

POLITICAL, MILITARY AND GENERAL

FURTHER REACTIONS TO DENMARK'S REJECTION OF EC UNION

After the NATO foreign minister's meeting today, EC foreign ministers will assemble at the SAS Hotel in Oslo at 1700 hrs to discuss the consequences of Denmark's rejection of the EC Union. In addition to those ministers already present in Oslo for the NATO meeting, several others will be arriving today to participate at the 5 o'clock meeting: Britain's Sir Douglas Hurd, France's Roland Dumas, Eire's David Andrews and EC Commission President Jacques Delors.

Speaking from Rio, Mrs Brundtland has said that Norway will now have to let the EC's internal debate run its course and will await a joint reaction from the member countries. She intends to stick to the Labour Party's original EC timetable and has rejected the idea of holding a referendum (as have 16 of the party's 19 county leaders) to decide whether or not Norway should apply for EC membership. Several top Norwegian politicians believe that Denmark's rejection of the EC Union and France's decision yesterday to hold a referendum could delay Norway's possible EC membership application and the entire European integration process. However, Trade Minister Godal has emphasised that the Labour Party's EC policy has never been dependent on the possibility of the Maastricht agreement being accepted by all the EC countries. He believes therefore that events in Denmark and France will have no direct bearing on the party's internal EC process. Foreign Minister Stoltenberg is worried that other EC nations may follow Denmark's example. When Denmark's TV2 wanted to know if Norway would now change its mind about applying for EC membership, Stoltenberg replied: "No, it's a long time since Norwegian foreign policy was decided in Copenhagen." Many pro-marketeers in Norway claim that Denmark's referendum shows that democracy works in the EC, and Stoltenberg says that he has never been in any doubt that the EC is the world's most democratic body. He also says that like the Danish referendum, the results of a Norwegian referendum would have to be respected. Furthermore he says that it could be easier to drum up support for Norwegian EC membership if the Maastricht agreement was amended. Labour Party deputy leader Gunnar Berge has also reaffirmed that the party will stick to its original EC strategy and he believes the party's November conference will still vote in favour of applying for membership. Arbeiderbladet, which regrets the results of the Danish referendum, comments that even if the Maastricht process survives, Denmark's "no" could delay the EFTA countries' chances of becoming members by several years, and at worst beyond the year 2000. Although the leader of the European Movement, Fredrik Vogt Lorentzen, still firmly believes that Norway should join the EC, he has called on Mrs Brundtland to hold fire with a Norwegian membership application until the EC has sorted out its current problems.

EC Polls (conducted yesterday): Opinion A/S on membership - 53% opposed, 33% in favour; 14% undecided. Scan-Fact on holding a referendum before applying for membership - 57% opposed; 33% in favour; 10% undecided. Aft pp. 1-4 & 8; Arb pp. 1 & 5-11; Dag pp. 1-9 & 20; VG pp. 1 & 6-9; DN pp. 2, 4-9 & 23)

MRS BRUNDTLAND AT THE UN EARTH SUMMIT

Mrs Brundtland was one of the main speakers at the opening of the UN Earth Summit in Rio De Janeiro yesterday. In her speech she said *i.a.* that the human race had reached a point where fundamental political change was unavoidable and the earth was crying out for a revolution. She said that during the remaining 400 weeks of the century poverty would have to be reduced, greater national and international equality was a must and human activities would have to be adjusted to concord with the laws of nature. She concluded by saying that the world needed nothing less than a global democracy based on a common understanding of common problems. Radical decisions were needed about the future of the human race in order to provide for future generations. (Aft p. 6; Arb p. 13; DN p. 15; VG p. 23)

LEADERSHIP CONFLICT IN LABOUR YOUTH LEAGUE

It is an open question as to who will replace Turid Birkeland as leader of the Labour Youth League at its National Conference on 1-4 October. Internal conflict on EC policy, which has split the League down the middle, has resulted in a battle two candidates - anti-marketeer Trond Gidske and pro-marketeer Beret Bråten. Jan Tore Sanner will stand for re-election as leader of the Young Conservatives at their National Conference on 26 June. (Aft p. 9)

