

EUROPEAN DETENTE AND EUROCOMMUNISM

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AMITA MALWADE

**CENTRE FOR AMERICAN AND WEST EUROPEAN STUDIES
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067
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C O N T E N T S

	<u>Page No.</u>
Preface	1 - 111
Chapter 1 Detente in Europe; New Patterns of Inter-Europe Interaction	1 - 42
Chapter 2 The Emergence of Eurocommunism and Its Linkage with Detente	43 - 76
Chapter 3 Eurocommunism and the Politics of East-West Detente	77 - 107
Chapter 4 Eurocommunism: Doctrine or Phenomenon?	108 - 171
Chapter 5 Conclusion	172 - 187
Bibliography	188 - 200

Preface

European detente, which emerged in its preliminary form in the nineteen sixties, but became concretized in the seventies, has been a subject of extensive debate. The same is true of in the case of Eurocommunism, which emerged as a distinct phenomenon in the communist movement of Western Europe only in the later half of the seventies. Even though there is enormous literature on both detente and Eurocommunism separately, there has practically been no in-depth analysis of the linkage between the two phenomena.

This dissertation is an attempt at discovering the linkage between detente and Eurocommunism. Without any doubt, the formalization of European detente through the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) helped pave the way for Eurocommunism. The linkage theory has its bearing upon the sequence of events which gave shape to the two phenomena, one following the other within the span of less than a year.

Though traces of detente can be found in the earlier periods, it became actualized only after the Helsinki Summit of July 1975. As a result, its ramifications were felt in the domain of Human Rights in both parts of Europe. It is in this context that there is the need to view the growth of the convergence of interests in 1976 among the PCI, PCF

and PCE - three major Communist Parties in Western Europe. Since then, Eurocommunism became not only a subject of severe controversy and great debate, but also drew unusual value judgements upon its ideological and political contours. The controversy became less intense with the defeat or setback suffered by the Eurocommunists in France and Italy during the past three years, but it would be too rash to speak about its total failure, or worse still its demise.

The first Chapter deals with detente and the emergence of new patterns of inter-action in Europe. The Super Power and Sino-American rapprochements have been briefly discussed, for these cleared the international climate and make detente in Europe a reality. The second Chapter traces the emergence of Eurocommunism from the time of the establishment of the Communist Parties in the twenties to the present, and then briefly examines its linkage with European detente. The third Chapter, the Eurocommunists and the politics of East/West detente, examines these parties changing attitudes to European integration and defence. The fourth Chapter examines the question of whether Eurocommunism represents a doctrine or phenomenon or whether it is a mere tactical manoeuvre as is generally claimed by the West. The conclusion, besides summing up the main contention of the dissertation, also discusses certain crucial issues, such as whether Eurocommunism would have a more destabilizing effect on the Eastern or the Western half of Europe.

I take this opportunity to express my sincerest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. H.S. Chopra, of the West European Studies Division of the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, for his guidance and encouragement that enabled me to complete my dissertation. I would also like to thank Mr. Taneja for the excellent typing of the dissertation. Nor can I forget the assistance given to me by the Library staff of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, the Indian Council for World Affairs and the Institute for Defence Study and Analysis.

A Malwade
(AMITA MALWADE)

Chapter 1

DETENTE IN EUROPE: NEW PATTERNS OF INTER-EUROPE INTERACTION

The nineteen seventies may with some justification be described as the decade of detente. On the international plane its chief architect was Henry Kissinger, the U.S. secretary of state, while on the European plane it was Willy Brandt, the West German Chancellor. The U.S. attempts at rapprochement with USSR and China during the early seventies led to a relaxation of tensions in inter bloc politics, which enabled new patterns of interaction to emerge in Europe. As a result East-West detente has had some significant effects on the international system:¹

- (i) It has led to increased accomodation and understanding between the two Super Powers in various tension filled areas of the world.
- (ii) Europe is no longer as rigidly partitioned into two rival blocs as it was during the Cold War period.
- (iii) Bilateral and multi-lateral negotiations have yielded place to a new norm of interaction marked by collusion and collision rather than confrontation which resulted from the post-war division of Europe.

1. Harish Kapur, "Europe and Detente", in M.S. Agwani, ed., Detente (New Delhi, 1975), pp. 95-96.

The Super Power Rapprochement

The term detente has been subject to a great deal of controversy and has been differently interpreted. The Oxford English Dictionary describes it as "the cessation of strained relations among states". Detente, a French term, means relaxation. However, it is difficult to recall a single moment of relaxation in Soviet-American relations since the Yalta Conference.² The high point came with the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, which made the Super Powers realise the dangers of nuclear brinkmanship. Since then, the two powers have chosen to compete without collision. In this, one may find the beginnings of the US-USSR detente. Detente does not end rivalry; co-operation keeps it within manageable limits. It is the sheer logic of survival that has compelled them to pursue the path of detente. J.W. Fulbright elaborates upon the concept as follows:

The heart and core of the policy of detente is the lessening of the danger of nuclear war - the lessening of tensions among the great powers is an endeavour of the greatest consequence, to which there is no rational alternative. The alternative to the SALT agreements is the arms race, the alternative to trade is one degree or another of economic boycott, the alternative to normal relations is the Cold War, and the ever present threat of hot war. (3)

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2. Bharat Wariawala, "Is Detente Dead?", World Focus (New Delhi), vol. 3 (March 1980), p. 13.
 3. Opening statement of Senator J.W. Fulbright, Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, on Sept. 19, 1974., in Detente, Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, 93rd Congress, on American Relations with Communist countries. August 15, 20 & 21, September 10, 12, 18, 19, 24 and 25 and December 1 & 8, 1974, (Washington, 1975), p. 236.

In USSR, the term "peaceful co-existence" is generally used to convey what detente does in the West. The Soviets claim this as a basic tenet of their foreign policy, and trace it to the Decree of Peace of 8 November 1917.⁴ Lenin elaborated this, saying that in order to save the Bolshevik revolution Russia would have to live in peace with the capitalist countries; however, there could never be a long term or permanent peaceful co-existence. Khrushchev defined this policy by referring to the five famous principles - "panchaseela".⁵ Brezhnev and Kosygin added a few nuances, and thence it gained currency as detente. Like their predecessor, they accepted the necessity for avoiding any direct confrontation. But while Khrushchev insisted on competition between the two social systems (especially in economic matters) with communist victory being inevitable, Brezhnev and his colleagues preached continuation and even intensification of the struggle by all means short of war. All communist writings now emphasise two basic points:

- (1) Detente is limited to relations between states.
- (ii) It has nothing to do with ideology; on the contrary, it signifies the intensification of the ideological

4. This Decree announced that the Soviet Union was willing to start peace negotiations with all the belligerent countries of the first world war and was willing to conclude peace treaties with them.

5. These principles are: mutual respect for each others territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in each others internal affairs, equality and mutual advantage, peaceful co-existence and economic co-operation.

struggle.⁶

The path from Cold War to detente was strewn with tremendous difficulties. Yet two factors seem to have facilitated its emergence. First, the change in the strategic balance which resulted from the Soviet attainment of nuclear parity with the U.S. Secondly, the Sino-Soviet conflict gave a new complexion to the international power structure. Ironically, a convergence of Sino-Soviet interests in South East Asia developed, which resulted in the debacle of US policy in Vietnam. As a result, USA was left with no option but to open dialogue with both USSR and China.

The rapid Soviet acquisition of nuclear weapons and the development of its missile systems rapidly broke the U.S. monopoly in that field. After the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Soviets had invested substantial resources in the development of their strategic weapons systems. Though the US could still claim qualitative superiority, what was important was that for the first time since the beginning of the nuclear age the USSR could claim nuclear parity with it. Secondly, ever increasing hostility towards China gave the Soviet Union a powerful impetus towards reaching accomodation with the United States. The 1969 border clashes drove Sino-Soviet relations to a new nadir. Moreover, China was

6. For details see Zafar Imam, "Soviet View of Detente", in M.S. Agwani, ed., Detente (New Delhi, 1975), pp. 41-65.

beginning to pose a serious diplomatic challenge to Soviet Union, especially after the Peking-Washington rapprochement. In what was probably the single most brilliant result of an often unproductive diplomacy, President Nixon and Secretary of State Kissinger gave the USSR a powerful incentive towards detente by ending the sterile and ineffectual boycott of the Peoples' Republic of China.⁷

Besides, both powers were alarmed by the increased burden on their economies. Defence expenditure was increasing at an alarming rate. A Gallup poll of March 1971 indicated that 49% of the Americans believed that the defence expenditure was too high, and only 11% thought it was too low. Most Americans felt that this money could instead be utilised for improving the standard of living in the country.⁸ The Soviet Union was then facing serious economic problems. The Five Year Plan begun in 1971 had fallen far short of expectations. The growth rate had begun to decline and the competition for resources had sharpened. The Soviet leadership refused to bring about substantial internal economic reforms, and therefore had only one alternative - to seek new avenues of technology as well as capital, in

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7. Marshall Schulman, "Towards a Western Philosophy of Co-existence", Foreign Affairs (Washington), vol. 52 (October 1973), pp. 44-45.
8. B.K. Shrivastava, "American Perspectives on Detente", in M.S. Agwani, ed., Detente (New Delhi, 1975), p. 13.

particular from the West. This could primarily come from USA, West Germany, and Japan. "The realisation of these expectations of massive economic assistance from the West", Marshall Schulman points out, "manifestly requires an international climate of reduced tensions i.e. detente".⁹

Both USA and USSR realized the benefits of improved mutual relations. There are certain matters which concern both states eg. they share a common concern over China's nuclear development and territorial expansion, which led them to follow parallel policies of giving military and economic aid to India during the Sino-Indian border war; they also provided a joint guarantee under the Non Proliferation Treaty to prevent a nuclear power like China from directing its nuclear force against its non-nuclear neighbours. They also realised the benefits of mutual economic and other relations eg. USA realised that USSR could provide it with raw materials while the Soviets realised that they could use American technology to develop their own relatively underdeveloped industries. Both are afraid of being outbidden by third states, for USSR can easily go in for West German technology while USA can get its raw materials from the Third World. Above all, USSR needs food supplies and USA is the only country with a

9. Marshall Schulman, n. 7, p. 44.

surplus. Both also realized that the Cold War had resulted in an unhealthy competition between them to provide economic assistance to developing countries.

Detente has had three important aspects: strategic, economic, and political. Following the Cuban Missile Crisis, a Moscow-Washington Hot Line was established to avoid any possible dangerous delays that might lead to a crises. Then came the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963 which only permitted underground nuclear tests. From now on there was an escalation towards detente. A significant step in this direction was the signing of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1968. The Four Power agreement on Berlin in September 1971 and the treaties between West Germany on the one hand, and USSR and other East European states on the other, greatly contributed to detente and to the convening of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. The latter was aimed at raising a confidence building mechanism. Besides, the two Super Powers concluded SALT I in 1972, whereby they agreed to parity in missiles and war heads. By this, USA acknowledged for the first time that it was no longer seeking to maintain the strategic superiority it had enjoyed since 1945. Then came SALT II, finally concluded in Vienna in June 1979. This has not been sent to the U.S. Senate for ratification as yet, for the former President Carter felt that the Executive must first deal with the more pressing

problems arising from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.¹⁰

In the economic field, there has been a normalisation and expansion of relations. Many economic agreements were signed eg. USSR agreed to pay 722 million dollars as a war time debt, to be paid in instalments upto July 1, 2001. USA not only advanced loans but also offered new technology to USSR, and trade between them rose rapidly.¹¹ USA also promised to get Congressional authorisation for a reduction of duties on Soviet imports, thus virtually offering Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to USSR. The Jackson Amendment of October 1972, however, linked this to the Soviet government permitting the free emigration of its citizens. This raised a highly controversial issue: whether it is legitimate for a foreign power to seek to influence the domestic affairs of another sovereign state? Senator Jackson held that an East-West detente without an internal human detente is useless, while Kissinger stated that though one could not be indifferent to the denial of Human Rights in the Soviet Union, the US could not insist that it alters its domestic structure. Ambassador George Kennan, who held similar views, declared: "I consider it on principle unsound practice for us to place demands on other governments in matters we

10. P.R. Chari, "Arms Race, Disarmament in the Freeze", World Focus, vol. 3 (March 1978), p. 17.

11. Harish Kapur, n. 1, p. 96.

ourselves would consider to be our domestic policy".¹²

Eventually the MFN status has not been granted to the USSR due to too much opposition.

Lastly, the rigid bi-polar system, which was a characteristic of the Cold War period, began gradually disintegrating. As a result, there have emerged a number of independent centres of decision making such as France, China, Japan and a few Third World states.

The Sino-American Rapprochement

Besides the Super Power detente, the Sino-American detente which occurred in the late sixties and early seventies helped clear the international environment of many tensions. Prior to the "Cultural Revolution", Peking felt that detente was an illusion; to propogate this was little less than a sell out to "US imperialism".¹³ However, the increasing bitterness of the Sino-Soviet conflict made China gradually re-evaluate her attitude to USA, and this process was hastened by the 1969 border clashes. There was a simultaneous reappraisal in Washington about its China policy, reflected in a study called Remaking China Policy.¹⁴

12. Opening statement of George F. Kennan before the Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, on August 20, 1975, n. 3, p. 62.

13. For China's views, see Gargi Dutt, "China and the Shift in Super Power Relations", in M.S. Agwani, ed., Detente (New Delhi, 1975), pp. 69-93.

14. Richard Moorsteen and Morton Abramowitz, Remaking China Policy: US-Chinese Relations and Government Decision Making (Cambridge, Mass. 1971).

Since 1967, Peking and Washington have been making preliminary gestures of rapprochement. However, the 1970 American and South Vietnamese bombing of Cambodia and later of Laos postponed their detente. It finally came in 1971, when Richard Nixon made his famous trip to Peking.

The main reasons for the Sino-American detente were as follows: Firstly, the Sino-Soviet relations have been deteriorating since the early sixties. China became increasingly conscious of its weakness vis-a-vis USSR. This was further accentuated when the latter intervened in Czechoslovakia in 1968. The Sino-Soviet clashes of 1969 made China realize its weakness in nuclear weapons. All these factors made it necessary for Peking to improve its relations with Moscow's enemies, especially Washington. This was strengthened when USA began implementing the Nixon doctrine.¹⁵ Secondly, the PRC hoped that better relations with USA would yield dividends on Taiwan. Thirdly, China was interested in USA as a potential trading partner. It was believed that the import of scientific and technological know-how could accelerate the Chinese industrial development.

There were simultaneous American moves towards China. Nixon replaced the traditional American policy of confront-

15. This provided for a partial American disengagement from Asia.

tation with detente because it would enable the US to disengage from South East Asia and would help USA recuperate its image with its allies in the Pacific and in Western Europe.¹⁶

The U.S. President Nixon's visit to Peking in 1971² is often described as "the week that changed the world", for the two sides in accord with the Shanghai Communiqué agreed to further "normalisation" of relations on the basis of the five principles of peaceful co-existence. The greatest controversial issue was Taiwan; in its most significant concession, Washington declared for the first time that it would not challenge the views of all Chinese that Taiwan is a part of China. The most significant Chinese concession was only implicit - the Chinese did not mention the US-Taiwan defence treaty. However, USA made it clear that it would not allow force to be used to make Taiwan part of mainland China. As a result, the PRC became a member of the United Nations and Sino-American relations have gradually improved over the years.

Detente in Europe

Soviet-American relations constitute an overall frame-

16. For details see William Griffith, "Peking, Moscow, and Beyond", The Washington Papers, No. 6 (Beverly Mills, Cal, 1973), and Harold Hinton, "Peking-Washington: Chinese Foreign Policy and the United States", The Washington Papers, No. 34 (Beverly Mills, 1976).

work for the policy of detente in Europe. The Kissinger design was a result of the international political situation prevailing in the late sixties, when even America's closest allies were finding it difficult to support her action in Vietnam, as a result of which America was becoming discredited in Western Europe. The Kissinger initiative paved the way for the success of detente in Europe, which was realized through Brandt's "Ostpolitik".

The Soviet, West German and French Views

For a proper understanding of detente in Europe, it is necessary to take into account the attitudes of the two parts of Europe towards the highly complex process of detente. As far as Eastern Europe is concerned, there is a sort of consensus in regard to furthering detente with the West. At the initial stage there were some differences between the Soviet leadership and the GDR. But very soon Walter Ulbricht yielded place to Hoenecker, who shared the Soviet views on detente. In Western Europe, it is fascinating to study the different approaches of France and the FRG.

The Soviet goals of detente in Europe can be broadly divided into two categories:

- (1) Since the early fifties, the Soviet Union has been trying to get international legal recognition of the status quo in Central and Eastern Europe. It has

repeatedly argued for recognition of the GDR as an independent state, as well as its boundaries with West Germany and for turning West Berlin into an independent political entity.

- (ii) ^{The} Soviet Union has repeatedly tried to reduce and eliminate American presence in Europe, first by way of proposing the dissolution of the military blocs, and then by calling for a European Security Conference. For this, it has established contacts with individual countries in Western Europe, playing upon their sensitivity in matters of national independence and pride. In this it has found an eager ally in France.¹⁷

West Europe's perceptions of detente differ considerably from the Soviet Union's. Moreover, the motives and goals of the two main West European powers - West Germany and France - differ, and sometimes even conflict.

West Germany saw detente as an avenue to normalization of her relations with the East. From 1949 to 1966, Bonn considered reunification of Germany as a precondition to a general detente in Europe. The West German Chancellor Kurt Georg Kiesinger reversed the order, according priority to detente. However, little was made during his Chancellorship

17. Josef Korbel, Detente in Europe: Real or Imaginary? (Princeton, 1972), p. 34.

because he continued to adhere to the Hallstein Doctrine¹⁸ and to the FRG's claim of exclusive representation of the whole of Germany. The Soviets refused any detente with Bonn under these conditions. A profound change occurred when Willy Brandt became Chancellor in 1969. Besides renouncing the Hallstein doctrine, West Germany also gave up its claim to representing the entire German nation. Thus, the FRG moved from open hostility to the GDR to de facto recognition of the GDR, from the indivisible unity of Germany to an acceptance of the existence of two German states.

France was the most ardent supporter of detente. Since 1959, De Gaulle repeatedly spoke of a "Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals"; he firmly believed that political, economic, social and cultural collaboration among the European states would end the military - political confrontation between the two blocs and would enable a normalization of relations.¹⁹ West Germany and France favoured detente for different reasons. Germany favoured detente in order to

18. This was adopted by Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. It got its name from the then State Secretary of the Foreign Office, Walter Hallstein. It was originally conceived by William Greve. It provided that any recognition of the GDR by a third nation would be viewed by Bonn as an "unfriendly act". Since 1957, the FRG broke off diplomatic relations on this account with Yugoslavia (1957), Cuba (1963), and 10 Arab states (1967).

19. For details on De Gaulle's views on European unity and the French role, see H.S. Chopra, De Gaulle and European Unity (New Delhi, 1974).

remove tensions on her eastern borders; France, however, was motivated primarily by considerations of power and prestige, ignoring all ideological barriers. West Germany constantly emphasised her ties with the rest of Western Europe, her desire for political integration, and the necessity for an American presence in Europe; on the other hand, De Gaulle saw detente as an opportunity to bolster France's independent policy and to minimize American role in Europe. In addition, France saw the policy of "detente to entente to co-operation" as a means of exercising restraint on West Germany.

Discord in the Atlantic Alliance

The late fifties witnessed increased discord and disagreement among the allies, especially USA and France. Many put the blame for this discord on President De Gaulle. However, no one could have destroyed the alliance by himself. Fundamental changes had by now taken place in the US-Europe rapports.²⁰ The greatest change was that American leadership was no longer unquestioned. Western Europe witnessed a four fold development, such as economic recovery, European integration, new avenues of interaction with the Third World and the Cuban Missile Crisis, which brought about a radical change in US-Europe relations. To illustrate, one may glance

20. Henry Kissinger, The Troubled Partnership: A Reappraisal of the Atlantic Alliance (New York, 1965), pp. 5-11.

through The Troubled Partnership in which Kissinger warned:

A United Europe is likely to insist on a specifically European view of world affairs - which is another way of saying that it will challenge U.S. hegemony in Atlantic policy. This may well be a price paying for European unity, but U.S. policy has suffered from an unwillingness to recognise that there is a price to be paid. (21)

When De Gaulle resumed power in 1958, a change had occurred in the international political situation. USA's credibility in France had reached its lowest ebb. The U.S. neutrality during the Suez crisis had greatly harmed France's international prestige. USA and UK had refused to help France in its campaigns in French North Africa, and America, to France's dismay, had decided to supply arms to Tunisia, Morocco etc. At the NATO level, the U.S. had sent marines into Lebanon in 1958 without any prior consultation with France. Nor had the Americans responded positively to the French for a share in the formulation of allied strategy. Furthermore, USA had modified the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 in order to restore the US-UK "special relationship", thereby falsifying the principle of equal partnership within NATO. Finally, the Soviet lead over America in space technology had widened the gap between the security needs of Europe and those of USA. France became skeptical

21. Ibid., p. 40.

and felt that her interests would never be safe if she had to depend on NATO, which Michel Debré had characterized as "the instrument of American security in the hands of the Anglo-American directorate".²² De Gaulle was voicing the general French fear, when in a conversation with André Malraux in 1969 he declared: "Despite its power, I do not believe that the United States has a long term policy. Its desire, and it will satisfy it one day, is to desert Europe. You will see".²³

As a result gradual dissatisfaction within NATO grew, and convinced De Gaulle of the need for an independent national defence system. De Gaulle's attitude to NATO can be best understood by having a knowledge of his stand on the basic principles of international alliances. These are:

- (i) France must enjoy an equal status with other members of the alliance, and must have an equal voice in the use of NATO's strategic machinery.
- (ii) In Western Europe, France's security stakes were much higher than those of the other powers. The alliance must therefore identify itself with France's vital interests as against Germany's, which had been respon-

22. H.S. Chopra, n. 19, p. 231.

23. André Malraux, "Felled Oaks: Conversations with De Gaulle", (New York, 1971), p. 30. Cited in Henry Kissinger, The White House Years (Delhi, 1978), p. 84.

sible for three aggressive wars against France in less than a century.

- (iii) The alliance must be strengthened through periodic consultations between the heads of member states and/or government.²⁴

All these factors made France revolt against USA. In 1966, she walked out of the NATO integrated command structure, while continuing to be a member of the alliance.²⁵ This break with NATO synchronized with De Gaulle's efforts at rapprochement with USSR. In fact, Khrushchev was the first foreign dignitary to visit France after De Gaulle returned to power. In June 1966, De Gaulle returned the visit to Moscow.

The Warsaw Pact states responded positively to De Gaulle's overtures. At the Bucharest Conference of June 1966, they suggested the setting up of a pan-European system to replace the two existing alliances. This idea was given concrete support by Gaullist France when the latter replaced its strategy of "massive retaliation" by the "Tous Azimuts"²⁶

24. H.S. Chopra, n. 19, pp. 238-9.

25. De Gaulle made a distinction between the North Atlantic alliance and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. He fully endorsed the former, in which each ally was supposed to enjoy full equality without subordinating its national defence policy to any other ally. He was against the NATO integrated defence structure, which effaced the national identity of the members of the alliance.

26. This term means "all sides of the compass".

strategy in December 1967. Two factors were responsible for this change: First, Franco-American relations had been markedly uneasy during the last few years due to differences on strategic issues. Against France's wishes, Washington had adopted the McNamara doctrine of "flexible response (1961-8)"²⁷, came up with the suggestion for a Multilateral Nuclear Force (1962-64), signed the Moscow Test Ban Treaty (1963) and the NPT (1968). Secondly, the U.S. Democratic administration led by President Johnson sought a dialogue with USSR, directly bypassing West European interests.

The weakening of NATO was accompanied by a simultaneous weakening of the Warsaw Pact. Following the Czechoslovakia crisis of August 1968, Moscow propounded the Brezhnev Doctrine of Limited sovereignty. This crisis proved to be only a temporary setback to the detente efforts in Europe.

By 1969, new leaderships emerged in Western Europe. In France, Pompidou had come to power following De Gaulle's resignation. In the FRG, Willy Brandt became Chancellor of

27. This doctrine was pushed through by Defence Secretary Robert McNamara after France withdrew from the integrated NATO command. In the 50's NATO had relied on the strategy of "massive retaliation" - any attack on Europe would be answered by an immediate all out US nuclear strike. Following the growth of Soviet nuclear stockpiles, USA looked for other options. It now adopted the strategy of "flexible response" - graduated escalation, starting with conventional weapons and moving into nuclear weapons by discrete stages, geared to the scale of the threat.

the SPD-FDP coalition (Social Democrats and Free Democrats). De Gaulle had been working for ending the division of Europe and for promoting unity from the "Atlantic to the Urals". Following his departure, this task was passed on to West German diplomacy in Eastern Europe. Credit for the success of West Germany's "Ostpolitik" goes to Chancellor Willy Brandt (1969-74). This led to increased interaction between the two parts of Europe in various fields - political, economic, social, cultural and technological. Commercial exchanges increased manifold. Thousands of families were reunited. Cultural and academic programmes, exchange of journalists etc. all helped create an atmosphere in which the two opposing halves of Europe could discover some meeting ground.

