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18 May 1982

West Europe Report

(FOUO 32/82)



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ECONOMIC

BELGIUM

DE CLERCQ ON BUDGETARY, ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

Brussels POURQUOI PAS? in French 18 Mar 82 pp 10-11

[Interview with Willy de Clercq, vice prime minister and minister of finance and foreign commerce: "Willy de Clercq Explains Himself"; date and place not specified]

[Text] Oh, poor, dear Willy de Clercq. What a tragedy for this man who adores so much being popular and then finds himself at the head of the most cruel department in an administration which intends to govern: the Ministry of Finance.

Consequently, he longs to explain himself. How could we deny him that?...

[Question] Without wanting to be too disagreeable, some people are starting to wonder about your loyalty -- we mean that of your party to your campaign promises. No new costs, no new taxes. We understand the general discontent which is translated into street movements. Now what?

[Answer] A liberal government agreement is also a Christian democrat government agreement. Both political parties share in this agreement, and I don't want to answer the question about where the most important input comes from. The four coalition parties approved this agreement and were thus satisfied about it as a whole. But the participation of each of them implies concessions and consequently numerous measures which have been taken are the result of a compromise.

The agreement clearly states that the government has based itself on the observation that "the Belgian sickness" is due to three phenomena: first of all, an unemployment rate which is too high; secondly, the imbalance of public finances; and finally, the deterioration of our current balance of payments. These three elements have reached such proportions that a complete reversal of the socio-economic policy conducted over the last 4 years has become indispensable. The government is and will continue to apply itself to this.

[Question] You are talking about a reversal. Up to now, what has been turned over most is cars in the street. What do you mean concretely?

[Answer] We can all easily see that the source of all our problems is the continuous and unjustified application of Keynesian concepts, which are

translated into a policy based on the overstimulation of demand, and this through the expedient of demand. Such an option has resulted in ever higher tax costs for the productive forces in our economy, both private individuals and enterprises.

The shortage of resources has led to an increasingly frequent call on borrowing, in Belgium or abroad, at astronomical interest rates.

The level of the fiscal costs has caused a loss of motivation to work and, for the enterprises, an inability to invest, to modernize, to renew, all the more so as the high interest rates no longer allow recourse to borrowing for those who might possibly still have been inclined to finance their investments that way.

High taxes, increasing production costs, the absence of investments, these are all reasons which have allowed the competition to exclude us not only on the foreign markets but also, let us not forget it, on the domestic market.

From year to year, enterprises working for the Belgian market have seen their market taken over by foreign competitors. Aren't these the reasons for the 4,147 bankruptcies we have experienced in 1981? And for the ever growing rate of unemployment? When you no longer sell, it is no longer possible to provide work.

[Question] Hence the presents to enterprises?

[Answer] If you want to call it that, everyone is of course free to practice demagoguery, to tell economic counter-truths or, even more simply, to be unaware of the government measures. What are the main measures taken in favor of the enterprises? There is the reduction of the TVA [Value-added Tax] rate for the construction sector (from 17 percent to 6 percent).

Next, we have all the decisions concerning the reduction of production costs: wages, energy, financial costs, taxes. The rates of corporate taxation have been reduced (the general rate has been reduced from 48 percent to 45 percent).

The exceptional solidarity contributions (Solidarity I and II) will not be renewed. Is this a question of presents? Isn't it necessary to leave the enterprises with a net profit sufficient to allow them to invest and consequently to create jobs?

We should also note the decisions concerning the temporary change in the linkage of wages to the index. I would first like to stress that all categories of the population are affected: independents, doctors, managers, etcetera, also have to participate, just like the wage earners. Second remark: the small tax payer is not affected, as the minimum wage remains indexed.

Third remark: it is not a question of "contributions," as people are too often inclined to write, but rather of "moderation," which means that incomes will not be reduced but their growth decelerated. The difference is a significant one.

All of this may seem a little complicated, but a careful reading of these decisions will prove that there is no question of presents to enterprises. Besides, there are no longer any presents to be given, to anybody! Because we no longer have anything. The legacy left us by those who are so vehemently criticizing us today is simply indescribable.

[Question] Aha! The legacy: the traditional case of embarrassment. What do you mean by that?

[Answer] Many things, as a matter of fact, but I am not in the habit of criticizing others and adding up their errors.

As for us, we have rejected a total cost increase in the amount of 35 to 40 million francs.

True, there are cost increases in the amount of 16 billion francs. But, opposite these increases there is a set of cost reductions not only in favor of enterprises, but also in favor of private individuals, specifically the increase in the level for elimination of cumulative taxation for household income up to 750,000 francs, the elimination of taxation on the appreciation of cadastral income for the house of residence, etcetera, without forgetting the measures I mentioned above.

[Question] You had announced, promised a 200 billion franc deficit. And you have accepted a 252 billion franc budgetary deficit. Is this very responsible?

[Answer] There are two reasons for this: first, the fact that the budget cut measures can be applicable only for 9 months. Cuts were decided on in all the public sectors for an amount of 70 billion francs, which gives an annual amount of approximately 95 billion francs. The second reason, which I have already mentioned, lies in the surprises we encountered when we saw the real figures in terms of unemployment, the interest costs for the debt, etcetera.

I repeat: I knew that the legacy was a heavy one; but what I have learned over the past weeks and months is simply alarming. As leader of the opposition, I knew that Belgium was economically and financially sick. But it is only when you are in the government and when you are acquainted with all the data that you realize to what extent the country is sick.

During the last few years, the situation has been allowed to deteriorate; the sick person has been abandoned to his fate.

Ask a doctor what that means.

[Question] To finish with a flourish: at the time of the elections, the slogan of the PVV [Party for Freedom and Progress (Flemish)] was: "More jobs, less costs"; do you think you will be able to realize that slogan?

[Answer] Less costs, certainly. The rejection of the new tax hikes planned for 1982, the measures aimed at canceling earlier measures (taxation on the appreciation of undeveloped real estate, and the like), and the new cost reductions both for enterprises and for private individuals which I just mentioned, prove it.

More jobs. I have already told you: that requires the cooperation of everyone. The government has taken the measures necessary to reach this goal. Let me say it clearly: if all of Belgium were to go on strike because the government imposes a temporary income moderation, do you think that any measures, whatever they may be, could have a positive effect on employment?

We have to save our economy and thus our social security and our social welfare. It is a question of saving that which can still be saved. During the coming months and years, it will be necessary to pursue this effort in order to achieve more positive results. Let this government remain in place until the end of the legislative session and you will see the positive results.

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ECONOMIC

FRANCE

CAUSES FOR FRANC'S WEAKNESS IN EMS, OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Ways to Avoid Devaluation

Paris L'EXPRESS in French 26-1 Apr 82 p 82

[Article by Jean Gloaguen: "The Franc in Trouble"]

[Text] Three weapons and 45 days to defend the franc.
It is enough?

A currency's loss of parity is always a political and economic failure. The administration was hoping for a return to a peaceful currency exchange market after the fitful week before the cantonal elections. However, speculation continued; the dollar set a new historic record at 6.27 francs on Tuesday 23 March. Was this a return shock from the Left's electoral failure? In any case, devaluation rumors started up again even stronger.

