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Afghanistan's History of Struggle Against Imperialist Domination

**General Strike Spells
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**Behind the Strike in
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Interview with students at U.S. Embassy

Why Iranians want the shah back

Carter's Faltering Afghan Propaganda Drive

By Ernest Harsch

As part of the U.S.-inspired propaganda campaign against the Soviet Union and the Afghan revolution, reports in the imperialist press prominently feature unconfirmed and contradictory allegations that Soviet troops in Afghanistan are meeting heavy resistance, not only from the rightist antigovernment guerrillas, but also from the government's own army units and the population in general.

Some American journalists and officials have now been forced to admit, however, that the reports of widespread Afghan opposition to Moscow are at least exaggerated, if not totally fictitious.

U.S. Defense Department officials have acknowledged that it was the Afghan army, not Soviet troops, that has actually been fighting against the rightist guerrillas. The Soviet army has been providing more of a supporting role. This has been confirmed by news reports from the Afghan capital of Kabul.

The fighting itself, according to a dispatch from Kabul by *New York Times* reporter James P. Sterba in the January 17 issue, has "dropped off dramatically along the border with Pakistan."

Contrary to the claims that Soviet soldiers were meeting popular hostility in Kabul and that some had been killed by residents, Sterba reported that "there have been relatively few confirmed incidents of violence against Soviet troops."

In a dispatch in the January 13 *Times*, Sterba quoted an Afghan tourist official as stating that nearly a third of his friends openly supported the Soviet military presence in the country.

Citing the assessments of Western diplomats in Kabul, Sterba noted in his January 17 report that "an impressive show of Soviet armed strength will boost Afghan Army morale and may also help in recruiting those who are not deeply committed to the various causes of the rebel factions."

If the Soviet intervention were really directed against the peoples of Afghanistan, as the imperialist propaganda

claims, would it "boost Afghan Army morale" and recruitment? Wouldn't the reaction be the opposite?

In reality, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, by striking at the U.S.-backed counterrevolution, helps the struggles of the Afghan workers and peasants against imperialist domination. It makes it easier for them to defend the social gains they have won since the beginning of the revolution in April 1978.

The struggle against the counterrevolutionaries is not just a military one. It is a political battle, in which the toiling masses are pitted against landlords, loan sharks, and opium smugglers, who are armed and backed by Washington and the proimperialist military dictatorship in neighboring Pakistan.

Since coming to power through a Soviet-backed coup December 27, President Babrak Karmal has coupled the military campaign with efforts to broaden the regime's political base of support.

He has attempted to unify the deeply factionalized People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), drawing leaders of both of its two major factions into the government. Several thousand political prisoners—many of them PDPA members who had been jailed during the intraparty purges of 1978 and 1979—have been released. The KAM (Workers Intelligence Organization), a secret police body set up by Karmal's predecessor, Hafizullah Amin (who was killed in the December coup), has been abolished.

Most importantly, the PDPA government has promised to defend the gains of the April 1978 revolution—the land reform program that gave 1.4 million acres of land to 248,000 peasant families, the mass literacy campaign, the legalization and establishment of trade unions, the abolition of child marriage, and other progressive social measures.

Although no details were given, a report from Kabul in the January 21 *Time* magazine noted that the regime has announced "a new campaign for land reform."

PDPA activists have been organizing political rallies to try to mobilize popular support for the regime and its policies. One such rally in the small town of Charikar, north of Kabul, drew several hundred persons. According to a report by William Branigan in the January 12 *Washington Post*, "There local party supporters of President Babrak Karmal had organized a progovernment demonstration complete with red banners and red-bordered posters

of former president Nur Mohammed Tarkai, slain in September and now considered a martyr by the new regime."

On January 14 and 15, the PDPA organized mosque ceremonies in Kabul to commemorate the victims of political repression under the Amin regime. Thousands of persons attended throughout the city.