"Ostpolitik"

Brandt's "Ostpolitik" or Eastern policy is a policy of conciliation and co-operation with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, which aims at reducing tensions in Europe through the renunciation of force, the normalisation of relations with the GDR, and proceeds on the basis of existing realities. In a speech in 1968, he declared:

The keystones of our policy are: reduction of tension, improvement of relations and preparatory contributions to a European peace settlement; our geographical position gives us a special responsibility. For centuries, Germany has acted as a bridge between Eastern and

Western Europe. We want to try and rebuild bridges that have been destroyed. (28)

Historically, this policy can be traced to the early fifties. However, no significant progress was made during the subsequent twenty years as long as the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) was in power in West Germany and the hard liner Walter Ulbricht was in power in the GDR. West Germany's "Ostpolitik" can be broadly divided into three phases.²⁹

The first phase lasted from 1950 to 1958/59, when the major development was the establishment of diplomatic relations between the FRG and USSR, and the latter's ending of the state of war against Germany. However, Konrad Adenauer's policies (1949-63) towards the East were governed by the harsh realities of the Cold War, which affected Germany with particular intensity. He firmly believed that Germany could be rehabilitated only in close association with the West. His insistence on prior "German reunification" under Western aegies precluded any meaningful dialogue with the Warsaw Pact countries. He ardently supported any idea that would tie his country to the West - he led it into the Council of

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28. Willy Brandt, "Building Bridges in Eastern Europe", Contribution to the Yugoslav magazine "International Politics", of June 1, 1968. PEACE, Writings and speeches of the Nobel Peace Prize Winner, 1971 (Bonn, 1971), p.66.
29. H.S. Chopra, "Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik and Its Impact on Franco-German Relations", India Quarterly (New Delhi) vol. 28 (September 1972), p. 228.



TH-683

Europe, the European Coal and Steel Community, the Western European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the European Economic Community. He tried his best to be the loyalist of the loyal allies to the US-UK dominated defence system. He was not very eager to normalize relations with the Eastern states. In accordance with the FRG Basic Law, he insisted that the FRG was the sole representative of the German nation. It was during this period that the Hallstein doctrine was adopted. He emphatically refused to recognise the Oder-Neisse boundary and was not willing to abrogate the Munich agreement of 1938.

The second phase was from 1959 to 1966, which saw the end of U.S. nuclear supremacy and the shift in the NATO strategy from "massive retaliation" to "flexible response", a move which displeased both De Gaulle and Adenauer. NATO solidarity thereby suffered a setback. Following the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, both sides tried to find a modus vivendi to detente. Adenauer, who believed that a solution of the German problem was a prerequisite for detente, had to give way to Ludwig Erhard (1963-1966). While preserving his predecessors basic principles (Hallstein Doctrine and exclusive representation), Erhard's government shifted its emphasis from outright hostility to a cautious opening of contacts with the East through "trade diplomacy". In 1963-

64, trade missions were opened with all East European states, except Czechoslovakia.³⁰

By the end of the decade the Germans became acutely aware of their importance in matters of European politics. As Brandt stated: "Economically we are a giant, politically a dwarf".³¹ Dependent on USA, paternalised by France, neglected by Great Britain, checked by USSR, the FRG's official policy was boxed into a position of immobility.

The final and most crucial phase was from 1966 onwards. Its architect was Willy Brandt, first as Foreign Minister under Kiesinger's government and then as Chancellor from 1969 onwards. Certain factors favoured Brandt's Ostpolitik:³²

- (i) Declining American fortunes in the Vietnam war and its policy of gradual disengagement from South East Asia.
- (ii) Nixon's efforts at rapprochement with USSR and China.

30. The Western states, especially Britain and France, now showed great interest in trade and exchange of visits with Communist states. Bonn realised the dangers of its negative stance.

31. Cited in Roger Morgan, "West Germany's Foreign Policy Agenda", The Washington Papers No. 54 (Beverly Hills, Cal. 1978), p. 9.

32. R.K. Jain, Continuity and Change in West Germany's Foreign Policy: A Study of Ostpolitik 1969-78 (Ph.D. thesis, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 1979).

- (iii) The disappearance of De Gaulle from the European scene.
- (iv) Growing American emphasis on the "Europeanization of European defence".

Moscow made a positive response to the West German overtures primarily due to the 1969 border clashes with China and its consequent desire to keep peace on its Western flank. The Soviets also wanted access to West German technology, loans, and expanded trade. Moreover, a relaxed atmosphere in Europe was necessary if Moscow wanted to take full advantage of Washington's unpopularity due to its bombing of Vietnam and French misgivings of the NATO.

Brandt's Eastern policy was firmly anchored in his West politik. Following De Gaulle's demise in 1968, West Germany became the initiator of its own policies, instead of merely being led by France in the Eastern direction. Elaborating, Brandt said:

an essential ingredient of our ostpolitik was that we applied ourselves to our own affairs in a new and more positive manner instead of relying solely on others speak for us. This meant that while remaining in touch with our allies and retaining their confidence, we became the advocates of our own interests vis-a-vis the governments of Eastern Europe. (33)

33. Willy Brandt, People and Politics 1960-75, J. Maxwell Brownjohn, trans. (London, 1978), p. 168.

The FRG now gave up its nuclear ambitions and signed the NPT in 1969. The FRG also gave up its policy of ambiguity with regard to the European Community and its expansion. Thus, at the Hague Conference of December 1969 Brandt vociferously advocated Britain's entry into the EEC and the acceleration of the European monetary and currency union. He thus sought to consolidate Western support for his policy in the East.

The Ostpolitik had two essential components: First, the FRG broke with its 25 year refusal to give any kind of official recognition to the GDR, and thus abandoned the goal of German reunification in the near future; secondly, Bonn accepted the Soviet and East European view that the Polish Western frontier should run along the Oder Neisse.

The Treaty System

Brandt's Ostpolitik involved a number of East-West agreements that incorporated the above points. This treaty system, which began with the Bonn-Moscow Treaty of August 1970 and ended with the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, for the first time accorded legitimacy to the post-war European settlements.

The FRG signed treaties with the USSR and Poland pledging the non-use of force for the settlement of international disputes and recognizing the existing frontiers. During the

signing of the Bonn-Warsaw Treaty, the German's desire for atonement and reconciliation was shown by Brandt's symbolic gesture of kneeling at the site of a Warsaw ghetto.³⁴ In December 1972, the Basic Treaty between the GDR and FRG was signed, which accorded international recognition to the GDR. As a result, the two German states became members of the United Nations in 1974. A number of agreements on functional problems were also concluded such as on traffic and telecommunications. In 1974, the FRG concluded an agreement with Czechoslovakia, thereby invalidating the Munich agreement of 1938. Besides these, a Four Power Agreement on Berlin was signed in September 1971, on the status of Berlin and the nature of the links between the FRG and West Berlin.

The kernel of Brandt's Ostpolitik was the abandonment both of reunification with the GDR in the near future and of the German territories to the East. In the prospects for peace in Europe and in Brandt's concept of detente the solution of the German problem was of paramount importance.

The German Problem

Since its inception in 1949, German unification has been one of the primary goals of the FRG. However, the FRG's attitude to the national question underwent a profound change

34. Roger Morgan, n. 31, p. 10.

soon after Brandt's takeover as Chancellor in October 1969. As a result the earlier open hostility to the GDR yielded place to de facto recognition of the GDR, from the indivisible unity of Germany to the acceptance of two German states.³⁵

In his first declaration before the Bundestag on 28 October 1969, Brandt outlined his government's foreign policy in rather concrete terms. Without mentioning reunification, he spoke about the preservation of "the coherence of the German nation", expressing the conviction that the "Germans had a right to self-determination just as any other nation" and that "this right and the will to defend it are not negotiable". However, he recognized the existence of two German states and wished to arrive at a modus vivendi between them. But international recognition of the GDR by the FRG is out of the question.³⁶ The Basic Treaty of 1972 recognized the GDR and both Germanies became members of the United Nations in 1974.

The most contentious issue related to West Berlin. In the past twenty five years, West Berlin became a symbol of the residual problems from the second world war; of the German determination to determine their fate; of Western

35. Josef Korbel, n. 17, pp. 169-70.

36. Willy Brandt, Government Declaration Delivered to Bundestag on 28 October 1969 (Bonn, 1969).

solidarity against repeated communist provocations and pressures; and of the permanence of Germany's and Europe's division.³⁷

The first contacts on West Berlin took place during Brandt's mayoralty in 1961, when the Berlin wall was raised. However, on the eve of Christmas in 1963, it was because of his efforts that family reunions across the wall could take place. The East-West negotiations on West Berlin took a decisive turn only after the question was integrated into the general framework of the West's Ostpolitik and the Soviet reaction to it. As Kissinger states in White House Years:

Berlin's vulnerability symbolised the tenuous nature of East-West relations; it was living proof of the importance of our concept of linkage. We could defend Berlin only by linking its freedom with other Soviet concerns. Only policy that dealt with Berlin as a separate issue was bound to place the allies in a significantly disadvantageous position because of Berlin's military vulnerability. (38)

A link was established between ratification of the Bonn-Moscow Treaty and a satisfactory Berlin settlement. The West also formulated a second link. The NATO Foreign Minister's communique of December 1969 stressed that the convening of a Conference for Security and Co-operation in

37. Lawrence and Whetten, "The Problem of Berlin", The World Today (London), vol. 27, (May 1971), p. 222.

38. Henry Kissinger, n. 23, pp. 405-6.

Europe would be considered only after the successful conclusion of the Berlin accord. It would thus seem that the Berlin problem formed part of the East-West dialogue.

The Berlin agreement was signed on 3 September 1971. The key clause was Article 4 of Part I, which bound the signatories "irrespective of the differences in legal views", not to change the present situation "unilaterally". The three Western Powers acknowledged that West Berlin is not a part of the FRG and is not governed by her. The Soviet Union agreed that the FRG may perform consular services for, and in international conferences and organizations represent, the interests of the inhabitants of West Berlin. It also noted the fact that the 'rights' of the three Western Powers are being delegated to the FRG. Thus, the Soviets gave up their earlier stand that West Berlin is an independent entity without having anything to do with the FRG. While reiterating the legal position they guaranteed unimpeded civilian access to West Berlin, accepted that the existing "links" between the FRG and West Berlin may be strengthened. In return, the Western powers undertook to discourage public demonstrations of the West German claim that Berlin is part of the FRG, like the ritual yearly session of the Bundestag and Bundesrat, the election of the Federal President etc. This agreement brought about a substantial improvement in the lives and safety of the

Berlin population.³⁹

In the concept of linkage the CSCE, popularly known as the Helsinki Conference, was of paramount importance.⁴⁰ For the first time in the history of Europe parliamentarians from more than twenty two European states, plus USA and Canada, met at Helsinki in late January 1975 to devise measures to reduce tensions in Europe. In his opening speech the British Prime Minister Harold Wilson was reflecting the prevailing sentiment when he said:

I do not pretend that the documents we are about to approve can, in themselves, diminish the tensions and insecurity which have affected the peoples, as well as the governments of Europe, since the end of the war.

But they do represent more than good intentions, more than a desire to set our relations on a new course. They are a moral commitment to be ignored at our mutual peril, and the start of a new chapter in the history of Europe. (41)

The declaration adopted at the end of the conference falls into four sections or baskets:

- I. Political principles of security. This consisted of a charter of Peaceful Co-existence in Europe, which

39. D.C. Watt, "The Agreement on Berlin", World Today, vol. 27 (September 1971), pp. 416-7.

40. The Russians came up with the idea of a conference as early as 1954, when Molotov suggested it to the Foreign Ministers Conference of the Big Four at Berlin.

41. Richard Davy and David Spanier, "Day of Joy and Hope for Europe at Helsinki", Times (London), 30 July 1976.

laid down ten principles governing relations among states (i) sovereign equality (ii) non-use of force or threat of force; (iii) inviolability of borders; (iv) territorial integrity of states; (v) peaceful settlement of disputes; (vi) non-interference in internal affairs; (vii) respect for human rights and fundamental liberties; (viii) equality and the right of nations to decide their own destiny and (ix) honest fulfilment of obligations taken under international law.

II. Co-operation in service, technology, economics and the environment

III. Co-operation in humanitarian and other fields

IV. Follow up procedures.

In this declaration, Brezhnev got what he wanted most - international recognition of Europe's post war frontiers. Moscow, in turn, made a concession. The Bonn-Moscow treaty had declared that the existing frontiers were inviolable. It was then declared that they could be changed through peaceful agreement. This keeps open the possibility of German reunification some day. For the West, there is the promise to respect the right of every European state to "freely choose and develop its economic, political, social and cultural systems". If observed, this could spell the end of the Brezhnev Doctrine.⁴²

42. Ibid.

The CSCE did help improve East-West relations. A year later, travel and immigration from Eastern Europe and Soviet Union improved considerably, though not much for the Soviet Jews. The FRG government reported that the monthly total of people of German descent arriving from the USSR rose from about 364 in August 1975 to 1,226 in April 1976. The equivalent figures from Czechoslovakia were 50 and 83, and from Poland (on the basis of a special agreement signed between them at Helsinki), 358 and 2,528.⁴³ Western journalists were given multiple entry visas and allowed greater freedom of movement in USSR. All this is significant, for detente means little if it is not reflected in the daily lives of the people.

In the ultra-right wing circles in the U.S., there were widespread misgivings about the Helsinki Conference, described as "another Munich". This, however, has no basis. The Final Act conferred no legal force on Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe. At the most, it acquiesced to the political realities existing since 1945. And it was understood that the West could not supplant the Soviet leadership in Eastern Europe by force of arms, or do anything else thereby risking war, as was evidenced by the Western reactions in 1956 and 1968. In fact, the Soviet acknowledgement of the

43. Richard Davy, "A Year Later What has the World Really Gained from Helsinki?", Times (London), 30 July 1976.

US commitment to European defence was a far newer element in contemporary European history than the acknowledgement of the Soviet power in the East.⁴⁴

Detente reduced the case for the USSR imposing Communist orthodoxy within the Warsaw Pact. The post 1945 fear of German "revanchism" now ceased to raise any alarm. Moreover, US imperialism now appeared less threatening in a period when both Poland and USSR depended on U.S. grain. Furthermore, the capacity of some East European states - Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia and Finland - for self assertion against Soviet pressures has greatly increased, such as the principle of inviolability of frontiers strengthens Poland's leverage against the USSR in the sense that it reduces Poland's apprehensions about West Germany and thus makes her less dependant on the Soviet Union for her security.

The Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction talks began in Vienna in October 1973.⁴⁵ Since the negotiations have continued by fits and starts, but without any positive result so far both sides have continued to improve qualitatively the forces deployed in Central Europe, if not increase them

44. Coral Bell, Detente in Europe : The Kissinger Era (London, 1977), pp. 104-10.

45. The ground for this had earlier been prepared by the Rapacki and Gromulka plans of the late 50's, references to reduction troops in early Warsaw Pact statements, and the 1967 Harmel Report on the future of Europe.

numerically. As a result, Europe continues to be the principal theatre of the rival bloc powers confronting each other.

Besides the military technical differences, political differences have slowed down the pace of negotiations. The individuals statesmen involved in this complex process have gone and the new Western regimes led by Reagan, Thatcher and Schmidt have different perspectives.

Evaluation

Brandt's Ostpolitik and the "Treaty System" have been subjected to severe criticism. It is generally felt that the Ostpolitik was primarily of value to the USSR, who saw this as an opportunity to isolate USA through a strategy of 'selective detente'. It therefore wanted to ease tensions with some allies while maintaining an intransigent attitude to USA. The possibility of dividing the alliance and isolating USA was further strengthened by some Western statesmen who favoured the Mansfield Amendment, calling for a cut of US forces in Europe by half. This was defeated in the Congress by 61:36 in May 1971. According to Kissinger, USA was able to thwart Soviet Union through its linkage politics. Ostpolitik was related to other issues involving the alliance as a whole. Besides enhancing FRG's negotiating position, this also set limits beyond which it could not

go without allied consensus.⁴⁶

A Communiqué issued in June 1969 during the first international meeting of Communist and Workers Parties in 9 years, defined Communist goals in Western Europe as:⁴⁷

- (i) The breakup of NATO and the convening of an all European security conference.
- (ii) An affirmation of the inviolability of existing frontiers in Europe.
- (iii) Recognition of the GDR and
- (iv) The recognition of West Berlin as a "separate political entity".

NATO continues to exist. However, all the other proclaimed Soviet goals were achieved through the Bonn-Moscow Treaty. The concessions Brandt made to the Soviets in pursuance of his Ostpolitik far outnumber the advantages such as the mutual renunciation of force. The FRG has never been, and will never be in a position to launch an attack on the Soviet Union. Besides, in 1969 the FRG became a signatory to the NPT. However, articles 53 and 107⁴⁸ of

46. Henry Kissinger, n. 23, p. 410.

47. Denis Bark, "Changing East-West Relations in Europe", The Bonn-Moscow Treaty of August 1970", ORBIS (Pennsylvania)(Summer 1971), pp. 630-32.

48. Article 53(2) of the UN Charter declares that the term enemy state "applies to any state which during the Second World War has been an enemy of any signatory

the UN charter have not yet been abrogated. These gave the allied powers who fought against the Axis Powers in the Second World War the right to intervene in Germany. Thus, though the USSR renounced the use of force in settling international disputes, it still retains the right of intervention. Secondly, by recognizing the status quo in Europe, Bonn has tacitly accepted the Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty for East Europe.

The limits of the Berlin Agreement have now become apparent. The USSR and GDR continue to insist that though East Berlin is the capital of the GDR, West Berlin must be regarded as a separate political entity, whose relations with the FRG must consist only of "contacts" (Verbindungen) rather than 'links' (Bindungen). They have therefore strongly protested against any FRG attempts to install governmental agencies in West Berlin eg. a Federal Environmental Research Agency. There were also moves to incorporate East Berlin into the GDR. In the spring of 1977 frontier controls between East Berlin and the GDR were removed, and the East

Footnote 48 cont'd...

of the present Charter". Art 107 reads: "Nothing in the present Charter shall invalidate or preclude action, in relation to any state which during the second world war has been an enemy of any signatory of the present charter, taken or authorized as a result of that war by the Governments having responsibility for such action".

Berlin publication in which GDR's laws were proclaimed as also valid for East Berlin was abolished.

As far as the GDR is concerned, one of the main aims of Brandt's Deutschland politik was to create a better relationship with the other German state. This has been only partially fulfilled. Though the number of inter-German visits has greatly increased, the flow is still heavily one sided for the GDR is apprehensive of increasing Western influence in that country. Certain constraints have been placed on the inter-flow of the visits as of information. This policy is known as Abgrenzungs politik (policy of demarcation). This means that all relations between the two states should be conducted on the principle they are two separate and distinct societies, and negotiations between them does not mean any kind of convergence i.e. for the GDR, Deutschland politik means a general recognition that there are two German states - a socialist one in the GDR and a capitalist one in the FRG. Thus, the state regulated development of inter-German relations keeps the level of interaction in various fields under check and control.

Secondly, as it is true of many international problems, the German question has not as yet been resolved, it has merely been managed. Brandt's concept of "two German states, and one nation" keeps alive the German question which may be revived at any time in the future. However, any move towards

reunification is likely to upset the balance of power in Europe, and would be unacceptable not only to the East, but also to France. The West Germans, however, are conscious of the delicate aspects of reunification. The highly sensitive nature of the German question becomes self-evident from the very fact that despite the two Germanies entry into the United Nations, the Four-allied Power responsibility on this question stays on.

Thirdly, instead of a "European peace order" towards which Brandt attempted to lead central Europe, European security still depends on the military balance between the two rival blocs. Many obstacles exist in the way of a transition from inter-bloc confrontation to a Europe wide productive co-operation. This is best illustrated by the FRG's relations with Poland.⁴⁹ One of the problems relates to the Polish demand for extensive financial credits at a low interest rate in order to offset the loss to the economy due to the emigration of people of German descent. In October 1975, a package of agreements was signed between the two states, whereby the FRG agreed to pay a compensation of 1.3 million marks and to give a long term credit of 1 billion marks at a very low interest rate. The Schmidt government had great difficulty in getting parliamentary ratification

49. Roger Morgan, n. 31, pp. 26-8.

for this treaty. The CDU raised objections in the Bundestag on the grounds that the financial terms were too favourable to Poland, and might set a precedent for other East European states. In Germany, there was increasing opposition to the idea of paying financially for political reconciliation.

In contrast to the political gains, the economic gains from the Ostpolitik have so far been modest but tangible. Western scholars generally emphasize the benefits that the USSR and East European states get from the inter-European deals. However, it must be realized that the new opening to the USSR came as a timely boon to Western Europe.

USSR is currently facing many economic difficulties. These include a decreasing rate of growth of the GNP, manpower shortages, balance of payment deficits etc. To counter these, the Soviets have opted for massive economic assistance from the West which will enable them to (i) develop their oil, natural gas and other mineral resources and (ii) to engage in military spending on a scale that would otherwise be impossible. The USSR is also trying to narrow down the technological gap by acquiring advanced American technology. In this, it is being helped by many U.S. firms. According to a spokesman of the American Control Data Corporation, by spending \$ 3 million in 3 years, the USSR gained 15 years in R & D. Lockheed and other aircraft firms compete for

deals with the Soviet Union and thus give it access to the latest jet liner technology and know-how.⁵⁰

However, West Germany too has benefited economically from political reconciliation with the Soviet bloc. In a time of general economic recession, it has greatly benefited from the dramatic rise of its exports, especially to USSR and Poland since 1951.⁵¹

The interaction with the Soviet Union proved to be of critical importance to the West European economies, especially after the oil crisis of 1973 which threw it into a state of unprecedented economic turmoil. Besides increased prices, there was uncertainty about its supply - and 94% of West Europe's oil needs are met by OPEC. West Europe now greatly benefited from its trade with USSR. The major Soviet exports were now oil and petroleum products, gas, non-ferrous metals, timber etc. In return, the Soviets have imported large-diameter steel pipes, plants and equipments, chemical manufactures, and other industrial and agricultural goods. At present, more than 200 West European MNC's are collaborating with USSR in scientific and technological ventures that entail billions of dollars of investment.

50. Denis Bark, "Changing East-West Relations in Europe", ORBIS (Summer, 1971), p. 634.

51. Roger Morgan, n. 31, pp. 24-5.

Thus, there is a certain amount of economic interdependence between the two opposing economic systems. But though trade with the West forms nearly 28% of the Soviet total, it is no more than 5 to 6% of the total West European trade. By giving up the 1961 embargo (called cocom) on the supply of strategic goods to the Warsaw Pact states, the West Europeans have showed that their new economic needs, interlaced with a political design, have provided a driving force behind the process of interaction.⁵²

Undoubtedly, the Super Power detente and West Germany's Ostpolitik have greatly helped in the emergence of new patterns of interaction in Europe. However, detente suffered a serious setback following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. Samuel Huntington, a Harvard hardliner, declared "detente has been dying for a long time. What we are now witnessing is the final nail being driven into the coffin".⁵³ It is true that ever since detente began, it died many deaths, only to be resurrected in one form or another. Just after the signing of the May 1972 Declaration, the Super Powers clashed in West Asia. Despite this and much more - Soviet involvement in the Ogaden war, the Soviet sponsored coup in South Yemen, etc. - President

52. H.S. Chopra, "European Detente", World Focus, vol. 13 (March 1980), p. 28.

53. Bharat Wariawala, n. 2, p. 14.

Carter and Mr. Brezhnev met at Vienna in June 1979 to conclude SALT II.

Following the Afghan crisis, there was a great deal of speculation that a new Cold war had broken out. However, all indications suggest that this is not the case and that there is a desire to return to an era of co-existence. Less than three months after Afghanistan, President Carter declared that "USA would hold firmly to the principle of detente".⁵⁴ The West Europeans, too have no intention of returning to the period of the Cold War which partitioned Europe into two rival rigid power blocs. Despite many stresses and strains that might appear, detente in Europe now seems to be an attractive phenomenon which, if reversed, would lead to more hostilities than ever existed during the Cold War.

54. Cited in Bhabani Sen Gupta, "Race for Supremacy: Failures Rag the US"; World Focus, vol. 3 (March 1980), p. 3.

Chapter 2

THE EMERGENCE OF EURO-COMMUNISM AND ITS LINKAGE WITH DETENTE

Despite intermittent traces of Euro-communism during the earlier epochs, it was only after the Helsinki Summit of July-August 1975 that it emerged as a new phenomenon in the communist movement in Western Europe. Differences of opinion between the Soviet Union and the major West European Communist Parties are deep and longstanding; however, they found concrete expression only as late as June 1976, at the Berlin Conference of Communist Parties of Europe. It was here that Santiago Carrillo, the leader of the PCE, made his well known and much publicised statement:

For many years Moscow, where our dreams started to materialise, has been our Rome. We spoke of the great October Socialist Revolution as if it were our Christmas. This was at a time when we were children. Today we are adults. (1)

Put briefly, the negative aspect of Euro-communism involves repudiating the leading role of the CPSU in the world communist movement, while the positive aspect is the assertion of each party's right to pursue its own political path without any outside interference.

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1. Berlin Conference of Communist Parties of Europe, Speeches, Document and other material (Calcutta, 1976), p. 126.

Euro-communism may be seen as a reaction to two conditions: First, the lack of any revolutionary perspective in the countries concerned; Secondly, the gradual disintegration of Soviet hegemony within the world communist movement.

Since 1945, the Euro-communist parties have been fighting a losing battle against the growing embourgeoisement of the workers/proletariat. ^{The European} ment has never been as little revolutionary minded as at present. It has built up large trade unions. However, they are not channels to build up revolutionary consciousness, but exist merely to bring the workers more and more material benefits. Thus, European workers today are more socially mobile and prosperous, better educated and trained, more healthy, more individualistic, and work in more congenial conditions than ever before.

After the process of de-Stalinization began in 1956, the Western Communist Parties, especially the PCI chief Togliatti, re-examined their political strategy, leading to an increasing autonomous stand. They accepted the 1956 invasion of Hungary almost without any hesitation. Then a series of events, the Sino-Soviet split, the fall of Khrushchev and the Czechoslovakian crisis of 1968, revealed the gradual decline of Soviet monolithism. The destruction of Dubcek's "Socialism with a human face" could no longer be defended and was harshly and irrevocably condemned.