The attacks against the franc, which had started in the beginning of March, became alarming on the 16th. The dollar, quoted at 6.05 on Friday the 12th, hit 6.23 a week later. What was even more disturbing was that the franc was weakening dangerously in relation to other currencies of the European monetary system (EMS), in relation to which it should fluctuate within a narrow range. The Bank of France, eager to limit the damage, dug deeply into its reserves of foreign currency. On Thursday 18 March it increased the money market rate from 15 to 17 percent. Jacques Delors, minister of economy and finance, thought this was a passing fever. He was disappointed.

Technical and psychological factors were at the origin of the unrest. Payments related to the recent gas contract signed with Algeria have entailed large purchases of dollars. In addition, non-residents sold their francs after turning in their securities in nationalized companies. On the other hand, contrary to certain rumors, Arab capital has not deserted Paris.

In any case, the distrust of the foreign exchange brokers was more of a factor than the exceptional need for foreign currency. This distrust began with the deterioration of the French trade balance at the end of 1981 and worsened when rumors of a 200 billion franc budget deficit for 1983 were heard. The conclusion drawn by national and international financial authorities was that a devaluation of the franc was inevitable.

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On the Rue de Rivoli, not surprisingly, this reasoning is not accepted. "Any speculation based on the devaluation of the franc is doomed to fail," repeated Jacques Delors on 23 March. We are reminded that in May 1981, against the advice of the governor of the Bank of France and of several ministers, Francois Mitterrand decided to stay in the EMS. In October the franc's parity was decreased by 8.5 percent in relation to the mark, but the excuse of the former administration's legacy was given.

In any case, a slide of the franc presents problems. An expert explained, "If we want to change the parity while remaining in the EMS, our trade partners, especially West Germany, will refuse. Will this mean a momentary exit from the EMS, as in 1974 and 1976? This would mean the death of monetary Europe and its transformation into a mark zone." Some, however, see this as an elegant way to implement the price increases demanded by farmers, which Brussels refuses. (See the article by Patrick Bonazza.)

Another substantial argument is that the economic advantages of a pullout are not predictable. As an immediate asset, France's competitiveness with the FRG, its major trade partner, would increase. As a liability there would be the obligation of paying more francs for two-thirds of our imports and the one-third of exports which are billed in foreign currencies--8 billion francs yearly for each devaluation point.

The Speculators' Loss

But can France avoid a devaluation? It all depends, of course, on the ability of its leaders to reestablish confidence in foreign capital. The authorities have three means at their disposal for defending the currency at all costs:

-- Interest rates. Already at 17 percent, they could still be raised significantly.

-- Control of foreign exchange. In effect since May 1981, it would be difficult to increase it for businesses, but increasing it for individuals has been discussed.

-- Direct intervention. At least for the moment it is not a question of digging into the gold stockpiles, which make up the bulk of the reserves of the Bank of France. This leaves the modest 6 billion dollars in foreign currency held by the Issuing Institute. More important, this leaves the unlimited drawing rights on Fecom, a European institution which would give France access to advances in another EMS currency, when this currency approaches its ceiling price in relation to the franc. However, these advances must be reimbursed within 45 days.

Forty-five days is enough for speculators to lose in an unjustified attack against the franc. It is also enough to avoid devaluing under pressure. But in monetary matters time is worth only the interest rates of the loans that have been made. The franc will not regain its status and will not escape upsets until the country's economic management is deemed orthodox by the entire world's bankers.

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Withdrawal of Petrodollars

Paris VALEURS ACTUELLES in French 29 Mar-4 Apr 82

[Article by Philippe Durupt: "The Hostage Franc"]

[Excerpts] The only realistic way out is to give the franc a vacation from the EMS for as long as the inflation differential with our German competitor is not corrected.

Six months was the length of the respite that the 4 October 1981 devaluation gave to the franc, which has been under new attacks for 3 weeks. Within the EMS it is declining in relation to all the other currencies, and has been at a seriously low level against the gulden since 18 March and against the German mark since the 22nd.

What is this speculation that has been loosed against our currency? The myth of the wall of money has a hard life. In this case it can be reduced to a simple fact: the holders of petrodollars are taking their capital out of France.

Their deposits in French banks, a real sword of Damocles, create a permanent threat of instability, while at the same time they reduce the administration's economic and political freedom to maneuver.

This includes petrodollars invested in France as capital entrusted to a trustee by third parties. The trustee can have this credited to his bank account to give the illusion of wealth. But the depositors can demand its withdrawal at any time. This is unfortunate for the imprudent trustee who might have spent the money on himself or frozen it to finance personal borrowing. The fate of petrodollars is to come and go. They are at the mercy of unpredictable decisions.

The latest attacks against the franc coincided with the cantonal election campaigns. Deducing from this that monetary maneuvers are only one weapon among others for political combat is a step quickly taken by men and a public opinion lacking in financial experience.

Even if the regime's political opponents were tempted to use this argument, the foreign exchange controls which were implemented 10 months ago are such that this would be discouraged. Only foreign depositors benefit from free circulation. They are indifferent to the political coloring of the host country as soon as this freedom is assured. However, they are extremely aware of financial security. And for the Arab states there is also a particular political sensitivity.

The speech by the president of the Republic to the Knesset on 4 April was much more important in their eyes than the restructuring of county councils in France. They apparently took the courageous declarations of the French president badly and are showing this by withdrawing capital. They have also

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taken the nationalization of large French firms badly and have made huge sales of their compensatory security rights during the month of March.

On last 8 and 9 February, during meetings with foreign investors, members of the Mauroy administration knew enough to use a realistic language--they reassured.

The foreign investors were ready to give them the benefit of the doubt, but the cantonal elections put the party hardliners back on stage. The tone hardened and caused an always latent worry to be stirred up.

This series of events acted as a detonator in the speculation against the franc. It would have had no more effect than a wet firecracker if our currency had been the faithful reflection of a competitive economy.

This is far from being the case in our relations with West Germany, our principal client and foreign supplier.

Since the creation of the European monetary system in April 1979, the German mark's value in francs had gradually gone from 2.3 to 2.4 (the old ceiling) then, lately, to 2.62, a new ceiling since the devaluation of October. In 3 years our currency has depreciated 14 percent. At the same time, our inflation was 29 percent higher than German inflation.

The 15 percent difference between the difference in inflation (29 percent) and the foreign exchange adjustment (14 percent) is a measure of our loss of competitiveness in relation to German industry. This difference should be reduced not to the sales volumes of our firms but to their profit margins. In 1979, these did not exceed 10 percent before taxes in the best of cases.

Clearly, our firms today are in a losing situation with their competitors on the other side of the Rhine, as well as on the French market, where German products are making irreversible inroads, and on the German market, where French products are beating a retreat. Our trade deficit with Germany has doubled in 2 years, going from 11.1 billion francs in 1979 to 22.7 billion in 1981.

The French franc is in a state of structural weakness in comparison to the German mark. Its true value is closer to 3 francs per German mark than 2.62. In this situation it would be surprising to see it get stronger rather than to see it weaken as it is doing today.

The administration's obstinacy is probably due to a fetishist conception of currency, which is very widespread in France. It also reflects the old dream of European unification, which is more unlikely than ever to happen when national egos arise during times of crises.