The rightist guerrilla leaders fighting to overthrow the PDPA regime are adamantly opposed to the revolutionary process unfolding in Afghanistan. It threatens their class interests. They are not, as they claim, fighting for religious freedom (the government has never imposed any restrictions on Islam), but to regain their vast estates and profitable businesses.

Sayed Ahmad Gailani, the leader of the Ittihad-i Inqelab-i Islami wa Melli Afghanistan (Afghanistan Islamic and Nationalist Revolutionary Council), one of the more important rightist groups, is an example of what kind of "freedom fighters" these guerrilla chiefs really are. According to a portrait of him by Selig S. Harrison in the January 13 *New York Times*:

A thoughtful man of 50, he is a respected Pir, or saint, claiming descent from the Prophet Mohammed, and is the heir to leadership of the influential Qadariya sect. But Gailani has had considerable difficulty polishing up his charisma as a religious leader because his major attentions have gone in recent years to the management of his Peugeot dealership in Kabul.

Until the Communists disposed him of his lands and properties after their coup of 1978, Gailani was more of a businessman than a practicing saint, and his two glamorous jet-setting daughters are better known in Arab circles in London and the Middle East than Kabul.

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan has been a significant blow to these former exploiters, as well as to American imperialism's efforts to use them to roll back the Afghan revolution.

Although Washington is in no political position to respond with direct military action against Afghanistan, it has attempted to step up aid to the guerrillas and to bolster the military position of its remaining local allies, especially the Pakistani regime.

The American-dominated World Bank announced in mid-January that it was halting the disbursement of funds to Afghanistan for previously approved economic development projects. The cutoff amounted to \$115 million.

On January 20 President Carter made clear that Washington will take steps to bar U.S. athletes from the 1980 summer Olympics if the games are not moved from Moscow. Carter's call for an Olympic boycott, however, got a cool initial reception, both from the International Olympic Committee and Washington's own European allies.

The U.S. Olympic Committee may poll Olympic athletes to get their opinions. The *New York Times* questioned some of these athletes and reported January 21 that

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"older athletes voiced more support for a boycott than younger athletes who were hoping to participate in their first Olympics. . . .

"I've trained for 10 years and I've not gotten one red cent from the Government," 19-year-old swimmer Steve Lundquist told the *Times*. "If they can tell us what to do, then they should be willing to help us financially."

Washington did score a propaganda victory January 14 when an American-backed resolution in the United Nations General Assembly was adopted by 104 votes to 18 (with 18 abstentions) condemning the Soviet aid to Afghanistan and calling for the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

Cuban representative to the UN Raúl Roa Kouri denounced the "Yankee chorus" in the UN and condemned Carter's advocacy of "intervention in the internal affairs of Afghanistan."

Explaining Cuba's opposition to the resolution, Roa Kouri stated, "Because we are profoundly aware of what socialism and imperialism signify, because we know the historic role of the Soviet Union and of United States imperialism, we are voting against imperialism and its policy. By doing so, we reaffirm our unshakable faith in the right of peoples to their sovereignty, in internationalism, and in socialism, which is the real and definitive future of humanity."

Speaking on the resolution, Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) representative Zehdi Terzi (who did not have a vote) also sought to direct attention toward the real enemy of the peoples of the Middle East and Asia—American imperialism.

On January 16, just two days after the UN vote, Carter's efforts to politically isolate Moscow received a setback during a meeting in Damascus of the PLO and several Arab foreign ministers to oppose the Camp David accords. Syrian Foreign Minister Abdel Halim Khaddam said that the Soviet Union, not Washington, was the ally of the Arab and Muslim peoples. "The United States aims at consecrating its military presence in the region after the Camp David alliance consecrated its economic and political presence," Khaddam said. "The Arabs and Moslems know very well who their friends are and who their enemies are."

As part of the Afghan government's efforts to establish closer relations with Iran—and thus counter Carter's attempts to sow divisions between the Afghan and Iranian revolutions—Karmal sent a letter to Khomeini over the weekend of January 12-13.

