections, of critical importance for the future of the country.

In line with the electorate's wishes, the People's Party will perform the function of opposition in an intransigent but democratic manner, pursuing, as it has for the last 30 years, a constructive policy in the service of the country.

A preliminary analysis shows that one of the reasons for the People's Party's diminished support is the structural transformation of the country, where the farming population has decreased. The electoral swing can certainly be attributed to farmers taking up dependent employment, to migration to the cities and to the effect of the floating vote. In addition, reduced employment in trade and in the tertiary sector in general must be taken into account. The 1975 elections were overshadowed by the employment problem. The Socialist Party owes its gains primarily to the white-collar workers worried by the threat of an economic crisis: they voted in much greater numbers than in 1971 and, in contrast to those elections, gave their support to the Socialist Party. It thus gained the support of both rural and small urban communes. Obviously, the opposite trend could also be observed: some electors switched from the Socialist Party to the PP: this swing expressed the desire for greater stabilization and possibly for the formation of a grand coalition. It also meant these voters expressed greater confidence in the People's Party's, rather than the Socialist's, ability to solve the economic crisis.

#### LUXEMBOURG: SOCIAL CHRISTIAN PARTY WINS

The elections held on 12 October and 19 October (for a second ballot in the 84 communes where the majority system is used) for the 126 communal councillors for the next 6 years had all the marks this year of a national test of approval for the new coalition government of Socialists and Liberals. Despite the attacks to which the Social-Christian Party had been subjected both from the Socialists and the Liberals, it can consider itself satisfied with the results obtained both in the City of Luxembourg and in the 18 communes where the proportional system applies.

By its vote, the electorate clearly showed that it endorses the policy pursued by the opposition in the last 14 months and that it is not entirely in agreement with the government's policy.

While the Socialists regained some ground and confirmed their position in nearly all the communes of the mining district (10 out of 19 where the proportional vote applies) they were the great losers in Luxembourg City (3 seats lost) and some other places.

Their governmental colleagues, Mr THORN's Liberals, show losses compared with the general elections of 1974, except in Walferdange, Wiltz and Echternach. In the country's capital, the Liberal Party lost nearly 3% of the vote compared with 1974, though it was there that they had put up their strongest candidate, the Mayor, Miss Colette FLESCH.

The October 1975 elections must convince the Liberals that their 1974 electoral success is a thing of the past and that the party is doomed to return to its previous position of only the third political force in the country.

The Social-Christian Party, although it lost 6.6% of the vote in Bascharage, a commune in the south of the country where voting was for the first time on the proportional system, made gains everywhere else and particularly in Luxembourg City (34.5% as against 26.8% in 1974) and in Esch-sur-Alzette, the Grand Duchy's second city (25.14% as against 21.4% in 1974). There would thus be no exaggeration in saying that the SCP is the only one to emerge victorious in the country overall and that it is regaining strength after last year's 'historic set-back'.