In this second battle, Delors is a lonely man. As flattering as the hopes of the financial community were to Barre, they are today playing against the minister of finance in equal proportion. The personal worth of the man is not at all in question; rather, the opposite. But the restraints that he

must undergo appear to be incompatible with any hope of rapid economic recovery.

The foreign deficit is increasing and Jobert has not ruled out the possibility of a negative balance of 100 billion francs for 1982.

The budget deficit has now reached 3 percent--a rate similar to, if not lower than, that of our major competitors. But the level of the deficit makes less of an impression than its trend--it has tripled in 1 year. And the leaks on the preliminary estimations of expenditures for 1983 (a deficit of over 200 billion was mentioned) have cast a glacial chill over it.

The hardening of the political rhetoric since the elections leads to the fear that social reforms will be maintained, if not increased. For French firms this means the prospect of a new increase in social and salary costs and a greater rigidity in employment: the increases in productivity which are still likely to happen are liable to be absorbed by the cost of maintaining the staff.

This is the opposite of the tendencies seen in our major competitors. In Germany, for the first time since the war, the large iron and steel union has just accepted a loss in purchasing power for 1982. In the United States the automobile workers union has given up indexation to the cost of living; this applies both to Ford and General Motors.

Social mobility has remained almost intact in the United States and in the FRG. It is increasing in Great Britain and Italy.

Everywhere the battle hinges on reducing operating costs, of which salaries make up two-thirds and sometimes more. Everywhere except in France, where the administration is hanging on to very unrealistic parities.

Foreign restraints are being added to domestic ones: increase in domestic interest rates, exchange subsidies for imports, additional cost imposed on exports.

Profit margins are at a historic low point. The administration seems powerless to hold back the wave of demands. Under these conditions, maintaining the foreign constraint puts firms in a real vise.

The only realistic and urgent way out would be to give the franc a break from the EMS so that the monetary trend could correct the inflation differential. This break would only be a temporary measure, but would be necessary as long as opinion had not been thoroughly convinced that the realities of world competition cannot be avoided.

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POLITICAL

SPAIN

SPANISH MAGAZINE INTERVIEWS PSOE'S GONZALEZ

PM041501 Madrid CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 26 Apr 82 pp 29-31

[Interview with Spanish Socialist Workers Party Secretary General Felipe Gonzalez by Jose Manuel Arija: "Felipe, Tired of Calvo"--date and place of interview not specified]

[Excerpts] The situation of the Union of the Democratic Center [UCD] in the light of the electorate's voting intentions is more than worrying, as can be deduced from the opinion poll on the preceding pages. But that, according to what opposition leader Felipe Gonzalez says in his interview, is good for nobody.

But its leader, Prime Minister Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo, is in an even worse situation than the Centrist Party. Not even many of those who say that they will vote for the UCD regard Calvo-Sotelo as having the caliber to lead the country. "There has been a dramatic leadership situation in the UCD since Adolfo Suarez' disappearance from the chairmanship," Gonzalez asserts. "This indicates that the UCD is directionless, since it has nobody capable of directing its own ideas." Since 1977 Felipe Gonzalez has been interviewed by CAMBIO 16 every 6 months. In this way the socialist leader has rendered accounts publicly at the same time as expressing his opinion on the national situation throughout the difficult stage of the transition.

In the present interview a possible socialist election victory, the 23 February [1981--date of attempted coup] trial and the contents of the future Spanish Socialist Workers Party [PSOE] government program are, among others, the specific topics he discusses. The results of the poll--"which do not impress me, because it is the ballot boxes which matter"--were also analyzed, and his replies begin by explaining the causes of Calvo-Sotelo's lack of a lead among those polled.

Felipe Gonzalez: Calvo-Sotelo did not achieve that lead, among other things, because the people are far more intuitive and shrewd than they appear. Calvo-Sotelo has had a far better press than any prime minister of a democratic government in the world can imagine. Nor do I know of any similar instance, or less harassment from the opposition's ranks, or, even more clearly, of more determined support from the country's most representative opposition party.

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Despite these circumstances, which theoretically should help the image of the conduct of the government and its prime minister, the voters detect that there is not sufficient ability to make the necessary response to the problems which the country is experiencing. Hence the deterioration in his image.

CAMBIO 16: In view of all this, is Calvo-Sotelo, in your opinion, any good or not as prime minister?

Felipe Gonzalez: I sincerely believe that he has not demonstrated that he is any good, at conducting the country's government. And that is what is reflected in the poll.

CAMBIO 16: If it was made clear throughout these months that Calvo-Sotelo was not good, why did you harass him with so little vigor?

Felipe Gonzalez: Whether somebody is any good or not is demonstrated essentially with the passage of a reasonable amount of time in office. A government's task cannot be judged after 3 or 4 months. Last June the government had an economic program agreed with the trade unions from the viewpoint of industrial relations. And it had an autonomy and municipal policy not only agreed but pledged with the principal opposition party, ourselves. Hence in those first few months it could be said that the balance sheet of conduct was favorable.

And so what happened? That program was never implemented, and now we find that the government was unable to implement the agreements or to conduct an effective policy to resolve the problems confronting the country.

CAMBIO 16: And between now and the election will you continue to support Calvo-Sotelo, even if you still find that he is no good?

Felipe Gonzalez: It is difficult to say in advance. Our intention is always to set democratic coexistence in freedom as a priority of the party above what might be merely electoral interests. In our opinion, it is more important to safeguard the interests of democracy as a whole than to attempt to kick a government when it is down.

The first people who should be concerned about this situation reflected by the polls are the members of the government themselves and their party; something which is not happening, because in some instance we see rather that what they are conducting is a policy of opposition to the PSOE rather than a government policy. All that we can and should do is to hope that the ballot boxes will change the country's political course.

CAMBIO 16: If the state of the polls were reflected soon in reality, what would happen in the UCD?

Felipe Gonzalez: It is not desirable for democracy that an internal rift should occur in the UCD. At the level of the entire state there is a force represented

fairly homogeneously, which is the PSOE, and another, which is less homogeneous but has a certain ability to win support, which is the UCD. Until other political forces capable of filling that gap emerge, I find it difficult to assess as positive a collapse or crisis of the UCD. On the contrary, it would be politically negative.

CAMBIO 16: Does the offer of a coalition government to safeguard against crisis still stand?

Felipe Gonzalez: The possibility is receding, and I find that natural as the election approaches: but we would never be opposed to an operation which would serve to safeguard democracy's interests. For that reason we should attempt to impart a positive nature to the election campaigns by putting forward platforms and not mercilessly criticizing opponents, as others are doing in some instances against us.

CAMBIO 16: The first campaign will be in Andalusia. If the UCD fails, could the general election be brought forward earlier than expected?

Felipe Gonzalez: When an election result occurs in which the right wins in Catalonia, in the Basque country or in Galicia, nobody makes a great fuss. However, certain sectors of opinion believe that possible victory for the Socialists in Andalusia would have greater consequences than are logically to be expected. I do not find that fair from a democratic viewpoint. It is necessary to be able to accept the results both if a reactionary force wins and if a progressive force wins.

CAMBIO 16: Could the socialists form a coalition with the communists to govern Spain, if they need their seats to achieve a majority?

Felipe Gonzalez: I rule out a PSOE-PCE coalition government, because it is not good for Spain as a historical blueprint, nor is this the time for it, nor--to be frank--do we trust the communists who might be in a government. According to the poll, the communist vote is declining. I believe that in the coming elections and within the political spectrum of the left, the concept of the tactical vote which could bring the socialists to power will begin to be assessed for the first time.