The Western Communist Parties have, since then, come a long way from the days when their support for Soviet foreign policy could be taken for granted. The emergence of Euro-communism is directly related to:

- (i) the decline of Soviet hegemony in the world communist movement and
- (ii) the emergence of detente.

Communism and the Third International

Since the Russian Revolution of 1917, two contradictory trends have characterised the world communist movement: on the one hand, the persistent Soviet efforts to subordinate the interests of foreign Communist Parties to those of the CPSU; on the other hand, the equally persistent efforts of these parties to resist such 'Sovietization' and in the process question Moscow's leading role. The former was predominant during the period of the Comintern.

The end of the First World War witnessed the emergence of Communist Parties in Europe. The war split the socialist movement in Europe. The anti-war minority, led by Lenin, sought an alternative to the Second International. The Communist or Third International was formally set up in March 1919, thereby making a permanent breach in European socialism.

At its first Conference in March 1919, the Comintern called for Communist Parties to be formed everywhere. At its second Congress in July-August 1920, it required them to agree to a set of statutes - the famous "Twenty one conditions of admission to the Communist International".² Though most Western socialists found these conditions unacceptable, there was usually a section ready to accede to them. Thus, Communist Parties were established in France, Italy and Germany.

The Comintern simply ran the Western Communist Parties, especially after Stalin came to power. There were three distinct periods in the Comintern's lifetime:³

- (i) 1921-1928: the period of the United Front
- (ii) 1928-1934: "the class against class"
- (iii) 1934-1939: the period of the "Popular Front"

In 1921 the Comintern endorsed the strategy of the "United Front", which meant alliance with the Social Democrats, whom the Communists had deserted in 1920 and scoffed at ever since. This sudden shift from ultra-revolutionary tactics to a United Front was too sharp for many Western Communist Parties to take. There was some resistance among

2. Neil McInnes, "From Comintern to Polycentrism", in Torre, Mortimer and Story eds., *Eurocommunism: Myth or Reality?* (Middlesex, 1979), pp. 36-8.
 3. *Ibid.*, pp. 42-52.

the French, Italian and Spanish parties, but this was soon overcome. The Comintern concluded that these parties needed to be bolshevized i.e. purged and disciplined so that they would follow such turns without questioning.

In 1928, Stalin launched his first Five Year Plan aimed at industrialization. He was apprehensive that the West would attack USSR before it could "build socialism" and therefore wanted to use the Communist Parties in Western Europe to subvert or to weaken the Western powers. For this, they first had to get rid of the Social Democrats, who were then preaching democratic collaboration against Nazism and Fascism, and thereby spoiling a promising revolutionary situation. The Western Communist Parties fell in line with the Comintern's wishes. From 1928 onwards, the PCF suspended the electoral alliance whereby the Communists, socialists and radicals desisted in the second round in favour of the best placed in the first round, in order to ensure the Right's defeat. The PCF thereby lost many seats in the Chamber of Deputies, but had the satisfaction of seeing the Socialist lose many more. The PCF also went so far as to join in a demonstration with the French fascists against the Daladier government in February 1934. The PCF, which regained its liberty with the inauguration of the Spanish Republic in 1931, hastened to follow similar instructions.

From 1934 onwards, USSR began its search for alliance with Western democracies against Germany. Santiago Carrillo, in his book "Eurocommunism and the State"⁴, claims that it was the PCE and PCF that first realised the urgency for uniting with the socialists and other democratic forces against the fascists. The fact that debates occurred in the International, states Carrillo,

confirms that the popular front policy was not simply, as its enemies have claimed, a Soviet initiative bound up with the USSR's foreign policy of defence in the face of danger of fascist aggression, and that in this policy two creative approaches met, one of them originating from the periphery, dictated by specific national realities, and distinct from the other. (5)

The PCF too argues that it defied Stalin in order to force this new line on the Comintern. However, even if the French may have taken the initiative, it would have made no progress if Stalin had not decided that a change of tactics was needed to promote Soviet foreign policy interests.

Thus, in July 1934 the PCF signed an agreement with the Socialists, which led to the July 1935 Popular Front⁶

4. Santiago Carrillo, Eurocommunism and the State Nan Green and A.M. Elliot, Trans. (Connecticut, 1978).

5. Ibid., p. 115.

6. According to Ernest Mandel, "the popular front policies of these parties are one of the main historical roots of Euro-communism". "The Theory and practice of the popular front led to a political line which fuelled a

electoral alliance, approved the following month at a Comintern World Conference. This won a majority in the Chamber of Deputies in the April 1938 elections. A government of Socialists and Radicals was formed under Leon Blum, with Communist support. It is said that Maurice Thorez wanted to accept portfolios in this ministry, but the Comintern vetoed any direct participation. In Spain, a Frente Popular was formed, headed by the Socialist Largo Caballero, but the PCE refused to join the ministry on instructions from Moscow.⁷

Both parties profited greatly from the Popular Fronts. When the Spanish Republic was inaugurated in April 1931, the PCE consisted of barely 800 militants, but by February 1936 it had 30,000 members. By June this had gone up to 84,000 and during the Civil War it enrolled some 300,000 members (excluding the 1/2 members of the Youth Organisation run by Carrillo). The PCF's membership too increased - from 28,000 in 1932 to 280,000 in 1936, and then to 320,000 in 1938.⁸

Footnote 6 cont'd...

a gradual process of social democratisation". The other root is Stalin's "socialism in one country", which led to national communism. See Ernest Mandel, From Stalinism to Eurocommunism: The Bitter Fruits of Socialism in one Country, Jon Rothschild, trans. (London, 1978), p. 18.

7. It entered the Republican government only in September 1936, after the Civil War had begun.
8. Neil McInnes, n. 2, p. 48.

Both parties were severely affected by the Hitler-Stalin non-aggression pact of 1939; however, they faithfully followed Moscow. Following the German attack on Russia in June 1941, the Comintern changed its stand and the Western Communist parties faithfully followed it. Thus, during the Stalin era, the Communist Parties of Western Europe had no identity of their own.⁹ They were mere puppets of the Soviet Union, and the defence and protection of the national interests of the USSR was synonymous with their own interests.¹⁰

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9. A major upheaval in the Third International was caused by the defeat and expulsion of Trotsky in 1929. He disagreed with Stalin on many points. In his "Revolution Betrayed", he wrote that the USSR was in the grip of a "Bonapartist Caste" and he attempted to create a Fourth International to liberate the workers of the Soviet Union as well as the Capitalist states. A question often asked is why a significant group of Trotskyist "Eurocommunist" parties did not emerge in the 1930's. His failure to gain a large following outside Russia was probably due to four factors:
- (i) The strong pull that Moscow exercised as the home of world socialism and revolution;
 - (ii) the way in which Stalin managed to get complete control of various Communist parties;
 - (iii) the apparent success of the Soviet system to deal with economic problems at a time when the capitalist economies were facing great difficulties;
 - (iv) the need for unity to fight fascism. This made liberals, who saw alliance with USSR as vital for the security of democracies, less disposed to listen to Trotsky's denunciations of Stalin's terror.

David Childs, "Eurocommunism: Origins and Problems", Contemporary Review (January 1978), pp. 1-2.

10. Stalin dissolved the Comintern in May 1943, for he wanted to allay the anxiety of the Western governments. They were alarmed by the growing influence of the Communists in the occupied countries, due to their heroic role in the resistance.

Post-Stalin Era

After Stalin's death, and especially after the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956, Soviet Union's dominant role in the Communist movement was increasingly questioned. The first major upheaval occurred in June 1956. This was heralded by Khrushchev's secret report to the 20th CPSU Congress, which began the process of de-Stalinization. Suddenly, Communists throughout the world were told that the 'lies' printed in the Western press about Stalin were true. Besides destroying the myth that the Soviet party was always right, Khrushchev announced a number of other policies that were of importance to the Communist parties of Western Europe:

- (i) He returned to the Marxist view, rejected by Lenin and Stalin, that there could be a peaceful transition to socialism in some countries.
- (ii) He admitted that Yugoslavia had built a different yet genuine socialist state.
- (iii) He indicated a more friendly attitude towards Western Socialist and Labour parties.

The PCI, PCE and PCF reacted differently to Khrushchev's Report.¹¹ Unlike the other two, the PCF clung to a rigid

11. Discussion on Khrushchev's speech began only after its publication by the U.S. State Department on 4 June 1956, although leading Communists in the free world were aware of its contents.

Stalinist orthodoxy. It took the longest in assimilating de-Stalinization. The tradition of Maurice Thorez had something to do with this, for the PCF secretary general had for long proudly worn the label "Stalinist" as "a badge of honor". Right up to his death in July 1964, he insisted on referring to Khrushchev's secret report as the "alleged Khrushchev report".¹² The PCF refused to adhere to the Khrushchevian line or to acknowledge de-Stalinization. In fact Thorez, through his association with Mao, won a bargaining position that he could exploit to the full in 1961: he agreed to support Khrushchev against China if the former would accept a purge of his supporters inside the PCF. Two leading members were tried, convicted and demoted, thereby leaving Thorez free to continue running the party as his private property.

The first public statement was made on 8 March, 1956 by Jacques Duclos.¹³ Only in the last part of his speech did he touch upon the question of the personality cult; on this, he remained far behind even the public sessions of the 20th CPSU Congress. While admitting that during a certain period the principle of collective leadership had

12. Mandel, n. 6, p. 69.

13. For details on the PCF and the 20th Congress the Francois Fejto, The PCF and the Crisis of International Communism (Mass., 1967), pp. 44-73.

not always been applied and that certain mistakes were made, he praised Stalin a great deal: "Comrade Stalin's merits are inscribed in history, they are part of the heritage of the international worker's movement".¹⁴

Two weeks later, on 26 March, 1956, Maurice Thorez wrote an article in L'Humanité entitled "Some Important Questions Posed at the 20th CPSU Congress". However, this mainly dealt with the Communist Vote in the National Assembly on 12 March¹⁵ and discretely passed over the Stalin problem. However, he particularly mentioned "Stalin's mistaken opinion according to which the class struggle had to increase in the Soviet Union in the same measure as the construction of socialism succeeded" and he acknowledged that "the erroneous thesis led to grave shortcomings with regard to party democracy and Soviet legality itself".¹⁶

The PCF had all along tried to minimize the errors committed by Stalin and its own criticisms. It became difficult for it to maintain this position following:

- (1) the publication of Khrushchev's secret report in Le Monde between June 6 and 19 and

14. Ibid., p. 46.

15. On that day, the Communists had voted with the Socialists for the "special powers" demanded by the Guy Mollet government in face of the Algerian problem.

16. Fejto, n. 13, p. 49.

(11) Palmiro Togliatti's interview in Nuovi Argomenti

The Politburo now took a position on this question. While echoing Togliatti's criticism on certain points, in its 18 June 1956 declaration the Politburo was careful not to repeat the most extreme theses of the PCI leader. The PCF merely demanded a "thorough Marxist analysis". No explanation was given, except that Stalin alone could not have been responsible, and that other Soviet leaders shared his responsibilities. It praised the 20th Congress as "the Congress of the brilliant balance sheet of the Soviet Union which, having achieved the construction of socialism, had started on the road to a communist society "and" which emphasizes the possibility of avoiding wars in our lifetime and of achieving socialism by new means".¹⁷

By moderating its criticism, the PCF leadership hoped to make Moscow appreciate its sang froid, its deliberativeness and its sense of loyalty. A PCF delegation which visited Moscow a few days later concluded a deal with the CPSU; the PCF alignment with the CPSU in return for the latter's unreserved support for the leading group in Paris and its policies regarding Algeria, and against those

17. Robert J. Alexander, The Anti-Stalin Campaign and International Communism (Oxford, 1956), p. 170. Cited in Fejto, n. 13, p. 67.

opposition members in the party who were demanding the implementation of the ideas of the 20th Congress.

The PCI and PCE however, were ready for the liberalisation heralded by Khrushchev's secret report. The most interesting analysis of Khrushchev's speech was made by the PCI leader, Palmiro Togliatti. This was in an interview with Alberto Moravia, editor of the Italian periodical Nuovi Argomenti dated 16 June 1956.¹⁸ For the first time a leading communist leader insisted seriously in print on the need to explain the phenomenon of Stalinism more adequately than the Soviets themselves had done. Togliatti did not merely criticize the present Soviet leadership for allowing Stalin's one man regime a free hand for so long. He came out in open criticism of the Soviet system itself. He demanded a detailed answer to the question of how the course of development of Soviet society could have given rise to general disorders and defects, against which the entire socialist camp must be warned. The criticism of Stalin, he maintained, had brought to the surface "the problem of the dangers of bureaucratic degeneration, the strifling for democratic life, and the alienation of leaders

18. For details see Donald L.M. Blackmer, Unity in Diversity: Italian Communism and the Communist World (Mass., 1968), pp. 50-58. Although generally referred to as an interview, the article was a carefully conceived reply to nine specific questions.

from initiative, from criticism and from the masses".¹⁹

In the final section of the interview Togliatti dealt with the consequences of de-Stalinization for the international Communist movement. He described its historical evolution since 1917, when responsibility for centralized leadership naturally lay in Russian hands. However, gradually the separate parties had become stronger and more independent, a fact recognized by the 7th Comintern Congress held in 1935, where it had been decided that "decision making and practical political action had to be the task of the individual political parties, fully entrusted to their initiative and responsibility".²⁰ When the Cominform was formed after the Second World War, serious mistakes had been made in failing to recognize in practice the full autonomy of the parties.²¹

In the present circumstances, with the Cominform dissolved and the principle of autonomy accepted by all,

19. Gunther Nollau, International Communism and World Revolution: History and Methods, Victor Anderson, trans. (London, 1961), p. 263.

20. Blackmer, n. 18, p. 55.

21. The PCI had resisted certain Soviet decisions eg. Togliatti had objected to the formation of the Cominform, which he saw as contrary to the line of development implied by the dissolution of Comintern. Again, in late January 1951, he refused Stalin's offer that he give up PCI leadership in order to become Secretary General of Cominform.

there had arisen not only the necessity but also the desire for greater autonomy of judgement. He declared that the Soviet model cannot and should not be declared compulsory for other states:

...There are countries in which they wish to find the way to socialism without the Communist Party being in the lead. In still other countries, the advance towards socialism is an objective for which there is a concentration of forces from different movements The whole system is becoming polycentric, and even in the Communist movement we cannot speak of a single guide, but rather of progress which is being made by following ways which are often different. (22)

Togliatti's call for polycentrism thus implied a reduction of Soviet influence over Western Communist Parties, and a devaluation of the Soviet model as a pattern for Western Communism.

The PCI accepted Khrushchev's statement that in some highly developed capitalist states a coalition of all partiotic forces led by the working class could win a parliamentary majority and bring about radical social changes. The possibility of peaceful change and a parliamentary road to socialism were henceforth included in the PCI's programme.

The PCE too drew certain political conclusions from the new Khrushchevian line. The "Young Turks" - led by

22. A.G. Almond, "The appeals of Communism" (Princeton, 1964), in Childs, n. 9, p. 67.

Santiago Carrillo and Fernando Claudin - a prominent member of the central committee - had been increasingly attacking the authoritarianism of the older leaders, and faced danger of expulsion. De-Stalinization helped Carrillo politically. He now became the de facto party boss, although he was officially designated Secretary General only in 1960. However, this issue led to a split between Carrillo and Claudin, and culminated in the expulsion of the latter from the party in 1964. Carrillo accepted Khrushchev's policy of de-Stalinization, but refused to discuss it any further; on the other hand, Claudin realized that the party would have to analyse its Stalinist past and not try to explain everything away by making use of the "personality cult" argument.²³

To the effects of the 20th Congress and de-Stalinization must of course be added the Yugoslav and Chinese shocks. The efficacy of the Soviet model was thus destroyed due to the inability of the bureaucracy to explain the deeper reasons for the Stalinist degeneration, the flagrant inadequacy of the formula of the "personality cult", the incapacity of the Soviets to bring about any institutional changes that would be a guarantee against a return to such crimes and errors. Togliatti, in his Yalta Memorial, was the first to understand this and to argue that there were

23. Neil McInnes, n. 2, p. 58.

^{US} causal links between the inadequacy of the theory of the "personality cult", the "imperfections of the Soviet model of Socialism", and the inevitable ascendancy of polycentrism in the Communist movement.²⁴

1956 marks the beginning of what is known as Euro-communism. However, upto the Czechoslovakian crisis of 1968 its influence in the pro-Moscow Communist movement was very limited. But the CPSU's hegemony was irredeemably compromised and centrifugal tendencies were strengthened. This was worsened by the Polish and Hungarian revolts, directed as much against Soviet domination as against the internal Stalinist regimes.

The PCF was in the forefront of those who encouraged the Soviets to use the greatest possible firmness in intervention and repression. In the case of Togliatti, he could not oppose Gomulka outright without revealing a blatant contradiction in his position, for the latter was trying to implement the very lessons Togliatti had insisted must be learnt from the 20th Congress. The rapid and peaceful way in which this crisis was resolved helped the PCI escape from this dilemma. Once the Soviet Union had capitulated to Gomulka's basic demands, the PCI adopted a stance of

24. Fernando Claudin, Eurocommunism and Socialism, John Wakeham, trans. (London, 1978), p. 43.

nervous optimism that everything would turn out for the best. The PCI first treated the Hungarian revolt as a similar case of Poland, maintaining that a "counter revolutionary putsch" had been staged by armed rebels in order to overthrow a regime trying to correct the serious errors of the past. A powerful wave of protest against Communist oppression spread throughout Italy, and this made the PCI gradually modify its stand. Togliatti even admitted that the use of Soviet troops had "complicated things" and "should and perhaps could have been avoided, but continued implying that responsibility for this rested with the Hungarian leaders, and not the Soviets.²⁵

Following these events, Moscow's moral and political credit throughout the Communist world suffered a severe blow. The PCI alone lost 250,000 members, including many intellectuals, while the other West European parties lost a further 50,000. Except for the PCI, the other Western Communist Parties assumed their attitude of pious loyalty to Moscow. All the parties attended the first world conference of Communist Parties (since the days of the Comintern) held at Moscow in November 1957, called to reassert Moscow's pre-eminence. All, except the Yugoslavs, signed the conference declaration and paid lip service to Moscow's pre-

25. Blackmer, n. 18, p. 83.

eminence. By the time of the next conference in Moscow in 1960²⁶, Sino-Soviet differences were predominant. The Chinese rejected the Soviet version of peaceful co-existence and through the Albanians, accused them of capitulating to imperialism. The majority of the parties backed the CPSU, accusing the Chinese and Albanians of "left deviationism". The USSR was once again acclaimed as the universally recognized vanguard of the world communist movement but not, as in 1957, as its "head".

Meanwhile, at the 22nd CPSU Congress in November 1961, Khrushchev again denounced Stalin. The Stalin question and the Sino-Soviet polemic led to tensions and differences in the leading bodies of many Communist Parties. A majority of the PCE and PCF felt that Khrushchev's policies were an adequate guarantee of de-Stalinization and a democratization of the Soviet regime. The PCI leadership, however, demanded "additional explanations, because the denunciations of the Stalin era also pose the problem of the responsibility of the Stalin and other parties". They asked for a thorough investigation of the situation under Stalin, and again pro-

26. At this conference, the PCF pointed out very clearly that it was not a supporter of "polycentrism". "We reject any position that might tend to weaken the unity of the Socialist system and the international Communist movement by considering that they might have several centres. One party has fought this erroneous point of view already". Dallin ed., "Diversity in International Communism", cited in Fejto, n. 13, p. 124.

posed full autonomy for each party.²⁷

The West European Communist Parties were not very interested in the substance of the Sino-Soviet ideological dispute. Except for the very beginning, they have not allowed themselves to be manoeuvred by the Soviets into a unanimous condemnation of the Chinese. The Sino-Soviet dispute stimulated centrifugal tendencies. It hastened the Western Communist Parties challenge to Moscow, for this damaged Soviet prestige, abolished Moscow's monopoly over the notion of revolution, and forced the Kremlin to seek support from fraternal parties in Western Europe. Above all, it demonstrated Communism's failure to conquer nationalism. What the Western parties had obediently denounced in Titoism from 1948-1956, was now seen to be the general case for all Communist regimes. They were national regimes first, with their internationalism being a mere foreign policy cover for their fundamental nationalism.²⁸

By the mid sixties, the West European parties realized that the Soviets were unreliable allies in their quest for political power. Two new developments strengthened this distrust; first, Khrushchev had persuaded them to accept the policy of peaceful co-existence by saying that it would

27. Statement by the PCI leadership issued on 27 November 1961. Fernando Claudin, n. 24, p. 40.

28. McInnes, n. 2, pp. 60-61.

provide the Soviet Union with conditions with which to outclass the US. This proved false. Instead, the Soviet Union was faced with a series of humiliating agricultural failures and economic difficulties. Then, there came the fall of Khrushchev in 1964. Most of the Western parties, including the PCF, had finally come to accept Khrushchev's policies. Just when they had managed the difficult emotional "transfer" from Stalin to Khrushchev, he was unseated in the 1964 "palace revolution". This embittered party leaders. It shook their bureaucratic sense of security and made them ridiculous as converts to democratic processes in their respective states.

Thus, the Western Communist parties and the CPSU by now had a number of wide ranging differences. The final break came with the Czechoslovakian crisis of August 1968.

August 1968: The Final Break

1968 was a crucial year for the evolution of the communist movement in Western Europe, and especially for the PCI, PCE and PCF. Two events occurred which shook West European Communism more severely than anything else during this century. The first was the May student-worker revolt in France, followed by the Czechoslovakian crisis.

In France a student insurrection, led by leftist groups violently hostile to the gradualist strategy of the PCF,

sparked off a general strike which the PCF had not expected and which it was able to bring under control with considerable difficulty. As its leaders had always feared, this kind of extra-parliamentary agitation proved detrimental to the Left's electoral performance. This made the PCF leader Maurice Waldeck Rochet realize that the party had lost control of the revolutionary youth and was in danger of losing control of the workers.

A more important event with far reaching consequences occurred that August, when Soviet troops entered Czechoslovakia and put an end to Alexander Dubček's "socialism with a human face". Most of the non-ruling Communist Parties were sympathetic to Dubček's efforts to build a "pluralistic socialism"; they saw in it the prospects for liberalization in the socialist world, a development in accordance with their policies and helpful to their electoral positions. Their protest against the Soviet invasion was the first public condemnation by almost all the West European parties, including the PCF, of a major Soviet foreign policy move. August 1968 is thus a watershed in the history of European-Communist relations.

The PCI's decision to condemn this action was not an easy one, but the expression of "profound dissent" was clear. As Luca Pavolin pointed out:

In Czechoslovakia an independent road of autonomous development was struck down,

and if the PCI had not come out against this it would have been contradicting its own thesis of a different model and a national road to socialism. (29)

The PCI therefore strongly condemned Russian action in order to (i) give credibility to what Togliatti had called the "peaceful road to socialism" and (ii) as a way of keeping an equidistant position on the China question.

August 1968 was a critical turning point in the foreign policy of the PCI.³⁰ It led to a rethinking of the international situation in Europe and the larger Western world, eg. the PCI gradually changed its attitude towards NATO, leading to its open acceptance in 1974.

The PCB took the clearest stand on this question. Santiago Carrillo, in a report to the Central Committee, declared that "a kind of Cold War now existed within our own camp". Responsibility for this lies with the policies of those parties who are in power, who are influenced, as often as not, by "reasons of state rather than proletarian internationalism". While admitting the duty of every Communist to defend the accomplishments of the "socialist community", he insisted that under no circumstances should non-

29. Giovanni Russo, "It Compromesso Storico: The Italian Communist Party from 1968-1978", in Tene, Mortimer and Story ed., n. 7, p. 71.

30. Norman Kogan, "The Italian Communist Party: The Modern Prince at the Crossroads", in Rudolf Tokes, ed. Eurocommunism and Detente (New York, 1978), p. 107.

ruling communist parties become satellites of one or another socialist state. What was needed was not a "directing centre or common discipline", but recognition of the need for each communist party to elaborate its strategy independently i.e. "to reaffirm its national personality".³¹

In a series of statements between 1968-1970, Carrillo elaborated on his ideas for autonomy for parties in the world Communist movement. He argued that relations between Communist Parties in Eastern and Western Europe had to be conceived on an entirely new basis. Those parties outside the Soviet orbit of influence must detach themselves from Soviet state policies and must develop revolutionary strategies to suit their own national conditions. The world communist movement had to be re-organized, with no centre claiming a monopoly on truth. Each party had to enjoy the 'creative capacity' to wage the ideological struggle which lay at the heart of Khrushchev's policy of peaceful co-existence.³²

The Czechoslovakia invasion was a traumatic experience for the PCF, the party that was the most thoroughly Stalinized and whose members and leaders retained a strong instinctive loyalty to Moscow. The PCF did condemn Soviet action. But having made this gesture, the PCF did its best to limit its

31. Santiago Carrillo, Problems of Socialism (Paris, 1969), pp. 41-53.

32. Jonathon Story, "El Pacto Para la Libertad: The Spanish Communist Party", in Tone, Mortimer and Story ed., n. 7, p. 164.

scope and to find a way out of this unbearable situation. It at once "welcomed" the agreement imposed by the Soviets on the Czech leaders. Roger Garaudy, the party's leading philosopher and a Politburo member, was censored for attacking the Soviet leaders in an interview with a Czech news agency. He was accused of "inadmissible interference in the internal affairs of other parties".³³ At the Moscow Conference of June 1969, the PCF, while reaffirming the independence of each party, was one of the few Western parties to fully support the CPSU in condemning China and to avoid making any reference to Czechoslovakia.

