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Etela'at

Demonstration in Zanjan, northwest of Tehran, October 21. More than half of city's population of 100,000 turned

out to protest murder of seventeen-year-old demonstrator three days before. See pp. 1212 and 1214.

Iran—Masses Return to Streets

Trotsky's Assassin Reported Dead

Trotsky's Assassin Reported Dead of Cancer

By Joseph Hansen

In a dispatch datelined "MOSCOW, Oct. 20," the news agency Reuters reported that the assassin of Trotsky, Ramón Mercader, died October 18 in Havana. (He was born in Barcelona February 7, 1914.)

Reuters said that its account was obtained from "sources close to his family."

"The sources said that his body would be cremated in Cuba and the ashes flown to the Soviet Union, apparently for burial in a place of honor in Moscow."

Reuters added: "Earlier this month, Mercader's younger brother, Luis, who has lived in the Soviet Union since 1939, said Ramón—who was 64—had gone to Havana early in 1977 for treatment for cancer."

The Associated Press ran a similar account on its wires. This amounted to only a few paragraphs in the version published by the *New York Post*.

There seem to have been difficulties in verifying details.

According to Reuters: "Luis, 55, was not available to confirm his brother's death, but reliable sources said he was planning to return to Spain shortly and settle there with his Russian wife and children."

The Cuban government apparently remained silent over the death of the assassin of Leon Trotsky. Up to now, at least, we have seen no government statement that would confirm or disavow the Moscow account.

This may be owing to political embarrassment in Havana over the case. Perhaps this was why the Moscow dateline was used in announcing Mercader's death.

A decision on this, if one was involved, could have been made earlier. Reuters carried what could be considered to be a preliminary notice, which reported from Moscow (as published in the October 13 *Washington Post*): "Ramón Mercader, convicted of killing Leon Trotsky in Mexico in 1940, is dying of bone cancer in Havana, his brother Luis said yesterday."

Of some interest in both the notice about Mercader's illness and the one about his

death is the use of his correct name.

The assassin penetrated the Trotsky household under the name of "Frank Jacson," a name placed by the Soviet secret political police on the forged Canadian passport utilized by "Jacson" to gain entry into Mexico.

After his arrest, the killer claimed that he had burned the incriminating document. His real name, he averred, was "Jacques Mornard Van Dendresch."

Throughout his stay in prison, he insisted on using this false name. The matter was so important to him, or to his superiors, that when he became eligible for parole, having served two-thirds of his twenty-year term, he permitted the issue to block success in his appeal. On August 20, 1953, the day Mercader became eligible for parole, the warden of the Federal Penitentiary announced that official records from Spain left no doubt that "Mornard" was really Ramón Mercader.

Despite this unfavorable turn, Mercader went ahead with his appeal. The petition was denied January 24, 1956, by the Division of Crime Prevention.

In a dispatch last year reporting that Trotsky's killer was living at a secret address in Moscow, Reuters was more reserved about his identity:

"His name is most probably Ramon Mercader, but to many of his old friends he was Jacques Mornard, and to his victim he was Frank Jacson."

The source of Reuters's information was not official: "What little can be found about his twilight existence in Moscow comes from his younger brother, Luis Mercader, who lectures at a Moscow radio communication institute. Even he is reluctant to talk."

Mercader insisted on the "Mornard" name even after completing his prison term.

As reported in the May 16, 1960, *Militant*:

"On May 6 the Mexican authorities announced that they had released the assassin of Leon Trotsky from prison, some four months before completing his 20-year sentence, ordered him deported as an 'undesirable alien,' and had placed him on a plane bound for Havana, where he would remain one week before departing

for Prague, Czechoslovakia, his eventual destination. . . .

"The Czechoslovak government provided 'Jacson' with a diplomatic passport for his exit from Mexico. Made out in the name of 'Jacques Mornard Van Dendresch,' it did not list his place of birth or the names of his parents. But it was good for a transit visa through Cuba; and Mexican officials said that on his arrival in Prague he would assume Czechoslovak citizenship. They did not explain why the Czech government felt impelled to extend this honor to Trotsky's murderer."

The fact that the Czech government had provided the killer with a passport and passage to Prague was taken by everyone—outside of dyed-in-the-wool Stalinists—as decisive proof of his identity as Ramón Mercader, an agent of Stalin's political police specifically assigned to assassinate Trotsky, facts that had already been established and widely circulated.

What is new is Moscow's decision, on the occasion of his death, to acknowledge in a shamefaced way that "Jacson" and "Mornard" were aliases and that the real identity of the killer was Ramón Mercader.

Mercader's younger brother Luis played a role in this by announcing the illness of Ramón and then his death. But Luis could hardly give out information to the press without official permission or, more likely, an order.

The reporters of the Associated Press and Reuters would seem to have their work cut out:

1. How did Luis Mercader get permission from the Moscow authorities to reveal a top secret of the state—the real name of his older brother? The details would make a sensation.

2. Leads furnished by Luis Mercader, by his friends, or by acquaintances of his late older brother would be useful in such a probe.

3. A still more sensational scoop might result from attempting to ascertain whether some layers of the bureaucracy favor finally coming clean and acknowledging Stalin's guilt in the murder of Trotsky.

It was rumored in the 1940s that Mercader was decorated in absentia by Stalin with the Order of the Hero of the Soviet Union; his mother, also an agent of Moscow's secret political police, was said to have been decorated by Stalin with the Order of Lenin.

For destroying the most brilliant mind of our times, the two Mercaders received the commendation of one of the worst dictators of all history.

However, this obscure Stalinist hatchetman—along with his master, too—will not be remembered long.

Trotsky, on the other hand, will never be forgotten by humanity and those who succeed in winning the battle for socialism in which he gave his life. □

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*The dispatch appeared in the January 17, 1977, *Washington Post* under the byline of Chris Catlin. For the full text, see *Intercontinental Press*, January 31, 1977, p. 70.

Brazil's Next Dictator

By Fred Murphy

Brazil's Electoral College chose Gen. João Baptista de Figueiredo on October 15 to be the next president of the country. The former chief of the National Intelligence Service will begin a six-year term next March.

Figueiredo was outgoing President Gen. Ernesto Geisel's personal choice as the candidate of ARENA, the official government party. ARENA enjoyed a solid majority in the Electoral College by virtue of an elaborate system of indirect elections Geisel imposed by decree in April 1977.

Figueiredo will take over in a period when the dictatorship faces rising opposition. During the past year and a half there have been repeated student strikes and demonstrations demanding a general amnesty and democratic rights; statements of protest by diverse groups, ranging from scientists to businessmen; and, most importantly, a wave of strikes that began last May and has involved hundreds of thousands of industrial workers, teachers, doctors, and bank employees—the biggest labor actions in Brazil since the early 1960s.

Discontent has even spread into the military officer corps. Gen. Euler Bentes Monteiro was nominated as the presidential candidate of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (the only legal opposition party).

Bentes enjoyed the support of many middle-ranking officers, as well as of the former chief of Geisel's military cabinet, Gen. Hugo Abreu. Some of Bentes's backing in the army came from extreme right-wingers opposed to the cautious steps toward liberalization that Geisel has undertaken.

Liberals in the MDB supported Bentes also, however. To gain their support he pledged to rule provisionally for only three years and call elections to a constituent assembly. He had hoped to win in the Electoral College by drawing the votes of dissident ARENA electors away from Figueiredo.

The opposition was dealt a big blow when General Abreu was jailed October 2. Abreu had angered the army high command with a letter to fellow officers charging Figueiredo and other Geisel aides with corrupt dealings with multinational corporations.

Bentes failed to win the support of any of the ARENA electors, and Figueiredo triumphed easily in the October 15 vote.

The new president has pledged to continue Geisel's policy of "relative democracy"; that is, snail's-pace liberalization while maintaining the basic structure of the dictatorship. He gained the most notoriety during his campaign for a remark to reporters that he preferred "the smell of horses to the smell of people." □

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Iran—the Masses Return to the Streets

By Parvin Najafi

Since early October the mass mobilizations against the tyranny of the Pahlavi dynasty have reached unprecedented proportions, drawing in every layer and class of Iranian society. Strikes by vast segments of the working class are continuing at full force. Street demonstrations have not ceased for a day since the beginning of the month and in fact have spread to every corner of the vast country.

Iran has truly become the scene of gigantic battles for the sovereignty of the people in place of the bloody rule of the dictatorial monarch. In this struggle the oppressed of Iran are conquering one barricade after another from the enemy, pushing forward for a complete victory over the shah.

The massive might of the Iranian proletariat is behind this upsurge. Since the beginning of October, nearly every factory, service industry, and government ministry has either been on strike or is planning to walk out. The strikes are taking on an increasingly sharp political character as demands for freedom of political prisoners, the lifting of martial law, a return of the exiles, an end to censorship, and the removal of SAVAK branches from the workplaces (the "security office," as it is called in Iran) are being put forward more and more as the most central demands of the strikers.

The Teachers Strike

Among the most prominent strikes is that of the 400,000 teachers, which has shut down all schools throughout Iran. The demands the striking teachers have put forward nationally are:

1. Lift martial law.
2. Freedom for all political prisoners, especially students and teachers, and a return of the exiles.
3. No forced participation in progovernment demonstrations and parades.
4. Bringing to justice of all who are responsible for the bloodbath that has been carried out in Iran in the last year, regardless of the governmental positions they may hold.
5. The right of teachers to form their own union and publish union newspapers.
6. Removal of the thought-control "security offices" from all schools and branches of the Ministry of Education.
7. A thoroughgoing change in the whole educational system in Iran, including the election of principals by students and teachers and the introduction of new text-

books, with the direct participation of teachers and students.

To this basic list of demands the teachers in each locality have added their own most pressing economic demands and other social and political demands in their area.

To back up their struggle, the teachers have organized rallies throughout the country, attended by massive numbers of supporters from all sectors of the population.

At the same time, the teachers of different cities and provinces have organized a convening conference of their union, and after discussion as to their aims and policy have elected a temporary Executive Committee.

High-school students have gone out on strike as well, with demands similar to those of the teachers. The shutdown of the schools has released tens of thousands of militant young activists, who have now begun to play a more and more prominent role in organizing and leading the massive street demonstrations.

In fact, the majority of demonstrations that have taken place in Iran in the past few weeks have not been called by the religious leaders but have been called, organized, and led by teachers and students.

Red Banners Fly at the Universities

The universities have also had their most turbulent days in the last few weeks. In several of the biggest universities in Tehran and other cities the students have forced the guards off campus. This has effectively ended the banning from campus of anyone who does not have a university identification card, making it possible to organize massive rallies inside the universities on a daily basis. The newspapers in Iran report that a majority of the participants in these rallies are high-school students.

One of the biggest of these rallies was held on October 25 at Tehran University. *Rastakhiz*, the organ of the shah's dissolved Rastakhiz Party, reported that the crowd began to gather at dawn for that day's march and rally.

It gathered in two different contingents—one under green banners, the symbol of Islam, and a slightly larger group under red banners.

Those under the red banners carried slogans reading, "For a revolutionary democratic republic of Iran, under the leader-

ship of the working class." They also carried placards expressing support for the demands of striking teachers and workers.

After marching together for a while, the Muslim students marched toward the university mosque for a mass prayer; the leftist students marched toward the football stadium.

At the stadium the leftist students held a rally and announced they were going to stage a twenty-four hour sit-in for freedom of the political prisoners and an end to martial law. They set up tents, topped by red banners flying high. At the rally, representatives of workers from different factories spoke and voiced their solidarity with the students.

What the Students Want

Similar scenes have been reported from numerous campuses throughout the last few weeks. At the end of each rally the protesters put forward their demands in the form of a resolution passed by the participants. The resolution passed by the gathering at Tehran University is typical. It calls for the following:

1. The lifting of martial law.
2. Freedom of all political prisoners and return of the exiles.
3. Expulsion from Iran of all imperialist military advisers, including those who work as "civilians."
4. Termination of the economic and military treaties that keep Iran in bondage.
5. Dissolution of "security offices" in all factories, offices, and universities.
6. Freedom of speech, press, association, and political parties.
7. Dissolution of the government-organized "trade unions" and the right of workers to organize real unions.
8. Immediate granting of all demands of striking workers and employees.
9. Granting of all demands of teachers and high-school students.

To this was added a whole set of demands for the right of the students, faculty, and employees to exert democratic control over the universities, including through the election of all university officials.

The demands, appeals, and statements issued by striking workers and demonstrators have received prominent coverage in the press, owing to a major victory by striking journalists and employees of *Kayhan* and *Etela'at*, the country's two largest newspapers, that resulted in a considerable easing of censorship. This coverage by

itself is greatly assisting the mass mobilizations.

Walkouts Spread

Following the example of the journalists, the employees of the Ministry of Art and Culture also went out on strike, demanding dissolution of the Central Bureau of Publications. This bureau is the national apparatus through which censorship is imposed on all books and publications.

Nearly all workers in Iranian radio and television have also gone out on strike, demanding an immediate lifting of censorship in these very important mediums of mass communication. They are also calling for an end to government control and ownership of all radio and television stations.

Only a few well-paid announcers remain at work, forcing radio and television stations to cut their programs to a bare minimum. The radio stations play music and announce the time, occasionally reporting news items. Television programming has been cut to a few hours a day—all reruns.

The strikers have issued several appeals to the Iranian people, asking for help in their fight against censorship. Their statements have received prominent coverage in the daily newspapers.

There have also been an incalculable number of strikes whose character has been more economic than political. One of the most important of these is the strike of postal workers, who went out for twenty-one days beginning in early October. During this whole period not a single letter or package was delivered. They went back to work October 25 but have maintained a slowdown. They have given the government fifteen days to meet their demands or face a new walkout.

Some 150,000 striking textile workers went back to work October 26, after winning all their demands. The railroad workers went back on strike at the end of October after returning to work for a week or so.

Longshoremen are also on strike, and except for the oil that is pumped into tankers through underground pipelines, nothing is being exported or imported from Iran.

Among other strikers are the employees of the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Finance, and those of the state notary service.

The iron ore workers of Yazd are also on strike. This mining center normally ships ore to the steel mills in Isfahan and Ahwaz, which have now had to be closed down.