In it, Karmal proposed "fraternal relations and Islamic Afghan-Iranian friendship" and called for the "establishment of a society of Islamic justice and piety, progress and advancement, and happiness of the fraternal nations in our two brotherly countries."

Karmal stated that only in that way would it be possible "to give international imperialism and Zionism led by American imperialism a bloody nose and insure a powerful unity among the oppressed work-

ing peoples of the fraternal Islamic countries."

Karmal's letter to Khomeini received prominent coverage in Iran through publication in the Tehran daily *Kayhan*. □

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Afghanistan—The Roots of Revolution

By Ernest Harsch

The struggles of Afghanistan's peoples for social progress and freedom from imperialist domination are inseparably linked. The one leads directly to the other.

Throughout Afghan history, every serious attempt to lift the country out of economic and social backwardness, to improve the conditions of its population, to spread literacy and social reform, and to achieve real national independence has met with stubborn imperialist opposition and intervention.

That is now being echoed on Afghanistan's battlefields, as supporters of the Afghan revolution and their Soviet allies seek to beat back an American-sponsored counterrevolution.

The actors today may be new ones, but the conflict itself is rooted in the evolution of Afghan society and the country's long struggle against imperialist aggression.

Resistance to Colonialism

The area that is now Afghanistan had been swept by foreign conquests and invasions for millennia. But it was not until 1747 that the first identifiable Afghan state came into existence. The monarchical form of rule—in which an amir (king) was chosen by Pushtun tribal leaders survived until 1973.

The early Afghan state rested on precapitalist economic and social foundations. Over time, the tribal leaders, or khans, were transformed into powerful landlords, owning vast estates on which peasants were forced to work under semiféudal conditions. Islamic religious figures, who were closely tied to the khans and who themselves became landlords or petty exploiters, played a prominent role in the state.

Geographically, Afghanistan at that time encompassed not only the Pushtun regions (including the Pushtun areas of present-day Pakistan), but also those inhabited by Uzbeks, Baluchis, Hazaras, Nuristanis, Turcomans, and other peoples. The Tajiks, a Persian-speaking nationality, predominated in and around Kabul and a few other major cities.

By the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Afghanistan began to arouse the interest of the European imperialists, as the British, French, and Russians maneuvered for dominance in central Asia and the Arab-Persian Gulf. Britain—then the most powerful imperialist state and the colonial master over India—was in the best position to move against Afghanistan.

In 1838 a British mission arrived in

Kabul and placed a series of demands before Amir Dost Mohammad, aimed at forestalling a growth in Russian influence in the country and preventing the existence of an independent Afghanistan from undermining Britain's hold over India. Dost Mohammad rejected the British demands.

In 1839 the British launched their first war against Afghanistan. Dost Mohammad was deposed and a British puppet, Shah Shuja, placed on the throne.

This provoked a massive revolt throughout Afghanistan two years later. An attempt to evacuate the British garrison in Kabul ended in disaster for the colonialists. A British force of 4,500 troops and 12,000 camp followers was annihilated; only one survivor escaped to tell the tale. Bereft of British protection, Shah Shuja was executed by the Afghan insurgents.

Though the British retaliated with barbaric force—razing entire villages and massacring their inhabitants—they were nevertheless compelled to return Dost Mohammad to the throne.

Several decades later, in 1878, the British again attacked Afghanistan, under the pretext that Amir Sher Ali (Dost Mohammad's successor) had received a Russian mission in Kabul while spurning a British diplomatic overture.

After several years of often fierce fighting, the British were successful in imposing their dominance. They annexed about half of the Pushtun territory and incorporated it into India (the area is now Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province). They likewise forced the Afghan monarchy to subordinate its foreign policy to the "wishes and advice of the British Government." To buy the acquiescence of the amirs, the British paid them substantial subsidies.

Although Afghanistan was not converted into a direct British colony like India, it had nevertheless lost its national independence.

