

U.S./EUROPE

U.S. changes line on Eurocommunism

By Nancy I. Lieber

Since World War II relations between the U.S. and western Europe have tended to follow a comfortable course of mutual accommodation. In exchange for the American government's assurance of military protection, European nations have submitted to the economic penetration by private American interests. But the Europeans' diminished expectation of a Soviet invasion—despite the recent Soviet build-up in central Europe—and their lessening degree of economic dependence on the U.S. achieved in part through the Common Market, have injected an uncomfortable note into U.S./Western European relations. Europeans are now more anxious to overcome present "Canadianization" at American hands and less fearful of "Finlandization" from future Soviet hegemony.

For American policy-makers, the immediate cause of concern is the European left. In the last decade, European social democrats, led by the Swedes, have revived their interest in economic democracy and workers control, the French, Italian, Spanish, and Belgian democratic socialist parties have adopted a Yugoslav-inspired worker's self-management model of socialism, and the French, Italian, and Spanish Communist parties have undergone "Europeanization" and committed themselves to "bourgeois" democratic procedures.

By 1976, left governments in France and Italy had become a strong possibility. Acting according to post-World War II policy, the Ford/Kissinger administration declared such governments would be "intolerable."

Fear of Communism.

While the Atlantic Alliance and NATO were officially established in 1949 to deter Soviet military dominance in Western Europe, the U.S. had unofficially regarded the Alliance as also having a broader, anti-communist purpose. Any internal challenge to the status quo in Europe (essentially "reformed capitalism") was perceived as a threat to the Alliance rather than as a result of a free and open democratic process.

American policy-makers feared that the rise of European left governments would create havoc within NATO, since they assumed any Western European Communist minister would be a fifth columnist for the Moscow-directed international communist movement.

Such an American position was ironic. While the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 expressed a faith in democratic governments, the U.S. not only insisted that Salazar's Portugal be included in the original treaty, but it led the effort to keep Greek membership intact throughout the 1967-74 dictatorial regime of Papadopoulos.

In contrast, the French and Italian Communist parties are approaching a share of governmental power precisely because they have de-Stalinized and endorsed democratic procedures. The three Eurocommunist parties also have come to accept NATO's presence and purpose in Western Europe. Having rejected the USSR as a model and having opted instead for their own uniquely national routes, these Communist parties have actually considered the not unprecedented possibility of Soviet intervention into their experiments in building "socialism with a human face."

Intervention in '76 elections.

In 1976, the U.S. openly intervened in the French and Italian elections. In February, emissaries from the American embassy in Paris visited several Socialist party leaders in their homes, bearing the message that the U.S. would not tolerate Communist ministers in a French left government. In a June summit meeting in Puerto Rico, American officials discussed with close European allies a strategy of cutting off all economic aid to Italy in the event Communists were admitted to the Italian govern-

ment following the June elections. Earlier, key PCI intellectual Sergio Segre, scheduled to address the establishment Council on Foreign Relations in New York, was denied an entry visa—a courtesy extended to the prominent neo-fascist Italian leader Almirante, who was accorded a meeting in the Executive Office Building with two staff members of the National Security Council.

Not surprisingly, these heavy-handed American interventions were resented by a wide spectrum of Europeans, and may even have helped the left. Nor did certain parallels go unnoticed. In the mid-1930s, the right's attitude in France, for example, had been "Better Hitler than Blum" (the Socialist leader); in 1976, the outgoing administration's attitude seemed to be "Better Papadopoulos than Mitterrand."

Carter turnaround.

Initially, it was hard to be hopeful that President Carter's foreign policy toward Europe would differ from that of his predecessors. A safe Cyrus Vance replaced Kissinger, with hold-overs from Kissinger's staff and the previous administration filling the top European policy positions in the NSC and the State department. In fact, the man tapped for the

NSC European desk had worked formerly for the CIA.

Yet signs to date contrast noticeably with the Kissinger era. In late January, Jean-Pierre Cot and Michel Rocard from the French Socialist party were received in Washington by all the top-level European strategists, as well as by Mondale, Brzezinski and Vance. Cot later reported that Vance had assured him the U.S. would not interfere in a "destabilizing way" in the event of a Socialist/Communist legislative victory in France. That victory, according to Vance, was an internal question for France, a question concerning French sovereignty. Besides, Vance had observed, American intervention would "run the risk of being counterproductive." A second sign came in February when American embassy officials in Paris took the unprecedented step of meeting and exchanging views in the office of the PCF's top foreign policy man, Jean Kanapa.

