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URGENT INFORMATION
March 27, 1973SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. KISSINGER

FROM: Helmut Sonnenfeldt

SUBJECT: Anti-Americanism and Other Strains in the SPD

In preparation for the SPD national convention early next month in Hannover, Brandt has been trying to contain the rising tide of anti-Americanism in his party's left wing, especially among the Jungsozialisten (Jusos). The leadership has also been under strain as a result of Wehner's resignation as deputy chairman.

MORI/CDF per C03316872

Recent developments:

--Brandt stressed to SPD Presidium members February 27 that they must suppress rising anti-Americanism in the party but that the Americans are making it more difficult to accomplish this.

--At their March 9-11 Congress, the Jusos adopted resolutions for the Hannover convention denouncing both alliances, calling for a withdrawal of US and Soviet forces from a "detente zone" in Central Europe that would include the Federal Republic, and rejecting a new offset agreement. The Party Presidium turned down these demands.

--On March 16, Wehner announced that he would not run again at Hannover for the Vice-Chairmanship. His main reasons are his own poor health (diabetes) and that of his wife, but there have also been rumors that he is disgusted by faction-building, presumably by the Jusos, within the party (Embassy report at Tab B).

--On March 17, Brandt implied he would resign as chairman if the Hannover convention adopts planks inconsistent with the program on which the SPD won the elections last fall. At a leadership meeting he attacked party members who favor neutralism in foreign policy. Shortly afterwards, Wehner and a prominent left-wing leader, Steffen of Schleswig-Holstein, denied that Brandt had actually threatened to resign. Steffen called Juso proposals to stop offset payments "completely unthinkable."

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--Last week, a party official told our people that, faced by Brandt's opposition, the Jusos have decided to focus their convention challenge to the party establishment on domestic rather than on foreign policy issues. About 40 percent of the convention delegates are likely to be left-wingers (including Jusos) and they will probably gain greater representation in the party leadership.



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 USDEL SALT
 USMISSION BERLIN VIA POUCH
 AMCONSUL BREMEN VIA POUCH
 AMCONSUL DUESSELDORF VIA POUCH
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 AMCONSUL MUNICH VIA POUCH
 AMCONSUL STUTTGART VIA POUCH

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MBFR DEL; MPT DEL

E.O. 11452: GDS
 TAGS: PINT, PFOR, GW
 SUBJ: BRANDT THREATENS RESIGNATION; WEHNER ANNOUNCES
 NO REPEAT CANDIDACY FOR SPD VICE CHAIRMANSHIP

REF: BONN 3782

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1. SUMMARY: PUBLIC ATTENTION HAS BEEN EVEN MORE SHARPLY FOCUSED ON THE SPD NATIONAL CONGRESS AT HANNOVER, NOW LITTLE MORE THAN 20 DAYS AWAY, BY ANNOUNCEMENTS ON MARCH 16 THAT HERBERT WEHNER WILL NOT RUN AGAIN FOR A VICE CHAIRMANSHIP SLOT, AND ON MARCH 17, THAT CHANCELLOR WILLY BRANDT WOULD RESIGN AS PARTY CHAIRMAN IF THE CONGRESS WERE TO ADOPT PLANKS (1996 MOTIONS ARE ON THE AGENDA) WHICH CONTRADICT THE SPD ELECTORAL PROGRAM ADOPTED LAST OCTOBER IN DORTMUND. BRANDT HAS THUS SERVED CLEAR PUBLIC NOTICE THAT HE INTENDS TO HAVE HIS WAY IN HANNOVER. END SUMMARY.