The War for Liberation

By the beginning of the twentieth century, hostility to British dominance and the examples of the Iranian revolution of 1906 and the Young Turk movement in Turkey helped foster a new nationalist awakening among Afghan intellectuals, including some members of the royal family. It was known as the Young Afghan movement.

The Russian revolution of 1917 further inspired political ferment. Afghan nationalists hailed the overthrow of the tsar,

welcomed the Bolsheviks' granting of national self-determination to the oppressed peoples of the old Russian empire, and greeted the clause in the Brest Litovsk treaty recognizing Afghanistan's independence.

This first socialist revolution was a powerful blow to the world capitalist system and greatly strengthened Afghanistan's own struggle against British imperialism.

Against this background, Amanullah Khan, a member of the Young Afghan movement, ascended to the throne in February 1919. Reflecting the growing anti-imperialist sentiments of his followers, Amanullah promised in his first royal proclamation to win Afghanistan's "total liberation."

Within weeks of being proclaimed amir, Amanullah declared Afghanistan an independent and sovereign state. Anticipating a British attack, he ordered his troops to strike into British-occupied India and attempted to initiate revolts among the Pushtun tribes along the border.

Militarily, the Afghan forces did not make much headway. But they won the war. In August 1919, the British recognized Afghanistan's full sovereignty.

Though the Afghan and Soviet states rested on completely different social foundations, they were both locked in a struggle against imperialism. Collaboration in that struggle was to their mutual advantage.

Amanullah's first message to a foreign state—even before he launched the war of independence—was sent to the head of the new revolutionary government in Russia, Lenin. He proposed the establishment of diplomatic relations.

Lenin replied on May 27, 1919. He accepted Amanullah's offer and conveyed

... the greetings of the Workers' and Peasants' Government and the entire people of Russia to the independent Afghan people, who are heroically upholding their freedom against foreign oppression. I wish to congratulate Your Majesty on your accession to the throne on February 21, 1919.

The Workers' and Peasants' Government has granted genuine equality and liberty to all the nations comprising the Russian Republic and, in keeping with its declarations, has firmly adopted the internationalist principle of unity of all the toilers against the exploiters.

May the desire of the Afghan people to follow the Russian example be the best guarantee of the strength and independence of the Afghan state.¹

Diplomatic envoys were soon exchanged. On November 27, 1919, Lenin had a further letter sent to Amanullah in which he greeted Afghanistan as "the only independent Muslim state in the world" with

1. This letter is not included in Lenin's *Collected Works*. It is printed, however, in V.I. Lenin, *The National-Liberation Movement in the East* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1962), pp. 218-19.

"the great historic task of uniting around itself all enslaved Muslim peoples and leading them on the road to freedom and independence." Lenin proposed the establishment of trade and other agreements, "the purpose of which is not only the buttressing of good neighbourly relations in the best interests of both nations, but the joint struggle together with Afghanistan against the most rapacious imperialist government on earth, Great Britain."²

A treaty was subsequently signed between the two countries. Moscow agreed to provide financial aid and to allow Afghan trade to pass through Russia untaxed. Kabul agreed not to enter into any military or political accords that might be prejudicial to the Soviet state.

Amanullah did not seek close ties with Moscow out of any revolutionary convictions. Far from it. He feared the impact of the socialist revolution within Afghanistan and even sent troops and material aid to the counterrevolutionary Emir of Bukhara, who was fighting against the Red Army in central Asia. But the treaty with Russia did help strengthen Afghanistan in its conflicts with British imperialism.

The Bolsheviks, for their part, viewed their relations with Afghanistan—despite the semifeudal character of the Afghan state—as an important breach in the imperialist encirclement of the Russian revolution. They also recognized that Afghanistan's successful war for independence was an important blow to British imperialism and set an example to colonized peoples elsewhere.