A few months after this crisis, the Third World Conference of Communist Parties was convened in Moscow in June 1969. The Chinese had wanted to hold this in 1962, in order to provoke a general debate about the Sino-Soviet dispute. But this Conference was delayed due to the publication of Togliatti's Yalta Memorial³⁴ in 1964 and the Czech crisis. In the former, Togliatti criticized the state of political and cultural freedoms in the USSR, and expressed his opposition to the convening of a world conference. He proposed that the Communist movement should accept a "unity in diversity", that would include the Chinese.

33. Edward Mortimer, "Un Socialisme aux Couleins de la France: The French Communist Party", in Tone, Mortimer and Story, ed., n. 7, p. 132.

34. Claudin, n. 24, p. 43.

The USSR used this conference as a platform to launch a formal offensive against the Chinese and to win support for the 'normalization' of Czechoslovakia and the Brezhnev Doctrine of "limited sovereignty".³⁵ The main West European parties, plus the Japanese, Romanians and a few others maintained their criticisms and reaffirmed the right of each party to make its own policies without outside interference. The PCE affirmed that democratic centralism could not be applied to relations between parties. The most lucid and rounded exposition of the line of opposition that has since developed into Euro-communism was provided by Enrico Berlinguer.

Berlinguer stated: "We reject the idea that there can be a single model of socialist society valid for all situations". He reiterated his party's refusal to condemn the Chinese, even though he described the Maoist line as erroneous; he explained that "not every difference of opinion can be explained in terms of 'deviation' from a doctrinal purity whose guardianship could always be disputed". He confirmed the disagreement over Czechoslovakia, deplored the Soviet intervention, and reaffirmed the 'pluralist' road to socialism in Italy, proclaiming that "the model of socialism for which we call on the Italian working class to

35. This sought to justify and legitimise a Communist state intervening in another state to defend socialist gains.

struggle is different from any other existing model.³⁶ The PCI delegation refused to sign the conference document because it contained no explicit agreement that "alternative models" of socialism could exist. The PCE signed the document, with major reservations without any explicit reservations; this group included the PCF.

The Present Decade

The nineteen seventies have witnessed the coming together of the three major West European Communist Parties. All three joined together in refusing to grant the CPSU a new world conference. The links between them and other West European parties were strengthened, culminating in the eighteen West European Communist Parties meeting at Brussels in January 1974. This Conference largely repeated earlier policy statements attacking the EEC and Multinational Corporations, but at least it was a tacit admission that the Western parties have different preoccupations from those of Moscow.

The final phase in the development of Eurocommunism took place in the period after 1974. The changing situation in the Iberian Peninsula, the progress of communism in France and Italy, and the violation of Human Rights in countries

36. Russo, n. 29, p. 74.

37. This was 21 less than the previous conference in 1960.

like Chile, South Africa and USSR, all influenced its development. The PCF, the party which had remained loyal to Moscow much longer than the PCI and PCE, was now convinced that it had little to gain from association with Moscow. This was mainly due to two reasons. First, the Soviet Union offered to support Giscard d'Estaing against the Left candidate Mitterand in the presidential elections of 1974.³⁸ The PCF, the party which had served Moscow for so many years, never forgave the Soviets for this; secondly, the increased world attention that was being focused on the treatment of dissidents in USSR, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany. The PCF, like the PCI and PCE, now came to the conclusion that association with the Soviet Union was more of a liability than an asset. Benlinguer and Marchais met several times in 1975 to confirm their new alliance.

In July 1975, the PCI and PCE issued a joint declaration (Livorno) and in November the Rome Declaration of the PCF and PCI was issued. Together, these documents provide the clearest statements of the three Western Communist Parties strategies and their concept of socialism. The latter was of great significance for it showed that, apart from some major tactical differences over NATO and the EEC, the PCF

38. Annette E. Stiefbold, The French Communist Party in Transition (New York, 1977), p. 136.

was now in almost complete agreement with the PCI. These documents were a further decisive step along the road to confrontation with Moscow.

From that moment the process accelerated. The first all round confrontation between the Soviet bloc and the Euro-Communists occurred at the Berlin Conference of Communist Parties of Europe in June 1976.³⁹ This Conference provided the most tangible evidence that Euro-communism has emerged as a new phenomenon to be reckoned with. It is an important landmark in the history of the world communist movement, for never before had so many parties had the courage to air their ideological differences so openly or to question the role of the USSR as the natural leader of the communist world.

For a time it seemed that the Conference would not be held. It was eventually held mainly because the Kremlin yielded on all the points that its adversaries had insisted on. The most important was probably the elimination of any condemnation of the CCP from the text of the common declaration and the abandonment of the dogma of "the leading role of the CPSU".⁴⁰ Even this, however, did not prevent the

39. It is important to realise that, originally the Soviets had no intention of holding a European Communist Party Conference but wanted to convene a new Communist World Conference.

40. Mandel, n. 6, p. 57.

advocates of "polycentrism" from asserting that such conferences were in fact useless, and that the strategy and tactics for achieving socialism were the exclusive domain of each national party.

Santiago Carrillo, expressing the sentiments of Georges Marchais and Enrico Berlinguer, declared:

For a long time, Moscow was the womb of the Communist movement. Now we have grown up. Communism has lost the character of a Church with a Pope. Now is the time for all progressive and social forces to work together independently in each country to achieve freedom and democracy ... nowadays we communists have no guiding centre and are not subject to any international discipline. (41)

The Soviets were forced to make major concessions. The text of the document did not contain four of the tenets of Marxist orthodoxy: "Marxism-Leninism", "dictatorship of the proletariat", "proletarian internationalism", and "struggle against anti-Sovietism". Instead, these were formulas to which Moscow was known to be hostile: the Stalin formula of "international solidarity" replaced "proletarian internationalism", and it was declared that the parties were to develop "basing themselves on the great ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin, but strictly preserving the equality and sovereignty

41. Berlin Conference of Communist Parties of Europe, n. 1, pp. 127-128.

of each party, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, and freedom to choose their different roads in the struggle for progressive social change and for socialism.⁴²

This summit vindicated President Tito's doctrine of "national communism", which had led to the expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Cominform nearly 30 years earlier. In fact, it may be said that the East Berlin Conference led to the substitution of the Brezhnev Doctrine by the Tito Doctrine.

The next major meeting took place at Madrid in March 1977. Its main purpose was to give support to the PCE in Spain's first free elections since 1936. This summit was mainly a confirmation of previously stated positions. Three events were responsible for this convergence in 1977.⁴³ First, from 1974 onwards everyone in Europe was looking towards Portugal and the unravelling of fascism. The American Secretary of State Kissinger spoke of the "vaccination theory" - this held that a left wing takeover in Portugal would at least have the positive effect of weakening the Communists in the most important states of Latin Europe. Both Berlinguer and Carrillo were aware of this and warned

42. For details see Wolfgang Leonhard, Eurocommunism: Challenge for East and West, Mark Vecchio, Trans. (New York, 1979), pp. 149-151.

43. James Goldborough, "Eurocommunism after Madrid", Foreign Affairs (New York), vol. 55 (July 1977), p. 802.

Cunai that his methods were dangerous. Secondly, Allende's fall made Berlinguer "read and reflect", and in 1974 he proposed the "historic compromise" to his party. He reasoned that socialism could not be built in Italy on just 51% of the vote. Thirdly, in France the Communist-Socialist Program had stood the test well. In the March 1974 elections the Left candidate Mitterand had lost to Giscard d'Estaing by just 1.4% of the vote. Furthermore, during the elections the Soviet Ambassador had made a well publicized call on Giscard d'Estaing to offer him support. The PCF, which had served Moscow loyally for so many years, never forgave the Soviets for this.

Linkage with Detente

However, the most important factor responsible for Eurocommunism was detente. East/West detente in Europe was one of the preconditions for and causes of the rise of Eurocommunism. To substantiate this, two reference points can be taken; the mid-fifties, the period of the intense Cold War, when these parties were effectively contained and their prospects were bleak; and the mid-seventies, when they became a serious political force. In the course of this period, the context in which these parties have had to operate has drastically changed. The fifties and early sixties were a period of considerable East/West tension (the Berlin crisis, Cuban missile crisis etc.) and of high

anti-Communist and anti-Capitalist rhetoric. This approach to world politics - of seeing the global struggle as much as one between "Communism" and "Democracy" as between national powers - continued until a few years after the Kennedy administration. Politicians and leaders in Western Europe also shared this view, especially the Social Democratic parties. In such an atmosphere it was difficult for the Communist Parties to make a headway. They were ideologically and politically isolated. In 1947, Premier Ramadier expelled the Communists from the government. During this period the socialist International refused to have any contacts with the communists, as did most of the social Democratic parties on an individual basis. As the intensity of the Cold War began diminishing in the late sixties, thereby paving the way for detente, the political isolation of the West European Communist Parties also came to an end.

As detente grew in the seventies, it had some significant effects on these parties.⁴⁴ First, it dimmed their perception of the danger of imperialism and made them less inclined to side with Soviet Union on every issue. Secondly, it gave the communist leaders a feeling of greater security

44. William Griffith, "The Diplomacy of Eurocommunism" in Rudolf Tokes ed., n. 28, p. 387.

in their pursuit of an autonomous policy. Thirdly, the increasing Soviet-American bilateralism created a certain "Gaullo-Communism"⁴⁵ in Western Europe - a resentment that European affairs were being disposed off or in danger of being disposed off by the Super Powers over and above their heads and interests. More important, detente enabled these communist parties to gain greater credibility at home. During the Cold War period, it was presumed that these parties were on the Soviet side, and a large part of the electorate believed so, especially in France and Italy. Detente brought about a basic change in the mode of thinking, thereby lending greater credibility to the programmes of the communist parties. This also enabled the other parties to coalesce with them, instead of against them, as the socialist party did in France in the name of "Left Unity", which however flopped in 1978. It was not inevitable that detente would loosen Moscow's grip over them. But this is what actually happened. It is with a view to gaining electoral support that these parties considered it necessary to broaden their appeal on domestic issues, which then meant, in actual practice, creating a certain distance between themselves and Moscow.

Chapter 3

EURO-COMMUNISM AND THE POLITICS OF EAST-WEST DETENTE

Given that there is a definite inter-connection between Euro-communism and detente, it is important to consider the views of the major Eurocommunist parties on European detente. Detente, which began in the sixties, only gained momentum in the seventies and eventually led to the emergence of new patterns of interaction in Europe.

The Cold War which dominated the European scene after 1945 had disastrous results on the Western Communist parties. During this period the Communists and Socialists were ranged on opposite sides, and the initiative passed into the hands of the Right. The Cold War also imposed several difficulties on the Communist parties. Thus, in Italy in the April 1948 elections following the coup in Czechoslovakia, the Left suffered a severe defeat. The PCI-PSI Popular Front managed to secure only 31% of the vote, while the Christian Democrats moved from the 35% they had got two years back to their all time high of 48%. A further setback occurred a few years later when the Christian Democrats and Social Democrats quit the Communist dominated CGIL (Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro) and set up rival trade union federations under their own control.¹

1. Donald L.M. Blackmer, Unity in Diversity: Italian Communism and the Communist World (Mass., 1968), p. 16.

The Eurocommunists and Detente

Since the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, Moscow has followed a "dual policy" in its relations with the West European States²; on the one hand, it established diplomatic relations with them and treated them in accordance with the principles of international law; on the other hand, it has supported local communist parties that would one day overthrow them. The Communist Parties, being well disciplined, accepted this divergence despite the embarrassment it entailed. The PCF managed, at the expense of the Servin-Casanova purge³, to buckle under when Moscow openly supported De Gaulle. A majority in the PCE, however, rebelled when Moscow began cultivating the Franco regime and when Poland supplied coal that helped break a Spanish workers strike.

The above mentioned policy of diplomacy today subversion tomorrow lasted upto 1956, when the Soviet Union adopted the policy of peaceful co-existence with the capitalist world. As a result, these parties lost their revolutionary role for they could no longer hope to add to communist strength through armed revolution. Secondly, detente helped these parties to appreciate and implement an important

2. Neil McInnes, The Communist Parties of Western Europe (London, 1975), p. 183.

3. See page 82 of this Chapter.

lesson learnt from the Sino-Soviet dispute, relating to Communism's failure to conquer nationalism. The Western Communist Parties now realized that they too would have to accord priority to national concerns and reconcile themselves to domestic national political traditions. Any doubts were dispelled by Soviet Union's new policy which clearly put the Soviet interest in good relations with Western governments ahead of the political ambitions of the relevant parties.

Of the three parties under consideration, it was the PCI under Palmiro Togliatti that wholeheartedly accepted the Soviet line of peace and detente. This suited the party's domestic alliance strategy, for it offered one of the most effective modes of entry into the Catholic camp. Moreover, it was essential to the PCI's gradual approach to the "area of government" in the peculiar condition of Italian politics.⁴

In a report to the Central Committee following the 20th CPSU Congress, Togliatti enthusiastically echoed the Soviet contention that the possibility of avoiding war was now greatly enhanced, and that modern weapons made peaceful co-existence a realistic, indeed necessary strategy.⁵ Accordingly, in 1958 and early 1959 the PCI agitated in the name of peace against the installation of missile and other

4. Donald L.M. Blackmer, n. 1, p. 23.

5. Ibid., p. 157.

military bases on Italian soil, and loudly protested against the U.S. submarine bindings in Lebanon.

The PCI enthusiastically took up the cause of Soviet attempts at detente on the domestic and international plane. In late November 1959, a gathering of European Communist Parties took place in Rome on the initiative of the Gramsci Institute, the PCI's research establishment. The text of the "appeal to all Workers and Democrats" had a dual purpose: first, it served as a sounding board for the Soviet campaign of relaxation of tensions, then at its peak following Khrushchev's visit to USA; secondly, it was also probably intended as a demonstration to the Chinese of the solidarity of these parties with the CPSU.

The PCI itself played a very important and direct role in contribution to the lessening of tensions in Europe. The European Communist Conference at Karlovy Vary in April 1967 was primarily directed against NATO solidarity and the developing West German Ostpolitik. At this conference, Luigi Longo emphasized the need to work for collaboration with the Socialists, the Social Democrats, and even the Christian Democrats for tactical reasons. The PCI now intensified its efforts to establish contacts with the West German Social Democrats. Various missions were sent to West Berlin and then to East Berlin. In 1968, Willy

Brandt's chief adviser, Herr Bauer met the PCI leaders in Rome. Next, an East German delegation visited Italy. Finally, during the official visit of the West German Chancellor Kurt-Georg Kiesinger, there was a conversation between him and Luigi Longo at the Quirinal (official residence of the Italian President of the Republic). The PCI's secret diplomacy was one of the main instruments of the Ostpolitik that brought about a profound change in the relations between the two Germanies, and between the FRG and USSR, Poland, and other East European States. It was these negotiations of 1970-72 that successfully brought an end to the Cold War in Europe and led to the emergence of new patterns of interaction.⁶

The PCF accepted the Cold War and the "Zhdandov line"⁷ theory of two camps. After Stalin's death in 1953 and Khrushchev's revelations in 1956, the PCF under Maurice Thorez did everything possible to resist de-Stalinization. This was hardly surprising, given the thorough going Stalinism in the country. Moreover, when the Sino-Soviet conflict

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6. Giovanni Russo, "Il Compromesso Storico: The Italian Communist Party" in Torre etc. eds., Eurocommunism: Myth or Reality? (Middlesex, 1979), p. 91.
7. Andrei Zhdandov spoke of the new alignment of forces that had now arisen. There were now two major camps; the imperialist and anti-democratic camp on the one hand, and the anti-imperialist and democratic camp on the other. The principal driving force behind the former is USA. Its aim is to strengthen imperialism, to launch a new imperialist war to combat socialism.

broke out in the late fifties Thorez showed every sign of following the Chinese for they outrightly rejected both Khrushchev's denunciations of Stalin and his policy of peaceful co-existence. Thorez, however, was threatened in his own party by a Khrushchev oriented faction, led by Marcel Servin and Laurent Casanova. Finally a bargain was struck: in exchange for Thorez's support for arranging a rapprochement with the Chinese at the 1960 Moscow Conference, Khrushchev granted permission to purge the Servin-Casanova group. PCF loyalty was henceforth always somewhat ambiguous in its depth, though the surface pattern was broken only years later.⁸

The PCF's seventeenth party congress (14-17 May, 1964) was a striking display of solidarity with the CPSU on all principal questions. The resolution adopted put forward point by point the essential themes enunciated by Khrushchev.⁹ The whole of Soviet foreign policy, oriented towards detente and rapprochement with USA, was approved by the PCF in the very same terms and same arguments normally found in CPSU

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8. Ronald Tiersky, "French Communism, Eurocommunism, and Soviet Power", in Rudolf Tokes, ed. Eurocommunism and Detente (New York, 1978), p. 159.
9. These related to (i) peaceful co-existence; (ii) peaceful transition; (iii) condemnation of Chinese heresy. For details see Francois Fejto, The PCF and the Crisis of International Communism (Mass, 1965), pp. 66-70.

documents.

By adopting a position favouring peaceful co-existence, the peaceful road and collaboration with the Socialist Parties, the PCF hoped to neutralize the mistrust of the SFIO and other non-Communist parties to whom they proposed unity of action with redoubled vigour.

But the PCF bitterly resented Moscow's policy of co-operating with De Gaulle and his successors. In the sixties, France occupied a special place in Soviet foreign policy because of De Gaulle's various gestures of independence from American tutelage and his desire to steer a course of his own between the two power blocs. The Soviets put a high value to these defiant gestures, and were therefore unenthusiastic about the PCF's willingness to make a common cause with the opposition, then predominantly Atlanticist. In 1962 Waldeck Rochet clearly stated the withdrawal from the Atlantic Pact or the Common Market should not be a precondition for co-operation between the PCF-PS; this was viewed with indifference by Moscow, for then there was little likelihood of France withdrawing from either. This had changed in 1965 when De Gaulle was applying his "empty chair" policy in Brussels and was preparing to withdraw from the NATO integrated command. Keeping its own interests uppermost in mind, it was hardly possible that Moscow would endorse a presidential candidate, running against De Gaulle,

on a platform including a pro-EEC and pro-NATO plank. In fact, Moscow discreetly endorsed De Gaulle's candidature in the form of a Tass report explaining that some opponents of the French regime would probably vote for De Gaulle because of "certain positive and realistic measures that the Gaullist government is taking in the foreign policy field".¹⁰ Following the death of De Gaulle on 9 November 1970, the implementation of West Germany's Ostpolitik, and Soviet co-operation with USA, the importance of France in Soviet foreign policy was somewhat decreased.

The PCE too shared the Soviet view of the world as irrevocably split into two antagonistic and competing blocs, headed by the USSR and USA. However, the Czechoslovakia crisis of 1968, the worsening of Sino-Soviet relations, Soviet overtures to the Franco regime for diplomatic relations and Soviet acquiescence of the Spanish government's inclusion in the European Security Conference, all encouraged the PCE to undertake a thorough re-examination of the motives behind Soviet foreign policy. Like the PCF, the PCE too protested that internationalism was a two way affair, and if Moscow

10. Edward Mortimer, "Un Socialisme aux Couleurs de la France", in Torre, Mortimer and Story, ed., Eurocommunism: Myth or Reality? (Middlesex, 1979), p. 131.

However, most observers view Soviet support for De Gaulle with skepticism and merely feel that they backed De Gaulle because his victory seemed assured. See Ronald Tiersky, "Le PCF et la Detente", Esprit (Paris), Feb. 1975, p. 237.

wanted their loyalty it would have to show care for their domestic political problems. By 1972, the party leadership had concluded that Soviet support for detente and peaceful co-existence concealed a determination to accept a divided Europe, a Europe in which the Kremlin would, for a long time, permit the hegemony of USA over the West while retaining its own in the East. The Soviet acceptance of the European status quo made the PCE realize the degree to which raison d'etat rather than proletarian internationalism had become the driving force behind Soviet foreign policy.¹¹

Though these three parties theoretically accepted Moscow's views on the Cold War and supported its policy of detente with the West, there has been a gradual and imperceptible change in their attitude to detente as they realized its implications.

The Eurocommunist parties themselves have been following a dual policy vis-a-vis their support to the Soviet policy of detente. Theoretically they favour it because it lessens international tensions and clears the way for domestic political alliances with their opponents. On the practical plane, however, these parties have been growing increasingly dissatisfied with some of the results of detente. The best

11. Mijal Leon, "The PCE", in Tokes ed., Eurocommunism and Detente (New York, 1978), p. 239.

example related to the acceptance of the status quo in Europe.

There has been a controversy between the French, Italian and Spanish parties as to whether detente is a precondition for the progress of Eurocommunism or whether it is an obstacle to change, for it constitutes an agreement between the Super Powers to maintain the status quo.¹² During the preparatory sessions of the East Berlin Conference, the PCF and PCE accused the Soviets of excessive moderation in its policy with the West, of being too mild in its ideological denunciations of capitalism, too weak in its support for socialist change in Western Europe, and in general more interested in what it can gain from great power detente than in its role as a revolutionary vanguard party. The PCF also accused the Italians of not taking advantage of the general crisis of capitalism to promote their domestic political advantage - to promote the "historic compromise" which the PCF considered too mild a policy.

In the June 1976 Berlin Conference, the PCF leader Georges Marchais insisted that "peaceful co-existence should in no way be identified with an acceptance of the status quo in our country, and the division of the world into spheres of

12. Pierre Hassner, "Eurocommunism and Detente", Survival (1976), p. 253.

influence under the domination of the more powerful states.¹³ Referring directly to Moscow's praise of Giscard's foreign policy, Marchais warned that "we can in no way accept that our struggle against the power of big capital, for democracy and socialism, should suffer in the name of peaceful co-existence among states".

Berlinguer too stressed that detente must not imply "the maintenance in each country of the old social and political equilibrium".¹⁴

The Eurocommunists and European Integration and Defence

The major foreign policy focus of these parties is Europe. As Santiago Carrillo declared in 1975: "whether one likes it or not ... the socialism in Western Europe will become a pole of reference for the whole of the working class movement".¹⁵ Involvement in Europe is seen as part of a more general European wide strategy. At the Berlin Conference, Berlinguer outlined the pan-European strategy of the PCI:

13. Berlin Conference of Communist Parties of Europe, Speeches, Documents and Material (Calcutta, 1976), p. 29.

14. Fernando Clandin, Eurocommunism and Socialism, John Wakeman, trans. (London, 1978), p. 55.

15. 11 Manifesto, Nov. 1, 1975. Cited in Godson and Haseler, Eurocommunism: Implications for East and West (London, 1978).

We will continue to develop our initiative in many and various directions: on the all European level, in order to help detente and co-operation; on the West European level, in order to find the broadest meeting point with other left wing, democratic, and progressive forces; and on the level of the European community, in order to make our contribution towards ensuring that the process of integration is democratic and consistent with the interests of the working class. (16)

Historically, these parties have opposed any attempts at European integration. Their changed attitude towards Europe is the result of, among many other factors, the onset of detente. The PCI was amongst the first to accept existing realities, and was followed at a much later date by the PCE and then the PCF. At present, the PCI and PCE are more committed to the European Community, while the PCF is the most lukewarm. It accepts the Common Market as a fact of life but emphasizes preservation of French national independence.

In the post-war period, Europe was faced with two important tasks: first, the creation of conditions that would prevent the future outbreak of any world war in Europe; secondly, the need to reassert itself in a world dominated by the Super Powers. It was sought to solve these problems through moves towards European integration. A beginning was made with the Treaty of Paris of 1951 which set up the

16. Enrico Berlinguer, "Eurocommunism Defended", in Donald Sassoon, ed., The Italian Communists Speak for Themselves (Nottingham, 1978), p. 79.

European Coal and Steel Community. The Rome Treaty of 1957 led to the establishment of the European Economic Community and Euratom, and since then a great deal of progress has been made in this direction.

During this period, the West European Communist Parties supported the foreign policy positions of the Soviet Union on various issues, including European integration and defence. In 1947, for example, Togliatti wanted to support Italian acceptance of the Marshall Plan aid, but succumbed to Soviet demands for out and out opposition to it.¹⁷ This had negative political results at home: the splitting of the CGIL, the elimination of communists from jobs in the public services, and the Papal excommunication of 1949. In the early fifties, the PCI-PSI unity of action pact was opposed to the first hesitant steps towards European integration, and campaigned vociferously against the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Defence Community (EDC) and Italian membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The attack on the latter was led by the PCI. The Italian Communists also voted against the treaties establishing the European Investment Bank, Euratom, and the

17. Norman Kogan, "The Italian Communist Party : The Modern Prince at the Crossroads", in Rudolf Tokes, ed., Eurocommunism and Detente (New York, 1978), pp. 104-5.

EEC.¹⁸ It was the same in the case of the PCF which, in collaboration with the Guallists, succeeded in scuttling the EDC proposal.

However, the initial hostility of these parties to the EEC has gradually given rise and way to a grudging acceptance of it. However much it still symbolizes capitalism, American influence, American multinational corporations and anti-communism, the EEC has in any case by now emerged as a new super economic power, though in the political field its success is not comparable despite direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979. Therefore, the Soviet Union has had to arrive at a modus vivendi with it.

First the PCI and PCE, and only recently and partially the PCF, have taken a less hostile attitude than the Soviets have towards the EEC. The PCI, which in 1959 had declared that "the future developments of so-called European integration could condemn Italy to become the depressed area of continental Europe",¹⁹ was amongst the first to change its attitude to the EEC.

18. Following Khrushchev's revelations at the 20th Congress of the CPSU and the Hungarian crisis in 1956, the Unity of Action Pact collapsed. That falls the socialists voted in favour of the treaties ratifying the European Investment Bank and Euratom and abstained on the EEC.

19. Rinascita, September 1961. Cited in Giorgio Galli, "Italian Communism" in William Griffith ed., Communism in Europe, vol. I, (Mass., 1964), p. 323.