RAUFOSS SALE OF M-M2s to USA STILL UNCLARIFIED

In Storting Question Time yesterday, Trade Minister Godal said that Raufoss AS had now applied for approval of an agreement to supply M-72 missiles to its American partner, based on a more limited order than the contract which was rejected by the Norwegian authorities last year. Godal said that the application was being considered. (Arb p. 53)

BRITISH NUCLEAR SUBMARINE HITS UNDERWATER ROCK DURING NATO EXERCISE

The British nuclear submarine "Valiant" is reported to have hit an underwater rock off the Norwegian coast during NATO'S Exercise TEAMWORK in March this year. A British Navy spokesman has said that the damage incurred was not serious. (Dag p. 18)

NORWAY AIMS FOR BIGGER SLICE OF UN PROCUREMENT CAKE

Aftenposten reports on UN procurement in Norway. The Norwegian Trade Council has organised a 2-day meeting between UN procurement officers and Norwegian companies. W Romani Urasa, procurement officer with the UN High Commission for Refugees, says that there is still a wide gap between the value of UN purchases in Norway and the country's development aid budget, but that a meeting of this nature is a step towards righting this imbalance. Norway sold goods and services worth Kr 150 m to the UN last year (compared with Kr 44 m in 1989) out of a total UN budget of Kr 10 bn. Urasa praised the Export Council for its professional approach to marketing. (Aft p. 30)

ABB TO LOSE MONOPOLY HOLD ON NSB CONTRACTS

The Norwegian State Railway (NSB) plans to break its long-standing traditional relationship with ABB Strømmen. Approx. 80% of all activities at ABB Strømmen (formerly the EB engineering works at Strømmen before Asea Brown Boveri took over Elektrisk Bureau last year) is due to NSB contracts (equipment and rolling stock). NSB now considers the arrangement as ineffective and is preparing to open the doors to outside competition. Another reason for the change in policy is the EEA agreement. NSB is currently planning to renew its locomotives and rolling stock. Tenders offered by both the Italians and Germans have included promises that over 50% of the contracts would be undertaken by Norwegian industry. (DN p. 3)

HYDRO IN FERTILISER CONTRACT WITH CHINA

Norsk Hydro has been awarded a Kr 250 m contract for supplying 175,000 tonnes of fertiliser to China. A contract has been signed with the Chinese trading organisation for chemical products, SINO CHEM. (Aft p. 29; DN p. 4)

BERGEN FIRM AWARDED TROLL FREIGHTING CONTRACT

Grieg Transport A/S & Co of Bergen have been awarded the contract for freight and forwarding services for procurements to the Troll platform. Norske Shell, the operator at Troll Phase I, has announced that the order is worth Kr 25-30 m of which 80% will be Norwegian. (DN p. 4)

STILL NO SOLUTION TO EUROPIPE ROUTING IN GERMANY

Negotiations between Statoil and the Niedersachsen state authorities in Germany about the routing of Europipe are on the verge of collapse (see press summaries of 27/4 and passim). Statoil is not prepared to bury the pipeline in a tunnel under Vadehavet, a protected national park reserve. Instead the Norwegians are only prepared to finance a pipeline laid in an open ditch. A spokesman for Niedersachsen says that the Statoil solution will contravene EC regulations governing the protection of birdlife. A tunnel construction will increase the cost of the project by Kr 975 m according to German estimates. The project should be started before 1 July if it is to remain on schedule for gas deliveries on 1 October 1995. (Aft p. 34)

COASTAL RADIO STATIONS TO BE RATIONALISED

Televerket has decided to reorganise its coastal radio services in South Norway. The plan will contribute to government aims to improve safety conditions in the sea lanes. At the same time stations which deal with less than 60,000 signals a year will be rationalised. (DN p. 13; Arb p. 24)

LITTLE CHANGE IN UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES

Figures released by the Labour Directorate show that a total of 104,684 (or 4.9% of the workforce) were unemployed at the end of May. The figure is 193 less than the previous month, but 14,354 more than in May 1991. Figures for those employed on job schemes will be available today. (Aft p. 29; DN p. 6)

ADDITIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

* The Storting has changed its timetable and will debate the agricultural workers' wage settlement today. (Aft p. 9)

Rates on 3 June 1992:

Currency Index = 100.21; £1 = 11.422; Brent Blend = \$21.15 p.b.