CAMBIO 16: Some questions from journalists and some replies from centrist politicians say that a possible socialist general election victory could provoke a coup. What is your opinion?

Felipe Gonzalez: I find that a stupid thing to say. Those who provoke that psychological reaction are in fact covert putschists. Those who reply in that way are on the other hand unable to defend their conduct from a democratic viewpoint and are attempting to instill fear in the public. On the other they are also toying with the armed forces. In my opinion, the attempted coup which took place in Spain was not against a leftwing government but against a rightwing government.

That means that there is a section of the civilian and military populations which is not in agreement with democracy and which will attempt to eliminate the system in order to replace it by a dictatorship, not that it is opposed to a socialist government which, I am certain, will not provoke reactions of that kind, even because of the very prestige of the armed forces.

CAMBIO 16: It has been announced that the PSOE has now almost finalized its government program. Will it present it soon?

Felipe Gonzalez: We will present the program at the right moment, at the next election. It amuses me that the Socialist Party is being asked for a detailed program, which we are in fact preparing, when nobody has presented one so far since 1977. As far as we are concerned, economic policy will be aimed essentially at combating unemployment.

All the complementary measures necessary to combat unemployment will be adopted or implemented, from the viewpoint both of the financial system and of monetary policy, public investments policy or encouragement of private investment and so forth.

We socialists believe that a good policy of creating employment must pay serious attention to small and medium enterprises, although without forgetting big enterprises interests.

CAMBIO 16: Will the socialists, when in power, ask the Spanish people to work harder?

Felipe Gonzalez: In a country in a state of crisis. It is only possible to make progress when a mentality of majority collective effort is created. It would be a matter not so much of working harder as of encouraging a necessary feeling of solidarity and a psychological attitude of endeavor. In addition, a politico-cultural program to recover somewhat Spanish society's creative drive, with the moral basis of gaining credibility in society and creating momentum to make progress, should be implemented. The people have more wisdom than they are credited with and do not expect miracles; they want an atmosphere of confidence and solidarity with the aim of surmounting this situation of sluggishness in which we are living, politically, culturally and economically.

CAMBIO 16: Will you continue to visit Calvo-Sotelo at the Moncloa Palace?

Felipe Gonzalez: Of course. We have had a good many meetings to discuss and talk about matters of general interest--more than are known publicly, because we are not going to make publicity every time we meet. And I believe that we should continue to hold these meetings in the immediate future.

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POLITICAL

SPAIN

LEFT ATTACKS TVE FOR BIAS, INCOMPETENCE, CRONYISM

Liberal Press

Madrid CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 5 Apr 82 pp 44-50

[Article by Encarnacion Valenzuela and Sebastian Moreno: "One, Big and Bad"]

[Text] Five months after Fernando Castedo was dismissed by the government and Carlos Robles Piquer gave a new direction to this country's only television entity, the issue of television (and its use by the party in power) has again come to the forefront on the current political scene.

Five months ago, the criticism of the general director (Castedo) was coming from a UCD [Democratic Center Union] unhappy over what it deemed excessive criticism of the government in the newscasts. Now it is the opposition (specifically, the Socialist and Communist Parties) which is complaining that Robles Piquer's ("Robles-pierre" as he is called in the establishment) television is reporting in a biased manner favoring UCD and limiting the news space devoted to leaders and parties to the left of the latter. The criticism is becoming sharper, because it coincides with a time when the country is preparing to vote (during May, in Andalucia, and perhaps a few months later in general elections). This week, the secretary general of the Communist Party submitted a motion to censure Robles Piquer the propriety of which was disapproved (for reasons of procedure) by the president of the Cortes, Landelino Lavilla, at the petition of UCD. If it had been put to a vote, it is quite possible that the government and Robles Piquer might have ended up losing; although (according to the opposite version) the television viewers who complain that the newscasts of democratic Spain in 1982 are increasingly reminiscent, for whatever reasons, of the NO-DO [Documentary Films and Newsreel Co] of other times, would have won.

The newsmen working for Spanish Television [TVE] received the first notion of what was befalling them a few days after Carlos Robles Piquer assumed his position, last October, as general director of the public entity (which also includes National Radio and Radio Network), when Red Cross Day was celebrated.

Those responsible for "Information Services" decided (as had been customary in recent years) to handle the subject casually, and merely send a camera crew to film the queen's presence at one of the boards of petition.

In mid-morning, "orders from above" caused them to see their mistake. Through those orders from the new general director, they were told that cameras were to be sent to the boards, where not only the queen was requested for the Red Cross, but also the wife of the president of the government, the wives of various ministers and Roble Piquer's wife herself, all of whom appeared on the screen on that day's "newscast."

Shortly after the dismissal of Fernando Castedo and the attempt made by his group of young professionals for 9 months and 14 days (with relative success) to show on the television screens in Spanish homes the real situation on the streets which those Spaniards were experiencing, the experiment had ended.

Carlos Robles Piquer, aged 56, a diplomatic with a great capacity for work, and brother-in-law of Manuel Fraga, for whom he claims to have great admiration and with whom he began his political career as general director of information and popular culture, arrived in television in response to a "patriotic appeal" (in his words) from President Calvo Sotelo, willing (as he has proven) to offer programming in keeping with the Spain which used to be entertained by watching "The Girls From the Red Cross" with a "ye-ye" Conchita Velasco, in the neighborhood movie theaters.

Ramon Gomez Redondo, a television director and Socialist consultant for the public entity remarks: "Robles Piquer considers television to be the leisure-television of the aggressive person and not a reflection or a window opened onto reality."

Gomez Redondo adds: "There are clear signs of the return to the old television of officialdom, the return to the traditional methods of submission to the network in control which necessarily emanates from the government and, in returning, resuming even censorship in this lavish Francoist 'revival' that Prado del Rey seems to be celebrating."

Ramon Gomez Redondo is a Socialist, and hence his statement could be labeled partisan in the official televised media. But there are agreeing with it many of the informational professionals queried by CAMBIO 16, who are not so willing to allow themselves to be quoted by name, owing to the wideness of the corridors in the building in which they work.

One of them commented: "There is censorship and, in particular, there is incompetence."

Example: During Castedo's time, the general director was scarcely ever consulted directly regarding the feasibility of issuing a report or not doing so. The chief of the "Information Services," first Inaki Gabilondo, and later Pedro Erquicia, two newsmen in his confidence and with extensive professional experience, made the decisions. The directors of the three "newscasts" (Jesus Hermida, Fermin Bocos and Joaquin Arozamena) had a free hand to give priority or more space to one report or another, depending on their professional criterion.

The example continues: Today, the decision as to what will be reported on the three "telecasts" is made in the general director's office, at a meeting held every day at 1000 hours by the high-ranking officials of the establishment, in which the "newscast" directors (Joaquin Arozamena, Manuel Roglan and Alberto Delgado) do not participate.

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At "1000 hours in the morning" when Spain is drinking coffee, when nothing has happened yet, it is already decided which news will be reported, and which will not.