The period 1959-63 was characterized by an economic boom in Italy on a scale never before known in its history.²⁰ This boom depended directly on the development of the Common Market. Even the Communists could not ignore the economic benefits of the EEC to the Italian workers and economy. Hence, on a visit to Moscow in 1961, Amendola delivered a lecture devoted to the defence of the Common Market. He claimed that:

- (i) The Common Market is the result of economic growth and consequently is a natural rather than an artificial creation.
- (ii) The Common Market has shown a productive economic vitality that does not allow any prophecy of its disruption.
- (iii) The economic position of the working class in Western Europe taken as a whole has improved rather than worsened.²¹

20. Reasons for the economic boom:

- (i) 1959-63 saw an economic boom in Italy never before known in its history. This surpassed the growth during the years prior to world war I when the first major impact of industrialisation was felt. This increase in foreign trade was a result of an expansion of imports and exports to all parts of the world, and especially with the states of Europe, members of the EEC.
- (ii) Italy was the main beneficiary of other EEC institutions eg. in 1961, the European Investment Bank invested 54% of its investments in Italy, France got 29% and West Germany 17%. See Norman Kogan, A Political History of Postwar Italy (New York, 1966) pp. 144-8.

21. Giorgio Galli, n. 19, p. 323.

The new attitude of the PCI to the EEC found its roots not only in its efforts to keep up with reality, but also in the situation existing within the Italian trade union led by the Communists, the CGIL.²²

In his famous Yalta Memorial of 1964, Togliatti attributed great importance to the EEC as the expression of a process of unification of Europe of such proportions that Europe becomes a particular sector, presenting particular tasks for a group of Communist parties, thus necessitating a special relationship. Here a case for the defence of Western Europe as a "centre" of a "polycentric" world receives its first formulation.²³

The PCI's autonomy is not only restricted by political considerations. The process of economic integration, the formation of the EEC etc. were all obstacles on a purely Italian road to Socialism. The Italian Communists, however, firmly believed that Italian development could only take place on the basis of European economic integration. The only way to tackle this apparent obstacle was to extend the

22. For details on the Common Market Controversy see Donald L.M. Blackmer, n. 1, pp. 305-319.

23. Donald Sassoon, "The PCI's European Strategy", Political Quarterly (London), vol. 45 (July/September 1976), pp. 256-58.

strategy to a European level - a European road to socialism. The European question became of primary importance, and after 1972 the European theme was emphasized and re-emphasized. The Italian road to socialism is no longer assumed to be a real possibility outside the European context.

In contrast with the PCI, the PCF continued viewing the EEC with hostility despite the changed positions of the PCI and CPSU in the sixties. But the PCF was soon forced to accept the EEC as a fait accompli and in 1967 it adopted a position which favoured "neither the disarming nor the liquidation of the Common Market, for the bonds between our country and the partners cannot be broken unilaterally without damaging the national economy."²⁴

However, the PCF forced the patriotic note, rejecting the least dilution of French national sovereignty. Georges Marchais even went so far as to accuse Michel Debré of being unpatriotic.²⁵ The PCF's argument is that any supranational institution in which capitalist Britain and Western Europe would wield decisive influence, could impede the socialization of the French economy by a government of the Left.

In the electoral programme of 1971 Marchais made a strident call for the preservation of French national inde-

24. Ronald Tiersky, n. 8, p. 220.

25. Le Monde, 23-24 and 25 January 1972. Cited in Neil McInnes, "The Communist Parties and the EEC", World Today (February 1974).

pendence and sovereignty. He stoutly denounced the "Europe of the trusts" as anti-national, as the work of cosmopolitan monopolies, as dangerous to the French economy, and as unfair to East Europe. In particular, the entry of Britain, whom the Communists saw as America's 'Trojan Horse' was strongly denounced for it would lead to increasing the faults of the union and an increase of American influence. In the PCF's perspective "national independence is a sine qua non of democratic development".²⁶

It is important to remember that the only conceivable Left government in France would be a coalition of Communists and Socialists - and the Socialists are pro-European.

At the Brussels Conference of January 1974 the PCF adopted a "European strategy". Besides calling for a "Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals", the PCF also developed a strategy at the West European level. This turn towards Europe ("tournant européen") can be seen from the ambiguous agreement they reached with the PS:²⁷

The government (of the Left) will have a dual objective vis-a-vis the European Economic Community. On the one hand, participation in the institutions and the construction of the EEC with the aim of liberating it from the domination of big capital and democratizing its institutions;

26. Ronald Tiersky, n. 8, p. 220.

27. The PS has always favoured complete political and economic integration with the EEC.

on the other hand, the preservation of the liberty of action of the state for the implementation of its political, economic, and social programmes. (28)

This turn towards Europe is nothing but a reiteration of a policy on which the PCF had embarked a while ago. Since 1962 at least, the French Communists have been forced by circumstances to give their national strategy a European dimension, especially as the Common Market became a fait accompli and an economic success. In another sense, this "tournant européen" is an unexpected result of detente.

When Spain applied for associate membership with the EEC in February 1962, the PCE had campaigned vigorously against it. However, the PCE too has now adopted a critical but positive attitude towards European integration. The 8th party congress held in the early seventies marked the party's official recognition of the EEC as an "objective force" in the overthrow of the Franco regime. Carrillo argued that the EEC was "irreversible" and the task of the Communists was to prevent its development as a "holy alliance" of capitalists directed against Soviet Union. He also declared that given the close economic ties with Western Europe, Spain had to become a full member of the EEC.²⁹

28. Ronald Tiersky, n. 8, p. 230.

29. Jonathan Story, "El Pacto Para la Libertad: The Spanish Communist Party" in Torre, Mortimer and Story, ed. Eurocommunism: Myth or Reality? (Middlesex, 1979), pp. 166-7.

Thus, these three parties have now come to accept the EEC. However, the PCF still maintains a strong nationalistic attitude and refuses to accept any political union, for this would mean an infringement of national independence. All three have now developed a pan-European strategy and want to work through the European Community to achieve their aims. This changed attitude reflects the majority political sentiments in the respective states.³⁰ Most Italians approve of the EEC because it helps their economy and protects them against French or German domination. Most Spaniards want a "return to Europe" while most Frenchmen favour the EEC in general, if only because of the enormous benefits that France gets from the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The PCF is primarily working class, not peasant, in membership and it has long shared Soviet hostility to the EEC. The PCI has had some influence on the PCF; however, the PCF still continues to oppose any political union.

All these parties share a common proclaimed desire to change the character of the European Community. They want to weaken the links between it and America, and to democratize its structures and institutions. They also call for

30. William Griffith, "The Diplomacy of Euro-Communism", in Tokes, ed., Eurocommunism and Detente (New York, 1978), p. 423.

closer relations between the EEC and Eastern Europe. In fact, they see the EEC as a half-way house for a Europe stretching from the "Atlantic to the Urals". They see their participation in the European Community as helping to foster a dynamic phenomenon -- to ease Western Europe as a whole into a more neutral position in the world. Carrillo made it clear that he envisaged a united, socialist Western Europe equidistant between Moscow and Washington -- non-aligned Communist Parties, so to speak, in a non-aligned Western Europe.³¹

Their view on the EEC was aptly summed up by Giorgio Napolitano, the economic spokesman of the PCI, in an interview with Eric Hobsbawn:

The Community could serve as a spokesman for West Europe's vital needs for economic independence; it could favour an autonomous and co-ordinated development and support a common resistance to the threat that the present phase of the world crisis will lead the United States to reaffirm and strengthen its supremacy against the countries of capitalist Europe. This is the line for which we will fight within the EEC. This requires, on the one hand, a substantial turn towards the developing countries, relations of co-operation with all countries of Europe, and initiatives towards the construction of a new economic order. On the other hand, it also requires a democratization of the structures and orientations of the EEC. (32)

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31. Interview with Santiago Carrillo in *Il Manifesto*, No. vi, 1975. Cited in Griffith, n. 30, p. 423.
32. Eric Hobsbawn, The Italian Road to Socialism: An Interview with Giorgio Napolitano (Connecticut, 1977), pp. 57-58.

European Defence

Any strategy based on the creation of a united Europe free from political commitments poses the question of the Atlantic Alliance. In an atmosphere of detente the Western Communist Parties gave priority to foreign policy considerations that, without necessarily indisposing the Soviet Union, would carry the most electoral weight at home. Thus, they gradually changed their views on the dependence of Western Europe for its security on NATO. They have long since given up the passionate and violent opposition to that military alliance that marked the Paris riots of 1949 and 1952. These parties now keep a watchful eye on NATO's developments that would in any way incommode the Soviet Union, with the assurance that they would not insist on their countries quitting NATO when in office.

In the case of Italy, specific NATO and American assets are at stake.³³ Most important of all is the strategic geographical situation of Italy, stretching from France to Greece right across the Mediterranean. NATO forces in Italy protect West Europe's main oil supply route.

33. NATO's Southern Command Headquarters are in Naples. Gaeta is an important base for the sixth fleet. Powerful U.S. Squadrons are based in Vicenza and other bases in the Veneto, and nuclear powered submarines operate out of La Maddalena in Northern Sardinia.

For the first twenty years after its formation the PCI opposed NATO and Italian membership of it with the slogan "Italy out of NATO and NATO out of Italy". August 1968 was probably the critical turning point in the foreign policy of the PCI.³⁴ It led to an open criticism of the Soviet Union that was not withdrawn despite the protests of many local and section party leaders. This led to a rethinking of the international situation in Europe and the larger Western world. Now there was a gradual shift in its attitude to NATO, leading to its ultimate acceptance in 1974.

At the twelfth party Congress of 1969³⁵, Luigi Longo made it clear that his party was not for the disintegration of the Western bloc in favour of the Eastern, but was for the simultaneous dissolution of both. When the NATO treaty came up for renewal that year, the PCI let the occasion pass without making any issue of it. This was hardly due to any neglect or oversight. By the 13th party Congress the unilateral call for withdrawal from NATO was neither in the party's programme nor in Berlinguer's report, and the PCI publicly announced its support of NATO and that Italy and Europe must be equally friendly with USA and USSR.

34. Norman Kogan, n. 17, p. 117.

35. Donald Sassoon, n. 23, pp. 260-62.

When pressed, the PCI leaders would say that they still demand that Italy should leave the organization. However, they have subordinated their exit to the improbable condition that all military blocs were dissolved. Amendola said:

We must get Italy out of blocs, which means concretely for us Italians out of the Atlantic Alliance, but in such a way as to guarantee that this will not mean in any sense an entry into the socialist camp getting beyond blocs will provide the guarantee that Italy's withdrawal from NATO will not mean a reversal of alliances. (36)

Elaborating on the NATO issue, Berlinguer declared in 1972 that:

This decisive question of getting free of the bonds of subordination that tie our country to NATO cannot be reduced to a simple declaration for or against the military pact. The struggle against the Atlantic Pact will, rather, become more effective the more it is identified with a general movement of the liberation of Europe from American hegemony and to the gradual surpassing of opposed blocs, right up to the point of their liquidation. (37)

In the 1976 election campaign, Berlinguer was anxious to convince Italians that voting for the PCI did not mean switching from the Western to the Eastern camp. He had already stressed his party's independent stance at the

36. Neil McInnes, n. 3, p. 187.

37. Godson and Haseler, n. 13.

twentyfifth CPSU Congress that February, at which Carrillo and Marchais were conspicuous by their absence. In an interview with Corriere Della Serra³⁸ Berlinguer made his well publicized statement where he spoke of NATO as "a shield behind which to build socialism in Italy". Thus, the PCI now saw NATO as a politico-strategic cover for its independent road to socialism.

France faces different problems compared to Italy. Since the time of De Gaulle, France has been a member of the North Atlantic Alliance but not of the integrated military structure. Though NATO does without French troops, NATO without a sympathetic French government would be strategically unviable. Over the years, the PCF has moved from a position of absolute rejection of NATO to one of ambiguity. In 1962, Waldeck Rochet declared that although the Communists maintained their total opposition to NATO, they would not make France withdraw from it as a prior condition for co-operation with the Socialists. This 'concession' soon became pointless, for in 1967 De Gaulle led France out of the NATO military command. Though the Communists applauded De Gaulle's move they still declared that France was an American satellite, subject to American military strategy, they therefore intensified their attacks on NATO under De Gaulle's successors.

38. For details of the interview see Giovanni Russo, n. 6, pp. 88-9.

During the discussions for a Common Program with the PS in the early seventies, the PCF first proposed that France withdraws from NATO altogether, and later on adopted an ambiguous compromise:

The government will declare itself for the simultaneous cancellation of the Atlantic Pact and Warsaw Pact while refusing to reintegrate itself in NATO, France will not deny itself the right to conclude defensive alliances as well as treaties of non-aggression The government will make plain its will to move the nation towards independence of any politico-military bloc. The problems posed by the obligations laid on France as a member of the Atlantic alliance will be resolved in this spirit. (39)

The Socialists under Mitterand interpreted this to mean that the PCF would let France stay in the Alliance until some other defense system was set up; party spokesmen, on the other hand, declared that a left coalition would seek independence of the Atlantic bloc. Since then the PCF has maintained its vehement opposition to the Alliance while indicating a willingness to enter a government that is not explicitly committed to leaving it, at least not immediately.

In the case of the Spanish Communist Party, the PCS has always campaigned vigorously against the American bases in Spain and against Spain's entry into NATO. However, this

39. Neil McInnes, n. 2, p. 187.

policy changed as a result of Moscow's wooing of Franco. Furthermore, the Soviet Union's priority on foreign affairs - and especially on the German problem - contradicted the PCE's priority for a parliamentary regime in Spain. Moscow had to get Spain's support as an additional vote in favour of a European settlement; amicable exchanges were therefore essential. In return, Franco demanded reduced Soviet support for the PCE. The 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, the import of Polish coal to break the Asturian coal strike and the Lister⁴⁰ affair all led to a deterioration of PCE-CPSU relations. As a result, the policy of the PCE with regard to NATO, the Atlantic Alliance and American bases in Spain has been consistent with the broader notion that the parties of the European Left have to make every effort to avoid being destabilising forces in their own countries as well as the regional level. Though the party newspaper Mundo Obrero, in late 1974, called the US bases a "mortal danger to our motherland", the PCE has publicly declared that it will accept their presence for the foreseeable future, at least until some Soviet forces withdraw from Eastern Europe. These negotiations have been taking place in the

40. Enrique Lister was number three in the PCE Party hierarchy, and enjoyed much support among the rank and file and had powerful friends in the Soviet Union. In 1968, the PCE passed a resolution condemning the Soviet action. Lister, however, recorded his dissent.

context of the MBFR since 1973, but without any concrete result so far. The PCE has shown itself opposed in principle to Spanish integration in NATO, declaring its intention to campaign against such entry. However, the party has declared that it would accept whatever decision a new and democratically elected Cortes adopted.⁴¹

Elaborating his views on NATO, Carrillo declared that:

NATO justifies its existence on the grounds of a possible Soviet attack. But since for more than twenty years no Soviet aggression has taken place and the fundamentally defensive orientation of the Warsaw Pact has been confirmed, NATO is becoming a bureaucratic-military superstructure, in search of a goal with which to justify itself. In the last resort it remains ultimately an instrument of American political, economic and military control over Europe. (42)

By adopting such an ambiguous position on NATO the Western Communist Parties are attempting, firstly, to kill two birds with one stone. On the one hand they want to satisfy internal public opinion (which is pro-NATO) and on the other hand their own Stalinist militants (who are strongly against NATO) and the Soviet leadership.

Hence, the PCI and PCE favour their countries remaining in NATO as long as it and the Warsaw Pact organizations

41. Mijal-Leon, n. 11, p. 240.

42. Santiago Carrillo, Eurocommunism and the State, Nan Greene and A.M. Elliot, trans. (Connecticut, 1978), p.60.

continue to exist. Most Italians have preferred alliance with USA to deter French or German domination. Most Spaniards also do so for the same reason; in addition, they see entry into NATO as a step in their re-entry into the Western Community of nations. In contrast, a majority of Frenchmen continue to endorse De Gaulle's withdrawal of France from the NATO integrated military command, which they see as an American and West German dominated organisation. The PCF has adopted a similar position.

Secondly, such ambiguity is a part of coalition making. The current ambiguous position of the PCF is an ostensible departure from outright hostility. This gave the PCF the flexibility it needed to reach an agreement on the Common Program with the PS.

There are other reasons for this change. The most important is, without doubt, the primacy of domestic policy and the parties ambitions to enter government. Their new attitude thus has tactical and electoral overtures. As these parties come closer to power, their anti-NATO image hangs as a weight around their necks. In fact, the PCI's reconciliation to NATO came during the 1976 election campaign. It was the same with the PCF. The PCE, however, has no need to modify its stand for by backing the status quo it incurs no electoral odium.

However, none of these parties are going to announce that they favour an alliance merely in order to attain political power. There are other factors, equally real. First, peace in Europe depends upon the maintenance of the balance of power between the two alliance systems. If either of these states were to drop out of NATO this equilibrium would be upset and would threaten detente; secondly, the Dubček lesson has taught these parties an important lesson. They realise that it would not be possible for them to develop their own independent roads to socialism in a Europe dominated by the Soviet Union. It was this which probably made Berlinguer describe NATO as a "shield behind which to build an Italian road to socialism". Added to this was the important question of what happens after Tito's death. This is of crucial importance to the PCI, which does not think that its hopes for an independent socialist Italy are favoured by the prospect of Warsaw Pact troops on her north-eastern frontier.⁴³

Thus, all the three parties under consideration have accepted Moscow's views on the Cold War and supported its policy of detente. They themselves were quick to realise the implications of detente. Besides depriving them of their

43. Norman Kogan, n. 31, pp. 108-110. Godson and Haseler, n. 13, pp. 104-112.

revolutionary role, it made them aware of communism's failure to conquer nationalism - and hence they too began giving priority to domestic national political traditions.

The PCI, besides being the first to accept the new Soviet foreign policy line, has also played an important part in the emergence of Ostpolitik. The PCF was slower to come to terms with the change in the Soviet Union's attitude to the West, it finally did so in 1964, at its seventeenth party congress. In comparison, the PCE has all along been very critical of the policy of detente. They firmly believe that Soviet Union supports detente in order to promote and maintain the division of Europe - a Europe in which it will accept USA's hegemony in the West while maintaining its own in the East.

The major foreign policy focus of these parties is Europe. At present, however, Europe is too capitalist and too dependent on USA. They therefore now want to work through the European Community to change the internal economic and political system of Western Europe and Europe's international outlook. Though they have begun accepting their countries membership of NATO, they are now calling for a simultaneous dissolution of both the military blocs in Europe. Their proclaimed aim is to see the emergence of an integrated, independent Western Europe - one that is equidistant from both Moscow and Washington.

Chapter 4

EUROCOMMUNISM : DOCTRINE OR PHENOMENON ?

The term "Eurocommunism" was coined by a Yugoslav journalist Frane Barbieri in an article in Giornale Nuovo on 26 June 1975. This idea came to him when he was reflecting upon some writings of Manuel Azcarate and Santiago Carrillo, leaders of the PCI, the party that had gone the farthest in its polemics against Moscow. The widespread acceptance and usage of this term was undoubtedly the result of the pressing need for a term that would characterize a new trend in the communist movement in Western Europe, a movement that was beginning to take a definite shape, separating itself from Moscow, following new roads, and proclaiming new methods of socialist transformation.

At first, the Communist Parties in Western Europe were reluctant to adopt this term. This was especially true of the PCE. At the Berlin Conference of June 1976 its Secretary General, Santiago Carrillo, declared that "it was a most unfortunate term. There is no such thing as Eurocommunism". On the same occasion the PCF leader, Georges Marchais, avoided using the term altogether, while the leader of the PCI, Enrico Berlinguer, tacitly accepted it. He said:

It is not a term of our invention, but the fact that it has become so widely used is evidence of the depth of the need felt in the countries of Western Europe to seek and discover new answers

to the problem of transforming society in the direction of socialism. (1)

This term, however, is something of a misnomer. Firstly, "Eurocommunism" seems to indicate that all the Communist Parties of Western Europe adhere to its viewpoint. This is not the case. There are still many Communist Parties in Europe that continue to follow the Moscow line. Secondly, this term refers to a purely European phenomenon. It ignores certain parties outside Europe who have been pursuing a similar course for some time, like the Communist Party of Japan. Thirdly, this term might imply a tightly knit organization with a centre and a binding party line. This is not the case either. Unlike the adherents of the Soviet line who meet regularly to formulate broad party strategy, the Eurocommunists have no single party guidelines. Instead, it denotes a specific regional environment which is a result of similar problems requiring a specific approach different from the one already operating in Eastern Europe. In other words, it implies internal autonomy of the Communist Parties on the national plane.

Pierre Hassner², a well known French ideologue, points

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1. Enrico Berlinguer, "Eurocommunism Defended" in Don Sassoon, ed., The Italian Communists Speak for Themselves (Nottingham, 1978), p. 79.
 2. Pierre Hassner, "Eurocommunism and Western Europe", Atlantic Community Quarterly, vol. 16, (Fall 1978), p. 265.

out that any real meaning to the term can be got by taking at face value the first two syllables of "Eurocommunism". What puts the "Euro" into "Eurocommunism", he declares, is the vision - and the strategy - according to which Western Europe is an autonomous whole in which shared characteristics are stronger than the individual features of the states that comprise it. These shared characteristics differ fundamentally from those of the Soviet Union and other Communist states. Their unity and independence is a precondition for the success of this phenomenon.

Some Preliminary Observations on the Eurocommunist Parties

From amongst the three parties under consideration, the PCI is the largest mass party outside the Communist ruled states. In 1975, the PCI had a membership of about 1,622,861 i.e. over 3% of the population. Since 1972, its membership has been on a steadily increasing curve, reversing the downward trend of recent decades. Between 1971-76 party membership has risen by an estimated 18% than the Italian population as a whole. The PCF had between 140,000-260,000 members; it has virtually doubled its membership since the sixties. The PCE had between 5,000 - 20,000 members.³

3. For details on the size of the Communist phenomenon, see Neil McInnes, The Communist Parties of Western Europe (London, 1975), pp. 1-35.

Historically, the best known element of the French Communists has been their unconditional loyalty to the Soviet Union, which produced no doctrinal advance in French thinking on communism. Its actual defiance to the Soviet Union came only as late as 1975, whereas the PCI and PCE did so in the early sixties. Moreover, when forced to choose between siding with or against the Soviet Union, as on the recent Afghanistan issue, the PCF alone reverted to its pro-Moscow stand in 1980-1. As Neal Tannahill has pointed out, leadership plays an important part in the diversity of West European Communism. In contrast to the PCF, the PCI, for example, has from its very origins been led or influenced by intellectuals, in or outside the party apparatus. Amadeo Bordiga, Gramsci, Togliatti and Berlinguer, to list the party secretaries, fall into this category. Luigi Longo is the only secretary who can be called a worker in origin, and even he spent most of his life in the party apparatus, and not in a factory. These people have the training and disposition to interpret Marx and Lenin for themselves, rather than rely on Moscow.⁴

The Spanish Communist Party managed to survive during the highly oppressive Franco regime. In contrast to the PCI

4. R. Neal Tannahill, "Leadership as a Determinant of Diversity in West European Communism", Studies in Comparative Communism (Winter 1976), p. 354.

and PCF, which developed in the conditions of a parliamentary democracy, the PCE functioned as an illegal and clandestine party for more than 30 years, and was legalized only as late as April 1977, following General Franco's death. During its transition period, the party had to contend for years with a strong pro-Soviet faction. Of these parties the Spanish Communists are most outspoken in defending Eurocommunism and in arguing with Moscow.

Common Interests and Goals

These three Eurocommunist parties have certain common interests and goals, which can be broadly discussed under the following categories:

- (i) autonomy and equality
- (ii) a new relationship between democracy and socialism
- (iii) an independent foreign policy

(i) The Eurocommunists place a great deal of emphasis on autonomy and equality. They deny the existence of a single centre of world communism, and object to any ideological and enforced general party lines as being no longer suitable given the different conditions each party has to face. They also reject the Soviet concept of "proletarian internationalism" - which essentially meant subservience to Moscow as the centre of world communism and the defence of the Soviet Union - as outdated. Instead, they advocate "unity in diver-

sity" whereby each party has the right to determine its own policies independently and in accordance with the traditions, with the economic, cultural and political peculiarities of its own country.

It was the PCI leader Palmiro Togliatti who expounded the principle of "unity in diversity". His call for "polycentrism" in the world communist movement was first openly expressed in his well known interview in Nuovi Argomenti in mid 1956.

The whole system is becoming polycentric and in the communist movement itself one cannot speak of a single guide but rather of progress being achieved by following paths that are often different. (5)

At the historic Berlin Conference, the Eurocommunist Parties rejected "proletarian internationalism" and replaced it with "international solidarity". Santiago Carrillo clearly announced that "nowadays we Communists have no guiding centre and are not subject to any international discipline".⁶

According to the Eurocommunists, relations between Communist Parties - both ruling and non-ruling - should

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5. For a detailed account see Donald L.M. Blackmer, Unity in Diversity: Italian Communism and the Communist World (Mass., 1968), pp. 50-8.
 6. Berlin Conference of the Communist Parties of Europe, Speeches, Documents and other material (Calcutta, 1976), pp. 128-9.

proceed on the basis of "Proletarian solidarity" - voluntary co-operation between different Communist Parties based on the equality, independence and autonomy of each party. They also proclaimed the need for dialogue and an open exchange of ideas. They criticized world conferences, which were invariably accompanied by attempts to establish a general party line and single ideology. They held that it was this that isolates the communists from other socialist and democratic forces; finally, they advocated mutual interaction between Communists, Socialists, Social Democratic and other progressive forces, and also a strong emphasis on progress with Christian Democratic and Liberal forces.

(11) The Eurocommunists openly proclaim a new relationship between democracy and socialism. They reject the theory of a violent revolution and the establishment of the "dictatorship of the proletariat". Instead, they advocate a democratic road to socialism which relies on the consent of the majority of the population.