Then on April 6 the American State department issued its first formal policy statement regarding possible governmental changes in Europe. "We believe that the position of a Communist party in a particular country is a matter to be decided by the people and the government of the country concerned.... We do not propose

to involve ourselves in the processes by which they reach their decisions on it. This does not mean that our attitude is one of indifference." The State department announcement coincided with the granting of American travel visas to several Italian Communist elected officials.

Communist weakness.

The Carter administration may be acting out of a principled commitment to the democratic process. Or it may simply recognize that the three Eurocommunist parties simply are not yet in dominant positions in Italian, French or Spanish politics.

The PCI, representing about one-third of the electorate, does have an informal veto power over parliamentary legislation by the Christian Democratic government due to its hold on several powerful legislative committees. But recent left opposition to the Italian government's economic policies includes growing criticism of the PCI as part of that government.

In France, the forging of a left coalition in 1972 has benefited the Socialist, more than the Communist partner. A recent poll, for example, gives the French left a whopping 56 percent of the vote, with 38 percent to the Socialists, 15 percent to the Communists, and 3 percent to assorted left groups. Thus, if the left won, Communist ministers would constitute a decidedly secondary force to the dominant Socialist presence. In Spain, where the left is weaker, the balance between the Socialist-Communist parties is even less favorable to the Spanish Communist party (PCE). In the recent June elections, the PSOE (Socialist Workers party) won 29 percent, the PCE 9 percent.

Post-election tactics.

To minimize growing left influence in Europe, the Carter administration nevertheless can always resort to post-election economic pressure. The first test will be France. Beginning with Mitterrand's near-miss of the presidency in 1974, the flow of capital outside the country and the declining rates of investment have already caused, in the words of the *London Economist*, "the virtual collapse of the French stock market." Many predict the legislative elections will be held well before the March 1978 deadline simply because a delay of nine more months could prove devastating to the economy in general. Whenever it comes to power, the left will assuredly need monetary and economic aid.

The U.S. could follow either the Chilean/Italian course of denying or threatening to deny crucial funds from international monetary institutions or the present Portuguese course of securing large loans for a shaky, yet salvageable ally.

Yet even if the Carter administration chooses the former course, the French left government would not necessarily go the way of Chile. France is considerably more self-sufficient, her economy stronger. More importantly, given the economic interdependence of the European nations within the European Community, officials in Brussels, as well as governmental leaders in Bonn and London, would most likely grant extensive economic and financial aid to a temporarily beleaguered France, rather than risk the health of the entire European economy.

It is not clear that the U.S. can exert the degree of political influence over Western European affairs that it once enjoyed. This is not because of "a weakening of the American people's national will," as Dean Rusk put it with regard to Vietnam, but because the Europeans have built movements that are now permitting them to challenge the post-war hegemony in Europe of American military and industrial interests.