A Wasted Medium

An executive (dismissed) from Castedo's group comments: "Television, like radio, has the advantage over the newspapers of being able to report instantly what has happened, an advantage that Spanish Television has given up. In this country, most of the real news is heard first on radio, is read in the newspaper and, finally, seen (if it is seen) on television."

The director of the "Information Services," Joaquin Castro, conveys to those in charge of the "newscasts" the "orders from above" which certain newsmen suspect may be reaching them exaggerated because of too much obedience to the chief.

Castro, who comes from the art critic's world, was dismissed as head of the information on the presidency of the State government by the Castedo group "for professional incompetence," according to an "ex" of that group.

But Castro is one of the few television newsmen who is a militant in UCD. His care regarding fulfillment of the "orders from above" is total. And the "orders from above" are aimed (as Robles Piquer himself has reiterated to the point of surfeit during his months at Prado del Rey) at not allowing "mines" to be set.

Robles Piquer and his adherents interpret as "mines" the possible "shots" that the alleged "Reds" situated on Spanish Television's organization chart could make to achieve the preaching of ideas not to the government's liking from the cameras.

The newsmen have heard Joaquin Castro say: "Television belongs to the State, and a little more to the government"; even though television is governed by a statute that was prepared and approved by Parliament, which implies (by law) that it belongs to everyone and is for everyone.

But it is known that the incident which gave Fernando Castedo the ouster as Robles Piquer's predecessor was the fact that Felipe Gonzalez appeared for 3 days in a row on the "telecast" first news. Now, Felipe Gonzalez almost never appears any longer on a "telecast" first news.

The Socialist Party members have kept track of how much time each of the political parties is appearing on television. A recent study provided the information that the leader of the opposition was shown on the screen merely 2 minutes and 40 seconds in all, on the three "telecasts" combined, over a period of 1 month (between 25 February and 24 March). The president of the government, Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, appeared on the screen for 36 minutes and 28 seconds during that same month. And what is even more peculiar, Robles Piquer himself (who is not, or should not be anyone politically) was on the screen for 5 minutes and 35 seconds, more than twice the length of time for Felipe Gonzalez.

However, there are television newsmen who do not agree with the Socialists on the criterion for gaging whether television is biased nor not using as a timing guide whether Fraga appears on the screen more than Alfonso Guerra, or whether New Force is mentioned more than the Communist Party.

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One of these newsmen remarked to CAMBIO 16: "To give an example, no one judges DIARIO 16 or EL PAIS politically by the number of times that a politician appears on their front page. One assumes that this 'honor' is not such an honor, but rather a reflection of the reality that has occurred in Spain during the preceding 24 hours."

But this latter guide is the one that least prevails in the television of Robles Piquer which, however, does appear to react to the opposition's criticism regarding the number of minutes for political personages. For example, last week, after Alfonso Guerra and Santiago Carrillo complained in the Cortes that Adolfo Suarez and Francisco Fernandez Ordonez are virtually banned from appearing on the screen, the "telecasts" on the following days presented pictures of Adolfo Suarez and Francisco Fernandez Ordonez after several months of absence from the cameras.

No one would be surprised if they soon disappear again... until someone complains. And, meanwhile, the international news will continue to have more space than the national news (a feature of the Francoist press), the weather more than the opposition, and soccer more than the national news outside of Madrid and its government, add the newsmen.

In Spanish Television, they have their own numbers, numbers (claim those close to Robles Piquer) which take into account the fact that the total space dedicated to the newscasts has declined; mainly because the noon one, which used to take an hour, now consumes only 30 minutes.

According to a recent study of the TVE technical office (based on percentages of the time of the news reports, not on combined minutes), the news on UCD last October (during Castedo's time) accounted for 22 percent of the national reporting, and that on PSOE [Spanish Socialist Workers Party], 26 percent. And (the study adds) those percentages were the same last February. The Communists have dropped, it is true, from 16 to 13 percent; while Popular Alliance has risen from 14 to 24 percent.

The official story on why Robles Piquer is shown on the screen so much is different ("the general director is news, and although he does not like to be shown, those in charge of the news reports consider him news"). Those circles also stress the fact that Castedo appeared often last October (they counted 17 appearances for him on the screen, lasting 51 minutes and 1 second); without regard for the fact that, last October, the dismissal or discharge of the general director of television was, of itself, one of the hottest news items on the national political scene.

As for the matter of the weather occupying more space than the opposition politicians, Robles Piquer's adherents find it natural. They claim that this holds true in the television of the developed countries, and admit that one of the goals of the current group's management is to reduce the volume of political news, something which "was making the atmosphere tense and the respectable public fed up."

And, meanwhile, the discharge of the most professional newsmen at Pardo del Rey is continuing as well. This is related to the reappearance of the announcers on the "newscasts" and, specifically, the new girls without professional experience but

very pretty indeed, who read more or less what has happened in the country in a tone of one completely glossing over those events, seated in the places which have held professionals such as Rosa Maria Mateo, Clara Francia, Victoria Prego or Elena Marti.

With what criteria? When it was time to distribute the positions of those responsible for the "telecasts" after their arrival in power, the new heads (applying the theory of "moderation" which reached them from "above") awarded the roles and excluded many professionals, based upon previous labels of unknown origin. Assigned to a post on one of the "telecasts" was a newsman described as pro-UCD; and, as his assistant, a professional whom Castro called "Red," to compensate. The two newsmen, both of whom are independents, are still making mutual jokes about their labels. In another recent instance, they received the shock that President Calvo Sotelo asked to be interviewed (when he appeared on television upon completing a year of his term) by a professional whom he had removed from the "telecasts" for being a "leftist."

"In my 15 years at Prado del Rey, I have seen some things; but what is going on now is the most unprecedented," commented another newsman a few days ago, claiming to have personally ascertained that none of the three "telecasts" on television reported the news of the death of the youth Ignacio Montoya, in Trebujena, who was shot by the Civil Guard on 2 March; not because of censorship, but rather incompetence. "It was overlooked by those on the first 'telecast' and those on the second did not report it because the first had not done so, and the same thing happened with the 'final edition.'"

It is because of incompetence and not because of plots by the superiors that the media professionals think that Alfonso Guerra (like many television viewers) has gone so far as to say that television is engaging in coup-oriented propaganda in its reporting on the 23-F trials. In fact, before the trial began, the RTVE's [General Directorate of Spanish Radio Broadcasting and Television] upper "echelons" discussed how to report so as not to make this mistake. An editor for the "telecasts" expresses the opinion: "The fact is that they don't know how to act because there are scarcely any professionals. The real professionals, those who know how to report on what they want to report...they are kept in the hallway, ignored, or else they went home a long time ago."

The First Are the Last

Not even certain sources close to the party in power consider the work done by Robles Piquer's group to be bringing favorable results for UCD. Those sources note that, in the recent list given in EL PAIS, measuring the time that the politicians spent on the screen last month, the first places are monopolized by government officials of the second rank, who are not the ones determining the country's policy.

In order of appearance, after Calvo Sotelo, there are shown Santiago Rodriguez Miranda, minister of labor and social security; Ignacio Aguirre, state secretary of information; Luis Gamir, minister of transportation and communications; Jose Luis Alvarez, minister of agriculture and fishing; and Federico Mayor Zaragoza, minister of education.