Demonstrators Take Over the Streets

The street demonstrations held in October have surpassed anything previously seen in Iran's history. Cities that have a population of only 100,000, for example, have had repeated demonstrations of

60,000 to 70,000 persons. The mood in these demonstrations is growing more determined.

Wherever possible the demonstrators have showered the shah's soldiers with flowers and sought to fraternize with them. On the other hand, wherever the soldiers have opened fire on the demonstrators, the crowd has given them a real battle. An example of this was the ten-hour clash between the demonstrators and the army and police in the northwestern city of Hamadan on October 22. After the fighting a correspondent for *Kayan* reported that Hamadan had taken on the appearance of Beirut during the civil war.

In many cities SAVAK agents have been recognized by crowds of demonstrators and have been brought to immediate justice.

In some cities independent truckowners have joined the demonstrations with their trucks, placing bullhorns and loudspeakers atop the vehicles to broadcast speeches and chants.

The massive participation of the peasantry is another truly unique and unprecedented aspect of these demonstrations. In many areas truckloads of peasants have come into the cities to join the marches. In the bloody Hamadan demonstration, among the list released by the government of those killed are the names of eleven peasants.

In several instances the peasants have organized their own independent marches. In Arak, for example, 1,500 peasants from surrounding villages marched twenty kilometers to the city, demanding freedom for thirteen peasants from their area who had been arrested.

1,126 Political Prisoners Released

On October 26, another important victory was wrested from the shah's regime, with the release of 1,126 political prisoners. The pretext was that the shah had pardoned them on his birthday.

Beginning at 5 a.m., a huge crowd gathered in front of the political prisons to greet their "heroes," as the throng called them. As the prisoners came out of the big metal doors of the jails, the crowd rushed to give them flowers and other presents. Then the former prisoners were raised on the shoulders of the crowd to make a speech. Almost all the prisoners stressed that it was the mighty arm of the oppressed of Iran that opened the shah's dungeons and won their freedom.

Meanwhile, the relatives of other political prisoners intensified their efforts to free those who still remain behind bars. On the same day, a huge crowd representing the families of political prisoners not covered by the amnesty gathered in front of the Justice Ministry, demanding the immediate release of all of them.

A month after the bloodbath of "Black Friday," September 8, the mass movement has reemerged in Iran, this time much

more powerful and with the solid backing of the working class. The whole mood and atmosphere of the demonstrations and strikes clearly indicates that the masses of oppressed and exploited have moved sharply to the left.

Bourgeois Leaders Backtrack

On the other hand, the movement's bourgeois leadership, organized mostly in the National Front and the religious hierarchy, has moved sharply to the right, coming out more and more openly in support of the shah and the monarchy.

On October 19 the leaders of the National Front announced that they are ready at any moment to form a cabinet under the shah. A few days later, on October 24, the leaders of the National Front even rescinded their call for the dissolution of the Majles (parliament) and the holding of new elections.

With the entry of the working class into the battle the bourgeoisie's own interests have become threatened and they are now doing their best to stop the mass mobilizations.

Karim Senjabi, a former minister in Mossadegh's government and now the head of the National Front Executive Committee, has openly expressed the bourgeoisie's fears and problems. In an interview with correspondent Jean Gueyras, in the October 4 *Le Monde*, he said:

The main problem is the monarchy. How to settle it? It wasn't difficult a year ago: all it needed was the faithful and total application of the constitutional law. Today it has become a complicated job. If, 12 months ago, you had to have courage to criticize the sovereign, today you need it to speak up for him. That's the nub of the problem. We no longer dare speak of the constitutional monarchy, though it has been provided for in our program."

The religious leaders are singing the same note, Gueyras reports: "Ayatollah Shariat Madari made it clear to foreign journalists that he did not agree with those who clamored in the streets for the shah's departure."

The only prominent religious leader who has not yet publicly supported the monarchy is Ayatollah Khomeyni. Mehdi Barzagan, a top leader of the National Front, and Naser Minachi, a prominent leader of the Tehran bazaar, have gone to France, where Khomeyni is in exile, to try to get him to rescind his call for the overthrow of the monarchy. The Iranian newspapers of October 26 reported that Khomeyni had refused to do so.

In any case, the main obstacle faced by the bourgeois opposition in stopping the mass mobilizations is not Khomeyni. The present movement in the streets of Iran is independent in character. No single organization or group of leaders have control over it or can order it to disperse before its central aim is won—the overthrow of the Pahlavi monarchy. □

Iran—The Mass Upsurge That Threatens the Shah's Rule

[The following interview with Alá, a recently exiled Iranian student activist, was obtained in mid-October.

[Alá first became active in politics while attending high school, where he helped produce a leftist wall newspaper. A few months after entering the university, he was arrested and tortured. He was arrested again a year later and was sentenced to one year in prison.

[On November 16, 1977, Alá participated in a demonstration in Tehran of some 24,000 students from all over the country, which was attacked by the police. Many students were killed or wounded. Alá spent one month in a hospital recovering from his injuries.

[The interview begins with a discussion of events that occurred in January and February in Iran, which set the stage for the gigantic demonstrations of September and the massive strike wave that followed.]

* * *

Question. An almost uninterrupted wave of protests against the shah's rule began this year with an open confrontation between the populace and the army in the city of Qum, a religious center south of Tehran. What touched off the uprising there?

Answer. I wasn't there, being in Tehran at the time. But a few of my friends were there.

Kayhan and Ettela'at, the main Iranian dailies, had been spreading slanders about the exiled religious leader Ayatollah Khomeyni, saying, for example, that he was a spy for England. This made the religious leaders very angry and they asked the people to attend lectures in the holy shrines. The speakers said many things about the shah and repression, denounced the slanders against Khomeyni, and so on.

By this time the police had surrounded the shrines. So the religious leaders asked the people not to give the police any pretext to attack them. Coming out of the shrines the people were silent and suddenly the police attacked them, firing their guns.

When the police began firing, the people first tried to escape. Later they got together to counterattack. After that, in the afternoon, tanks were brought in to deal with the situation.

That night until around 1 a.m. people were fighting the police in the streets, and many people were killed. Nearly 1,000 lost their lives, although the government claimed that only one person had died.

The newspapers didn't report the uprising in Qum until three or four days after it had happened. And when they did report it, they said that only five persons had died, two of them supposedly trampled to death in the crowds, and that two officers had been injured.

My friend told me that whenever anyone was killed, the crowd would hold the body aloft, shouting, "We had martyrs, and we are bringing more martyrs. Long live our martyrs and the way of our martyrs." Then, suddenly, the slogans were changed to "Shah, we will kill you."

Q. Do you know how many people had gathered in the shrines?

A. Qum is a very religious city, the most religious city in Iran, and many of the religious leaders live there. When they asked the people to come to the shrines, it carried the force of a religious order. So almost everyone went to the shrines, even women and children.

Q. Were there any other demonstrations before the events in Tabriz in February?

A. Small demonstrations took place in all the cities, even the small ones.

Q. Were these led by the religious leaders or by students?

A. In Tehran some were led by religious leaders and some by university students. But as I say, they were only small demonstrations. For example, people would gather in one mosque and hear a religious leader speak about the Qum uprising, and then they would come out of the mosque chanting slogans and quickly disperse.

Q. What was the mood on the campuses after Qum?

A. As before the students were not eager to attend classes. But they were jubilant that their struggle had spread among the people.

Q. What layers of society were now participating in the various demonstrations?

A. Many of them were common people, such as drivers and people working in bazaars, but not people working for the government. And some working-class people, such as workers at the Pars Electric Company, which is near Aryamehr University. And also the unemployed, especially the unemployed.

Q. Who were these unemployed? People who had been in the cities for awhile?

A. Yes. You see, there are about five million people in Iran who are unemployed.

Q. So they were the main group that joined the students.

A. Yes. And another thing, in all demonstrations other than those consisting mainly of university students the religious leaders would take up a position in the front ranks.

Q. What were the slogans being chanted at this point, and what demands were being raised?

A. One demand was for the government to respect the constitution. Another was for punishment for those who had ordered the massacre in Qum. They demanded release of the political prisoners and that the political exiles be allowed to return.

Demonstrators would also shout "Down with the shah," "Down with the Pahlavi dynasty," "Down with imperialism," and similar slogans.

Q. Down with imperialism? Was that directed at the United States primarily?

A. Primarily the United States. But sometimes there were banners that said "Down with the imperialisms of China, America, and the USSR." The people of Iran know that all these governments are supporters of the shah and benefit as a result.

Q. Let's turn to the events in Tabriz. Why did the shah crack down harder there than in the other cities where mourning demonstrations were going on?

A. I think because in Tabriz the government made a mistake. In other parts of the country people went to the mosques, they had their ceremonies, and after the ceremonies they went home.

But in Tabriz, the morning the people wanted to go to the mosques the army and police blocked their way and prevented them from entering.

Q. Why do you think they did that?

A. Because in Tabriz people are much more politicized than in other cities of Iran. And so the mosques were closed and people were forced into the streets.

The first person to protest this action was a religious leader, who asked, "Why have you closed the doors of the mosques?"

They shot him. When he fell to the ground, the people attacked the police.

Q. And then they took over the city?

A. Yes. They even took guns from the police. A number of policemen were killed that day, perhaps as many as a hundred. The police were pushed out of the city.

After that the army joined the police. They recaptured the city with the help of tanks and killed many people. Really it was a bloodbath.

Q. About how long did the people hold the city?

A. Three or four hours. And during that time the people burned many government offices and headquarters of the shah's Rastakhiz Party and banks.

Q. What were the effects of the Tabriz uprising?

A. Tabriz showed that the government would hold on to its policies by any means it had and that the shah himself was the real enemy. After that you couldn't restrain the people. There were demonstrations in every city every day. And some factories went on strike.

Q. How did the newspapers cover the events in Tabriz?

A. They said funny things. To explain the uprising they said that some people had come from outside of the borders of Iran and they were responsible for the trouble. And even more amusing, one of the leaders of the Rastakhiz Party, Mr. Ansari, said that the troublemakers were just a small group who were going from one city to another. He said this even while demonstrations were occurring simultaneously all over the country!

Q. So the word about what had happened in Tabriz had to spread by word of mouth?

A. Yes, but also by leaflets.

Q. Who produced the leaflets?

A. Many hidden organizations, such as Fajer Islam and various leftist groups.

Q. These were clandestine, illegal organizations?

A. Yes. And so, very soon people were aware of what had happened, even in small cities, and even in towns and villages.

Q. Were demonstrations then held in those towns and villages?

A. Yes, but called by the religious leaders.

You see, two or three months ago the real leaders of most of the demonstrations were religious figures. But more recently,

leaders of the National Front and its components such as the Movement for Freedom, and leaders of student groups began to play the most prominent role.

Since Black Friday, September 8, however, the religious leaders in Iran and figures associated with the National Front have been seen as very conservative. And because of what the government has been doing, the people don't like conservative leaders; they see a big gap between what needs to be done and what these leaders are calling for.

This is the main reason why they often chant "Long live Khomeyni." Because



Shah's army: How long before it cracks?

Khomeyni is seen as a very radical religious leader.

Q. He is very popular?

A. Yes, very popular. Recently even seven-year-old schoolchildren were leaving their classes shouting "Long live Khomeyni, long live Khomeyni."

Q. Would you explain why the demonstrations took place when they did?

A. You see, there are four ceremonies after someone dies—on the third day, on the seventh day, on the fortieth day, and on the first anniversary after the death. So after each bloodbath, there would be demonstrations on the third day, the seventh day, and fortieth day. Soon demonstrations were going on almost every day, because in one city it would be the third day, in another the seventh day, in another the fortieth day, and so on.

So we had many demonstrations. For example, in Zanzan the people joined a demonstration called by the religious leader of that city. That demonstration took place on the seventh day after a young man named Ahmad Mortazayee had been killed. I had gone there as the representative of the students at my university.

Nobody was killed at this demonstration because an agreement had been negotiated. The police and army agreed to stay away while the people held a peaceful procession and ceremony and then went home.

Q. How big was this demonstration?

A. The entire population of the city was there. I went up on a high building and took pictures of the crowd. Many, many people were there.

Q. You were also in Mashad.

A. Yes. The religious leaders had asked the people to join the demonstrations. And so every week and every month there were demonstrations in Mashad. I participated in one of them. About five people were killed that day.

So we had many large demonstrations. But the first really huge demonstration was the one on Monday [September 4] and after that the Thursday [September 7] demonstration before Bloody Friday.

Q. What was the Monday demonstration like?

A. All the religious leaders had asked the people to join it.

In Tehran there are at least four very large open spaces—one is called Qaitareih, which is north of Shemiran Street, another is called Sarah of Farah Abad. At all four places people were gathered. I was at Qaitareih and about 25,000 people were gathered there.

From these four assembly points people were organized to march to Valiahad Square in the center of the city.

At the square, we gathered on Pahlavi Street. It was about noon when we got there, and everyone joined in a traditional prayer. Even leftists participated to show the unity and solidarity that existed.

Earlier, as we marched through the street, flowers were thrown down from the houses we passed. Hoses were brought out to provide water. Bread, food, everything was there, being delivered to the people. Many shops were closed and their owners joined us. People cheered us from balconies and some of them joined us.

The march grew in size as time went on. The newspapers reported that about one million people had participated that day. And I believe it.

When we reached Hoseineh Ershad [a religious institution], we shouted to the soldiers, "Brother soldiers, why do you kill your brothers?" And this influenced them. Some of them had tears in their eyes. And everything remained peaceful.

Q. What part of the demonstration were you in?

A. About one kilometer from the front. The length of the entire demonstration after gathering all the people together was about 22 kilometers.

Q. What proportion of the participants were women?

A. There were many women, including women with veils.

Q. Was there any reaction in the crowd against the women who were not wearing veils?

A. No reaction. They were welcomed. Everyone was happy to see these women among the demonstrators.

It is one of the policies of the shah to say that these people are fanatics and are demonstrating for women to wear veils and so on.

Q. That is what the international press has been saying too.

A. Yes, I know. There were even pregnant women who joined us with no veils. The attitude of the demonstrators was to help these women. Many of them were offered rides in pickup trucks, for example.