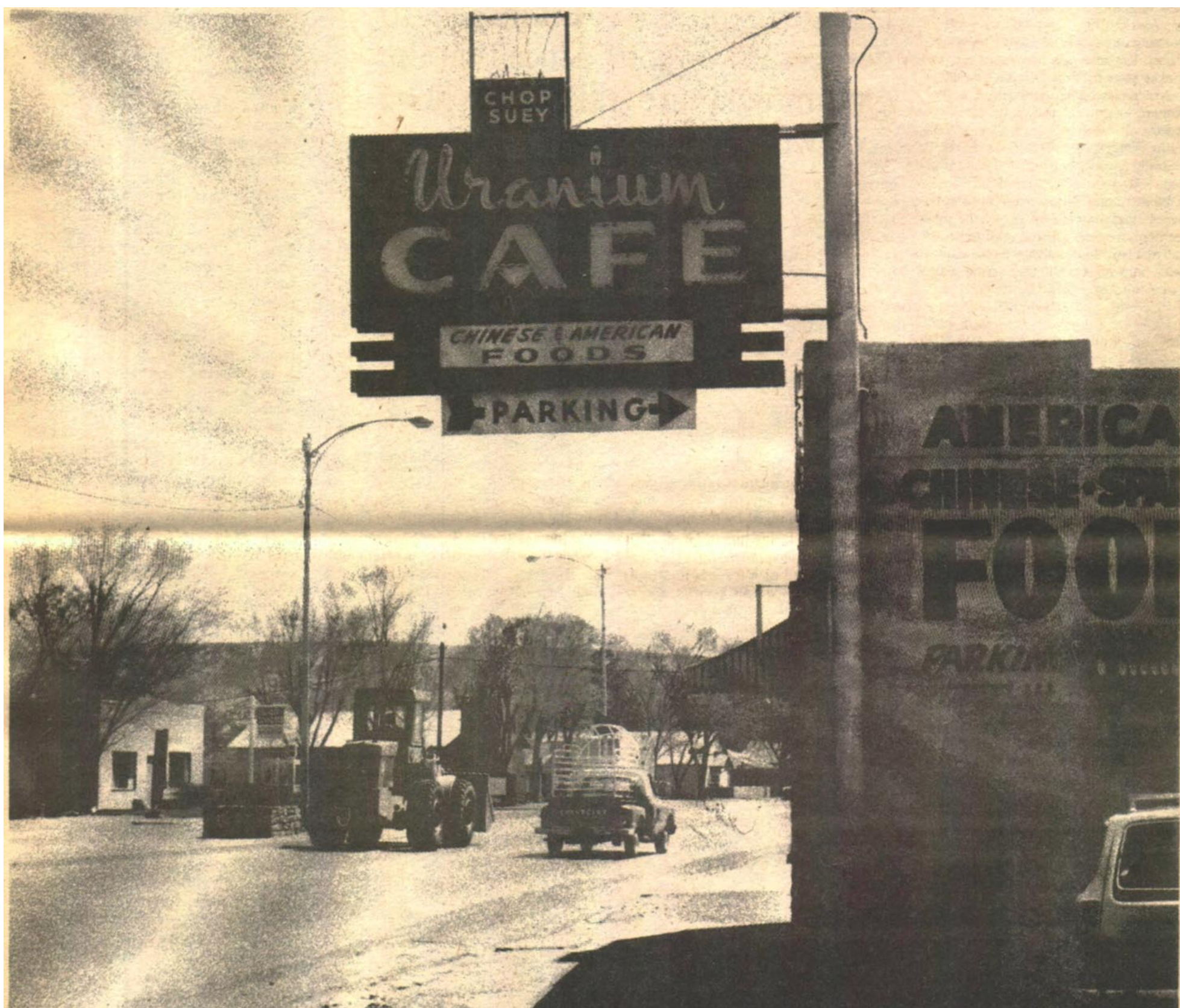
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URANIUM!

★ ★ IN NEW MEXICO ★ ★



Dede Feldman

The Saga of a Modern Boom Town by Dede Feldman

THE STREET SIGNS IN GRANTS, New Mexico, proudly bear the insignia of atomic energy and are marked with the words "Uranium Capitol of the World." On an average day the streets of the small town are clogged with the pick-ups, campers and U-Hauls of migrant miners now peopling dusty mesas and dry lands once dominated by Indians and later farmed by Spanish settlers.

Beckoning the thousands who have come to the Grants area in the past sev-

eral years is a new type of yellow gold—uranium.

It is the lure of uranium's high wages that prompt the new immigrants to send their children to overcrowded schools, breathe air that is threatened by radon gas, drink water that may be spoiled by radioactive run-off from nearby mills and live in the aluminum ghettos that make up the West's newest kind of boomtown.

Fifty percent of the nation's uranium lies in an area of northwestern New Mexico called the Grants Uranium Belt. In 1977-78 it is estimated that 17.9 million pounds of ore will be taken out of the ground by

extractive companies like Anaconda, United Nuclear, Gulf, Kerr-McGee and others. The value of that uranium is estimated to be \$360 million.

But while the northwest section of New Mexico is resource-rich—containing coal and oil as well as uranium—the area's inhabitants are poor. New Mexico is ranked 46th in per capita income in the nation, and in the northwest area of the state 39 percent of the population live below the poverty level, with 50 percent earning less than \$7,000 a year.

Many are Indians—Acomas, Lagunas, and Navajos—who revere the mountains

from which the ore is being taken. Others are Chicanos who have struggled to farm the arid land for generations.

The Grants area is close to the Navajo Reservation. The town itself has long served as a shopping and trade center for the Navajos, as well as for the pueblos to the south and east.

Until the 1950s Grants was a tiny agricultural community. Known as "the carrot capitol," in 1925 Grants had only 300 residents, most of whom were farmers or lumberjacks.

In 1950 a Navajo by the name of Paddy Martinez changed all that when he discov-