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Except for the easy excuse for the presence of Aguirre (the spokesman for the presidency of the government), how can one explain the fact that the minister of labor appeared on the screen three times more than the first vice president of the government, Rodolfo Martin Villa, or that Jose Luis Alvarez appeared once owing to a works project that he was opening, while the other ministers are incapable of appearing before the camera unless they engage in a triple somersault?

In the corridors of Spanish Television, where since Castedo's departure they have seen a return of the perpetual faces from Francoist television, they do have an explanation ("it is the doing of Rafael Anson"). Anson, who was general director of radio-television before Castedo and before Arias Salgado, once again has a "hand" in his former establishment. And Rafael Anson, who is engaged mainly in preserving the image of half a dozen UCD ministers, knows how to install his own people so that they may appear on the screen frequently. This would appear to prove that not even Robles Piquer's television is devoted to pro-governmental politics, but rather to showing the countenances of those with influential jobs, provided of course that they belong to UCD.

Another who has returned is Luis Ezcurra (a regular holder of a high-ranking post at Prado del Rey for life, and at the Plaza de Oriente demonstrations when they are called), who was installed in an office as soon as Castedo left and before Robles Piquer appointed him to anything (he is now chief of television international relations).

As a rule, the other direct collaborators of Robles Piquer have been dissociated from the medium of television and from journalism. The only journalists with high-ranking posts are personal friends of the general director: Manuel Calvo Hernandez, who was assistant editor of YA (and to whom is attributed the "telecasts" enthusiasm for showing scientific congresses); and Rafael Ortega, coordinator of foreign correspondents, who was director of National Radio in Rome when Robles Piquer was holding the post of ambassador to the Vatican.

Other names come from that Fraga Ministry of Information in which Robles Piquer held high-ranking positions; such as Jesus Moneo, now director of the technical office; or Enrique de la Hoz, former commissioner of festivals in Spain, who has unseated a prominent composer, Miguel Angel Coria, in the RTVE's orchestra and chorus office; or the director of the Spanish Radio Network, Luis del Val, who at one time headed the General Directorate of Cooperatives.

But the philosophy of the new group heading "tele" has been that of not "draining" the intermediate level posts of those appointed by Castedo, whose functions have been taken away from them, but not their salaries. This has entailed an inflation of the "Information Services" table of organization, the cost of which has increased by 50 percent in recent months.

The bureaucratic burden is such that a reporting space like the nine o'clock "telecast" has a director, an assistant national director, an assistant international director, a national coordinator, an international coordinator, a deputy director, an editing secretary, a chief of economic and labor reporting, an assistant chief of labor reporting and a chief of parliamentary reporting.

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All of them, of course, collect bonuses of up to 125,000 pesetas in addition to their salaries, which are already rather large as a rule.

But the standard in Spanish Television is this statement coined in its offices: "Here one earns a salary for being Spanish, and a bonus for working." In other words, the 9,600 workers on the TVE payroll have an assigned salary equivalent to that earned by other Spanish citizens in other business firms. If they do not earn any more it is because they are in the halls (in more direct language, they have no work to do). At the time when they become associated with a program, they are assigned an extra bonus for working; a system which caused the maintenance of the TVE payroll to cost us Spanish taxpayers 31 billion pesetas last year.

The bonus, to make matters worse, does not require exclusive dedication on the part of those who collect it, at least on the high-ranking level: Luis Losada, director of "weekend news reports," works in the press office of the RENFE [Spanish National Railroads]; Angel Urreiztieta, director of that "weekend news," is press chief of the Ministry of Labor and Society Security; and Ramon Barro and Aurelio Rodrigo (director of "telecast" and coordinator of "final edition," respectively) also work in the press office of the Health Ministry.

Jose Luis Sanz, editor of "final edition," is press chief of the Ministry of Health and Consumer Affairs; Angel del Rio, assistant director of "open editor's office," also works as press chief for CEPYME [Spanish Confederation of Small and Medium Businesses]; and Pedro Gonzalez, assistant international director of "telecast," is press chief for BANESTO [Spanish Credit Bank]. Other RTVE professionals are also well placed in other government press offices.

All these problems have cropped up similarly in 10 of the 11 regional centers (the exception is that in the Canaries, which operates in a model fashion). Owing to the budget needs, those centers are closed in the afternoon after they have finished their regional area broadcasts; and this prevents their being connected with the evening "telecast." If the latter needs news from editors outside of Madrid, it has to hire them as extras (and with extra pay, of course).

While the "telecasts" are declining in quality, the same thing is still happening to the other reporting spaces which are not only declining, but even disappearing. Spaces such as the current international news report, "Objective," that on topics of collective interest, "Hand to Hand," and that critiquing the media itself, "Take the Floor," have become a thing of the past. All that remain now are three programs of public debates: "The Key," "This Country" and "Voices Without a Voice"; but the latter two are aired simultaneously on both networks.

And, meanwhile, television is engaged in entertaining, like a boob-tube. Apart from the news reports, the key questions are: "Will 'Inigo' return?" and "will 'One-Two-Three' return?" There are many films, many American films made for television, and soon there will be a great deal of soccer, especially the World Soccer: a formula already used (actually, without much success) in Francoist times.

A well-known director claims: "This will be difficult to stop because the philosophy of the First Network director, Enrique de las Casas, is that of airing on prime time things such as "300 Million" and "Applause" (two low budget programs because of alleged concealed advertising), and all types of musicals and contests."

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But the contests and the musicals do not concern the leftist political parties so much as the elections, first those in Andalucia and later the general elections, with reporting which they consider totally partial to the government.

According to the minute count made by the Communists and Socialists, the reporting on ministers and the government increased from occupying 22 to 49 percent of the space devoted to national news from October 1981 to February 1982; while the reporting on political parties during that period declined from 52 to 13 percent.

Communist Motion

The conclusion reached by the Communist Party after reading the results of its last study was that it should submit to Parliament a motion of censure against Robles Piquer which might have succeeded (they had backing from Socialists, Basques and Andalucians) if it had not been excluded from the agenda by the president of the Cortes last Tuesday.

The aborted Communist motion states: "This parliamentary group has noted the persistence and seriousness with which TVE has been violating the principles of impartiality and pluralism, and others set forth in the Constitution and the Statute on Radio and Television. Consequently, it censures the action of the general director of the public entity, and calls upon the government, implementing Article 12 on Radio and Television, to resolve the dismissal of the general director."

While Socialists and Communists pledge to continue raising the issue both outside of and within Parliament, no party has yet protested over a news item which the "telecasts" (significantly) omitted last weekend, despite the fact that it occupied the front pages of the newspapers.

It involves a decision of the Constitutional Court which, although it does not bear out the arguments of the private television company, "Antena 3," that had filed an appeal against the government postponement of the decree which was about to authorize the establishment of private channels at the end of last year, does indeed open the door for the creation of private broadcasting firms. The court responsible for overseeing its fulfillment decided that private television is not necessarily imposed by the existing legal system, although within the framework of the Constitution this policy decision could be accepted by the government (which, after its "reconquest" of TVE, is in no hurry to have more television entities in existence); and the leftist parties, which were never advocates of private broadcasting firms, are not interested in allowing free stations immediately either.

Inaki Gabilondo, director of RTV 16, argues: "Nevertheless, until private television exists, it will be impossible to solve the essential problems of state television." He adds: "So long as there is a just one television system, this medium will continue to be considered a constitutional authority, like the Cortes, for example, dissociated from the purposes of a normal communications medium."