Reform and Reaction

The anti-imperialist struggle in Afghanistan inevitably brought with it numerous demands for social and economic betterment. Although Amanullah was determined to maintain the monarchy, he at the same time introduced a program of domestic reform aimed at "modernizing" the country and laying the basis for future economic growth.

Throughout the 1920s, Amanullah sought to implement a variety of measures, including abolition of child marriage, the introduction of secular law, steps to improve the position of women, the establishment of free education, the development of the press, and the introduction of general military conscription (to replace the archaic system of tribal levies). In a new proposed constitution, he also called for the establishment of a national assembly, elected by all adult men and women, that would have important legislative powers.

In the context of Afghanistan's level of economic and social development at the

time, these democratic reforms were far-reaching and stirred the opposition of conservative sectors of society.

The British imperialists, meanwhile, had not given up their plans to subjugate Afghanistan. They feared that the example of Afghanistan's war for independence could weaken their hold on India. They were worried about Amanullah's ties with anticolonial Pushtun groups in the North-



Amanullah visiting Moscow.

West Frontier Province. They were alarmed at the spreading influence of the Russian revolution.

While formally recognizing Afghan independence, the British acted to undermine it, using the opposition to Amanullah's reforms as an opening.

The first armed opposition to Amanullah began in 1924, led by religious and tribal leaders who were against the opening of public schools to women and the liberalization of restrictions on women. The Afghan and Soviet governments accused the British authorities in India of instigating the revolt. Amanullah moved to crush the reactionary rebellion, and was aided in his drive by Soviet pilots.

In 1928 a more serious revolt began, led by Bacha-i Saqao, an archreactionary bandit chief. He was widely believed to have had direct British backing, and articles in the Soviet, German, French, and even British press pointed to a British hand behind the revolt. Col. T.E. Lawrence ("Lawrence of Arabia"), who was in India

at the time, was specifically accused of aiding the opposition to Amanullah.

In January 1929, Amanullah was forced to abdicate and flee Kabul. Although he attempted for several months to rally continued opposition to Bacha, he gave up in April and went into exile.

Bacha marched into Kabul and proclaimed himself amir. His regime was promptly recognized by Britain.

Bacha left no doubt about his social program. He reversed all of Amanullah's reforms. He closed the secular schools, recalled women students who were studying abroad, and reinstated the laws allowing polygamy. Laboratories, libraries, and museums were sacked. Supporters of Amanullah and educated Afghans in general were gunned down in the streets, blown apart by cannons, impaled, or starved to death.

Bacha's usefulness to Britain was limited, however. As a bandit leader, he did not have a sufficient social base among the landlords and tribal leaders to set up a stable regime. After he had sufficiently terrorized the urban population, the British decided to dump him and instead back Nadir Shah, a member of the old royal family.

After only nine months in power, Bacha was swinging from the gallows. Nadir Shah seized the throne in October 1929. The British signalled their approval, dispatching to Kabul an interest-free loan of \$1 million and crates of arms and ammunition.

Having been brought to power with imperialist backing, Nadir Shah set about entrenching the monarchy and strengthening the conservative grip over society of the landlords, khans, and religious leaders. He dropped Amanullah's policy of giving aid to the anticolonial Pushtun groups across the border in India.

Nadir Shah was assassinated in 1933, but his son, Zahir Shah, continued along the same course. For four decades, until 1973, Zahir Shah ruled Afghanistan as a semifuedal monarch.

Despite the predominance of landlord and aristocratic influences, some capitalist development did occur. Private and state banks were set up, government workshops were established, and a minimal amount of industrialization took root. Between 1962 and 1971, the industrial work force grew from 18,000 to 27,000 (out of a total working population of around 4 million). Another 50,000 workers were employed in construction. Most industry was government owned and only five private companies employed more than 200 workers each. Some of these capitalist interests, moreover, were directly tied to the royal family.

Together with the limited economic growth came a few modernization measures, including an expanded—but still quite small—educational system.