Q. What was the ratio of women to men?

A. About two out of ten participants were women.

Q. And what proportion of the women did not wear veils?

A. The majority. A large number of high-school girls participated, for example, and none of them wore veils.

Q. Were the women marching in separate contingents?

A. Some of the women with veils gathered together. I don't know the reason. But most women marched hand in hand with husbands, brothers, sisters, and so on.

The organizers of the demonstration had asked the people to be peaceful. And to help keep the demonstration orderly they had marshals. Many people were asked to be marshals and everyone was willing because they wanted the demonstration to be peaceful.

Whenever it looked like there might be trouble the marshals locked arms along the side of the demonstration.

Q. Why did they do that?

A. Because a frequent tactic of SAVAK at previous demonstrations was to send agents provocateurs among the demonstrators. The SAVAK agents would then suddenly attack the police, for example with stones. This would give the police a pretext to attack the demonstrators.

In fact there was an incident something like that near Valiahad Square. Some people suddenly wanted to attack the soldiers. The women who were nearby surrounded this group and kept them from engaging in any provocative activity.

Q. Was there a lot of talking with the soldiers?

A. Yes, very much. Kissing was also a very common thing there. For example, I kissed a soldier once and he kissed me twice in return.

Q. And you hugged one another?

A. Yes, and there were many pats on the back.

Q. So there was a great deal of fraternization.

A. Yes. And in some places when the crowd shouted "Brother soldiers, don't kill your brothers," officers would throw their guns down and say, "That's true, we are your brothers."

Q. What did people say to the soldiers when they talked to them?

A. I don't know. I didn't talk to any soldiers.

Q. Were there extended discussions, or just brief exchanges?

A. Only short talks.

Q. What about the banners that were carried?

A. Common slogans were "Down with imperialism," "Down with the Pahlavi

dynasty," and "Kill the perpetrators of the bloodbaths."

There were many political demands also. For example, "We want an Islamic government," "We want a democratic country," "Free the political prisoners," "Let the exiles return," "Dismantle SAVAK."

Another important thing is that the demonstrators chanted "Viva Palestine, Eritrea, the Philippines, Iran." Also "Death to the shah," "Death to China," "Death to Russia," "Death to America," and "Death to Anwar Sadat."

Q. It has been reported that during this demonstration a lot of leaflets were distributed. What kind of leaflets were they, how many were distributed, and what was the response?

A. The leaflets were distributed by throwing bunches of them up in the air. And when they came down, people would grab them. Probably two or three million leaflets were distributed that day.

I should mention, though, that when the leaflets of the Tudeh Party, the Iranian Communist Party, were thrown into the air people would rip them up once they realized who had issued them.

Q. Why? Were they opposed to socialism?

A. No, no, because leaflets of other leftist organizations were not ripped up.

All the people remember the betrayal of the Tudeh Party when Mossadegh was overthrown in 1953. People say the Tudeh Party was responsible for the success of that coup, which brought the shah to power. The Tudeh Party didn't defend the Mossadegh government, this is well known.

Q. What about the Maoist organizations? What was the reaction of the people to them?

A. I don't know because that day I didn't see any leaflets from the Maoists. But when the people shout "Death to China," what does it show?

Q. Are there many technical problems involved in producing these leaflets?

A. They are run off on mimeograph machines that are hidden away, for example in the basement of a house. It is very difficult and we have lost many of our friends . . .

Q. Because of these machines.

A. Yes.

Q. It is considered a great crime by the government to possess one of these machines?

A. Yes, we have people who were sentenced to anywhere from fifteen years to life imprisonment for this. Many of the

people in whose homes such machines were found have been killed under torture.

Q. You can't buy these machines easily?

A. No, to get one of these machines requires all kinds of tricks, many tricks.

Q. There have been reports from Iran that several times during the Monday demonstration, when the soldiers cocked their guns and prepared to fire, a group of people stood between the soldiers and the main body of demonstrators, locked arms, and told the crowd not to worry because if the soldiers started to shoot they would be the first people to be killed. That is how they kept the crowd together.

A. Yes, this happened. I was there.

Q. Tell us what happened.

A. Well, the army officer had announced through a loudspeaker that if the people came any closer they would be shot. And then the people in front told us to sit down and we all sat down. And the people in front stood up in front of us. Some of them began to speak to the officer, and after some negotiations the procession continued on its way.

Q. How did the mass of demonstrators react to these incidents?

A. We were not afraid, because we were so filled with emotion that fear couldn't come into our hearts. Really I was ready to be killed. It was the first time in my life that I had seen one million people in the streets denouncing the government.

Before, when we had demonstrations of a hundred or so, we were afraid of being arrested and we ran away as soon as the police came. But here I felt confident that they couldn't arrest me.

Q. Did you also participate in the demonstration on Thursday, September 7?

A. Yes. The Thursday demonstration was just like the Monday demonstration but it was bigger, more than one million. Between Monday and Thursday the main thing people talked about was the Monday demonstration. So the Thursday demonstration attracted many people, even people from villages outside the city. Also many workers came, including people who worked for the government, in the ministries, and so on.

Q. How were you able to tell that peasants had joined the demonstration?

A. They had banners with them that said, for example, we are the peasants of such and such village.

Q. Were they organized by the religious leaders, or are there peasant organizations of any kind?



A. We don't have any peasant organizations in Iran. I don't know who organized them. But no organization was needed to bring them into the cities. Ten people from a village might just get together and decide to come to the demonstration. They might just decide on their own to do this. The sentiment is very high in the villages.

Q. How did the workers participate? Did they have banners saying we are the workers of such and such factory?

A. If I say the workers I am not just talking about the working class in the factories. That day all the small private factories in Tehran were closed, and also all the shops were closed. So a lot of workers joined the demonstration.

Q. But you didn't see any groups of workers identifying themselves as such?

A. No.

Q. Can you tell us more about the Thursday demonstration?

A. People say that the soldiers had been changed. The government was afraid that the soldiers who had been at the Monday demonstration might join the people on Thursday.

Before the Thursday demonstration the government had issued a message, which was printed in the newspapers, banning all demonstrations. The government statement said that the planned demonstration for Thursday would be violently suppressed. The message went on to warn that if people demonstrated they might be killed.

All the people knew this but they came anyway.

You see, during the twenty-five years since the coup in 1953 many people have lost at least one of their family members to the shah's repression and they have at least one or two more in jail.

People are also very oppressed by the

economic conditions. For example, the average worker gets between 1,000 Tomans [US \$143] and 2,000 Tomans [US \$286] a month, at most. Rent alone takes up 1,000 Tomans for a family of five, and most families are bigger than that.

And finally every day people see with their own eyes beatings in the streets by the police, arrests, and so on. If you don't live under those conditions you cannot understand the feelings of people. The government treats us like animals.

For example, the police, whose salaries are low, extort money from the peddlers and shopkeepers, especially if they don't have the proper licenses.

If someone wanted to go and protest against this, the police most likely would instead beat him, make false accusations against such a person, and so on. This is a very common thing.

During demonstrations, for example, they see the soldiers grab women and drag them by their hair to the army trucks and rape them.

Or they see an unmarked car pull over when the plainclothes SAVAK agents inside see a young man who has a beard and wears glasses, put him up against a wall and frisk him. God forbid if they find a student ID card because if they do they most likely will beat him severely and then throw him into the car and take him to jail.

These are scenes that are repeated every day in the streets. People see so many humiliations like this that they become outraged.

One story that is widely known is that some policemen raped a young girl and when her parents protested at the police station they were arrested.

Such incidents are widely known either through word of mouth or knowing someone personally who has been victimized.

Q. Were you ever in jail yourself?

A. Yes. Two times.

The first time they had me for more than sixty days. Those were very difficult days. They tortured me; here you can see a scar from a wound they made.

About a year after that they arrested me again, because I had read my poems for my friends. I was convicted and sentenced to one year in prison.

Q. For reading your poems?

A. Yes, for reading my poems and for talking about political matters.

After I was arrested they tortured me again. If a doctor examines my feet now he can understand what they did. I was also placed in solitary confinement.

Q. What kind of questions did they ask?

A. They asked me if I wanted to organize a group, who were my associates, what books had I read. . . .

[At this point the interview had to be interrupted because Alá could not talk any more about his experience in prison.]

Q. Turning to Black Friday, September 8, the day thousands of persons were gunned down—were you at that demonstration yourself?

A. No. My parents had come to Tehran and they kept me confined.

That day I lost a number of my friends. One of them was a young moviemaker, and two other friends. They were shot down by the soldiers.

Some of my other friends who were there told me what happened.

Between about 6 a.m. and 7 a.m. people had gathered in Jaleh Square, near the house of Alameh Nouri, the representative of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran.

The night before, the shah had ordered the premier and the other ministers to declare martial law. But until 7 a.m. the next morning no one knew anything about the martial law because it was not announced on radio or television.

After a large number of people had gathered they wanted to go north from Jaleh Square. The army officers told them they would not be allowed to march and that they must disperse and go home. The officers said that if the procession continued they would open fire. Many tanks and army trucks were nearby.

But the demonstrators didn't pay any attention and continued their march. At first, for about a minute, the soldiers fired tear gas and shot into the air. But people still refused to disperse. And they began burning tires and other things to neutralize the tear gas.

At this point the soldiers began firing into the crowd.

According to my friends, the officers and soldiers "hunted" the people in the most sadistic fashion. They closed all the entrances to the square and then stalked and shot people as if they were deer. They also fired from helicopters.

As news of the bloodbath spread, people in the surrounding area rushed out and, ignoring the danger, attacked banks and government buildings in the area and overturned buses to form barricades.

In one hospital there is a doctor who is my friend. He told me that he had seen the bodies of seven soldiers and officers who had been brought to the hospital by the people. You see, they had supported the people and were shot down along with the others. According to my friends, other soldiers, not knowing who to shoot, committed suicide.

I have heard estimates of 5,000 to 30,000 for the number of people killed there that day, including those who later died from their wounds.

Q. How long did the shooting go on?

A. I heard shooting going on until about

4 p.m.

People who lived nearby opened the doors of their homes and offered refuge to persons fleeing the shooting.

In some cases houses were turned into makeshift hospitals. Word would be spread around the city that blood donors were urgently needed at those houses and also at the hospitals where the wounded were taken.

So many people answered these appeals that the blood banks of the hospitals were soon completely filled up. No blood was donated to the government's national blood-collection agency, however.

Many merchants who sold pharmaceutical supplies brought critically needed drugs and provided them free for treatment of the wounded.

There are a lot of independent pickup-truck owners who for a small amount carry loads here and there. On this day many of them offered their trucks for carrying wounded persons to where they could be treated.

All kinds of people helped because they knew the government wanted the wounded to die. In fact, there were cases where the police or soldiers discovered a house where injured persons were being cared for and went in and killed everyone.

Police and SAVAK agents also stationed themselves at certain intersections to arrest anyone who looked like a doctor to prevent them from treating the wounded.

The army surrounded hospitals in other areas of the city to prevent doctors from leaving and going to the areas where they were urgently needed.

But many doctors took great risks and played all sorts of tricks to get to where they were needed. At some hospitals, for example, doctors dressed up as trash collectors or janitors and walked through the army encirclement carrying garbage.

Still, despite all these efforts, many of the wounded died.

Q. There have been reports that people defied the martial law decree even after the massacre. Did you see instances of this?

A. Yes. On the afternoon of Bloody Friday the loudspeakers of the police and army as well as radio and television broadcasts announced that martial law was in effect and that no more than two persons could be together, and the other rules.

However, after the shooting had ended and everything had become peaceful again, as many as fifty persons would gather near some of the tanks, ostensibly to look at the guns. They wanted to show that they were not afraid of the martial law.

And at every bus stop people who had no intention of taking the bus gathered; sometimes the crowd would grow to a hundred persons or more.

You would also see a hundred or so persons gathered at a telephone booth

pretending to be waiting for the phone.

The day after Bloody Friday a joke began to make the rounds that gives you an idea of the mood of the people. As part of the martial law a curfew was in effect from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. According to the joke, at a quarter to nine a person was going to his home and the police shot him down. A passerby asked, "Why did you shoot him? It is only a quarter to nine." And the policeman answered, "Oh I knew him and he couldn't possibly have reached home until after nine, so I killed him."

Q. When did the wave of workers' strikes begin?

A. Three or four days after Bloody Friday.

Q. Were they protest strikes against the killings or did they begin raising economic demands also?

A. Of course they all had some economic demands but the common demands were "Lift martial law," "End regimentation in the factories," and "Punish the perpetrators of Black Friday."

Q. So they were basically political strikes.

A. Yes.

Q. How were the demands and statements of the strikers made public?

A. The workers of different factories issued statements and distributed them like leaflets. These statements would be sent to the newspapers as well. Of course, the newspaper reporters even if they saw the statements could not report them because of the censorship.

Q. Were these leaflets widely distributed?

A. Not widely because they didn't have the necessary facilities for widescale distribution.

Q. Did the workers make any contact with the students?

A. Beginning in May, all the universities were closed because of student strikes. Many of the students got jobs in the factories with the aim of establishing an organization there. This was the main contact between the workers and the students.

Q. So the students really went to the workers rather than the workers coming to the students.

A. Yes. For example, many of my student friends had gone into hiding and then decided to get jobs in the factories to help the workers organize.

Q. How would you describe the politics of the students who went to the factories?

A. Many of them are communists, maybe the majority of them.

Q. Supporters of the Tudeh Party, or communists in the general sense?

A. Communists in the general sense, because you see there is really no Tudeh Party network in Iran although they claim that they have one. If they went to the factories and said they were from the Tudeh Party the workers would tell them to go away.

The Tudeh Party claims that it has organized every strike in Iran but that is completely false.

Q. So these students are independent of the Tudeh Party and oppose the policies of the Tudeh Party?

A. Yes. Other than the Tudeh Party, which claims to be a communist party, there is no organization for communists in Iran. In other words, there is no party organization for communists in Iran. Maybe a few small groups here and there, but that is all.

Q. Are there organizations on campus of varying political outlooks?

A. Sure.

Q. But you work together?

A. Yes, university student groups even with different ideologies work together, because the enemy is just in front of them. If for only one minute they forget this and make one another the enemy they will be defeated.