Both the PCI and PCF trace their choice of a moderate and evolutionary road back to the forties, when the parties were led by Palmiro Togliatti and Maurice Thorez respectively. Following his return to Italy after 18 years in exile in April 1944, Togliatti declared that the PCI's goal was the creation of a "parliamentary democracy".

Only after the 20th CPSU Congress held in 1956 did Togliatti return to this theme with renewed vigour. This debate, however, was due not so much to the initiative of the party leaders as due to the tumultous development of de-Stalinization in the East. The first real independence appeared at the 8th party Congress of the PCI in December 1956. This Congress was an important turning point in the present day development of the PCI. The theses published on the eve of this Congress affirmed that

the Communist party has from the beginning stated that it does not conceive of a republican constitution as a mere expedient in order to utilize the instruments of bourgeois democracy until an armed insurrection will conquer the state but as a foundation for unity a basis for the organic development of national life for a whole historical period. (7)

From this statement it is legitimate to deduce that the PCI decided a long time ago to work within the framework of the Italian constitution, which obviously allows only peaceful, parliamentary and democratic means of political action in the traditional sense.⁸

The PCF's option for a parliamentary road to socialism also dates back to 1944-45. Abundant literature on this

7. L'unita, 14 October 1956. Cited in Georgio Galli, "Italian Communism" in William Griffith, ed., Communism in Europe, vol. I, (Mass., 1964), p. 307.

8. Ibid., p. 307.

theme can be found during this period, the most famous being Maurice Thorez's interview with The Times of 18 November 1946. Though no statements were made for a long time after 1947, it does not appear that the PCF ever explicitly disavowed this strategy. The party accepted Khrushchev's policy of "peaceful co-existence", for this suited the "Union of the Left" strategy that the party was forced to adopt by national circumstances. When this became a reality in 1965, the PCF constantly referred to Thorez's interview and other such statements to assure its partners that it was not a new convert to the ideas of political democracy and a parliamentary system.

In the case of the PCE, following the Second World War the party trained and supported various gureilla groups in an attempt to overthrow General Franco. Following Stalin's advice in 1948-49, they decided to give up the gureilla struggle and instead concentrate on infiltrating the fascist trade unions and mass organizations. However, the first, through somewhat careful disassociation of the PCE from the Soviet model occurred only at its 6th party Congress in January 1960. For the first time it was declared that, in a favourable international situation, Spain could achieve socialism along a peaceful parliamentary road. Simultaneously, changes were brought about in the party structure and it was declared that, in contrast to what Bolshevik doctrines

prescribed, a party member did not have to be a member of a basic organization but could co-operate individually with the party.⁹

The most complete and rounded statement on what this democratic road to socialism involves is provided in the Rome Declaration of the PCI-PCF of November 1975.¹⁰ This declared that:

The Italian and French Communists hold that the march towards socialism and the building of a socialist society must be achieved within the framework of a continuous democratisation of economic, social and political life All freedoms ... will be guaranteed and developed. Both parties also declare themselves for the plurality of political parties, for the right to existence and activity of opposition parties, for the free formation of majorities and minorities, and the possibility of their alternating democratically.

At the 25th CPSU meeting in Moscow, Santiago Carrillo declared that the PCE stood for "a socialist society that guaranteed individual as well as collective rights, and religious freedom, as well as cultural, artistic and scientific freedom."¹¹

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9. Fernando Clandin, "Unity-The Way to Victory", World Marxist Review, No. 7 (July 1959), pp. 59-62 in Wolfgang Leonhard, Eurocommunism: Challenge for East and West (New York, 1979), p. 218.
 10. The Text of this declaration has been published in Torre, Mortimer and Story, ed., Eurocommunism: Myth or Reality? (Middlesex, 1979), pp. 334-8.
 11. Morton Kaplan, ed., The Many Faces of Communism (New York, 1978), p. 19.

Thus, the democratic road to socialism includes:

- (i) the coming to power through peaceful means and the abandonment of the concept of the "dictatorship of the proletariat". Khrushchev's doctrine that in some highly developed capitalist countries in Western Europe, a coalition of all the patriotic forces led by the working class could, with a parliamentary majority, effect radical social transformations, was included in the PCI's programme in 1956, while the PCF inserted a paraphrase of Khrushchev in its training literature for militants. Even the clandestine and persecuted PCE opted for legal procedures during the period from 1956 to 1960.
- (ii) the Eurocommunists reject the usual communist conception of playing a "leading role" in political struggles. Instead, they strive for an equal alliance which includes not only socialists and social democrats, but also Christian Democrats and Liberals.
- (iii) they recognize the necessity for a pluralistic party system - unrestricted activities of all political parties and groups, and regularly held secret elections. Thus in May 1963, Maurice Thorez announced that "the theory of the single party in a socialist regime was an error of Stalin's." Political pluralism^{was} included in the PCF doctrine and by 1966 it was made clear that

there would be more than one party not only during the transition period but also in the socialist state itself.¹²

(iv) alternance in power - the parties concerned declared that if, after coming to power, they were voted out, they would abide by the decision of the electorate.

Each Eurocommunist party interprets the transition period from capitalism to socialism differently.¹³ The PCI often considers it a period of "structural reforms". The PCF speaks about far reaching changes in the economic, political and social life leading to an "advanced democracy". The PCE considers this a "period of political and social democracy". In addition, each party suggests different measures. The main aim of this period is to restrain and gradually overcome monopolistic ownership i.e. large private banks, insurance agencies etc. However, they have no intention of achieving this through the establishment of state owned enterprises directed by the government, but by step-by-step nationalization. The nationalized enterprises are to be decentralized and directed by democratically elected bodies, in which workers are to be properly represented. Small private business and middle sized enterprises are not

12. Neil McInnes, n. 3, p. 175.

13. Wolfgang Leonhard, n. 9, pp. 7-8.

to be affected by this economic change. Large land holdings are to be done away with, but farm property is to remain intact. The Eurocommunists also foresee change in other realms, including the control of the mass media.

The Eurocommunist Parties now lay stress on an independent foreign policy. They no longer blindly follow the dictates of Moscow as they did in the case of the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939. They refuse to be mere extensions of the Soviet Union and have adopted an independent stand on many issues. To illustrate,

- (i) They reject the indiscriminate Soviet condemnation of the Peoples Republic of China and its campaign against the Chinese Communist Party to excommunicate it from the international communist movement.
- (ii) They reject any one sided portrayal of the Warsaw Pact as an alliance for freedom and socialism on the one hand, and of NATO as an alliance of capitalism and aggression on the other. In fact, these parties have accepted the continued existence of NATO as long as the Warsaw Pact exists. They are now striving for a non-aligned and independent Europe, one which is capable of developing and a enjoying relationship based on equality with both the US and the USSR.

- (iii) They criticize, through in different ways and with different intensity, the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe.
- (iv) Besides wanting to overcome the bloc phenomenon in Europe, the Eurocommunists now support the process of European unification.

Any analysis of the phenomenon of Eurocommunism must be restricted to theory, for none of the three parties under consideration have as yet achieved power. The PCF was the closest to power and would have gained control of the government together with the PS in 1978. However, the collapse of the Common Program effectively ended any such possibility. Had the PCF come to power, the task of analyzing the democratic credentials of at least one of these parties would have been made easier. Since this did not occur, any analysis of the phenomenon of Eurocommunism must be purely speculative.

Domestic Policies

The PCI is the only Communist Party in Western Europe that already has a voice in vital governmental decisions. After the June 1976 elections, in which the PCI got 34% of the vote (only 4% less than the Christian Democrats) it assumed a measure of governmental responsibility by supporting (through abstention from voting) a minority Christian Democratic (DC) government by working out with the DC a

national programme of retrenchment and reform to meet Italy's political and economic crises. Thus the "historic compromise" came into being not only in name, but in fact. This became firmer in 1977 when the PCI began to vote for the government instead of merely refraining from voting against it. Since March 1970, the PCI became part of the parliamentary majority supporting a minority government.

The PCI, more than the PCF, has built a record of gradually increasing participation in the existing system, first on the local and later on the regional and national levels. The party's own experience of Italian politics, plus the conclusions drawn from what happened in Chile, led to what is called the Berlinguer line - that the communists should not try to govern Italy, even if they could make an alliance with the socialists that gave the Left over 50% of the vote against the non-communist half of the population represented mainly by Christian Democracy and the Catholic Church. This is Berlinguer's rationale; the PCI is the process of proving its responsibility and legitimacy as an Italian party.

Italy, therefore, is the real laboratory of Eurocommunism and is the place to watch. The Spanish Communists may be more outspoken in their criticisms of Moscow; the PCF may have come close to power in the last election. But the PCE is on the fringe of Spanish politics, and the PCF's

success is wholly dependent on its ties with a stronger Socialist Party and on their ability to maintain a "united Left under stress. In Italy, however, the Communists are the Left. They are not dependent on the Socialists. As they have secured around 35% of the vote, the PSI's has decreased to less than 10%, and the Social Democrats to less than 5%.

Italy

Italy is the success story for communist electoral politics. In the general elections of 1976 the PCI got 34.44% of the votes. Since the war, the PCI votes have considerably increased, as is apparent from the table below,¹⁴

Year	PCI Vote	Percentage of the Total
June 1946	4,356,686	19.0
June 1953	6,120,809	22.6
May 1958	6,705,454	22.7
April 1963	7,763,854	25.3
May 1968	8,557,404	26.9
May 1972	9,085,927	27.2
June 1976	12,620,502	34.4

14. 1948 has been excluded because the PCI fought the elections with the PSI and it is difficult to give the number of votes got separately.

The PCI's advance is inversely related to Socialist and Social Democrat decline. In 1946, the PSI got 21% of the vote; in 1976, it got 9.68%. The PCI share of the Left vote has increased from 47.7% in 1946 to 73.8% in 1976.¹⁵

The PCI-PSI unity of Action Pact that was signed in 1934 collapsed finally by 1959.¹⁶ After 1956, the prospect opened for Socialist participation in Christian Democrat Cabinets, leading to the period of Centre-Left coalition [DC, PSI, Social Democrats and Republicans] that lasted on and off from 1963-75.

During the Centre-Left period the PCI persisted in its strategy of alliances despite rebuffs; local governments controlled by coalitions of left parties decreased but never completely disappeared. They increased after 1970 when the PSI switched alliances away from the DC's and back to the PCI. In the June 1970 regional elections the PCI emerged as the largest party in three regions; after the 1975 regional

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15. Godson and Haseler, Eurocommunism: Implications for East and West (London, 1978), pp. 22-4.
16. This broke due to the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939, but was renewed after the German attack on Soviet Union. The April 1948 elections, which the two parties fought together, marked the greatest post-war victory of the Christian Democrats. After the 1953 parliamentary elections, which the two parties contested separately, the PCI margin over the PSI grew. Differences now emerged. In 1955, PSI opposition to NATO decreased and in 1956 it openly condemned Soviet Communism. By 1957, the unity of Action Pact was dead.

elections, three more regions were added to Communist-Socialist control. By 1976 almost all the major cities from Naples northward were under left-wing administrations, and in many Social Democrats and Republicans were joining the coalitions.

By the early seventies, the PSI was proclaiming the Centre-Left coalition a failure. After 1972, it began insisting on Communist participation to solve Italy's growing problems. Italy in the seventies was faced with growing inflation, working class struggles, outbursts of violence, and fears of a coup d'etat. It was in this atmosphere that Berlinguer following the military coup in Chile, launched his proposal for a "historical compromise". Between 28 September to 9 October 1973 he wrote a series of articles in Rinascita.¹⁷ In them, he asserted that the left would not be able to govern the country even if it got 51% of the vote. He argued that PCI was seeking a democratic, not a left wing alternative, and declared that a "historic compromise" was needed between the forces representing the vast majority of the population, mainly the Communists, Socialists and Christian Democrats. During the following years Italian politics were to be profoundly changed by

17. "Reflections on Recent Events in Chile", "Democratic Road and Reactionary Violence", "Social Alliances and Political Groups". See Wolfgang Leonhard, n. 9, p. 178.

these reflections of Berlinguer.

Though the PCI's proposal for a government of national unity in 1976 fell through, it abstained on the parliamentary vote that year which brought a minority DC government into office. In July 1977 it joined with other constitutional parties in publicly negotiating new agreements with the government on economic and internal security problems. In January 1978 its efforts to form a government of national unity failed once again; in March, however, the PCI became part of a parliamentary majority supporting the minority Cabinet. Since major policy making was being conducted through negotiations between the leaders of the five parties constituting the parliamentary majority, a de facto, a shadow government of national unity was in actual operation.¹⁸

France

Compared to Italian Communism, French Communism at the polls has been a static phenomenon, devoid of the sense of movement and permeation of the Italian variety. The PCF

18. Norman Kogan, "The PCI: Modern Prince at the Crossroads", in Rudolf Tokes, ed., Eurocommunism and Detente (New York, 1978) pp. 126-7. For details of the PCI strategy and various elections see Giovanni Russo, "Il Compromesso Storico: The Italian Communist Party from 1968 to 1978" in Torre, Mortimer and Story, ed., n.10, pp. 77-90. For the post 1976 period see Stephen Hellman, "The Italian Communist Party: Stumbling on the Threshold of Power?", Problems of Communism, vol. XXVII (November/December 1978).

got the highest number of votes after the war, when it secured 28.6% in the general elections of November 1946. In the first round in March 1978 it got 20.6%. Its post war average has been 23.4% of the vote. In the five assembly elections since 1962, its vote has varied only by 2.5%. Consequently, for the purpose of parliamentary elections it is in need of major alliances.¹⁹

Immediately after the war the PCF had a significant influence in French politics. Thus, it emerged as the strongest party in France in November 1946 and participated in numerous post-war governments. The Cold War brought this to an end.

Beginning with the late sixties, however, the PCF began to show signs of a new life both strategically and organizationally. Nonetheless, when De Gaulle resigned in April 1969, no observer could have reasonably predicted that in less than a decade the PCF would have some serious chance of directing governmental policy. The PCF's strategic potency was derived in 1975 from its surprising program alliance with an unexpectedly revived Socialist Party.²⁰

19. Godson and Haseler, n. 3, pp. 24-5.

20. Ronald Tiersky, "French Communism, Euro-Communism and Soviet Power", in Rudolf Tokes, ed., Eurocommunism and Detente (New York, 1978), pp. 139-40.

A sort of understanding was reached as early as 1962 when the PS announced that it would withdraw in favour of the best placed candidate in the first ballot, even if it meant supporting a Communist. The PCF, which was waiting for such a breakthrough, reciprocated. Though De Gaulle's supporters won the elections, the PCF and PS were able to win back many of the votes lost in 1958.

The two parties now began supporting each other. In the 1965 presidential elections they put up a common candidate, Francois Mitterand, who did exceptionally well. In the first ballot he secured 32% of the vote, while in the second he got 45% against De Gaulle alone. The morale of the left was now at its highest point. However, the student revolts of May 1968 and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia that August were a serious setback to the Left's progress, leading to the breakup of the "Federation de la Gauche". Following De Gaulle's resignation in April 1969, dispersal of Communist votes led to the unchallenged victory of the Right. The Left took some time to realize these implications, which finally led to the "Common Program" in 1972.

The decisive test of the Left coalition came with the presidential elections of May 1974. In the preliminary round, the Left candidate Mitterand got 43.3% of the vote, while Giscard d'Estaing got 32.9%, in the run-off Mitterand got 49.33% while Giscard got 50.67%.

By mid-1974, the PCF was getting increasingly worried about the growing strength of the PS. In bye-elections in five districts in September/October, the PS was more successful than the PCF. Moreover, in 1975 there were bitter arguments between the two parties on events in Portugal. In late 1976-early 1977, the emphasis on unity led to the victory of the alliance in the municipal elections of 1977. That March, however, disagreement erupted on the updating of the Common Program for the March 1978 general elections.

The programmatic differences mainly related to the issue of nationalization. The main cause for the breakup, however, was the intensified competition that developed between the two parties. Formerly, each party possessed a distinctive appeal that defined its electorate and attracted certain types of individuals. But as the PS radicalized its outlook after 1971 and the PCF moderated some of its doctrinal positions, their distinctiveness diminished so that both parties found themselves appealing to approximately the same categories of people as party activists.

Both parties were disappointed by the first ballot votes in the 1978 elections. While the PCF got 20.6% of the vote compared to 21% in 1973, the PS got 22.6% , up from 18.9% in 1973, but well below the 30% forecast in

public opinion polls. To limit their losses, both parties hastily issued a joint programme declaration and agreed to reciprocal withdrawals. However, this last minute reunion failed to prevent the re-election of the Giscardist-Gaullist majority. The prospect of a left wing government, which had seemed certain nearly 7 months earlier, was lost.

What the PCF leadership showed in the 1978 electoral campaign is its political cynicism. It cares essentially only about the strength of its own party, and defines this as the measure of the gains on "the road to socialism". The PCF attack on the PS in 1977-8 was less to do with genuine differences over how much business should be nationalized^{than} with a brutal and cynical test of party strength.²¹

Following Francois Mitterand's election as President in May 1981 and the resounding socialist victory in the National Assembly this June, there was a great deal of speculation on whether Mitterand would include any Communists in his government. He has done so - but on his own terms and conditions. The joint Communist-Socialist pact drawn up reflects Mitterand's views. It outlines a two year recovery plan geared to expanded growth and reduced unemployment, it commits the Communists to "solidarity with the Socialists. On the issue of nationalization too,

21. Ibid., p. 197.

the PCF has limited its demands to the eleven industrial groups Mitterand had marked down for state takeover. On foreign policy issues, the joint declaration calls for the Soviet withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan, favours the Camp David peace process in the Middle East etc. On Poland too the Communists were forced to give in, and endorsed a statement which backs solidarity and the Polish reform movement.

The Communists have been given charge of only the minor ministries responsible for transport, health, the civil service and vocational guidance. While the Socialists and their Centre-Left allies control 289 out of the 491 seats in the National Assembly, the PCF has only 44 seats. In sharp contrast to the situation which existed during the signing of the 1972 Common Program, the PCF has now been reduced to a mere appendage of the socialist dominated Left.

Spain

The PCE has the longest history of illegality, from the establishment of the Spanish Republic in 1936 to 1977. In the beginning it supported all gureilla activities aimed at overthrowing General Franco; it gave up this in 1946 on Stalin's advice, and now tried to infiltrate various institutions, increased so-operation with other political forces

etc.

Following Spain's entry into the United Nations in 1955 (which the Soviets voted for) and Khrushchev's speech in 1956 Santiago Carrillo announced the policy of "National Reconciliation". This policy stood for co-operation with other opposition parties in exile, or outlawed in Spain, and co-operation with Franco's disaffected followers. This met with little success throughout the sixties. The PCE's fortunes changed for the better following the assassination of the head of state, Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco, in December 1973, who was widely regarded as the man on whom the aged dictator could count on to continue his system. His extremely conservative successor, Carlos Arias Navarro, promised a general liberalization of the political system.

The PCE, now convinced that the end of the Franco regime was near, entered into contact with other groups in order to form a united opposition front. In July 1974, Carrillo announced the creation of a Junta Democratica which adopted a twelve point programme calling for the establishment of a provisional government, a general amnesty, legalization of all political parties, separation of the Church from the state, and eventual Spanish entry into the EEC.

This Junta did not bring together a sufficiently broad spectrum of the opposition, for those groups which had been economically and politically favoured since 1939 were not willing to break with the regime. However, its creation was a significant political victory for the PCE. It proved to be an ideal vehicle for the Communists to establish a formal dialogue with others in opposition and to ensure that in the post-Franco era the PCE would be a full participant in the political process.²² In March 1976 the Junta Democratica and the Plataforma de Convergencia (this had been formed in June 1975 by the Partido Socialista Obrero Espanol (PSOE), the Union Social Democratica Espanol (USDE) and others) merged to form the Coordinacion Democratica or the Plata-junta.

When Adolfo Suarez became the new premier in July 1976 he announced a reform programme in which he promised elections before June 1977 and the possibility of the installation of parliamentary democracy. Though united on the surface, the opposition was in fact deeply divided. Unlike the Moderates and Liberals the PCE rejected the reforma. As a precondition for any discussion they wanted the prior legalization of all political parties and the neutralization of the state apparatus.

22. Eusebio Mujal, Leon, "The Domestic and International Evolution of the PCE", Rudolf Tokes, ed., Eurocommunism and Detente (New York, 1978), p. 247.

The PCE was legalized on April 10, 1977 and parliamentary elections were held on June 15. The PCE emerged in a minority. The Union de Centro Democratica (UCD) coalition headed by Suarez got almost 35% of the votes, while the PSCE got 29%. The PCE emerged as the third, with 9.2% of the vote.

In late summer 1977 the PCE-UCD signed the Pact de la Moncloa, an economic and political agreement. This was a victory for the PCE, but it could not exploit it fully because it lacked the leverage necessary to compel the Suarez government to line up to its end of the bargain.

There were many reasons for the dismal performance of the PCE in the June 1977 elections.²³

- The PCE, illegal until two months before the elections, could not in a few weeks overcome the effects of 40 years of hostile anti-Communist propaganda and the memories of its own ruthless tactics during the civil war.
- The nature of the electoral law; specific provisions made it less than directly proportional and thus worked to the advantage of larger parties; the voting age limit was 21 years, thus omitting about

23. Eusebio Mujal, Leon, "The PCE in Spanish Politics", Problems of Communism, vol. XXVII (July/August 1978), pp. 15-16.

two million young people who favoured the opposition.

- The presence of an invigorated and youthful PSCE, which had neither a history of subservience to the USSR nor a reputation for intolerance.

Views of Eurocommunism

Eurocommunism can no longer be overlooked as an important trend in international politics. Since its coinage in 1975, this term has attracted a great deal of attention among political analysts and commentators. However, there have been conflicting appraisals of this new phenomenon.²⁴

Some commentators adhere to the "serious transformation theory", which sees in Eurocommunism a significant departure from the Soviet model of communism. They see certain communist parties developing towards a new conception of democracy. Others, however, see Eurocommunism as a large scale tactical manoeuvre. The adherents to this "deception theory" fear that the Eurocommunists are motivated solely by their desire to gain control of the strategic positions in the governments of certain West European states. On attaining power they will reveal their true faces, as in Eastern Europe after the second world war, and they will erect their own dictator-

24. Wolfgang Leonhard, n. 9, pp. VI-VII.

ships and break with the allies they once wooed. They make promises, but history shows that they cannot be trusted. They also contend that Communists remain communists, no matter how much they try to convince the world that their approach is different.

This wide spectrum of opinion is not surprising, for Eurocommunism does not fit into the world of our usual conceptions of democracy and of our previous experiences with Communists and Communist ruled states.

Among the optimists, Richard Lowenthal stands in the forefront. He declared that with the PCE, PCF and PCI, one could distinguish a rejection of the "Leninist beliefs in violent revolutions and party dictatorship". Above all, since the changes in the PCI's development have taken place in open discussion and over a long period of time, and have influenced other Communists, they cannot be regarded as having occurred either under direction from above or very suddenly. He believes that there is a certain degree of validity in the belief that changes in West European Communism are under way which, if and when they succeed, will result in the parties no longer being Communist in today's meaning of the term.²⁵

25. Der Spiegel (Hamburg), No. 18 (25 April, 1977),
Ibid., p. 23.

In January 1975 Professor Stanley Hoffman, Chairman of the Centre for European Studies at Harvard University, rejected Kissinger's cold war attitude towards Eurocommunism, denouncing his failure to differentiate between the various West European Communist Parties and to realize that the party's independent stance towards Moscow "was largely a response to the distaste of the electorate for the Stalinist model".²⁶

Similar views were expressed by many European statesmen and politicians. Even politicians who have spent most of their lives fighting communism, like some Christian Democratic and other leaders in Italy, today believe that the Eurocommunists are sincere in their statements. Thus, Ugo La Malfa, President of the Italian Republican Party, declared:²⁷

I attach the greatest importance to Berlinguer's Moscow speech (on the 60th anniversary of the October Revolution). For me it is the clearest possible turning point. After that speech it is no longer possible - without grave intellectual dishonesty - to dispute the PCI's new international alignment.

26. New York Times, 27 January 1978, Ibid., p. 23.

27. Interview in La Repubblica, 6 November 1977, in Arrigo Levi, "Eurocommunism: Myth or Reality?" in Torre, Mortimer and Story, eds., Eurocommunism: Myth or Reality? (Middlesex, 1979), p. 32.

Those who view Eurocommunism with skepticism, however, are far more numerous. This view is most emphatically expressed in USA by Henry Kissinger. At a Conference on "Eurocommunism: The Italian Case" held in Washington, D.C. from 7-9 June 1977, Kissinger emphasized the dangers of Eurocommunism for the West²⁸; a Communist take over of power in Western Europe would result in a drastic change in European-American relations. His objections to a Communist role in government were threefold: these parties have Leninist, or authoritarian, organizations; they would inevitably decrease their country's spending on defence against the Soviet bloc; they would maintain political relations quite different from the pro-Western ones now being practised.

Similar views are being voiced in Europe. Jacques Chirac, in an interview with Newsweek²⁹ on 20 June 1977, described Eurocommunism as -

A phenomenon which is essentially only window dressing. The Communist Parties of Southern Europe are trying to pursue a strategy which will allow them eventually to take over.

Eurocommunism is eventually a wager which they would like us to accept on the capacity of communism to reform itself. The fact that the Euro-

28. Henry Kissinger, "Communist Parties in Western Europe: Challenge to the West", in Austin Ranney and Giovanni Sartori, eds., Eurocommunism: The Italian Case (Washington, D.C., 1978), pp. 183-196.

29. Arrigo Levi, n. 27, p. 10.

communists are not denounced by Moscow is the real proof that they are not, in fact, sincere. It is a question of tactics.