Gabilondo gives a reminder that this proposition was brought up during the night of 23 February, when the high-ranking officials of TVE (including him) were discussing whether or not it was feasible to show on television the seizure of the Congress by Tejero and his Civil Guards.

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"As a matter of mere informational interest, there would not have been any doubt; the video would have had to be shown immediately. But TVE is an institution transcending an informational medium." He remarks: "And so long as there is only one, the professional battle will be irremediably doomed."

PSOE's Guerra

Madrid CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 5 Apr 82 p 47

[Article by Alfonso Guerra: "The One-Dimensional Television"]

[Text] The arrival of Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo in the presidency of the government means the "Kabulization" of Prado del Rey. The latest experiment begun at RTVE after the approval of the Statute and the appointment of Fernando Castedo to the directorship was halted with the cruelty and firmness of the scalpel. After Castedo's wishes had been extorted, a useless dismissal was achieved, and steps were taken to make the first appointment of the great right (Calvo Sotelo version) or of the natural majority (Fraga Iribarne version): Carlos Robles Piquer. And immediately, there were purges, persecution, the stoppage of programs and the rerun of Francoism on television.

If the government risked the political scandal entailed in forcing the dismissal of Castedo without the presence of any of the reasons for dismissal stipulated in Article 12 of the Statute, it was not, of course, to allow his successor to continue that first, halting experiment in pluralism in the media subordinate to the public entity; but rather to restore in its entirety the governmental model of television perpetrated during the Franco era. And this is what we have, what is obviously: a television with its back turned to reality, one-dimensional in its tastes, its ethics and its cultural message, whose leaders, intentions, methods and end product can only be described as a rerun of Francoism.

For example, during the 4 and a half months of Mr Robles Piquer's term, the RTVE's official statistics show the spectacular escalation in the image of three person-ages in Spanish public life: Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, Manuel Fraga Iribarne and Carlos Robles Piquer who, in an abuse of authority bordering on megalomania, far surpasses, for example, the president of the Congress of Deputies and the vast majority of political leaders.

A sign of the governmentalization of the TVE news reporting is the return to what George Hills, director of BBC programs for Spain and Latin America, defines as an archetype of "non-news, germane to the news media in undemocratic regimes": the social activities and travel of ministers and other high-ranking government office holders.

With the TVE news reporting space heavily controlled, and administered on the basis of a unilateral political plan, with decreased reporting on national issues and political activity and increased reporting on sports and weather forecasts, there remains a residual area enabling the old friends to satisfy their own clientele: and so, with TVE regarded as a "private preserve," it is not surprising that a member of the RTVE Board of Administration (from UCD, of course) should manipulate a report and furthermore be convinced that this is a normal practice. And

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when something is upsetting, it will suffice not to report it: disinformation, concealment of facts. The most recent instance: incidents in Lebrija and Trebujena.

If major events are approaching, for example, elections in Andalucia, they ... the director of the regional center among the long list of advisers of the honorable ministers; which explains why Tele/Andalucia has been converted into a pedantic bulletin of UCD, eager to reflect, with care, the Andalucian excursions of the government ministers.

As for the non-informational programing, one notes a decline in the production itself. There has been an elimination or soft-pedaling of "controversial" programs, and those of an open, participatory type ("Take the Floor," "Objective," "Hand to Hand," "The Witness," "Between Two Lights," "Music, Maestro," etc., in the first instance; and the "problems" of "The Key" and "In This Country," in the latter). There has been a return to the old formulas: "Open Studio" has returned; "One, Two, Three" has been announced for after the World games; and "Your Turn" is already on the air. In short, the television of the past, the forms of entertainment of the past, the comfortable culture of the past and the careful exclusion of alternative cultures, intended not for adults, not for free citizens, but for subjects on conditional release, who are childish and assiduously protected from reality.

This policy has caused a widespread situation marked by personal exclusions. A total of 67 top-rank appointments (public entity, associations, regional centers) have been officially reported to the Board of Administration. It is impossible to assess how many other second-rank appointments have occurred during the 4 and a half months of Robles Piquer's term.

But, based on the cherry theory, it is not rash to assume that the removal of individuals and positions (and, if need be, the accumulation of the latter) will double or triple that figure. At the present time, professionals of recognized quality are suffering a greater or lesser degree of exclusion (in some instances absolute), and working, when they do work, on tasks that are beneath their competence.

In the context of an authoritarian relationship with the Board of Administration on the part of Mr Robles Piquer (a position which affects the UCD board members, but which they do not dare oppose), there has been a gradual curtailment of the board's authority, with the complicity and submission of the Centrist board members. Unaccustomed to undergoing any kind of democratic control, Robles Piquer prefers to state his obligations to the board as "matters of courtesy," being painstaking to the point of exasperation in minor matters and acting without giving an explanation in the more serious ones.

The current situation of TVE necessitates a demand for responsibility on the part of the general director and Mr Calvo Sotelo's government. Spanish society so demands, and it will achieve this.

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POLITICAL

UNITED KINGDOM

'TIMES' ASSESSES SOVIET POLICY IN LATIN AMERICA

PM041159 London THE TIMES in English 4 May 82 p 9

[Editorial: "Will the Soviets Slip In?"]

[Text] To find the key to Soviet policy in Latin America one has to look at and listen to Cuba. Opinion in Moscow may have been confined in the main to criticism of British "imperialism" and American "hypocrisy". In Latin America, Cuba has been vociferous in its support for the Argentine junta, whose generals only the other day were discussing collaboration with Washington to contain Cuban-inspired subversion and terrorism in Central America. Underneath these contradictions, however, it is possible to discover a very clear long-term Soviet interest in the dissipation of Washington's power and influence throughout the American hemisphere.

The Soviet Union is beset by pressures on its own periphery--China, Afganistan, Iran and Poland. The men of the Kremlin see these pressures not as proof of communism's inherent untenability as a system of political control, but more as evidence that the world outside is determined to destroy them. Their strategy is thus strategically defensive, in that they have to meet their basic feelings of insecurity by permanently extending the outer perimeter of their defenses and seeking to destabilize all other societies which they inevitably regard as hostile.

In those terms it must be necessary for the Soviet Union to encourage as much agitation as it can in Latin America, since for historical reasons, that agitation can most conveniently be targeted on a symbolic hatred of Uncle Sam. Russia's patronage of Cuba was correctly seen as a vital first beachhead in this design; and that is what it has been. But beyond that the sheer volatility of the continent has foxed Marxist minds as much as everybody else seeking to observe patterns in the ebb and flow of Latin American politics. The Cuban foothold gave encouragement to guerrilla movements wherever they could get started. In January 1966, for instance, the Latin American solidarity organization was set up in Havana after a tri-continental conference attended by all Latin American communist parties which endorsed recourse to "armed struggle", in the continent, in that group incidentally, were two Argentine terrorist organizations, the ERP and the Monteneros.

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In 1970 the accession of Salvador Allende in Chile was appropriately celebrated by the establishment of close links between Havana and Santiago, which bracketed the continent while terrorism in Argentina continued to receive moral and material support. Until the fall of Allende in 1973, and the gradual elimination of terrorism in Argentina--at an appalling social cost--later in the decade, it must have seemed likely to Moscow that the toe of South America could move decisively out of Washington's orbit, and if that happened, could Brazil--the real jewel of South America--have been far behind?