But abroad, for example in the United States, there are groups of students that struggle with each other—you can't find this in Iran, even though we have different ideologies.

Q. How much political discussion goes on?

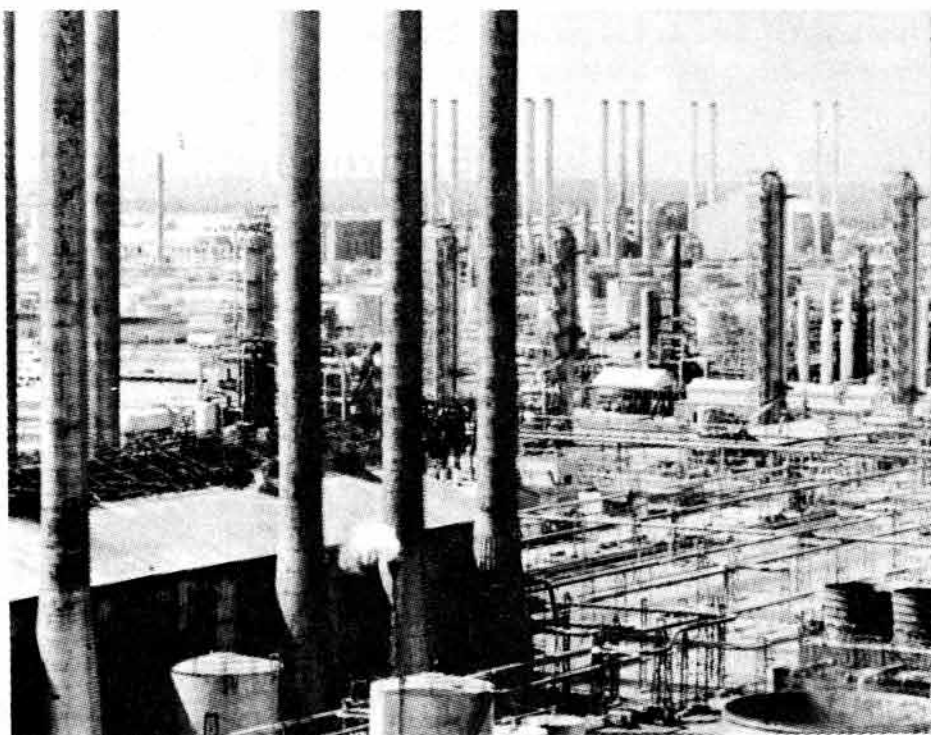
A. Whenever students get together they discuss politics. And even the jokes that are told are political.

Q. Is there an awareness of other struggles that are going on in other areas of the world? For example, did you know what was happening in Nicaragua?

A. Because of the censorship in the newspapers of Iran, the information on Nicaragua that they gave was misleading and distorted. But we were able to get more accurate information through the short-wave radio and through foreign reporters stationed in Iran.

I myself am a poet and writer and was in contact with such people.

Q. Do the majority of students consider themselves leftists?



Der Spiegel

Ultramodern oil refinery at Abadan. Workers from this and other industrial complexes have gone out on strike to demand end to martial law.

A. Yes, but this would also include many Muslim students who consider themselves leftists. Of the students who have gone to the factories the majority are communists.

Q. What is their attitude toward the Chinese regime?

A. Completely disgusted. You cannot talk about China in the universities.

Q. Were you there during Hua Kuo-feng's visit?

A. Yes. We published a leaflet saying that once again the Chinese regime had shown its true face.

Q. So who do these communist students identify with internationally?

A. Fidel Castro is very popular. Also Georges Marchais in France is popular, because he has supported the movement in Iran.

Q. So even though he is known as a comrade of the Tudeh Party, he is popular.

A. Yes, but Fidel Castro is by far the favorite.

Q. What about the liberation movements in Africa?

A. We support them.

Q. What about the PLO?

A. The PLO is the closest friend we have. There is a very strong sympathy,

even among the common people, for the PLO.

Q. What is the relationship if any between the students in Iran and the Iranian students in the United States and other countries? Is there much contact at all?

A. No, not much contact.

Q. What do you think will happen in the coming months in Iran?

A. In many cases the government has been forced to grant concessions to the people, but because the people are so injured—not only their bodies but their hearts are injured—a raise of two or three times in their wages will not satisfy them. Anyway inflation will take away the increases, and conditions will again become worse. The struggle will continue. □

Travel Tip

The Chinese government prefers tourists who are conservative, wealthy, and influential, an entrepreneur who has organized visits there reports.

Lars-Eric Lindblad told the Hong Kong daily *South China Morning Post* that Chinese officials "prefer to have a conservative businessman come to visit China today than a radical."

This is "simply because you know that conservative businessmen can go back and speak to people in power and influence China's relations. . . . They want the conservative, influential American to come see what China is."

Wages, Safety, and Environment on Chopping Block

By Jon Britton

President Carter announced "Phase II" of his "anti-inflation program" in a televised speech from the White House October 24. "We must face a time of national austerity," he said.

Last April, when Carter announced the first "phase" of his austerity drive, he used similar words, calling upon all Americans to "sacrifice for the common good."

Carter does indeed have real sacrifices in mind, but not from the ruling rich he serves. To the extent his "anti-inflation program" succeeds in its aims, which only incidentally include stemming inflation, it will be solely at the expense of working people.

The second "phase" of Carter's program, like the first, is part and parcel of the antilabor offensive launched by Richard Nixon in 1971 and carried on in one form or another by the U.S. ruling class ever since.

The real aims of Carter's austerity drive can be summed up as follows:

1. To strengthen the position of U.S. corporations in the world market, where competition has been getting more and more fierce. This is to be accomplished by cutting wage costs, getting rid of "unnecessary" health, safety, and environmental regulations, and cutting corporate taxes.

2. To alleviate growing financial pressures on the government owing to the world economic slowdown. This is to be achieved by increasing taxes on working people and by cutting social spending. (Military expenditures, on the other hand, are projected to go up substantially, even in constant dollar terms.)

The net result, if all goes according to plan, will be fatter profits for the employers and a stronger U.S. dollar.

Carter's new scheme sets forth "standards" aimed at keeping most wage increases in the coming year well under 7%, although the cost of living so far in 1978 has been rising at nearly a 10% rate.

To lure workers into accepting this swindle, another "standard" calls for a given company's overall price increases in the next year to be at least 0.5% under the average annual increase for the last two years. If adhered to by employers this would supposedly produce an inflation rate of 6.5% for the economy as a whole.

But Carter's 7% limit covers both wages and "fringe benefits" such as pensions. And money for "fringe benefits" doesn't go to workers but into investment accounts controlled by the corporations and banks.



So in terms of wage increases workers actually collect, Carter is talking about 6% or less.

On the other hand, prices are almost sure to go up by more than 6.5%. Unmentioned by Carter in his speech but included in the more detailed explanation released by the White House is the fact that the real limit on prices requested from business is 9.5%, if firms suffer "unusual cost increases."

Moreover, while enforcement of the 7% wage standard is no problem (the employers will be only too happy to comply), policing the price standard is impossible. The editors of *Business Week* explain why:

The formula for computing price ceilings . . . is excruciatingly complex and almost impossible to police without an elaborate audit of each producer and distributor. . . .

For companies with hundreds of products and major shifts in the product mix each year, such a calculation would involve pioneering ventures into averaging and indexing. The paperwork costs would be astronomical, and the results would be highly unreliable.

Realistically, there is no possibility that the government could audit pricing policies except in the largest corporations. . . . The trouble is that controlling even the leaders in the detail this program provides could call for an army of

enforcers, backed up by auditors who will review confidential information on product lines and market shares. Such an intrusion of government into management of the private sector did not occur even during the mobilization and price controls of World War II [*Business Week*, November 6.]

It is safe to say that "such an intrusion" will not occur now either. But even if it did, rising prices produced by a depreciating currency cannot be suppressed by the most draconian controls. Even the Hitler regime, which "intruded" quite extensively into the private economy of Nazi Germany, could not get rid of inflation.

As further sucker bait Carter offered another pie-in-the-sky gimmick. He promised to introduce legislation that would provide workers who accept the 7% standard with tax rebates, should the cost of living rise faster than 7%.

But if such legislation were passed—which is by no means certain in view of the fate of previous promised rebates—workers would not be protected. The rebate would be pegged to the government's Consumer Price Index, which notoriously understates the real rate of inflation. Furthermore, Carter specified that there would be a "cap," or upper limit, on the rebates no

matter how high prices go.

In short, the ongoing fall in real wages in the United States from the 1973 peak is almost certain to accelerate if workers accept nominal increases for both wages and "fringe benefits" of only 7% a year in new contracts.

In regard to another of his profit-boosting efforts, Carter announced that "today . . . the Occupational Safety and Health Administration eliminated nearly 1,000 unnecessary regulations." He is putting strong pressure on all the regulatory agencies of the government to follow suit.

On the fiscal front, Carter announced further budget tightening moves, including a sharp cutback in federal hiring that will lead to a reduction of 20,000 in the government work force. Earlier he had ordered a 5.5% limit on pay increases for federal workers.

Carter also hinted in his speech that he would sign the tax legislation recently passed by Congress (he later confirmed this). Under this measure, some 80% of taxpayers will actually wind up paying more federal taxes in 1979 than they did in 1978—because of a big jump in Social Security taxes already scheduled to take effect in January and because of the automatic effect of inflation bumping income earners into higher tax brackets.

Big business and wealthy individuals will get real tax cuts. The nominal rate on corporate taxes is being reduced from 48% to 46%, the 10% investment tax credit is being liberalized, and capital-gains taxes are being slashed.

To sell his "anti-inflation" wage cuts to American workers, Carter has launched what *Business Week* called "a highly professional propaganda effort of staggering scope."

However, in light of earlier experiences with wage-price guidelines and controls, both in the United States and elsewhere such as in Britain—and in light of the growing militancy and distrust of the government shown recently by industrial workers—Carter has a very tough selling job ahead of him.

This is already indicated by the lukewarm endorsements of "Phase II" that Carter has obtained from labor officials such as Teamsters President Frank Fitzsimmons. (The upcoming negotiations between the Teamsters and the trucking industry are widely seen as a key test for Carter's wage "standards.")

Fitzsimmons made his support "conditional," the conditions being that "adjustments" be made in the wage standard and that the program show some success in moderating price rises.

Rubber Workers President Peter Bommarito said his union "could live with" a program such as Carter proposed if prices, interest rates, rents, and other living expenses of union members are stabilized—a big "if," to say the least.

The AFL-CIO has yet to respond offi-

cially to Carter's wage-price package, but administration "sources" had told reporters earlier that they held out little hope of winning support from the labor federation.

Carter's plans for scrapping "unnecessary" health, safety, and environmental regulations may not fare very well either. Even before his speech, environmentalists were protesting the new White House moves.

Moreover, the continued potential for protest against really drastic cuts in social spending, and against further tax increases, as well as the decision to up military spending, make it unlikely that Carter will be able to cut the federal deficit to a noninflationary level.

All this, combined with a cloudy economic outlook, helps to explain why the

financial markets responded so negatively to Carter's speech. In the days that followed, the dollar dropped to new record lows and the stock market continued one of its biggest plunges ever.

A short-term brightening of economic prospects, including a temporary strengthening of the dollar, is not ruled out.* But the longer-range outlook is for accelerating inflation and a sharpening class struggle as working people fight for higher wages, full cost-of-living escalator clauses, and other means of protecting their living standards from the intensifying attacks of the employing class. □

*See *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, October 23, 1978, p. 1169.

After 100% Hike in Bus Fares

Strikes and Demonstrations in Guatemala

A 100 percent increase in urban transportation fares touched off a wave of strikes and street demonstrations in Guatemala in early October.

Immediately after the fare hike was announced on September 30, several hundred trade unionists, students, and public employees met in Guatemala City at the call of the National Trade-Union Unity Committee (CNUS) and the Committee of State Workers Organizations (CETE), which together include the majority of Guatemalan trade unions.

The assembly voted to call for lightning rallies and the construction of barricades in the poor neighborhoods of the capital, and rotating strikes in industrial plants and banks.

The CETE also called for a general strike of public employees in Guatemala City that began October 2. It was extended throughout the country on October 9.

Two thousand students marched in the capital to protest the fare hike on October 2. Police opened fire, killing at least one student and wounding fifty. Thousands more persons came into the streets, building barricades and burning buses.

The protests continued on October 3, and three more demonstrators were killed by the cops. Clashes were also reported in the city of Amatitlán.

On October 5, students, workers, and peasants demonstrated in Jutiapa. The next day the protests spread to Quetzaltenango, Guatemala's second-largest city. Five hundred middle-school students there set up barricades and battled police.

The City Council of Guatemala City ordered the transportation companies to roll back the fare increase on October 7,

but the bus owners refused to do so and the strikes and protests continued.

Hundreds of government employees occupied the posts and telegraph building in the capital on October 2. They were finally dislodged by the police on October 10, and 400 were arrested.

On October 11, the police opened fire on a peaceful demonstration of public employees in Guatemala City, wounding at least ten.

Altogether, government troops and police killed 30 persons, wounded 300, and arrested 800, in the course of the protests, according to the October 11 issue of the news bulletin *Noticias de Guatemala*. In addition, right-wing terrorists in plain-clothes machine-gunned the offices of the radio station "Nuevo Mundo" and the newspapers *El Independiente*, *El Gráfico*, and *Nuevo Diario*.

The wave of protests and strikes was continuing as of October 11. □

Just One of Those Things

A woman whose husband and child were killed in a crash at a railway crossing has received a bill for A\$349.15 for damage to the railway engine, the Australian socialist weekly *Direct Action* reported October 19.

According to a representative of the railways board, the claim was simply a "normal procedure" and no one had complained in the past.

"It does seem callous," she said, "but it's just one of those nasty sidelines to this kind of death."

Palestinian Movement Is Biggest Loser

By Livio Maitan

Camp David, the new conflict in Lebanon, and the tripartite Washington conference have again placed the Middle East at the center of world attention. The situation continues to change constantly and the periods of equilibrium that develop are extremely precarious and fragile. However, over the past two months there have been tangible changes in the relationship of forces and in the situation of the principal protagonists.