This skepticism is based on certain factors. First, it is pointed out that although the Eurocommunists have abandoned the concept of the "dictatorship of the proletariat", the position of the workers remains a key factor in their programmes and planning. Thus the PCF are still blunt "vanguardists". The struggle for socialism means "first of all the necessity that the working class has a directing political role".³⁰ The PCI continues making references to Gramsci's "hegemony of the working class". There are probably as many explanations of its meanings as there are individuals to explicate it. While some call this a dictatorship of the proletariat by consensus, skeptics feel that it is merely a euphemism for dictatorship of the proletariat. For the PCE, the leading role in the *democracia politica et social*, as well as in the subsequent stage of socialist revolution, would be played by what the party called the "hegemony of the bloc of forces of labour and culture in society", a term which owed much to Gramsci's concept of "historic bloc". Labour referred to the working class and peasantry, relatively easy categories to define.

30. Marchais speech to the 22nd PCF Congress, *Cahiers du Communisme* (February/March 1976), pp. 46-60 in Ronald Tiersky, n. 20, p. 75.

But the forces of culture was a catch all term which included professionals like lawyers, physicians, scientists and journalists, administrative personnel in industry and government, and members of the university community. According to this, those forces objectively interested in joining the working class as permanent allies on the road to socialism constituted the overwhelming majority of the population. As a result, socialism no longer had to be imposed by a tiny minority in the name of the people.³¹

While extending their definition of the working class, these parties narrow down who comprises the exploiting class. Orthodox Marxists identify exploiters as those who desire income from property rather than from their labour, or from the effects of their brains rather than their hands. In Italy, such a definition would immediately cast more of the population into the ranks of the enemy. For a party committed to a mass strategy, required to compete in free elections, trying for alliances and trying to make its presence felt in all areas of society, the aim is to minimize, not enlarge, the ranks of the enemy. In the post war period, Togliatti excluded small owners, self-employed artisans, white collar and professional people, small and then middle sized industries and their owners and managers

31. Eusebio Mujal, n. 22, p. 223.

from the ranks of the class enemy. In subsequent years the enemy was limited to the large, private monopolists. Since a substantial and increasing share of large firms in Italy were publicly owned and controlled, this left very few enemies indeed.³²

Doubts were also expressed about the future of foreign investments in Western Europe if the Communists gained control in any one of these countries. These were reinforced following Berlinguer's statement that no one need fear the Eurocommunists, but the multinational cooperations. The PCF's insistence (within the framework of "Left Unity") on the nationalization of the key industries in France strengthened these fears.

However, in recent years opposition in principle to the remaining large private firms and even to foreign MNC's has disappeared. It has been replaced with the proposition that they are neither good nor bad, per se. It is what they do or do not do that counts. If they produce in the public interest, as defined by the public authorities, there is nothing to criticize. The Eurocommunists are increasingly becoming aware of the positive role that private capital, both domestic and foreign, can play. A high ranking official

32. Norman Kogan, n. 18, p. 95.

of the PCI, for e.g. declared:

We do not believe that MNC's are the creation of the devil. On the contrary, they are an essential structure of capitalism in its present phase of development We are not considering the elimination of MNC's from our country. Even less would we wish to discourage foreign investments. A policy of autarchy and isolationism would be sheer folly. We want to negotiate realistically the presence of MNC's in the Italian economy; this means giving and receiving effective and reliable guarantees. The following problem is quite important: we can no longer accept that MNC's, especially in certain sectors, be allowed to sell in our country products manufactured substantially out of Italy

In this connection, I wish to cite as examples electronics and data processing, essential factors in the development of the world economy. In these sectors, it is useful that a law be passed in Italy making it mandatory for large corporations to produce in our country a specific percentage of the goods they wish to sell on our market. I remind you that similar laws now exist in USA, Sweden and Japan. (33)

A great deal of apprehensions has been expressed in the West about the adverse effect that a Communist Government would have on the NATO. Henry Kissinger³⁴ has been most vocal on this point. He believes that if Communists came to power in allied governments, America's relations with Europe would be severely jeopardized.

33. Lucio Libertini, "The Problem of the PCI", in Austin Ranney and Giovanni Sartori, eds., n. 28, p. 159.

34. Henry Kissinger, n. 28, pp. 190-3.

(i) The character of the alliance would become confused for the American people. Moreover, US forces in Europe could hardly be maintained for the purpose of defending some Communist Governments against other Communist governments.

(ii) It would have a disastrous effect on allied cohesion. President De Gaulle, for example, cherished French independence from America, but in major crises - over Berlin and the Cuban missile crisis - he stood firmly with his allies. He points out that, by the same token, Communist governments in Western Europe, however independent they might be on interparty issues, can be expected to demonstrate their basic communist convictions on major international issues.

(iii) The military strength and unity of NATO would be gravely weakened, for the Communist governments are unlikely to give NATO a high budgetary priority. There would have to be a major change in NATO practices, as occurred temporarily in relation to Portugal, which had to exclude itself from classified discussions within the organization when its own political future was in doubt.

(iv) Progress towards European unity would be undermined.

All three parties say that they see the need for maintaining the balance until the time comes when both mili-

tary blocs can be dissolved. The PCI, in its own interests, would not wish to see any change that would encourage a Soviet move against Yugoslavia and the appearance of Soviet forces on the Italian border. However, a close study of the writings and statements of the Eurocommunist leaders leads to the conclusion that they are not wholly committed to maintaining the strength and solidarity of the Western Alliance. For they are all very evasive when facing questions concerning their commitment to European defence. According to them, the whole issue is theoretical; it was out of the question that the Warsaw Pact would ever attack and if NATO attacked the Warsaw Pact it was of course their duty to defend Soviet Union.

In a conversation between historian George Urban with Professor Lombardo Radice of the PCI of the Central Committee, the latter stated that the Party's attitude to a "war like emergency" would be one of non-commitment to either side.³⁵

It would be for peace. It would ... certainly oppose anti-Sovietism. It would be against any move to roll back the present frontiers of socialism ... in the unlikely event of a showdown, we as a party could not be expected to work against the general interests of the Soviet Union

He went on to say that -

Italy, France and the other European members of NATO must be prepared to be loyal to the common

35. G. R. Urban, ed., Eurocommunism: Its Roots and Future in Italy and Elsewhere (London, 1978), pp. 35 and 42-3.

defense of that alliance if that defense is based on common decisions.

Under the North Atlantic Treaty, allied decisions must be unanimous. Thus, a Communist country led government in Italy, France and elsewhere could veto effective resistance to Soviet aggression. And this, as Kissinger feared, would make nonsense of NATO.

Santiago Carrillo avoided this question by saying that -

in a confrontation between the two super powers we would not have time to make a choice. It would be the nuclear destruction of Europe. Therefore, the question today is how to avoid this confrontation of which we would be the first victims. If we do not we will all go to hell. (36)

This led Neil McInnes to conclude that "the aim of the CP's is to break down regional barriers in Western Europe and to promote economic co-operation within a politically disunited and militarily defenceless Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals under Russian leadership."³⁷

Eurocommunism and Social Democracy

Some observers interpret Eurocommunism as a development

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36. James O Goldsborough, "Eurocommunism After Madrid", Foreign Affairs (vol. 35, July, 1977), p. 804.
37. Hadley Arkes, "Democracy and European Communism", Commentary, vol. 61 (May 1976), p. 47.

in the direction of social democracy. Communist commentators in Eastern Europe stress the dangers of "social Democratization", and the Trotskyite theoretician Ernest Mandel compared the development of Eurocommunism with the changes which occurred in German Social Democracy between 1890 and the mid-1920's.³⁸ Many non-communist commentators also see this as a move towards Social Democracy. Thus in November 1977 the Italian Christian Democratic Prime Minister Andreotti declared that the PCI "shares many of the ideas of Social Democratic parties".³⁹

It is often pointed out that in Italy the PCI, in the light of the recent changes, could serve as a better guide for Social Democratic moderation than the PSI. The PCI now urges self-imposed wage restraints on the trade union movement, it accepts the need for a mixed economy in which public and private ownership co-exist, and it proclaims commitment to the values of liberty and political pluralism. In the international sphere the party is increasingly critical of the Soviet Union (as during the Afghanistan crisis). At times it appears even more critical than the Labour Party and now even accepts Italian membership of

38. Ernest Mandel, From Stalinism to Eurocommunism: The Bitter Fruits of Socialism in One Country, Jon Rothschild, trans. (London, 1978).

39. In an interview with *Reutsche Zeitung* (Stuttgart), No. 49, April 1977, p. 7, in Wolfgang Leonhard, n. 9, p. 334.

NATO. Moreover, the active membership of the Social Democratic parties is no longer as strikingly different in social composition from that of their political rivals. In France, this was one of the main reasons for the breakup of the 1972 Communist-Socialist Common Programme before the 1978 elections.

The Social Democratic parties were established in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and were well known for their articulation of anti-capitalist and internationalist ideas. The outbreak of the war in 1914, however, showed how shallow their commitment to these ideas was. This, followed by the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, led to the formation of Communist Parties in almost all the West European countries, parties that were committed to the realization of socialist goals by revolutionary means. This division was reinforced by the resurrection of the second (Socialist) International, and the establishment of the Third International (The Communist International or Cominform) in 1919.

During the nineteen seventies, Social Democrats were represented at one time or another in all European governments; sometimes they governed alone, sometimes in co-operation with other parties. When they were not in power they constituted, with one major exception (Italy), the main opposition party. In West Germany, the SPD has been a senior

partner with the Free Democrats in a coalition since 1969. In Britain, the Labour Party was defeated in 1970 but returned to power four years later. In Finland, the Social Democrats were represented in most Cabinets since 1966. In the first free elections in Spain in 1977, they emerged as the second largest party, while in France the revised PS constituted the main opposition force. Thus, in Western Europe as a whole, Social Democracy was the most important political force.⁴⁰

Prior to 1939 socialist doctrine was considered indispensable to a social democratic party and served both as an electoral programme and as a justification for its continued existence. This doctrinal commitment was widely challenged during the nineteen fifties, due to the fluctuating political fortunes and changing socio-economic conditions. This was especially so in West Germany following the SPD's third electoral defeat in 1959, leading to the acceptance of the Bad Godesberg programme that year.⁴¹ As a result, it disengaged itself from the major Marxist tenacles and accepted the principle of private ownership in so far as it did not hinder the creation of a just social order. It was also

40. Walter Laquer, A Continent Astray (Oxford, 1979), p. 115.

41. William E. Peterson, "The German SPD", in Paterson and Thomas, eds., Social Democratic Parties in Western Europe (Washington, D.C., 1978), p. 186.

declared that the party would concentrate on improving and reforming, rather than abolishing the system of free competition. Simultaneously, in a famous speech before the Bundestag on 30 June 1960, Herbert Wehner on behalf of the SPD indicated its willingness to join with the other German groups in defence of the FRG against communist threats by fully accepting NATO and its foreign policy postulates.

In Britain, following the Labour Party's third successive defeat in 1959 - when the Conservatives actually improved their position after nearly a decade in office - there was a move to eliminate clause IV - the public ownership clause - from the party's constitution.

In France, the SFIO adopted a Fundamental Programme in 1958. Compared to the Bad Godesberg programme, this was not even a fundamental revision of the party's tenets. In France, under the Fourth Republic there was little reason for the SFIO to engage in the kind of revisionism that took place in West Germany or Britain. In both these countries, the parties had moderated the radical provisions in their programmes and toned down revolutionary doctrine so as to appeal to the large uncommitted vote that held the balance of power in the middle of the political spectrum. This mass of uncommitted voters did not exist in France, at least not on the Left. To have engaged in revisionism under the Fourth Republic would have lost the SFIO much of the support

it had. In Italy too there were no major doctrinal revisions. In Italy, as in France, the multiparty system posed severe problems of identity for a socialist party which wanted to change its ideological outlook; in Italy too, divisions within the party helped paralyse its intellectual thinking.

The Social Democrats are ardent upholders of individual freedom and equality. They believe that neither is possible without the other. If freedom is a privilege of a few then, as British Socialist philosopher and historian R.H. Tawney pointed out, "Freedom for the strong is oppression for the weak".⁴²

Firstly, the Social Democrats believe that only within a democratic framework can freedom and equality find their fullest expression. They argue that in Western democracies revolution - in the Marxist-Leninist sense of unconstitutional violent change - is both unnecessary and a debasement of fundamental human rights. At times, it is possible that revolution is the only way open to an oppressed people. But when there is an opportunity for redressing wrongs democratically, then revolution is a costly, unnecessary aberration.

42. Giles Radice, Democratic Socialism: A Short Survey (London, 1965), p. 27.

The Socialists accepted the parliamentary political structure which the Communists dismissed as irredeemably bourgeois. They put parliament at the centre of their political institutions. They hold that three principles are necessary to a democratic system:

(i) Limitations on the power of the government in order to provide safeguards for individuals and minority groups. In 1898 Bernstein wrote: "The idea of democracy includes, in the conception of the present day, a notion of justice and equality of rights for all members of the community in that principle, the rule of the majority finds its limits".⁴³

(ii) Effective popular representation - this involves free elections with a genuine choice of candidates, an elected and freely representative assembly with powers strong enough to give the people a say in government, and the freedom to oppose and criticize, including the freedom of press and mass media.

(iii) Constitutional and peaceful change of power - this implies the presence of a legal and organized opposition, the acceptance by all of the election results, etc. They consider the party system with competing political parties

43. Ibid., p. 69.

as the best way to ensure the possibility of a regular and peaceful change of power to preserve basic civil liberties.

Secondly, the Social Democrats believe in the concept of the welfare state. This implies that everyone should have the right to pension, to proper medical attention, a decent home and good education. Socialist governments have pioneered many advances in social welfare. By the fifties many West European states had introduced the system of basic social security - through the British Labour government's National Insurance Act of 1946, the French coalition government's Social Security Legislation of 1946 etc. A common principle behind all these acts was that they were designed to secure a basic minimum standard of living for all in times of unemployment, ill health and old age. One of the greatest achievements of the British Labour Party in 1945-51 was the introduction of a National Health Service Scheme in 1948.

Thirdly, the Social Democrats have always argued that the unchecked workings of the forces of market produce inequality and exploitation. Long and bitter experience has shown that vigorous governmental intervention in the form of control of the economy, public ownership of the basic industries, redistribution of wealth, education etc. is necessary if society is to be changed in the direction

of greater equality and freedom.

Though they regard public ownership as a vital part of their policies, they accept the existence of a mixed economy in which both the public and private sector co-exist. Thus the 1951 Socialist International at Frankfurt declared that "socialist planning does not presuppose public ownership of all the means of production".⁴⁴

The Eurocommunists themselves repeatedly declare that their independence and new course do not imply that they may have acquiesced to social democratic conceptions. In reality, there do exist certain fundamental and important differences between the Euro-communists and the Social Democrats.

First, the Social Democrat parties do not believe in the Leninist model of a political party based on democratic centralism. They reject this outright. Their internal party organization is marked by free debate and discussion.

Secondly, it was these parties who were responsible for NATO and other transnational international institutions. The MNC's operating in Europe are a consequence of a free market economy, upheld by the SPD in West Germany since 1969.

Prior to 1945 these parties accorded primacy to domestic rather than foreign policy, with the onset of the

44. Ibid., p. 45.

Cold War and the division of Europe into two parts, however, these parties overwhelmingly supported U.S. policy, especially after the takeover of Prague in 1948. They all almost universally accepted NATO as the main instrument of West European defence in 1949. An exception to this was the SPD which took to the streets in 1955 to try to prevent German entry into NATO. After a period of uncertainty the party adopted a position of wholehearted support for NATO.

In the case of European unification, the Italian, Belgian and Dutch Social Democrats played a prominent role at the Hague Congress of 1948 in favour of a federal Europe. The Social Democrats of Northern Europe, however, were more reserved, such as the British Labour Party. The Schuman Plan for establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the first really important step in European integration, was supported by five of the six social democratic parties of the states that were later to join the Community. It was bitterly opposed by the SPD. In the fifties the SPD consistently opposed German participation in the move towards European integration due to the undemocratic and inequitable character of the Community institutions and as a rejection of Adenauer's single minded concentration on West politik. Opposition was most intense when the question of European integration became identified with that of defense; when the two were separated, and the prospects for German unity

became more remote, the SPD changed its attitude. In October 1955 the SPD joined the Monnet Committee as a founding member and thereafter its leaders became enthusiastic 'Europeans', their views coinciding with governmental policy on European integration.

Thirdly, according to the Eurocommunists themselves, the main difference between Eurocommunism and Social Democracy lies in the fact that the latter strive for and have even accomplished reforms within the framework of the system, but nowhere have they been able to change the capitalist system itself.

Thus, Santiago Carrillo has declared that the Eurocommunism cannot be confused with Social Democracy, at least not with Social Democracy as it has manifested itself upto now. What is commonly called Eurocommunism proposes to transform capitalist society, not merely administer it.⁴⁵

The Eurocommunists reject the Soviet thesis that in history the Social Democrats have always been wrong and the Communists have always been right. Carrillo urges the Communists to carefully examine the grounds which have enabled the Social Democrats to reach such a strong position

45. Santiago Carrillo, Eurocommunism and the State, Nan Green and A.M. Ellicot, trans. (Connecticut, 1978), p. 104.

in developed states. In some of their publications the Eurocommunists admit that both the Social Democrats and Communists could not realize their goals because one side had insisted too much on reforms and the other had relied too heavily on pure propaganda.⁴⁶

The Eurocommunists explicitly stress the difference between themselves and the Social Democrats, but also indicate that they are willing to review their earlier attitudes. While the Social Democrats want to maintain their fundamental opposition to Communism, they are willing to take into account certain changes within communism such as Eurocommunism. This has led to increased Communist-Socialist collaboration and cooperation in Europe in recent years. Thus, the PCI provided good offices in establishing contacts between the German Socialists and the East German Communists that contributed to the success of Brandt's Ostpolitik. The PCI also did all it could in an unsuccessful attempt to persuade the left wing of the British Labour Party to support the European Community.

Eurocommunism: A Tactical Manoeuvre

An important question that is constantly being raised is whether Eurocommunism is merely a tactical manoeuvre or

46. Wolfgang Leonhard, n. 9, p. 334.

it represent a new change or orientation?

In the West, it is generally felt that Eurocommunism is a threat to the West but not in any case to the Soviet Union. It is a threat to the West for it represents a new tactic in the unremitting effort to dupe the Western world into believing that it has nothing to fear from communism. It is felt that this is one of the major explanations for the Russian ambivalence about the rapid growth in strength of the West European Communist Parties.

Many see the Eurocommunists changed attitudes to NATO and to democracy as a Machiavellian tactic decided upon (in concert with Moscow) to increase the parties electoral chances domestically.

The changed attitude of the PCI and PCF to NATO has tactical overtones. The PCI abandoned its slogan "Italy out of NATO and NATO out of Italy" in the seventies. During the 1976 election campaign Berlinguer was anxious to convince the Italians that voting for the PCI did not mean switching from the Western to the Eastern camp. He indicated that the PCI would make no move to make Italy leave NATO and went on to spell out a considerably modified view of Italian foreign policy. Interdependence was acknowledged, as well as (more subtly) the PCI's belief that NATO would help maintain both the international and internal domestic

equilibrium, for example, possible intervention from Moscow.

Unlike the PCI, the PCF has not openly endorsed its country's membership of NATO. During the negotiations with the PS for a Common Program in 1972, however, the party adopted an ambiguous position.⁴⁷ Since then, while maintaining its opposition of NATO, the PCF has expressed its willingness to enter a government that is not explicitly committed to leaving it, at least not immediately. Though both parties justify their changed attitude to NATO on the ground that their exit from NATO would upset the international balance, there are other pragmatic and realistic reasons for this change - the most important one is that their domestic populations are essentially pro-Western and would not accept or vote for a party which stands for switching from the Western to the Eastern camp.

It was only in 1975 that the PCF decided to move closer towards collaboration with other West European Communists. It was sudden, it came late, and it provoked a great deal of incredulity. Whereas in Italy the development of Eurocommunism had been a gradual process accompanied by much debate in the fifties, there was no such thing to

47. See Chapter 3, especially, p. 102.

prepare the outside public for such a startling development in France. The PCF had been the most reliable pillar of Soviet policy in Europe, the most ardent advocate of the unity of the camp. Therefore, the sudden shift in the PCF policy was greeted with disbelief.

The turning point in 1975-6 was reached under the stimulus, in large measure, of the possibility of national power which developed suddenly between 1972-4.⁴⁸

At its 22nd Congress in February 1976, the PCF announced many changes, like the abandonment of the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Most people see this as a tactic. For according to Marxists, a party represents a certain class interest; acceptance of a plural society would mean that society would be divided irremediably between classes - even after a socialist revolution has taken place and the transition communism has begun.

The changes announced in the 22nd Congress played an important role in the local elections of March 7 and 14, 1976, when the Left won a landslide.⁴⁹

48. Ronald Tiersky, n. 20, pp. 160-1.

49. Of the 30 cities of over 100,000 inhabitants, the Leftist Union had won 12 during the 1971 elections; in 1976, this went up to 22. It now won majorities in 133 out of the 182 towns with inhabitants numbering between 30,000-100,000; in 1971, in contrast, the no. was just 86. Even France's most conservative strongholds - Brest, Cherbourg, Nantes and Rennes - fell into Leftist hands. Ibid., p. 163.

The local elections of March 1976 showed that a victory of the Leftist union was possible in the spring of 1978. But in such an election, the Socialists would far surpass the Communists, who would at best be a junior partner in a government of the Left. Realizing this, the PCF stressed two new moves in its policies:

- (i) a clearer disassociation from Soviet Union in order to appeal to a broader spectrum of votes;
- (ii) an increasingly independent policy in the leftist union in order to stand out in the coalition.

These soon led to a dispute with the PS.⁵⁰ However, this shift from loyalism to independence from the Soviet Union is not complete. The PCF is still dogmatically bound to the USSR in a shared perception of world politics. Ronald Tiersky is of the opinion that this residual Soviet ideological leverage counsels prudence; the current PCF decision making autonomy should not be seen as either absolute or necessarily permanent, for no matter how strong the PCF-CPSU disagreement might be, the PCF, to serve its own interests (as defined in the two camp theory) must of necessity support the Soviet Union. In other words, the French policy of monolithic communism has given way to a new policy which (i) distinguishes the PCF from strictly loyalist

50. Wolfgang Leonhard, n. 9, pp. 207-8,

parties (like some in Eastern Europe) and from other autonomous parties (mainly the PCI and PCE) but which (ii) is still based on the belief that the future of world socialism is united with the expansion of Soviet linked power.⁵¹

Tiersky's prophecies seem to have materialized. For in the first major crisis facing the PCF since its changed policy in 1975, the party has stood solidly behind the Soviet Union - in the Afghanistan crisis of December 1979 - January 1980.

The Eurocommunist phase of the PCF, according to Pierre Hassner⁵² began and ended with two Soviet invasions - the Prague coup in the Summer of 1968 and the Kabul coup in the Winter of 1979-80 - the one cancelling out the other. The PCF support for the USSR began to weaken in August 1968; however, in contrast with the PCI and PCE, it swung back to its pro-Soviet stance with the acceptance of the status quo in Czechoslovakia. As from 1969, it changed course again in 1974 following Moscow's support for Giscard in the 1974 presidential elections, swinging briefly back over Portugal in 1979, was in direct conflict

51. Ibid., pp. 152-3.

52. Pierre Hassner, "Eurocommunism in the Aftermath of Kabul", NATO Review, vol. 28 (August, 1980), p. 9.

with Soviet Union between 1975-77⁵³, and began a normalization of relations as from the summer of 1977. It buttressed this reconciliation with unconditional support for the invasion of Cambodia by Vietnam during the Winter of 1978-79, crowing it with the no less enthusiastic support for the December 1979 invasion of Afghanistan.

This attitude is in direct contrast with that of the PCI and PCE. The PCI's statement on Afghanistan described the Soviet intervention as "a violation of the principle of national independence and sovereignty" and condemned it as an act that had created "a danger to world peace". They also refused to attend the Paris Conference of Communist Parties (28 July-9 April 1980) organized by the French and Polish Communist Parties.⁵⁴

Claims by Eurocommunist that they will abide by democracy invite skepticism, for sound historical reasons. Lenin

53. Since 1974, the political source of the PCF-CPSU dispute has been twofold: The PCF, like any other Eurocommunist party, wanted to be in government. This was not in accordance with the wishes of the CPSU. The PCF was also suspicious of the CPSU's friendly attitude to the French government; and because of what the PCF felt was insufficient aid given to the PCP, the PCF suspected Soviet Union of being over attached to the status quo for fear of jeopardizing detente. Today, however, PCF-CPSU relations are a source of mutual satisfaction. On the one hand the PCF, in splitting the united left, while not obeying Russia, has at least done what it had hoped it would do; the Russians, by intervening in Afghanistan and elsewhere, have done exactly what the French Communists suspected them of having renounced-intervening to support Communist rulers in difficulty. The forceful extension of the Brezhnev doctrine is regarded as reassuring by the French. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.
54. Henry Tanner "Italians Red Split on Afghan Policy", Times of India (New Delhi), 14 Feb., 1980.

urged the need for Communist Parties to make the tactics fit the country - to take power by force where necessary, but also where necessary to reach tactical alliances with Socialists and Conservatives, and to pretend to believe in democracy. One of the most democratic constitutions on paper, which promises to respect freedom of speech, elections, assembly and trade unions, is that of the USSR. After the war, the leaders of all the East European states stressed that they pursue democratic national paths to power. There are therefore grounds for suspecting that Eurocommunism is no more than a mark for pro-Soviet revolutionaries who know that they stand no chance of gaining power in Western Europe if they show their real faces.