It was not to be so, though there remained an ambivalent relationship between Buenos Aires and Moscow which was certainly more complicated than the simple certainties of terrorism and anti-terrorism would imply. However in the late 1970s Soviet and Cuban interests switched back to Central America causing President Reagan's Washington to become almost obsessed with the threat this might ultimately pose to the future stability of Mexico itself. It was that pre-occupation that encouraged Washington to try to enlist more allies from the South to help contain the damage in El Salvador.

Moreover, in addition to giving support to subversion, the Soviet economic presence in Latin America was continuing to grow. Its trade with Latin America, excluding Cuba, grew ten times between 1970 to 1977; its credit to Latin America, excluding Cuba, rose in that period from 2 per cent of its total credits to developing countries to 25 per cent. Though these figures do not suggest economic dominance in the area, they certainly help to position the Soviet Union to take further political advantage of any other frontier disputes which might occur on the continent.

It has never been Soviet policy to put all its strategic eggs in one basket--the Nazi Soviet pact is eloquent enough testimony to that. So when the Galtieri junta invaded the Falklands the Soviet Union was quite satisfactorily placed to exploit the situation to its advantage. Soviet-Argentine relations have anyway been very good since even before 1980 when Argentina ignored President Carter's call for a grain embargo on the Soviet Union after the invasion of Afghanistan. Since then Argentina's commercial dependence has grown, with 80 per cent of her grain crop and 50 per cent of her total exports going to the Soviet Union. In August 1979 a Soviet military delegation had already been in Buenos Aires to capitalize on Carter's ban on arms sales to the junta. These earlier contacts enabled Moscow to provide Argentina with intelligence about the British fleet presumably with the hope, or maybe the assurance, that they will be able to secure listening posts and access to other maritime services in return. Arms sales may also be stepped up in the wake of hostilities with Britain, not least because Argentina may not receive credit from anywhere else to buy arms in the Western world.

The decisive declaration of American support for Great Britain will have provided Moscow with much extra propaganda in Argentina. Whatever regime emerges in Argentina after the crisis, therefore, is bound to be bruised and even more wary of Washington than its predecessors. It will thus be all the more susceptible to Soviet approaches. That cannot be avoided and it explains why the American administration was so desperate to prevent the crisis deteriorating to a point of outright hostilities.

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However, this opportunity for the Soviet Union is not the only consequence of the crisis. In European terms, the alliance and its posture of deterrence have been immeasurably strengthened both by the decision of the United States to back its major ally--in spite of its own inter-American difficulties--and by the spectacle of Britain's will to use force to uphold international law and protect her citizens. That message cannot have been lost on West Berliners, who are, in one sense, the Falklanders of Europe; and if it is not lost on West Berliners, it is certainly not lost on East Berliners and their Soviet patrons. In the central area of East-West tension, where the deterrent has long been taken for granted, but more recently doubted, that point of reassurance must be significant. The prospect of Soviet strategists fishing in the troubled waters of the South Atlantic may be disturbing, but it must be set against the more important principle that has here been vindicated--upholding the law, and emphasizing the credibility of a policy of deterrence wherever it applies.

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GENERAL

FRANCE

FRANCO-JAPANESE COOPERATION ON ARIANE. SPOT, AIRBUS DISCUSSED

Paris AIR & COSMOS in French 24 Apr 82 p 9

[Article: "Presidential Trip to Japan: Aerospace Cooperation in the Forefront of the Tokyo Symposium on Advanced Technologies"]

[Text] During President Francois Mitterrand's trip to Japan, the dominant theme was technological development and the Franco-Japanese cooperation in this field. The aeronautical and airspace industries were kept in the forefront during this visit, especially during the symposium on advanced technologies organized at the initiative of Mr Jean-Pierre Chevenement, minister of Research. The symposium was opened by President Francois Mitterrand who took this opportunity to mention France's privileged position in the aerospace sector.

The symposium brought together 220 representatives of Japanese enterprises and 23 French participants, among whom Prof Hubert Curien, president of CNES [National Center for Space Studies], and Messrs Roger Chevalier, vice-president of Aerospatiale, Lathiere, managing director of Airbus Industrie, Jacques Berichou, president of SNECMA [National Aircraft Engine Study and Manufacturing Co.], and Giraudet, president of Air France, who presented reports or made speeches. In particular, Professor Curien underlined French self-sufficiency in the space field and its capability for bilateral or multilateral cooperation. Among others, he mentioned SPOT [Earth Observation Probe System] and Ariane, two realizations of particular interest for Japan. Mr Roger Chevalier, recalling French achievements in the field of turbo-propeller aircraft (Transall and ATR 42), suggested that the French and Japanese aeronautical industries could cooperate on new developments in this field. Mr Bernard Lathiere mentioned the operations of Airbus Industrie, the first flight of the A.310, and stressed that the A.320 could provide an opportunity for a Japanese-European cooperation, both in the field of airframes and in that of engines.

Japanese Interest in Ariane

Prof Hidemasa Kimura, president of the Council on Aeronautical Policy, remarked that Japan was behind in the aeronautical field since this industry amounts to only one fiftieth of the automobile industry; for his part, Mr Masao Yamanouchi, president of NASDA [expansion unknown], emphasized that the Japanese must know their partners better and must exchange information, especially on the systems already developed. The president of the Defense Council of Japanese Employers

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(Keidanren) stressed that France occupies a leading position in the aerospace sector in Europe and expressed the opinion that it should be relatively easy to implement a cooperation in this field. Mr Eiichi Ohara, president of Fuji Heavy Industries, however, remarked that aerospace operations are only subsidiaries of large groups which lack experience in advanced technologies. Finally, Mr Masato Yamano, vice-minister and director of the Agency for Science and Technology, expressed the opinion that the best way to start a technical cooperation with France would be to have Ariane launch the satellites that Japan cannot launch itself.

Need to Express Political Determination

After Mr Pierre Giraudet had recalled the need to develop a 150-passenger aircraft based on new technologies, the A.320, Mr Benichou remarked that this project could open the way to a cooperation on engines. Professor Curien showed that the MOS [expansion unknown] and SPOT projects are compatible and stressed the advantages which Ariane could offer in launching heavy Japanese satellites, as well as those offered by French-developed equipment. Mr Chevalier invited Japanese manufacturers to come and visit the French helicopter manufacturing plants. Mr Bernard Lathiere concluded that now was the time to go beyond generalities and repetitions and to proceed to realizations, but that talks and exchanges of information would not be enough and that it was now necessary to show political determination.

Our correspondent in Tokyo, Alfred Smouler, who represented AIR & COSMOS at this symposium, thinks it unlikely that concrete results will come out of these talks in the near future; however, according to Professor Curien, the atmosphere was "remarkable" and "favorable", and Professor Curien declared himself optimistic as to the possible use of Ariane to launch Japanese satellites. During these talks, France did not ask for anything. It presented offers for a technical cooperation that would be profitable to both parties, an important step in a field where, until now, words have been stronger than actions: our correspondent reports that the Japanese manufacturers who in the past were invited to visit French aeronautical facilities could not extend a similar invitation to French manufacturers visiting Japan, the reason given being that the Japanese industry works for the American industry.

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