The results of Camp David are clear in their basic outline. The Zionist government of Israel can rightly claim victory. It was able to deepen the split among the Arab states; neutralize Egypt, the principal Arab military force; avoid any form of recognition of the Palestinian movement; and is now even less disposed to accept any plan for an independent Palestine. In the not too distant future Israel also hopes to obtain economic advantages, which are not unimportant given the growing difficulties and tensions in its economy and the inevitable repercussions these have in the social arena.

To a large extent the Egyptian government has traded off its present isolation within the Arab world for strengthened ties with imperialism, with the prospect of long-term support in all fields, and for the advantage of appearing to the masses to have ended a war that official propaganda successfully portrays as the cause of the economic difficulties and growing impoverishment of the overwhelming majority of the people.

The Carter administration was successful in pushing the USSR out of the picture, portraying the United States as the only power able to play a decisive role. It also preserved and strengthened the traditional American alliance with Zionism, which remains a cornerstone of imperialist strategy in the region, while at the same time reconsolidating its links with the largest Arab countries.

Among the losers, the biggest is the Palestinian movement, which was left out of the game. Particularly hard hit was the moderate Arafat leadership, which had backed the ministate compromise solution and has now not only lost the partial recognition previously won but has also been explicitly denied the right to determine the fate of the West Bank and the Gaza strip. The empty protests and proclamations of solidarity from the "steadfastness front" are meager consolation even on the purely propagandistic plane.

The second biggest loser is Syria, which

could in the near future find itself in a confrontation with Israel and imperialism. Damascus is bogged down in an increasingly inextricable situation in Lebanon, with no concrete perspective for solving its special problems.

The USSR is also a loser. It was unable to exert the slightest influence in the whole affair and to get back into the game it now has only one ally, hardly worthy of confidence—Assad's Syria.

The conservative Arab states—Saudi Arabia and Jordan—are in an uncomfortable position. In the last analysis they have everything to gain from a solution based on a perspective of *Pax Americana*. At the same time they have been pushed completely to the sidelines and were confronted with a *fait accompli*. Above all they fear that the Palestinians, who now have no hope for a "peaceful solution" to their national problem, may undergo a radicalization leading toward the replacement of their present leadership, or at least leading to situations of conflict that could mobilize the masses of other Arab countries. That is why they refused to get involved with Camp David, while leaving the door ajar.

The events in Lebanon, on the other hand, have served abrupt notice on all the mouthpieces of imperialism who hailed Camp David as a triumph for peace, reminding them that a lasting peace will not be achieved piecemeal or through separate agreements. In fact, any solution, even partial, touches on the interests of a whole range of forces. And any momentary equilibrium runs the risk of being overturned in short order.

The bourgeois mass media has raised a howl about the activities of the Syrian army, while trying to make us forget the role played by the reactionary militias of Chamoun and Gemayel. Those who endorsed all the reprisals of the Zionist government and all the massacres against the Palestinian resistance from Jordan to Tell Zaatar have no right to raise their voices in condemnation of the Syrian bombardment of Beirut.

The ones really responsible for the present tragedy, as well as for the tragedies of the past thirty years in that part of the world, are the Zionists, the imperialists, and the representatives of the Arab ruling classes. Despite their contradictory interests, these forces have worked together to prevent the Palestinian people from exercising their right to self-determination and to assert their independence. They were

motivated primarily by fear that the Arab masses would revolt against the poverty and oppression they suffer, opening up an anti-imperialist battle with an anticapitalist dynamic.

The Syrian counterattack is a direct consequence of Camp David. Assad is faced with the perspective of an unfavorable evolution in the relationship of forces if the Camp David accords are concretized. In particular he is faced with the possibility that the Lebanese reactionaries and Israel, backed by the United States, might try to impose a settlement that is unfavorable to Syria regarding the problems that concern it most directly.

Such a settlement could undermine the base of the Syrian government, which rests on an unstable balance of forces and maintains itself through harsh repression. That is why Assad and company want to exploit whatever breathing space they have, not only to strike militarily at the Lebanese reactionary front, but also to weaken the Christian community as a whole by carrying out blind massacres, by destroying the conditions necessary for its survival and eventually forcing it into a massive exodus.

This in no way means that the Syrian leaders are primarily concerned with defending the vital interests and aspirations of the Lebanese and Palestinian masses. The Syrian army intervened in Lebanon to block the progressive Lebanese and the Palestinians from gaining further ground; and the intervention was aimed directly against them. At this moment, conjunctural needs have led the Syrian bourgeoisie to reverse its tactical orientation, but it is by no means excluded that it may make other pirouettes.

Above all, Assad and company seek a solution that would help stabilize their regime, and they are not at all opposed to a compromise with Israel and the United States, though on different terms than those accepted by Egypt.

In the final analysis all the indigenous and international conservative forces have an interest in seeing the overall thrust of Camp David succeed; both Washington and Cairo have staked their hopes on this.

However, the Palestinian movement still exists and has not been substantially weakened by the Israeli aggression last March. Furthermore, the masses in the occupied territories reject any accords that trample on their rights, and the Arab

ruling classes themselves are divided by contradictory interests. This means that Camp David and similar accords will have to be imposed, and by the most brutal methods. That will not be easy, and new conflicts are inevitable. In this sense recent events in Lebanon could be an anticipation of other dramatic developments on a much larger scale.

The revolutionary-Marxists of the region must continue their determined struggle for an overall solution to the problem of the Middle East demanding, within a perspective that is both anti-imperialist and anticapitalist, recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and independence, and the right of the exploited Arab masses to organize independently.

Mario Vargas Llosa to Head Panel

Peru—Independent Tribunal to Probe Right-Wing Terror

By Fred Murphy

An independent "Anti-Terrorism Tribunal," to be headed by the renowned novelist Mario Vargas Llosa, is being formed in Peru to investigate links between the military government and a wave of bombings and kidnappings aimed at leftists.

In late August the homes of Constituent Assembly deputies Ricardo Díaz Chávez of the UDP and Magda Benavides of the FOCEP* were bombed, as was the Lima headquarters of the Revolutionary Marxist Workers Party (POMR).

On September 3, FOCEP activists Francisco Santa Cruz and Ricardo Morales Bermúdez and Colombian journalist Roberto Fanjul were kidnapped outside a FOCEP headquarters in downtown Lima. Santa Cruz and Morales were released after several hours, but Fanjul was held for a week and severely tortured.

These kidnappings involved a large number of men, some armed with machine guns or carrying walkie-talkies, and a number of vehicles without license plates—all on the main streets of Lima.

The assailants told Santa Cruz and Morales they were from the "Peruvian Anticommunist Alliance" (AAP). They took credit for the August bombings. When they released Fanjul the kidnappers left a note claiming the journalist was "an Argentine Montonero" and warning that "communists like Hugo Blanco" would be "eliminated."

*UDP—Unidad Democrático-Popular (Democratic People's Unity); FOCEP—Frente Obrero, Campesino, Estudiantil, y Popular (Workers, Peasants, Students, and People's Front).

This means the immediate withdrawal of Zionist troops from all occupied areas, a demand that is part of the struggle against the Zionist state of Israel; the withdrawal of United Nations troops from Lebanon; and the dissolution of the reactionary armed gangs of Chamoun and Gemayel. It also means rejecting any illusions regarding the supposedly progressive role of the Syrian army, whose presence in Lebanon is intended to serve the interests of the Syrian bourgeoisie and its ruling group. That is why Syrian troops must also leave Lebanon.

The Lebanese masses and Palestinian militants should not entrust their defense to any imperialist army, whether or not it is camouflaged by the UN flag, nor to any supposedly national bourgeois army. The

Palestinians must continue their armed struggle independent of every Arab state and strive to achieve a strategic convergence of the struggles of the Palestinian masses, both inside and outside the occupied zones, with the struggles of the masses of all the Arab countries against imperialism and their native ruling classes, and with the coming struggles of the exploited Israeli masses themselves.

The Lebanese workers, peasants, and students must organize their own mass self-defense and must struggle to win or regain their democratic rights, in order to totally secularize Lebanon, and to convoke a constituent assembly elected through proportional representation, by a single voting list and on a nondenominational basis. □

The government's initial response was total silence. Almost two weeks later the Ministry of the Interior issued a statement saying that investigations were under way to "identify" the terrorists and that "all the weight of the law" would be brought to bear. But it failed to mention the names of the victims or to acknowledge the paramilitary character of the September 3 operations.

In face of the obvious lack of enthusiasm on the regime's part, a number of Lima magazines and newspapers began to call for independent investigations. In particular, the weekly *Equis* announced that it would publish all evidence made available to it and offered a reward equivalent to US\$1,120 to anyone providing information on the identity of the kidnappers.

The idea of a tribunal was first raised by Alfonso Baella Tuesta, publisher of the conservative weekly *El Tiempo*. (Baella was one of the fourteen political figures and journalists deported by the regime to Argentina last May.) In a mid-September editorial in *El Tiempo*, he wrote:

At this moment not a single Peruvian can be unaware of the brutally tragic truth: there exist in our country one or more organizations that enjoy . . . official permission to carry out terrorist attacks. The kidnappings of the Argentine [sic] journalist Fanjul Rodríguez and the extremist militants Santa Cruz and Morales Bermúdez provide ample proof of this assertion. The nationality or political affiliations of the victims make no difference. All human beings deserve to have their rights respected. . . .

Individuals from the left and from the right . . . independently of the public authorities—which either do not want to or cannot act—must

immediately form an Anti-Terrorist Tribunal that . . . can put together sufficient material in order to provide it to the proper authorities and exhibit it before world public opinion. [Quoted in *Equis*, September 27.]

The editors of *Equis* quickly joined Baella's call, and publicly invited Vargas Llosa to head such a tribunal. The novelist accepted.

Other members of the tribunal will include Christian Democratic Constituent Assembly Deputy Héctor Cornejo Chávez, who during 1971-76 was president of the National Council of Justice (Peru's supreme court); attorney Laura Caller, Peruvian representative of Amnesty International; attorney Genaro Ledesma, FOCEP president and assembly deputy; UDP President Alfonso Barrantes Lingán; and the editors or publishers of five of Peru's leading independent periodicals. The latter are Alfonso Baella of *El Tiempo*, Julio Cabrera Moreno of *Equis*, Francisco Iguartua of *Oiga*, Ricardo Letts of *Marka*, and Enrique Zileri of *Caretas*.

The initial members of the tribunal are reported to be seeking the participation as well of former President José Bustamante y Rivero and respected Peruvian historian Jorge Basadre.

When it begins work, the Anti-Terrorism Tribunal will already have some evidence to work with. *Equis* has reported that, according to a number of sources, the bombings in August were masterminded by a military intelligence aide named Luis Alfredo Otoyá Avalos, who goes by the nickname "Kung Fu." Otoyá is said to be a

martial arts instructor and an expert torturer. He is also widely believed to have played a role in the September 3 kidnappings.

Also according to *Equis*, the main organizer of the kidnappings was Inspector Teófilo Aliaga Salazar, chief of the coun-

terintelligence department of the National Intelligence Service (SIN).

On the basis of the evidence developed by *Equis*, criminal complaints are to be filed against Otoyá, Aliaga, and SIN chief Brig. Gen. Juan Schroth Carlin by bombing victims Benavides and Díaz Chávez,

kidnapping victims Santa Cruz and Morales, and Hugo Blanco. Blanco had also been at the FOCEP headquarters on September 3 and might well have been the kidnappers' real target. A group of FOCEP activists were able to move him to safety during the attack. □

Peruvian Trotskyists Take Big Step Toward Unification

By Miguel Fuentes

LIMA—Unification of the Peruvian Trotskyist movement has taken a big step forward with the formation of the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers Party).

Hugo Blanco and other leaders of the new group announced at a news conference October 11 that five Trotskyist groups had fused to form the PRT.

Joining in the unification are the Frente de la Izquierda Revolucionaria (FIR—Front of the Revolutionary Left), the FIR-IV (FIR-Fourth International), the Grupo Combate Socialista (Socialist Struggle Group), the Círculos Natalia Sedova (Natalia Sedova Circles), and the Tendencia Pro-Unificación (TPU—Pro-Unification Tendency) of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers Party). The TPU was led by Hugo Blanco.

Three other leaders of the new PRT also participated in the news conference: Victoriano Ramírez (FIR), Jorge Lucar Vázquez (TPU-PST), and trade-union leader Hipólito Enriquez. Enriquez is the organization secretary of the FETIMP, the principal union of Peruvian metalworkers.

The PRT will publish a newspaper called *Combate Socialista* (Socialist Struggle). This will replace the paper *Revolución* (Revolution), of which two issues were published to promote the fusion process and explain this development to the Peruvian people.

Constituent Assembly deputy Genaro Ledesma hailed the founding of the PRT at the October 11 news conference. Ledesma is president of the Frente Obrero, Campesino, Estudiantil, y Popular (FOCEP—Workers, Peasants, Students, and People's Front). He said the formation of the PRT marked an advance toward unity of the left, and welcomed the PRT's decision to work in the FOCEP and help to strengthen it.

The FOCEP received more votes than any other force on the left in the June 18 Constituent Assembly elections. Hugo Blanco is also a FOCEP deputy.

Two of the groups involved in the fusion had belonged until recently to another electoral bloc, the Unidad Democrático-Popular (UDP—Democratic People's Unity). The UDP is dominated by Maoist tendencies.

Two other Peruvian Trotskyist groups also fused recently—the PST and the Frente de la Izquierda Revolucionaria—Partido de Obreros y Campesinos (FIR-POC—Front of the Revolutionary Left—Workers and Peasants Party). This new group has retained the name PST and is to publish a newspaper called *Bandera Socialista* (Socialist Flag—the name of the former FIR-POC's paper).

These unifications reduce the number of Trotskyist currents in Peru to three: the PRT and PST, both sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International; and the Partido Obrero Marxista Revolucionario (POMR—Revolutionary Marxist Workers Party), which is affiliated internationally to the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International.

Efforts are continuing toward uniting all the Trotskyist groups into a single party. The POMR has taken an important initiative in this direction, calling publicly for discussions among the three currents to promote joint work.

The process of unification has been given impetus by the overwhelming sentiment among the Peruvian workers and

peasants for unity in the face of escalating government attacks on their democratic rights and standard of living. Hardly a day goes by without a call from one sector or another for unifying the workers and peasants organizations.