Many people agree with the Chairman of the Christian Social Union (CSU) Josef Strauss, who declared that: "It is difficult to think that an independent Eurocommunist movement is developing in the West, for communism and freedom are always incompatible".⁵⁵

Thus, all three parties reject the rules of the democratic game. (1) Santiago Corrallo sees the electoral process as only a means to achieving power. He is not committed to the rules of democratic elections. In Eurocommunism and the State, he says:

55. Die Welt (Hamburg), 16 December 1976 in Wolfgang Leonhard, n. 9, p. 20.

We are not returning to Social Democracy
 We do not rule out, by any means, the possibility of taking power through revolution, if the dominant classes close democratic channels and the circumstances that make revolution were to come about. (56)

(ii) Eurocommunists insist that once in power, they would abide by the decision of the electorate and return to opposition if voted out. But they seem strangely unable to believe that the electorate would do this to them. Even to a Eurocommunist, the march of history seems more or less irreversible.

In a broadcast on Radio Free Europe, a middle ranking member of the PCI leadership, Lucio Lombardo Radice, scoffed at the danger that East European states, if freed from Soviet domination, would also want to turn their backs on socialism: "Would any part of the population want to seek a regression from socialism, a retreat from a higher form of socialism to a lower? It is entirely unhistorical as well as unreasonable to suppose that they would want to turn the clock back".⁵⁷

The PCF was even more tenacious than the PCI in maintaining that "there can be no return from socialism to capi-

56. Michael Ledeen, "The News about Eurocommunism", Commentary, vol. 64 (October 1977), p. 55.

57. "The Long, Long March away from Stalin", Economist (London), 5 November 1977, p. 63.

talism". It said that subsequent elections might change the government but they could never change the regime. It was not until the 1973 election campaign that the PCF conceded quite unambiguously that it would be possible for France to retreat, not from communism, but from 'advanced democracy' which was the most that could be installed by a coalition of communists and socialists. This was put even more emphatically after the coalition's defeat.

(111) It is often felt that the term "dictatorship of the proletariat" was dropped merely as a tactic, for as Marchais himself pointed out at the 22nd PCF Congress in February 1976, "dictatorship automatically reminds one of the fascist regimes of Hitler, Mussolini, Salazar and Franco, i.e., of the negation of democracy".⁵⁸

However, there was no hint that anything of that kind had been found in the Soviet Union of Stalin - and certainly no hint that anything of that sort may be found in the Soviet Union today. All this confirms the sense of Annie Kriegel's plaint about the party: "Il change, Il change, et pourtant, non, rien n'est change" (It is changing, it is changing, and yet nothing has changed).⁵⁹

58. Neil McInnes, n. 3, p. 178.

59. Hadley Arkes, n. 37, p. 41.

The classical doctrine of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" meant authoritarian rule by a party acting in the name of the proletariat. A single party would rule, no political opposition would be tolerated in the difficult transition from capitalism to socialism - and none would be necessary afterwards, because there would be only one class, and hence the basis for only one party.

(iv) With the rejection of the theory of seizing power through revolutionary means, the Western communist parties also accepted the need for a plurality of parties. However, Marchais illustrated what he meant by a multiparty system when he said: "In six socialist countries out of fourteen there is a single party but in eight others, two or more parties".⁶⁰

The position of the party represents a tactical assessment rather than a commitment in principle. Tiersky is of the opinion that "The PCP's acceptance of political pluralism is an accomplished fact to the extent that the party leadership recognizes (that the party) is not likely even to be strong enough to achieve its goals alone".⁶¹

It is due to the US presence and NATO that a plural party system exists in Europe. In their

60. L'Humanité, 13 September 1972 in Neil McInnes, n. 3, p. 175.

61. Hadley Arkes, n. 59, p. 38.

absence and with the domination of the Soviet Union, in spite of the PCI and PCF's good intentions, a new structure of power would be established in favour of the Communists. This may lead the PCI and PCF to look at alternatives they have recently rejected. (62)

It is felt that political pluralism in Europe will continue to exist due to:

- (i) Economic interdependence within the Common Market and Commercial ties between USA and individual West European states.
- (ii) The continuing political strength of indigenous democratic forces in Western Europe. Thus in Italy, the Christian Democrats still have the backing of the Church.
- (iii) The Communist parties at local governing bodies still have a record of efficiency and integrity.⁶³

The Eurocommunist statements on pluralism, on the democratic alteration of power, and so on, are, in fact, contradicted and rejected by the party organization. The traditional Leninist organization of party apparatus is still unchanged. Democratic centralism still exists. The rank and file are encouraged to discuss general political problems to a greater extent. But decisions, once taken by the appropriate party organ, are still not supposed to

62. Ibid., p. 45.

63. Ibid.

be questioned. The party leadership still announce important changes in policy with little or no discussion - thus, the decision to abandon the dictatorship of the proletariat was first announced by Marchais in a radio interview and was voted by a party Congress a month later. This concept was rejected by a unanimous vote in February 1976, while all previous congresses had endorsed the same dictatorship of the proletariat by a similar unanimous vote of 1,700 to nothing. Again, the decision to support the force de frappe was taken by the central committee, in May 1977, virtually without debate, after hearing a single report from Politburo member Jean Kanapa.⁶⁴ This unanimity suggests a monolithic organization capable of producing abrupt changes in doctrine, regardless of the convictions of the party membership. In fact, the drastic shifts which have characterized the propaganda of the Eurocommunists of late show just how undemocratic all three parties are.⁶⁵

The inner working of the PCF model, for example, has been aptly described by the philosopher (and disappointed communist) Lucio Colletti:

My refusal to this kind of party can be summarized in a formula. The real power situation

64. Henry Kissinger, n. 28, p. 185.

65. Euze Betliza, "Eurocommunism in Limbo", in Austin Ranney and Giovanni Sartori, Eurocommunism: The Italian case (Washington, D.C., 1978), p. 129.

in contemporary communist parties is as follows; it is not the congress which elects the central committee but it is the central committee which nominates the congress; it is not the central committee which elects the management, but the management which nominates the central committee; it is not the management which elects the political bureau, but the political bureau which nominates the central committee.

Berlinguer himself incessantly repeats that his party is, and will always remain, a Leninist one. In a speech he delivered in Milan on 31 January 1977 to workers of the northern organization of the party, one of his most telling sentences was "we answer a flat no to those who would like to take us to a breaking point with other Communist Parties"⁶⁶

Despite this, the PCI has acquired, both in the West and in the East, a reputation of being a more liberal party than all the other Communist Parties. This was certainly true to the extent that the party did not believe in brutal purges as did the PCF. Relations inside the party and towards outsiders were on the whole more civilized than in most other parts of Europe. In this context, the PCI's vote in favour of a motion in the Italian Parliament demonstrating Italy's continued loyalty to the Atlantic Alliance is symbolic. What is even more important is that 60 PCI deputies abstained, thus giving proof of a lack of

66. Ibid., p. 129.

discipline that is more democratic and Western than Leninist.⁶⁷

A question that is frequently raised is : Does Eurocommunism exist? There is no doubt that such a phenomenon does exist; though it emerged around the mid-seventies, it has its antecedents dating back to the Popular Front period of the nineteen thirties and other forms of Communist participation. It is difficult however, to speak of a Eurocommunist doctrine. In fact, Eurocommunism stands neither for a coherent doctrine nor for a joint strategy, but rather for the partially converging evolution of a certain number of Communist Parties in the developed countries of Western Europe. However, major differences in structure, strategy and policy among Eurocommunist oriented parties exist. Thus, in the French case, the move away from Soviet control within the world Communist movement has taken the form, not of a positive regional view, but of a strident French chauvanism. As a result, the PCF seems to be more "Gaulle-Communist", as Pierre Hassner has termed it, than "Euro-communist".

Nor would it be correct to dismiss Eurocommunism as a mere tactical manoeuvre. Though much of the skepticisms

67. Pierre Hassner, n. 53, p. 13.

is understandable, it would be wrong to treat all the recent developments in communism as mere tactical manoeuvres and to hold the Communists of all countries and of all times responsible for what happened in Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Monolithic Communism is now a thing of the past. For the past over thirty years, since Yugoslavia's break with Moscow and the Sino-Soviet split, world communism has achieved a great deal of diversity and what we call Eurocommunism today has been developing ever since then. Consequently, it cannot be judged solely on the basis of the Stalinist past or from a purely current standpoint. It must be seen as a political trend which has developed in the course of a long term process of transformation and emancipation. Tactical motives also seem to play an important role in its evolution. The Eurocommunists themselves are aware that it is their new concepts which guarantee their future successes. But it would be wrong, or perhaps an oversimplification to see this entire process of emancipation from the Soviet Union as a mere tactical manoeuvre.

Conclusion

Eurocommunism emerged as a phenomenon in the international communist movement only in the nineteen seventies. Though its traces can be found in the earlier epochs, it was only after the Helsinki Summit of July-August 1975 that it took concrete shape. Differences between the non-ruling West European Communist Parties and the Soviet Union are deep and longstanding. However, it was only at the Berlin Conference of the Communist Parties of Europe, held in June 1976, that the outside world witnessed a distinct and open defiance of the leading role of the CPSU in the world communist movement, leading to a sort of convergence of interests among the French, Italian, and Spanish Communist Parties.

The emergence of Eurocommunism is directly related to, firstly, the gradual disintegration of Soviet monolithism within the world communist movement and secondly, the onset of detente.

Throughout recorded history international movements have been subject to splits and schisms, and communism has been no exception. It is equally true that international movements became strengthened as and when they capture political power; if not, they became weakened sooner or later. This seems to have been the case with the Communist movement in Western Europe as well. Assertion of leadership

on the international plane of the communist movement has been a key factor ever since the inception of the Bolshevik system in the Soviet Union. The first major defiance came from Marshall Tito during Stalin's lifetime, but then he was excommunicated. Following Stalin's death the Sino-Soviet split took place and Albania left the fold. The nineteen sixties saw a growing estrangement between Moscow and the non-ruling Communist Parties, leading eventually to the historic Berlin Conference of June 1976.

During the Stalin era, the western communist parties more often than not subscribed to Moscow's perceptions for, apart from being the leader of the revolutionary struggle against capitalism, it was also a source of strength of them in their internal struggle against reactionary forces. There then appeared a rift soon after Stalin's death and especially after the twentieth Congress in 1956 Moscow's leading role was increasingly questioned. The process of de-Stalinization made these parties re-examine their political strategies, and led them to adopt increasingly autonomous positions. The proclamation of the doctrine of polycentrism by the PCI leader Palmiro Togliatti marks the beginning of what became known as Euro-communism. However, until the 1968 Czech. crisis its influence in the pro-Moscow Communist movement was very limited. The final break came in August 1968. While the Western Communist Parties accepted the

invasions of Hungary and Poland almost without any hesitation, the destruction of Dubcek's "socialism with a human face" was harshly and irrevocably condemned. 1968 was thus a crucial year in the evolution of the communist movement in Western Europe. As Santiago Carrillo pointed out:

For us, for the PCE, the culminating point was the occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968 Czechoslovakia was the last straw that led our parties to say No! This was the end of "internationalism" for us -- the "old internationalism", as we call it, and which, we are convinced, must cease. True internationalism is something else, must be something else. (1)

This is equally applicable to the PCI and PCF. 1968 marked a critical turning point in the PCI's foreign policy. It led to a rethinking of the international situation in Europe and the west, and the PCI gradually changed its attitude towards NATO, openly accepting it in 1976.

Detente, however, was undoubtedly the most important factor responsible for Euro-communism. In fact, East-West detente in Europe was one of the preconditions for and causes of the rise of Euro-communism. Detente enabled the communists to gain greater credibility at home. During the Cold War period, it was presumed that these parties were on the Soviet side. As a result, they were politically and ideologically

1. Santiago Carrillo, Problems of Socialism (Paris, 1969), pp. 41-53.

isolated. With the diminishing of the intensity of the Cold War and the onset of detente, this came to a gradual end. Detente resulted in a basic change in the mode of thinking of the domestic populations, and the people concerned now attached greater importance to the programmes and promises of the Communist Parties at home. While they had earlier accepted this as pure rhetoric, they now began to believe in the sincerity of the Communist Parties desires and claims for independence from Moscow. Moreover, detente had three other important effects on the parties under consideration:² first, it dimmed their perception of the dangers of imperialism and therefore made them less inclined to side with the Soviet Union on every issue; secondly, it made them feel more secure while pursuing an independent policy; thirdly, the Super Power collusion led to a kind of "Gaullo-Communism" in Western Europe - a resentment that the Super Powers were trying to dispose of European affairs over and above their heads and interests.

In the beginning Eurocommunism was simply seen as an extension of the Soviet Union's own detente strategy. However, the Western Communist Parties have come to realize that they stand a better chance of political success in the absence

2. William Griffith, "The Diplomacy of Eurocommunism" in Rudolf Tokes, ed., Eurocommunism and Detente (New York, 1978), p. 387.

of any major international crisis, which would disrupt the strategic balance in Europe. They therefore support the diplomatic and political status quo in each country, perhaps largely as a way of reassuring both Super Powers. Thus, the PCF accepts France's membership of the North Atlantic Alliance, but is totally against any reintegration of her armed forces into the NATO military command. The PCE accepts the presence of American bases in Spain, but is against Spanish membership of NATO. Here the interests of the PCI and PCE coincide, for Moscow has suggested that Spanish membership of NATO would be balanced by Yugoslavia joining the Warsaw Pact. The presence of Soviet troops on the Yugoslav-Italian border would adversely affect the PCI's prospects in Italy.

Eurocommunism has often been dismissed as a mere tactical manoeuvre. However, it would be an oversimplification to see the entire process of emancipation from the Soviet Union as a mere tactical manoeuvre. Monolithic communism is now a thing of the past. For the past forty years, world communism has achieved a great deal of diversity and what we now call Eurocommunism has been developing for a long time. Therefore, it must not be judged solely on the basis of the Stalinist past or from a purely current standpoint. Tactical motives have certainly played an important part in this process, and the Eurocommunists themselves are aware of the fact that it is their new concepts which guarantee their future successes.

Instead of viewing Eurocommunism as a mere tactical manoeuvre, it would be more realistic to see it as a political trend which has developed in the course of a long term process of transformation and emancipation.

A much debated question is whether, in the context of detente, the disruptive influence of Eurocommunism will be greater in the East or in the West. Many known dissidents and exiles, like Medvedev and Sakharov - have repeatedly argued that Eurocommunism is an element of de-stabilization in the Soviet power system. Others - like Solzhenitsyn - believe less in this possibility. They fear the negative influence in the West, where Eurocommunism may help reduce 'vigilance' and thus weaken resistance to the Soviet threat.

As far as the East is concerned, the situation of the Eurocommunists is subject to ambiguities. The evolution of Eurocommunism has been greatly influenced by the crises of the East - 1956 for the Italian and 1968 for the Spanish and French are decisive dates - and presently their two main themes of criticisms are repression in the Soviet Union and its structural failures. However, it must be realized that these parties do not intend to cut themselves off in the West, but to maintain a special relationship with Soviet Union and "existing socialist societies". They want to avoid a break with the Soviet Union both for domestic reasons and because of the progress of Soviet power - a power which they see

both as a threat with which they must compromise and as a protection against hostile American reactions.

In Eastern Europe, the impact of Eurocommunism can be seen more in a changed atmosphere than in any actual change of policy or political action. While making their assessment of Eurocommunism, the East European parties have to keep in mind their own relations with the Soviet Union and with their domestic populations. Thus, Yugoslavia and Romania reacted positively to Eurocommunism, seeing it as an instrument for strengthening their independence vis-a-vis Moscow. The Czechs and others reacted negatively, lining up with the Soviet Union for reasons of loyalty and out of a dislike of the ideological implications of Eurocommunism.

There are various schools of thought on the likely influence of Eurocommunism on the Communist states of the East. There are those in the West who believe that Eurocommunist strategies and ideological innovations might enable the ruling Communist parties to introduce domestic reforms and to move towards more independent foreign policies.³ The unofficial Washington position is still ambiguous, though spokesmen see unspecified benefits to the West from the spread of Eurocommunism in the East. West European

3. See Charles Gati, "The Europeanisation of Communism", Foreign Affairs, vol. 55 (April 1977), pp. 539-53.

leaders - especially the Italian and French - who are closer to the realities of Eurocommunism, see it both as an internal threat and as a destabilizing factor in European security. The Euro-communists themselves are divided on the ultimate goals of their critical posture towards the USSR and Eastern Europe. Neither the PCI nor PCF is likely, unless compelled by Moscow, to follow Carrillo to an open break with Moscow and the East Europeans.

The greatest impact of Eurocommunism was on the opposition in the East. This has two aspects. First, the specific assistance given by the Western parties through appeals, denunciations, intercessions etc. in individual cases of repression has helped sustain the morale of the opposition. To illustrate, they condemned the expatriation of Wolf Biermann, writer and performer of dissident satirical ballads, and then their support for "Charter 77" in Czechoslovakia; secondly, the opposition has used Eurocommunism as a support for their own legitimacy. They quote statements made by the PCI and PCF precisely because these are Communist statements. This accounts for the Soviet Union challenging the right of the Eurocommunists to speak for the international communist movement, and their violent denunciation of Santiago⁴

4. Santiago Carrillo, Eurocommunism and the State, Nan Green and A.M. Elliot, trans. (Connecticut, 1978).

Carrillo's book Eurocommunism and the State.

For the ruling party elites of the East, there is nothing new about Eurocommunism.⁵ Its disadvantage lies in the distant threat it poses to the legitimacy of the regimes, but it also provides new opportunities to strengthen a ruling party's bargaining position vis-a-vis Moscow. In Eastern Europe, political breathing spells are always welcome, and the Russians apparent preoccupation with Carrillo, Berlinguer and Marchais is no exception.

The Eurocommunists insistence on political pluralism and the parliamentary road to power serves as a painful reminder that, with the exception of Yugoslavia's authentic revolution, it is not the ballot box but Soviet bayonets that keep the East European Communists in power. Moreover, by legitimizing certain concepts like a competitive party system, alternative governments, elections, and freedom of criticism, and making them respectable in Communist terms, it had provided ideological support for the opposition which wants to develop a Communist model free from the limitations imposed by the Soviet model.

5. They had to contend with such ideas in 1919, when it was called "national Bolshevism", in the 1920's "right wing opportunism", in the 1930's "social fascism", in the 1950's "Titoism", in the 1960's "polycentrism" and in the 1970's "autonomism".

As far as the West is concerned, the challenge is mainly in the sphere of defence. Opposed to an effective defence at the national level or within NATO, the West European Communist Parties are even more hostile to the idea of a joint West European defence force. Ever since the PCF joined hands with the Gaullists in scuttling the proposal which aimed at the setting up of the European Defence Community in 1954, it has censored any proposal for West European defence co-operation as a reincarnation of the idea of that "European Army". On this point there is complete unanimity with the Soviet Union, even fearful of a new defence entity to its west. In 1973, Giorgio Amendola went on to explain that a West European defence policy was a "real problem" and would consist in "asserting European autonomy vis-a-vis the United States" by practising a policy of "active neutrality" and by rejecting "the costly, dangerous illusion of a nuclear armed European third force".⁶

Regarding NATO, the attitude of these parties is a fascinating study in ambiguity.⁷ Thus, the PCI leadership supports Italian membership of NATO as an alliance predi-

6. Neil McInnes, The Communist Parties of Western Europe (London, 1975), p. 189.

7. Godson and Haseler, Eurocommunism: Implications for East and West (London, 1978).

cated upon the notion of a threat from Moscow, yet cannot imagine that the Russians would ever invade. Communists proclaim that the Warsaw Pact is only defensive, that Soviet Union is a force for peace, yet are willing, in various degrees, to side with an alliance that believes the opposite; the United States is depicted as being aggressive and imperialist, yet the Communist leadership can envisage taking part in an alliance that is anti-Soviet; again, these parties reject anti-Sovietism, yet accept an alliance that is anti-Soviet.

From the Western viewpoint, an important question is as to whether Communist participation in the governments of France and Italy would seriously weaken NATO? If Italy and France were to withdraw, then NATO would become essentially a North American/North European defence pact heavily dependent on United States/West German accord. Former American Secretary of State Kissinger has suggested that "This spectre could then be used in other West European states to undermine what remains of Atlantic cohesion."⁸ Equally important would be the psychological shock. NATO would be seen to be grievously weakened thereby leading to the weakening of the anti-Soviet resolve. In this atmosphere the remaining European members of NATO, including West Germany, might find

8. Ibid.

it irresistible to seek separate deals with the Soviet Union to limit the blow to their own security.

From the NATO viewpoint the three Eurocommunist parties have only a negative influence, that of the PCI and PCE being somewhat more limited.⁹ In principle, all three accept the status quo. But the PCF and PCI stress certain elements of their policy that are, from the NATO viewpoint, negative. Thus, the PCF's views stretch from Gaullism to anti-American and anti-German neutralism which, in practice, may mean not only exclusion of France from the NATO but also from the Atlantic Alliance. Whether inspired by nationalism or pro-Sovietism, this line can, in the long run, be profitable only to the East. The PCI's attitude, however, is one of 'Pacifist Atlanticism'. This involves the acceptance of the status quo, including US bases and nuclear missiles, combined with a passive attitude towards defence and with unconditional support for detente. Unlike the French, however, the Italians would prefer to occupy themselves as little as possible with defence. The PCF advocates an independent defence for Europe in the long run, but considers that the demands of equilibrium make the maintenance of American bases necessary in the foreseeable future. In theory, they are opposed to Spain's entry into NATO. However,

9. Pierre Hassner, "Eurocommunism and Western Europe", Atlantic Community Quarterly (Fall, 1978), pp. 271-2.

if the opposite happens they may acquiesce to it without difficulty as a fait accompli.

If a Communist government assumed power, then the NATO Council would for the first time have members whose proclaimed aim is the dissolution of both NATO and the Warsaw blocs, the removal of all foreign bases from Europe, and the resolution of conflicts by an All European Security Conference. In fact, the entry of Communists into the NATO may possibly have two fold implications. First, it is likely to drive a wedge between the northern and southern flanks of the West European members of NATO. Secondly, it may further widen the credibility gap between the United States and Western Europe. The new socialist government in France, headed by Francois Mitterand, includes four Communists. As expected, the West expressed a great deal of concern at such a move. Mitterand however, has assured the US that no NATO secrets or documents would be entrusted to the Communists.

In a nutshell, the process of destabilization set in within NATO may upset the present balance of forces in Europe. This is why Kissinger and then Brezinski and now the Reagan-Haig regime are averse to the Eurocommunist entry into any of the West European governments.

At present detente itself is under a cloud, following recent developments in Iran and Afghanistan. It is important

to note the reactions of the Euro-communist parties to the Afghan crisis. The PCI and PCE have strongly condemned the Soviet action, while the French Communists have adopted a pro-Moscow stand. The PCI's statement on Afghanistan described the Soviet intervention as "a violation of the principles of national independence and sovereignty" and condemned it as an act that created "a danger to world peace". As Berlinguer said before a meeting of regional party secretaries in Rome: "Never has our dissent and our disassociation touched so directly on essential aspects of Soviet foreign policy". Some old party leaders, however, disagreed with the party decision. Led by Giorgio Amendola, they defended the Soviet move into Afghanistan on the grounds that it was strategically realistic in the face of US encirclement, and warned the party against passing moral judgements.¹⁰

The PCF, on the other hand, has offered absolute, unconditional support to Soviet foreign and military policy. They attack the Western countries and China. They are disciplining their own ranks and silencing dissenting members. The PCF has been full of praise for the "liberation of Afghanistan from American imperialism, feudalism etc." The French communists, in co-sponsorship with the Poles, announced a meeting of all European communists in Paris in April 1980 to

10. See Henry Tanner, "Italian Reds Split on Afghan Policy", Times of India (New Delhi), February 14, 1980.

issue a 'popular appeal for peace and disarmament'. The PCI publicly announced that it would not attend, revealing that the basic theme would be against western deployment of missiles to offset Soviet SS-20's targeted against Europe. They also charged that it aimed at setting up a Kremlin dominated centralized leadership. Both the PCI and PCE rejected this offer, and Berlinguer made it clear that he now considered Moscow as grave a threat to world peace as "US imperialism".¹¹

As stated earlier, detente has not created Eurocommunism but has made it possible. It has legitimized these parties by making it difficult for governments - including the USA - to practise positive relations with the Soviet Union and simultaneously excommunicate the Communist Parties of Western Europe, and by making it easier for the latter to accept western institutions, without making a clear choice between the two camps. A return to the Cold War would certainly reduce their chances of being accepted - in the short run this would probably provoke a public reaction against them, while in the long run it would force them to make painful choices, which would lose them a part of their following. On the other hand detente could perhaps harm them, by depriving them of Soviet support under American pressure.

11. Flora Lewis, "Western Fears of Meeting of Reds", Times of India, April 15, 1980.

By definition, both Euro-communism and detente are destabilizing, for both challenge the division of Europe into two societies isolated from one another. From the purely strategic view point, Euro-communism may destabilize East/West relations in Europe, which explains most of the hostility emanating from the Super Powers. Left unity in France, which suffered a severe defeat in the 1978 elections, was restored following the National Assembly elections in June 1981. However, this has been done on socialist terms and conditions. Though four Communist Ministers have been included in Mitterand's cabinet, this was done only after the PCF has made numerous concessions. The PCF can now be described as a junior partner in the Left Unity. In Italy too, the Communists have suffered a severe setback in the last elections. Notwithstanding these vicissitudes in the fortunes of Eurocommunism, it would be too hasty and too harsh to say that this phenomenon was ephemeral or is dead. The only justifiable conclusion could be that in the midst of the severe international crises, both economic and political facing Western Europe today, Eurocommunism remains a factor that cannot be ignored. The possibility of it regaining dynamism is linked directly in an inverse proportion with the adventurist role which the right-wing forces in the West seem bent upon playing with a view to arresting the inevitable process of change and development.

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