2. MARCH 16, SPD VICE CHAIRMAN WEHNER ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD NOT RUN AGAIN AT HANNOVER FOR THE VICE CHAIRMANSHIP. WEHNER, 66 AND AN SPD VICE CHAIRMAN SINCE 1958, SAID HE WAS MAKING THIS DECISION BECAUSE OF "PERSONAL REASONS". WEHNER MADE CLEAR THAT HE WOULD RETAIN THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE SPD PARLIAMENTARY GROUP AND THAT HE WOULD BE A CANDIDATE AT HANNOVER FOR A SEAT IN THE SPD NATIONAL LEADERSHIP. FOLLOWING WEHNER'S STATEMENT, THE SPD PRESIDIUM NOMINATED NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA MINISTER PRESIDENT HEINZ KUEHN FOR THE VICE CHAIRMANSHIP. IT HAS ALSO BECOME KNOWN THAT SPD TREASURER ALFRED NAUJ, 66, WILL DIVEST HIMSELF AT HANNOVER OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR MEDIA POLICY. TWO POSSIBILITIES TO TAKE OVER THIS RESPONSIBILITY ARE HAMBURG INTERIOR SENATOR HEINZ RUHNAU AND BAVARIAN SPD VICE CHAIRMAN PETER GLUTZ (SEE A-660 OF JULY 20).

3. ON MARCH 17, CHANCELLOR BRANDT TOLD THE SPD PARTY COUNCIL THAT HE WOULD RESIGN AS SPD CHAIRMAN IF THE SPD CONGRESS AT HANNOVER ADOPTED MOTIONS CONTRADICTING THE ELECTORAL PROGRAM ADOPTED AT DORTMUND IN OCTOBER 1973. BRANDT REPORTEDLY SHARPLY CRITICIZED EVERY SPD MEMBER WHO WANTS TO LEAD GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY ONTO A NEUTRALIST COURSE.

4. THE ANNOUNCEMENTS ABOUT PERSONNEL AND POLICY FROM SPD HEADQUARTERS PARALLELS PUBLICATION OF THE LATEST WICKERT INSTITUTE POLL WHICH SHOWS THAT THE SPD IS THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC'S MOST POPULAR POLITICAL PARTY. A SAMPLE OF 1800 WEST GERMANS (EXCLUDING WEST BERLIN)

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RECENTLY ANSWERED THE QUESTION: "WHICH PARTY AT THIS MOMENT IS CLOSEST TO YOU?" WITH 47 PERCENT SAYING SPD, 31 PERCENT CDU, 10 PERCENT FDP AND 4 PERCENT ALL OTHER PARTIES. EIGHT PERCENT GAVE NO ANSWER.

5. COMMENT: BRANDT'S CLEAR STATEMENT OF WHAT HE WILL NOT TOLERATE AT HANNOVER GAINS ADDITIONAL IMPORTANCE FOLLOWING AS IT DOES WEHNER'S ANNOUNCEMENT WHICH WAS CAUSED BY: (1) THE CONTINUING POOR STATE OF WEHNER'S HEALTH (DIABETES) AND THAT OF HIS WIFE LOTTE (ANGINA PECTORIS), AND (2) AS RUMORED IN BONN POLITICAL CIRCLES, WEHNER'S DISGUST AT FACTION BUILDING INSIDE THE SPD. BRANDT'S IMMEDIATE CHOICE OF KUEHN (61 AND ALSO IN POOR HEALTH) CLOSES OUT ANY CHANCE THAT THE SPD'S LEFT WING COULD NOMINATE ERHARD EPOLER. FURTHER, IT BINDS EVEN MORE CLOSELY KUEHN'S POWERFUL AND WORKER-RICH NRW ORGANIZATION TO BRANDT'S SIDE IN THE BATTLE AGAINST THE PARTY'S LEFT-WING INTELLECTUALS. KUEHN, ONE OF THE LEADING PROPONENTS OF SPD COOPERATION WITH THE FDP, AND AN ARCHITECT OF THE FORMATION OF THE BRANDT/SCHEEL GOVERNMENT, CAN BE COUNTED ON TO FIGHT HARD AGAINST ANY SPD LEFT-WING PRESSURE TO DISASSOCIATE THE SPD FROM THE FDP.
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