The Peruvian left has been badly splintered in recent years. According to an article in the Lima weekly *Marka* last May 4, there were some thirty-four organizations that the editors considered part of the left. This figure included five pro-Moscow or pro-Peking fragments of the Stalinist Communist Party, eight centrist or Maoist groups that arose from the organization known as Vanguardia Revolucionaria (Revolutionary Vanguard), eight tendencies that trace their history back to the Castroist MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left), and seven or more groups claiming to be Trotskyist.

But of all the currents in the Peruvian left, only the Fourth Internationalists have thus far been able to embark on a successful fusion process, thus strengthening their forces relative to those of the centrists and reformists.

October 11, 1978

French CP Calls for Halt to Immigration

The French Communist Party has added its voice to the right-wing chorus calling for a clampdown on immigrant workers in France.

The CP's parliamentary delegation read a statement in the National Assembly October 6 in which it called for "a halt to all new immigration." The Stalinist parliamentarians thereby extended a helping hand to Premier Raymond Barre, who, the previous day, had hinted that the government might refuse to renew the residency permits of several thousand immigrant workers—primarily Algerians, Moroccans, and Tunisians—when they expire in 1980.

To be sure, the CP's statement was couched in references to a "genuine policy of return corresponding to the aspirations of the immigrant workers," and vaguely

worded opposition to "racism and xenophobia." But in the context of a virulent propaganda campaign aimed at blaming the evils of the capitalist crisis on immigrant workers, such statements are nothing but window dressing.

Replying to Barre—and to even cruder threats by Labor ministry official Lionel Stoléru, who said that "the number of jobs held by immigrant workers in France will diminish even further"—the French Democratic Confederation of Labor released a communiqué. The trade-union federation pointed out that "the departure of the immigrants is not an answer to unemployment, and in fact, has only a slight impact on the job market. On the other hand, such statements can only encourage a climate of racism and add to the insecurity of the immigrants."

Why Canadian \$ Is Falling Even Faster Than U.S. Greenback

By Richard Fidler

[The following article appeared in the October 16 issue of *Socialist Voice*, a revolutionary-socialist fortnightly published in Toronto.]

* * *

"The Canadian dollar has fallen to less than 85 cents (U.S.), its lowest level in 45 years. It now costs 22 cents more to purchase a U.S. dollar than it did two years ago—and 89 percent more to buy the Japanese yen or Swiss franc.

"The dollar's decline hits consumers hard. For example, the increased cost of imported fruits and vegetables has helped boost food prices by more than 17 percent during the past year, a key factor in thrusting inflation rates toward double-digit levels.

"The drooping dollar reflects the declining competitive position of the Canadian economy in the face of rising trade rivalry from other capitalist countries, especially the United States. And speculation against the dollar in international currency markets reflects declining confidence among investors in the government's ability to 'manage the economy,' that is, guarantee profit rates. This concern is compounded by Canada's political instability, particularly the mounting struggle of the Québécois for national liberation and independence.

"Ironically, the weakness of the dollar originates partially in the very conditions that made Canada an exception to trends among major capitalist countries in the early 1970s. While other capitalist economies were slowing down, Canada's expanded, owing to the boom in world prices for fuel and raw materials.

"But the steep rise in resource prices tended to mask a decline in the volume of exports. In fact, Canada's share of world trade has been declining for more than a decade.

"And high resource prices, affecting about half of Canada's goods and manufacturing output, also gave rise to a strong inflationary push.

"The combativity of Canadian workers kept them abreast of the steep inflation in the early 1970s, and even slightly ahead of it. In 1974 workers in both Québec and English Canada waged a round of successful strikes and struggles for the reopening of contracts to negotiate cost-of-living provisions. This combativity, coupled with the effects of Nixon's wage freeze in the U.S., contributed to a relative decline in the wage gap with American workers, making

Canada less attractive for investment.

"In an initial attempt to reverse these trends, the Trudeau government made a fundamental shift in strategy in the fall of 1975. First, the repressive power of the state was mobilized to put a ceiling on wage increases throughout the economy.

"The essential goals of the wage controls program were to hold down labor costs, substantially boost profits, and stimulate a new wave of capital investment. The first goal was successfully achieved, the second only partially, and the third failed to materialize.

Second, the government sought to maintain a high level of investment by keeping interest rates high enough to attract foreign capital. The resulting high demand for the Canadian dollar in foreign exchange and investment markets maintained it above the U.S. rate. Goods from the United States could thus be imported relatively cheaply. The price of imported goods did not rise at all during the first year of controls. This factor, not wage controls, is what caused the inflation rate to drop to 6 percent in 1976.

"But this was achieved at the cost of a balance of payments crisis: the huge volume of foreign money brought in at high interest rates required even larger outflows of Canadian dollars for repayments and interest. Canada has borrowed \$16 billion abroad in the last four years. Most of the borrowing today is simply to pay back interest and dividends for previous loans and investments.

Moreover, the overvalued dollar made Canadian exports relatively expensive, undermining their competitiveness.

The election of the Parti Québécois government in November 1976, following on the heels of the October 14 cross-country strike of one million workers against wage controls, increased the uneasiness felt by market analysts and investors. Demand for the Canadian dollar fell sharply. Governments and private investors moved to get rid of their holdings of Canadian dollars, increasing the supply on the market. The result was a fall in the dollar's exchange value.

"The Trudeau government then reversed policy and allowed the dollar to fall during 1977. This increased the profits of companies that specialize in exports, especially resources industries. MacMillan Bloedel, for example, estimates that every time the Canadian dollar drops one cent it nets an extra \$2.5 million in profits. But the falling dollar also increased the prices we pay for

oranges, refrigerators, cars, and anything else that comes into the country. And it means paying more for goods produced inside the country, since most domestic industries have to import expensive components.

"In addition, the lower dollar value increases the cost of servicing the foreign debt. Under Trudeau's leadership, governments have moved to meet these increased costs through higher taxes on workers and more cutbacks in social services.

"Devaluation has already pushed the inflation rate to almost 10 percent, while wage gains have been restricted to 4 to 6 percent—resulting in a sharp drop in real wages. Thus Trudeau's "anti-inflation" program achieved its main goal—lower wages—through renewed inflation!

"But it has failed to carry Canada out of the slump. There is no guarantee that higher profits on Canadian commodity exports will mean increased production and employment. In all major capitalist countries the prospect is one of stagnation and slump. The United States, which accounts for more than two-thirds of Canada's exports, is heading for a new downturn in 1979.

"For millions of working people, the weakness of the Canadian dollar means more inflation, more unemployment, and a declining standard of living—all in the name of capitalist rationalization." □

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France Since the Defeat of the Union of the Left

By Pierre Frank

Six months have now gone by since the defeat of the Union of the Left in the March 1978 legislative elections. After the masses had been looking forward for years to a victory and after the Union of the Left did win a majority of the vote in the March 1977 municipal elections, discord erupted between the Communist and Socialist parties. It grew sharper day by day in the months preceding the legislative elections.

This conflict assumed such proportions that by the time of the elections, the Union of the Left and its "Common Program" seemed to the voters to be no more than an empty shell.

Since that time, the CP and the SP have not maintained any direct relations.¹ The CP has been conducting a constant campaign against the SP. The SP has responded, although it has picked up the gauntlet less frequently than the CP has laid it down, in such a way as to present itself as the offended party.

These recent allies have been hurling half truths, along with small and big lies, at each other. The CGT and the CFDT² have had less venomous interchanges and have met together, but they no longer conduct joint actions, except where they are forced to do so locally or in certain industries by struggles in which their members are involved. Even when circumstances bring pressure to bear for operation, the national federations do not always accede to this.

In September, the meeting of the general secretaries of the two federations concluded with a cynical registering of disagreement and a refusal to organize a joint counterattack against phase III of the Barre government's austerity plan.

1. The parasitic character of the Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche [Movement of Left Radicals, the bourgeois component of the Union of the Left] was clearly shown immediately after the elections. The chairman of this party, Robert Fabre, broke with the left alliance on the very night of election day and wasted no time in accepting a "commission" from the president of the republic. The Left Radicals who have maintained their ties with the SP do so only because they could not be elected without its support. They remain faithful to the cardinal principle of all Radicals—sell out for what you can get.

2. Confédération Générale du Travail (General Confederation of Labor, the CP-controlled federation). Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail (French Democratic Confederation of Labor, an independent federation of Catholic origins but now associated with the SP).

As a result of the electoral defeat, the prospect of a Union of the Left government has disappeared, and along with it, for the moment, any convincing perspective for the workers. One of the results of this is that demonstrations have become few in number and small. But this does not mean that nothing is happening.

In August and September, by-elections were held to fill the seats of five deputies whose election in March had been ruled invalid by the Constitutional Council. A CP member was elected in a Paris suburb. Two SP members were elected in the provinces (one in Pas de Calais and the other in Gers, that is, in the North and South). Two members of the ruling coalition were elected. In a district in the East, the chairman of the Radical Party [the party of President Giscard d'Estaing] was elected. A Gaullist, Chirac's³ right-hand man, was elected in Paris.

So, these elections were representative of the various regions in the country and answered a number of questions about the mood of the population today and the attitude of the masses to the CP and the SP.

One fact stands out. In every case, the candidates of the ruling coalition parties lost a relatively large number of votes. The two majority deputies who had to stand again were severely defeated. Where they had had small absolute majorities a few months before, they got only 41 to 46 percent of the vote.

So, these elections have shown that Giscard and Barre's policy is condemned by the population and that mass discontent is growing. Such discontent is being fanned by mounting unemployment, persistent inflation, rising costs of public services, and the absence of restraints on the prices of industrial products and the prospect of this for the prices of all services. Some bourgeois politicians are beginning to show uneasiness about the government's policy. They are trying insofar as possible to clear themselves of responsibility for it but not to change it.

The small number of strikes nowadays, which are often hard fought but seldom very long lasting, reflects the demoralization of the masses following the election defeat. Besides being a consequence of the lack of political perspective, this is a result of the failure of the workers organizations to unite around broad common demands

3. Mayor of Paris and leader of the right-wing Gaullists.

relating to the hours of work (such as the demand for a thirty-five-hour workweek), the minimum wage, and equal raises for all. Such demands could focus the battles being fought by the masses toward a generalized struggle in the relatively near future.

Neither the CP nor the SP nor the union federations (CGT, CFDT, FO⁴, FEN⁵) has an orientation like that, despite the fact that a strong aspiration for unity is being expressed in the struggles that are going on now and was also confirmed by the results of the recent elections.

The by-elections were rich in lessons about the evolution of the relations between the two big workers parties and the working masses. In the Paris suburbs, the SP decided not to run a candidate against the CP deputy whose election had been invalidated. In return, in the South, the CP did not run a candidate against an SP deputy whose election had been quashed. In both cases, these deputies were returned with an increased vote.

In the other districts, both the CP and SP ran candidates, including in Pas de Calais, where the election of an SP deputy had been invalidated. In their campaigns, the CP candidates came out with the same sort of attacks against their SP rivals as *l'Humanité* [the CP organ] has been hurling at this party every day in several of its columns.

In working-class districts in particular, the CP sought to stem the advance of the SP and if possible restore the old situation in which it could boast of being "the leading left party."

One initial conclusion can be drawn from the election results. In every case where there was a runoff, the single candidate got all the votes that had been cast for the SP and CP separately in the first round. In other words, goaded by the government's policy, the workers' desire and hope to see these parties unite in action remains unabated. At present the workers can see no solution to the situation with which they have been confronted by the government except in the framework of such unity.

However, another conclusion can be

4. Force Ouvrière (Labor Force, a right-wing Social Democratic and syndicalist-led splitoff from the CGT).

5. Fédération de l'Education Nationale (National Education Federation, a union representative of all teachers and not split along party lines).

drawn from these elections. In every case in which there was a contest between the CP and the SP, it was the SP that gained and the CP that lost.⁶ The extent of the gains and losses varied according to district, but the trend was constant, and there was nothing accidental about it. This was not the first time since the Union of the Left was established in 1972, moreover, that this tendency has shown up.

On the occasion of the 1973 legislative elections, the CP had already noted that the SP was gaining the most from the accord between the two parties. This fact was confirmed by the 1974 by-elections, and the CP had for some time been making fruitless attacks on the SP. The 1977 municipal elections not only reconfirmed the trend but showed that the CP was losing both on its right, to the SP, and on its left, to the far-left candidates.

It was after the 1977 elections that the CP began to make a "left" turn in its language, but not its politics, and to conduct a furious campaign against the SP, which led to the well-known results in March 1978.

Why is the CP losing votes in the present circumstances when there is growing mass discontent, and why is its offensive against the SP not bringing any results? Without going into any long explanations, the following can be said:

1. Made in the exaggerated form that they are, the CP's accusations against the SP are not convincing, even when they are true or at least partly true.

2. Large sections of the masses, even those who still vote Communist, see the CP as particularly responsible for the present division.

3. The CP concentrates exclusively on criticizing the SP but it has not offered any policy really different from that of the SP.

In these circumstances, except for those who blindly follow the CP—and their numbers are diminishing—the SP seems to be in the best position to rally the largest number of voters behind it and win the most seats in parliament. So, people vote for the SP as the best means of making their votes "count," not because it has a better policy.

Despite its electoral successes, the SP could not fail to feel the impact of the

defeat of the alliance, because it was left facing the fundamental problem of how is it going to get into the government if the CP keeps on playing its old tricks or if the threat of the CP reverting to this remains hanging over its head.

Up till now, no one in the SP has proposed seeking a political deal with any formation in the government coalition, or even giving up the idea of a "Union of the Left." On this point, only the form and political content of such an alliance are open to discussion. Any other course of action would mean returning to a "third-force" policy in the style of Guy Mollet, which would lead immediately to a halt in the SP's electoral advances or even to the loss of everything the SP has gained during its alliance with the CP.

The SP's internal problems today have tended to focus around personalities. Despite the role he played in the SP's spectacular resurgence after 1971, Mitterrand finds himself being challenged, although this is still being done in a cautious way. The top echelons of the party are all in a tizzy over who is going to "succeed" Mitterrand. He could hardly run for president of the republic a third time after losing twice. This struggle is going to have to take a more or less clear form in the coming year around the upcoming SP congress.

In the case of the CP, everyone remembers the wave of questioning that arose following the elections and continued to the summer vacations.⁷ In the course of these debates, the leadership adjusted its line in order to regain a firm grip on the party. Just before the end of the summer vacations, it brought out a book by some of its in-house intellectuals entitled *L'URSS et nous* ["The USSR and Us"].

Publication of this book was intended to show the membership that the leadership was not retreating on the question of the Soviet Union but rather was taking a few steps forward in differentiating itself from the USSR, while not breaking with it.⁸ At the same time, Marchais was saying publicly that there were no "questioners" in the party but only a few "comrades" who

were discussing some points and had a right to hold opinions contrary to his.

This adjustment, which changed nothing about the party's general line, especially as regards the SP, was obviously designed to reassure those party members who feared that the attacks on the SP were the result of an abandonment of the "line of the Twenty-Second Congress."⁹ Such a readjustment could have no effect on the masses who vote for the CP.

In view of the results of the recent by-elections, the CP leadership wanted to take advantage of the September 27-28 Central Committee plenum to answer in advance the questions that might be raised. The reporter for the Political Bureau, Fiterman, found that the results "give real cause for worry." He recognized that there was an "erosion" of the Communist vote, that "some Communist voters abstained," and some even "voted for the right."

Fiterman's explanation for the developments he took note of can be summed up as follows: The SP is pursuing a "kind of strategy of double dealing" designed to "gather together the most diverse kinds of malcontents with the most contradictory interests." The "ruling right" is assisting this operation, notably by means of the mass media. The Communist voters were found wanting because they misjudged the "conditions for change"—that is, first of all, the need for a strong Communist Party—and because they failed to understand "the grave responsibility" borne by the SP in the defeat of the Union of the Left.

There's a real Stalinist explanation for you! The bourgeois are acting like bourgeois, the Social Democrats like Social Democrats, and the Communist voters do not understand this, and so they are not voting for the CP anymore. Thus, what happened is the fault of someone else, even of the workers. The CP's line remains above criticism.

Nonetheless, the CP leadership must have realized that its explanations were rather weak. Fiterman made them in a short section, less than a tenth, of his report, which overall was distinguished by its tone of French nationalist boosterism. It was very much wrapped in the "colors of France."¹⁰

In his speech concluding the plenum, Marchais did not say a single word about the election results. So, it is not impossible that after a while we will see other "explanations" and new adjustments of the line. For the moment the CP is continuing its incantations.

The Communist Party has postponed its congress until May 1979. So, we will see if between now and then it makes any alterations in its line. And we will see whether,

7. See "The Crisis in the French Communist Party," *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, July 3, 1978, p. 795.

8. While the CP leadership has been obliged to modify its political positions with regard to the Soviet Union, it has done so without departing from typically Stalinist methods. It ordered the publication of a book to present its new positions. But in doing this, not only did it say nothing about the books that opposed its old positions. It didn't even say anything about those books in which the old positions were presented. Sayers, Kahn, Figuières and the like have become unauthors, "unpersons." Henceforth, for CP members, there is only one book on the Soviet Union, *L'URSS et nous*. It is the sole repository of the truth, and they should not look anywhere else.

9. The congress that formally made the "Euro-communist" turn.—*IP/I*

10. The French CP says that it is in favor of a socialism in the "colors of France."—*IP/I*

6. The most symptomatic setback for the CP came in Paris. Since the Tours split in 1920 [the break of the supporters of the Russian revolution from the Social Democrats, leading to the formation of the Communist Party], the CP has held a dominant position in the Paris region. And the CP held the district in question before it was taken by a Gaullist candidate twenty years ago. In March, the SP candidate had only a 500-vote lead on the CP candidate. This time, although several Political Bureau members campaigned for the CP candidate, the SPer got a lead of approximately 2,600 votes in the first round.

insofar as the CP's internal regime permits this, although it is now somewhat less rigid, criticisms of the line are expressed.

In the immediate situation, despite the efforts of the SP and CP leaderships to send their memberships off on false trails, both big workers parties have largely turned in on themselves as a result of their common electoral defeat. But, as everyone in France recognizes, the situation in the country is deteriorating.

The president, the premier, and the bosses in the CNPF [Conseil National du Patronat Français—National Council of French Employers] are exploiting their victory over the Union of the Left to the hilt. They are not hesitating to tighten the screws, and they do not seem worried that the vise may break. They are even turning a deaf ear to the warnings from Bergeron, secretary general of Force Ouvrière, who could hardly be suspected of wanting to make trouble.

Conditions right now certainly do not encourage the masses to undertake large scale and prolonged actions. But the growing unemployment and the attacks on the workers' standard of living cannot fail in the long run to provoke a counterattack by the working class, whose combativity re-

mains fundamentally intact.

The conflict between the leaderships of the two big parties now tends to inhibit the militancy of the workers. But in the long run it seems likely that it will help to weaken the hold that these parties have on the masses and reinforce the tendencies of the masses to undertake actions that will be less easily containable by the SP and CP leaderships. As a result, revolutionary activists will have greater possibilities to gain a hearing.

The fact that the Union of the Left did not achieve an electoral victory in March does not mean that the masses have gone through their experience with this formation. Their experience with the Union of the Left is still incomplete. It would certainly have been better if they had been able to go through the experience of a Union of the Left government, which would have enabled them to see clearly the impotence and bankruptcy of reformism.

However, the break in the Union of the Left that blocked an electoral victory was carried out and has been continued in conditions that are, nonetheless, very educational for the activists and for the masses.

Let us recall the big political questions

that were posed during the election campaign, that is, the need for socialism today, how to get there, what form a socialist system should take from the outset, and other such questions. These questions may seem to have been pushed into the background by the accusations the CP and the SP have been hurling at each other. But they have not disappeared. They have not lost their force. And the capitalists' policy will bring these questions back into the forefront with still greater impact.

The doubts about the leaderships that underlay the debates on these questions can only grow. Circumstances may force the SP and the CP, under the pressure of the masses, to come to a new understanding. But when that happens, the leaders are not going to be able to just say "let's kiss and make up, and all is forgotten."

The masses no longer have the sort of illusions they had at the time of the Popular Front government. They have already raised embarrassing questions for the leaderships. And they will look on any future deal between the SP and the CP with greater distrust and tend more strongly to go beyond the line of these parties.

October 2, 1978

Say 'No' to Giscard and Barre's Austerity Program!

[The following statement was issued October 8 by the Central Committee of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (Revolutionary Communist League), French section of the Fourth International. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

Eight months after the March elections, the political situation in France is characterized by:

- The brutality of a bourgeois offensive that not only increases both unemployment and inflation, but also directly threatens a number of gains previously won by workers;

- The fact that the working-class response is stymied by political and trade-union divisions and by the class-collaborationist orientation of the bureaucratic leaderships, which together represent the main obstacle to the deepening and coordination of struggles.

The strikes that have taken place since March 19 in important sectors (Santé, Moulinex, Renault, Arsenaux, SNCF [the railroads], etc.) and the results of the by-elections confirm that the working class remains mobilized. Despite the effects of the economic crisis—the existence of 1.5 million unemployed, the defeat of numer-

ous struggles, and especially the defeat of the Union of the Left—the combativity of the workers remains at a high level and there is still massive opposition to the government.

1. Phase III of the Barre [austerity] plan is not simply the 1.5 million unemployed and the more than 10% rise in prices. It includes the rise in layoffs and factory closings that hits entire branches and regions. It means the taking back of gains and benefits previously won by the working class (the forty-hour week, minimum wage, 90% Social Security, job-related health care, grievance procedures), a process in which the government tries to directly involve the trade-union leaderships through contractual negotiations. It includes the increase in "repatriation aid," or in other words, the sending back of tens of thousands of immigrant workers; and the generalization of part-time work to hide the unemployment among women. It is also a policy of increased cuts in public services, and worse working conditions and job security in the entire public sector, such as at the SNCF, the PTT [post office and telephone], and in the national education system.

But the real Barre Plan is yet to be revealed. To counter the effects of the international capitalist economic crisis,

the French bourgeoisie seeks to strengthen its positions relative to its imperialist competitors. It knows it cannot do this without lowering the workers' standard of living.

2. To strike while the iron is hot, Giscard and Barre intend to exploit their slim victory in the second round of the legislative elections and the bowing and scraping in the direction of the Elysée Palace by the leaders of the workers organizations. Of course there is dissension within the parliamentary majority—regarding Europe and the budget for example—which flared up the day after the by-elections. But the RPR¹ is on the defensive. It does not have serious disagreements with the government's social policy. And while it tries to make some noise, in order not to drop out of sight, the RPR does not at this time have the resources to carry out an independent program. Its only seeming weapon, its ability to turn the government into a minority in parliament, is actually its principal weakness. This weapon would backfire against it if the anticipated elections had to be held. At this point there is nothing pushing the RPR to carry out this

1. Rassemblement pour la République (Assembly for the Republic, rightist party led by Paris Mayor Jacques Chirac).

dangerous course. The bourgeoisie is closing ranks behind the austerity plan.

3. The recent by-elections (Saint-Denis, Gers, Pas-de-Calais, Nancy, Paris XIV) have special national significance—they were a dramatic rejection of the government and its austerity policy. While rejecting the war of attrition foisted on them by the leaders of the SP and CP, the workers voted without hesitation for these parties to assure the defeat of the bourgeois candidates. This confirms the gap between the majority in terms of seats in the Assembly and the real majority of living forces in this country—the workers, the young, and the toiling population.

It also highlights an evolution in the political relationship of forces within the workers movement. The decline in votes for the Communist Party and the major gain for the Socialist Party are not simply an extension of a tendency that was at work before the elections. Among many working-class voters who traditionally support the CP it signified two things:

- A desire to make the CP pay for the special responsibility it bore in the electoral defeat of the Union of the Left through its threats of blackmail in the second round;²

- A rejection of the sectarian policy the CP is carrying out today in no longer attacking the majority except through the intermediary of the SP, and in rejecting every proposal for unity against the employers' and government's austerity.

The SP leadership, by cultivating the appearance of being the injured party with respect to the CP's denunciations, has been able at little cost to cloak itself in an image of advocating unity. Even while openly discussing the best way to administer the austerity and defending the contracts being negotiated, and while playing its part in maintaining the divisions in concert with the CP's sectarianism and Edmond Maire's³ rejection of every move toward united trade-union action, the SP was able to turn to its benefit the deep desire of working-class voters to close ranks against the bourgeois offensive.

4. In face of a general attack, what is needed is a unified response by the entire working class. The general strike is the

only answer corresponding to the gravity of the situation.

The leaders of the unions and of the workers parties have turned their backs on this perspective, cultivating division, dividing up the struggles, and signing contracts that ratify the giving up of gains previously won.

The CFDT is asking the workers to limit their sights to demands that are "accessible through union activity" and, in the name of the "deep differences," rejects any joint initiatives with other trade-union federations while at the same time praising plant-by-plant action.

The CGT⁴ accuses the CFDT of not opposing the government firmly enough, and of rejecting every initiative for united action. But, in turn, its leadership signs the worst contracts. It left it up to the CP to organize, in its own name, both the August 29 meeting of plants threatened with closing and the October 11 demonstration in front of the National Assembly. The only initiative the CGT announced regarding the new session of the Assembly was a national CGT day a week before... its convention!

5. The general strike is, however, the only perspective open to the working class if it wants to put an end to the austerity.

Nothing would be more dangerous in the present situation than a false "realism" that leads the workers to retreat back to their plants, contenting themselves with "objectives within their reach." Some working-class militants might be tempted to yield to this in the absence of immediate perspectives. But in fact this would give a free hand to the policy of the union federations and would leave the field clear for the offensive of the employers and the government.

If a general strike is not now in the wings, it is brewing.

And the struggles that have taken place since the opening of the new session of the Assembly have shown how it has been possible to move forward in this direction:

- At the SNCF, by preparing a renewable general strike involving all branches, rather than fragmenting the action by departments.

- In the Lorraine steel mills, by carrying out a massive strike right after the defeat of Servan-Schreiber,⁵ rather than stopping the struggle at Sollac-Sacilor when it was starting up at Solmer and Usinor.

- In the school system, by pushing toward the coordination of the schools where struggles were going on in order to prepare a general strike in the entire

education system.

In all these struggles workers democracy is a weapon against division. Only decision-making general assemblies and elected strike committees that are responsible to the assemblies can assure a united thrust to the struggle, while ensuring that the existing differences do not serve as an alibi to justify passivity. This fight for strike committees can be carried out only if it is combined with a fight for the unity of union organizations.

The example of the united struggle of the Elastelle workers, which won the support of a large number of union locals in Puy, clearly shows what can happen in numerous other plants. In the course of their struggle, by addressing an "open letter" to Maire, Ségué, Bergeron⁶ and Henry⁸ asking that they jointly respond to the workers' needs and prepare a general strike, and by formulating the unifying demands needed for such a joint movement, the Elastelle workers gave expression to a deep aspiration of the great mass of workers. At the same time they combined this national call with a fight for local interunion committees, for coordination of locals in all the plants engaged in struggle (tanneries, textile), and for a general assembly of all the unemployed and laid-off workers in the region.

6. That is what leads the LCR to put forward the following perspective in response to the needs of the workers:

- Today the main obstacle to the development and coordination of struggles is the division in the ranks of the workers that is maintained by the leaderships of the CP and SP and is carried further by the CGT, CFDT, FO, and FEN union federations to further their policy of class collaboration.

- Unity of the unions and the workers parties is needed to carry out a plan of action against layoffs, for a thirty-five hour week without a decrease in pay, for a 2,500 franc minimum wage, a 300-franc wage increase for all, and a sliding scale of wages. To pave the way for this we need a mobilization that starts with interunion activity within the plants and localities, that bases itself on local and regional coordinating committees, on the centralization of the plants struggling against layoffs, laying the basis for a general strike to defeat the austerity plans.

- Any generalization of the struggles will inevitably lead to a confrontation with this government and its unrepresentative Assembly. To win their demands, the workers will have to compel the majority workers parties to break with the bourgeoisie and form a SP-CP government. □

2. French elections are held in two rounds. In the event that no candidate for a given post wins an absolute majority, a runoff is held in which all candidates who gained 12.5 percent or more of the vote are eligible to run. Traditionally, the parties of the left agree well in advance to withdraw on the second round in favor of the workers party candidate with the highest vote total, so as not to fragment the working-class vote. In this year's election, the Communist Party threatened up until a week before the second-round vote that it might not withdraw in favor of Socialist Party candidates.

3. Head of the Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail (CFDT—French Democratic Confederation of Labor, associated with the SP).

4. Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT—General Confederation of Labor, led by the CP).

5. A supporter of French President Giscard d'Estaing's austerity policy, Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber was overwhelmingly defeated in a September 24 by-election by the SP candidate, steelworker Yves Tondon.

6. Head of the CGT.

7. Head of the labor federation Force Ouvrière (FO—Labor Force).

8. Head of the Fédération de l'Éducation Nationale (FEN—National Education Federation, France's largest teachers union).

A Worker in a Worker's State

Reviewed by Will Reissner

This short book, by a thirty-three-year-old Budapest sociologist and poet, was more accurately entitled *Piece Rates* in Hungarian. It was commissioned in 1972 by a Budapest publisher who wanted a book on working conditions.

Miklós Haraszti got a job as a machinist in a tractor factory, and this study describes the effects of working in a plant where wages are directly determined on a piecework basis.

Haraszti's publisher rejected the manuscript as being "hostile" to the state, and Haraszti was later arrested for circulating copies to other publishers and to friends. In a 1974 trial the author received a suspended eight-month sentence and a heavy fine.

This was not the author's first brush with the authorities. After helping to establish a Vietnam Solidarity Committee at the University of Budapest in 1965, he was expelled from the university a year later. In 1968 he was placed under a form of house arrest for having some contact with a Hungarian Maoist circle.

Although unions in capitalist countries have long opposed payment on the basis of piece work, in the workers states of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union this form of payment is widely used to spur workers on to increase production, since a worker's pay is directly related to the amount of goods produced.

Although the bureaucrats who run the societies in Eastern Europe often defend

piecework wages as a valid form of payment in the transitional period between socialism and communism, Haraszti's study clearly shows that piecework wages have the same dehumanizing effects in a noncapitalist system as they do under capitalism.

Workers at the Red Star Tractor Factory find themselves in a vicious circle. In order

A Worker in a Worker's State by Miklós Haraszti (New York: Universe Books, 1978). \$7.95, 175 pp. Trans. by Michael Wright.

to earn a living wage, they must find ways to increase their rate of production beyond the norms posted for the work. They do this by sacrificing quality to quantity, by working two machines at once, and by disregarding the most elemental safety considerations. Every minute "wasted" by concern over safety or by attempts to achieve optimal quality means fewer items produced and thus less money earned.

But as workers increase their production, they find that in time the payment per piece is reduced and they must find new ways to produce even more in order to maintain their wages at the old levels.

The effect, as Haraszti points out, is that "my work-mates have long since given up the idea of their labour producing useful goods of high quality." Piecework wages, he notes, kill "in the worker—who creates everything—the instinct for good work."

In order to try to maintain any quality standards, the factory management must resort to quality inspectors who can reject pieces produced by the workers. But, as one older worker explains to the author, if the workers weren't forced to cheat on norms and on quality in order to produce enough to make a living wage "inspectors would be redundant." The worker, Haraszti points out, "would like to be a man of quality without inspectors."

Because this study was written for a Hungarian audience, many aspects of a worker's life that would be of interest to a non-Hungarian, such as what the wages of these workers will buy, what social benefits they have, and so forth, are not discussed.

But we catch a glimpse of aspects of



Hungarian society through some of the asides in the book. The collective agreement between the union and management at the plant, for example, was described by one worker in these terms: "It states everything we have to put up with, except for what it doesn't state." Haraszti notes that he needed his foreman's permission to look at a copy of the agreement.

The union plays little role in the lives of the workers. Noting that "enthusiastic press and TV commentaries burst with solidarity for the union-led wage struggles in the West," Haraszti comments that "our unions do not seem to compare favorably."

Judging by this study, the Communist Party also seems to play little role in the daily life of the workers. There are only occasional references to membership being a ticket up the ladder.

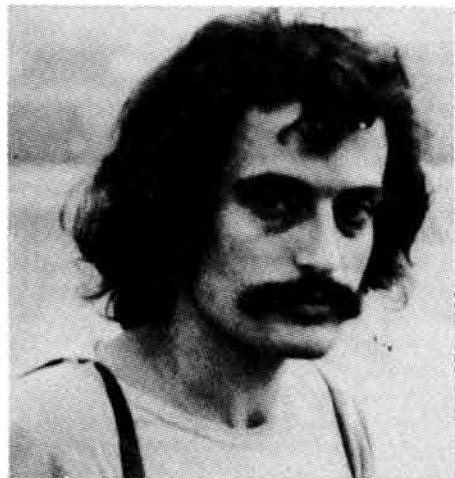
The marginal comments about women in the factory speak volumes about their status in Hungary. In this plant women are concentrated in clerical and unskilled jobs. Discussing new semiautomatic milling machines, Haraszti comments that they are all operated by women. "Their wages are so low that no man would take the job."

Although piecework wages are designed to give each worker an incentive to maximize individual production, and although they do result in the self-imposed dehumanizing, breakneck pace of work, Haraszti asks, "Does the norm really get the most out of us?"

He points out that those who set the norms do not understand the actual processes of production or the tricks of the trade. And the workers hide these tricks from management to protect themselves from further increases.

As one worker notes, "production would get along much better if we had a say in fixing the norms." And quality control would not have to be imposed from the outside. But under piecework, those who develop the norms in the front office "can't count on any information coming from us, who actually operate the machine."

What is needed, the author points out, is for the whole process of production to be brought under the control of the workers. "The first goal of a technical science under the control of the workers," he states, "would be an increase in production that reduced the amount of work necessary to



MIKLOS HARASZTI

bring it about."

But rather than solve questions of production and quality through workers' control of production and planning, the Hungarian Stalinist regime resorts to piecework and quality inspectors, for to give workers control over production in

any area of life would raise inevitable questions about why direct workers' control shouldn't be extended to all areas of life in a workers' state. And such direct control could only end in the abolition of the special privileges the bureaucrats now enjoy. □

ocratic goals still remain to be achieved.

Also to be noted is the fact that the congress put its stamp of approval on the policy of family planning and population control that now seems to have been definitely adopted by the Chinese leaders. Its goal is to reduce the rate of population growth to less than 1 percent within three years.

Finally, Kang's report also sets forth the norms that should prevail in male-female relations and in family life. "Young men and women should not base their love on the pursuit of money and material things but on working for common revolutionary objectives."³ As for the family, it should belong to the "new type": "The household should be managed industriously and thriftily. Men and women should be equal and should share the housework. Elderly people should be respected and well taken care of, and the children educated by their parents. A family should discuss things together and contradictions should be democratically settled through discussions. The feudal patriarchal style of behaviour and selfish bourgeois ideas must be thoroughly done away with."⁴

Worthwhile though this advice may be, we should not overlook the fact that no mention is made of the family's future as an institution. The perspective seems to be to perpetuate the nuclear family in a "reformed" version. Meanwhile, a number of other issues raised by the women's liberation movement around the world seem to have been ignored as well.

In China, "one-half of heaven" still has a long road to travel. □

'The Practice of Buying Brides Has Reappeared'

Chinese Women Still Face Long March

By Livio Maitan

As part of its effort to achieve a political and organizational "normalization," the new Chinese ruling group convened the Fourth Congress of the National Women's Federation on September 8-17.

The first three congresses were held at regular and fairly close intervals—in 1949, 1953, and 1957. Then, thanks to a bureaucratic tradition that was also responsible for the fact that no party congresses were held from 1956 to 1969, no other national women's gatherings were organized. This did not keep Kang Ke-ching, widow of Chu Teh, from giving a report on behalf of an Executive Committee elected twenty-one years ago!

Some 2,000 delegates (belonging to fifty different nationalities, according to the official summary) attended the congress and unanimously approved the report, a new set of statutes, and the slate of 300 candidates for the new executive committee.

In her report, Kang restated the main points of the current leadership's line (referring in particular to the decisions of the Eleventh Congress and the Fifth National Assembly). She then went on to explain that "in the course of striving for the four modernizations [of agriculture, industry, national defense, and science and technology], material and technical conditions will be continuously provided for bringing about the socialization and modernization of household chores; this will in turn progressively free women for production work and continuously provide reinforcements for realizing the four modernizations.¹

In addition, Kang joined in the ritual denunciation of the "gang of four," thanking the Central Committee of the Chinese CP, and Chairman Hua, for having cured the youth—who had come under the harmful influence of the notorious "gang" as well as of the "traitor Lin Piao"—of their illusions. She urged that academic and

social education be closely intertwined with family upbringing.

The most interesting feature of the report was the picture it gave of the problems still facing a considerable number of Chinese women:

"For some years, because of interference from Lin Piao and the 'gang of four,' the practice of buying brides and arranging marriages reappeared in some places, while bourgeois and feudal ideas began to spread and cases of oppression of women have been reported. . . . We should publicize the idea of marriage based on the free will of both parties, and encourage reasonable late marriage. Couples are encouraged to observe frugality in arranging wedding celebrations and all venal marriages or arbitrary arrangements by others should be opposed."²

In other words, certain elementary, dem-

2. Ibid., pp. 10-11.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

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1. *Peking Review*, September 29, 1978, pp. 9-10.

Gulf & Western's 'Slave Labor Camp' in Dominican Republic

By Susan Wald

Imagine working at a job where the maximum pay is thirty-four cents an hour, where unpaid overtime is common, where seniority is nonexistent and you can be fired at any time with no reasons given. If you are thrown out of work, or disabled by an injury, you are left to fend for yourself. And if you try to organize a union, you're likely to lose your job, at best—or, at worst, suffer arrest, jailing, and torture.

Sound like slave labor? These are the conditions faced by the 5,000 workers employed by U.S. corporations in La Romana, one of four "industrial free zones" in the Dominican Republic.

An inside look at how U.S. multinationals are squeezing unheard-of profits out of the superexploitation of Dominican workers—with the generous backing of the government in Santo Domingo—was provided by *Chicago Sun-Times* correspondent Michael Flannery in the May issue of *American Federationist*, the monthly magazine of the AFL-CIO trade-union federation.

The industrial free zones were created by former President Joaquín Balaguer to draw American companies to the Dominican Republic. The advantages to the imperialists are obvious and substantial. Companies operating in the free zones receive a twenty-year exemption from all taxes, as well as freedom from customs duties and currency restrictions. And in a country with a chronic unemployment rate of 24 percent, workers desperate for any kind of job can be made to work for as little as forty-five centavos (US\$.34) an hour, under degrading and dehumanizing conditions, and can be speedily fired if they show any inclinations toward militancy—there are always plenty of others to take their place.

The La Romana free zone is owned by Gulf & Western Industries, Inc., a multinational conglomerate with widely diversified holdings, whose projected worldwide income—\$4 billion—nearly equals the Dominican gross national product.

Of the 5,000 workers employed in the free zone, some 2,000 work directly for G&W or its subsidiaries. The rest work for the eighteen other companies that lease space in the zone from G&W.

G&W is one of the largest employers in the country. In addition to the free zone, it runs the world's largest sugar mill, cattle ranches, two plush resorts, and grows sugar cane, citrus, vegetables, and tobacco on the 264,000 acres it owns in the Dominican Republic.

But the country's inhabitants do not share in this fabulous wealth. Per capita income is about \$700 a year. In 1972, it was estimated that only 11 percent of the 5 million Dominicans drink milk, 4 percent eat meat, and 2 percent eat eggs.

The industrial free zone system is designed to keep things this way.

La Romana has the appearance of a "modern slave-labor camp," according to the labor federation monthly. Government customs agents armed with shotguns and National Police are stationed at the entrances to the free zone, which is surrounded by a high chain-link fence topped with barbed wire.

The National Confederation of Dominican Workers (CNTD) and the Free Union of Romana Sugar Mill Workers have both attempted to carry out organizing drives in the zone. But the U.S. capitalists were determined to keep unions out of what has been called "one of the most perfect company towns in the western hemisphere." The Balaguer dictatorship was an ideal instrument for carrying out this policy.

In December 1976, a CNTD organizing committee was formed in La Romana, and a public rally was scheduled. Five days before the rally was to take place, six union supporters were fired from their jobs. Four were jailed immediately and charged with being outside Communist "agitators."

The meeting was postponed for several days, then went ahead as planned. But when 1,000 workers showed up, they were met by troops of the National Police in full combat gear who dispersed them at the point of automatic weapons.

Several union leaders were arrested and taken to National Police headquarters, where they were "interrogated" by agents of the secret police and accused of being Communists. Police later "escorted" the union leadership out of the province, passing through a series of checkpoints that had been set up on roads leading into La Romana to keep out "undesirables."

Since taking office on August 16, President Antonio Guzmán Fernández has given no indication that he intends to run things in the free zones any differently than his predecessor. He recently told a meeting of the country's main trade-union leaders that "enemies of the workers" were trying to use them to obstruct the country's economic development. "Foreign investors are helping to create jobs for all Dominicans," Guzmán said.

The AFL-CIO leadership correctly sees the labor practices of U.S. corporations in neocolonial countries like the Dominican Republic as a reflection of their stepped-up drive for profits in the face of increased international competition. And they correctly see it as part of a worldwide trend aimed at forcing a rollback of wages and working conditions in the advanced industrialized countries as well.

But the labor bureaucrats are silent about the role of the U.S. government in supporting and maintaining this exploitation. They neglect to mention that U.S. dollars are going to pay the salaries of the National Police who stand guard outside the factories in the free industrial zones.

Nor can slave-labor conditions be eliminated, as the AFL-CIO leadership suggests, by abolishing tax advantages for U.S. multinationals that move their operations overseas, or by setting quotas on imports from low-wage countries.

Only the Dominican workers, supported by the labor movement internationally, can force an improvement in their living and working conditions. To do this, they must have the right to organize without the threat of dismissal, arrest, and torture hanging over their heads. □

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