Though independent in name, Afghanistan remained a semicolony of imperial-

2. E.H. Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution*, Vol. 3 (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1966), p. 241. This letter, too, is absent from Lenin's *Collected Works*. According to Carr, it may not have been personally drafted by Lenin, though it reflects his thinking.

ism. The imperialist role in propping up the monarchy and the rule of the landlord class was a key element blocking the country's social advance.

Ties with Moscow

At the same time, because of Afghanistan's proximity to the Soviet Union, the government could not avoid having extensive relations with Moscow.

By this time, the revolutionary Soviet government led by Lenin and Trotsky had been purged by Stalin and replaced by a regime reflecting the interests of a privileged bureaucratic caste. The revolutionary internationalist policies of the Soviet government and Communist International under the Bolsheviks gave way to a policy of class collaboration—"peaceful coexistence"—with imperialism.

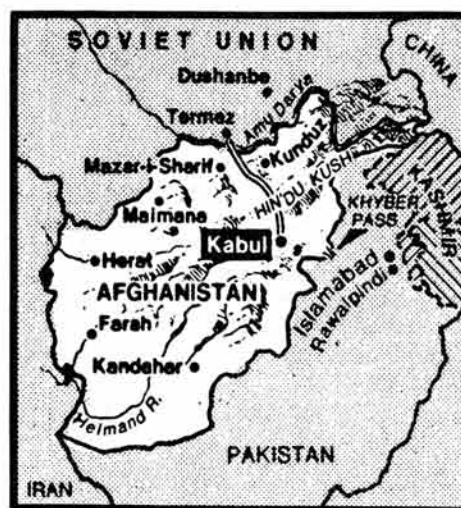
Since the material benefits of the conservative caste depend on the survival of the Soviet Union, however, the Moscow government continued to value a special relationship with Afghanistan, although now on the basis of "socialism in one country" instead of extension of the revolutionary struggle against imperialism and capitalism.

The ties between the Soviet and Afghan governments became especially significant during the 1950s, while Mohammad Daud, a cousin of Zahir Shah, served as prime minister. At the time, frictions between Afghanistan and Pakistan had sharpened over the artificially drawn border that divided the Pushtun people, as the Kabul regime raised the call for the creation of an independent Pushtunistan that would include the North-West Frontier Province. Washington was a major backer of the Pakistani regime and refused Daud's appeals for greater economic and military aid. So he turned northward.

In 1956, the Afghan regime reached an agreement with Moscow to obtain \$25 million worth of Soviet arms. Other agreements followed. Over the years, thousands of Afghan officers, technicians, and administrators were trained in the Soviet Union. Moscow helped build a modern road system. Trade between the two countries flourished. Between 1954 and 1976, Moscow gave Afghanistan \$1.3 billion in aid, the largest per capita amount of Soviet aid to any capitalist country.

Although Afghanistan was still tied to imperialism, these close Soviet relations

assured Moscow that the country did not serve as a direct imperialist military bastion on the Soviet Union's southern border, as Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey had become



through their membership in the American-dominated Central Treaty Organization (CENTO).

Do Soviet Asians Look to Afghan Rightists?

Some commentators in the bourgeois press have speculated that the Soviet government sent troops into Afghanistan because it feared that the right-wing insurgency there would have an attractive power on Asian nationalities inside the Soviet Union.

"Western and other foreign specialists here are skeptical" of that theory, Anthony Austin reported from Moscow in the January 13 *New York Times*.

Austin goes on to explain why.

"... almost everyone" in the Soviet Central Asian republics, says Austin, "seems proud of what has been achieved in turning stagnant czarist dependencies into modernizing, productive republics."

"This is particularly evident in Uzbekistan, the leading Central Asian republic and the one with the largest population, 10 to 12 million. Illiteracy, 98 percent before 1917, has been all but wiped out." Illiteracy in Afghanistan is around 90 percent, and opposition to the government's literacy campaign has been one of the battle cries of the rightist bands that are somehow supposed to be attractive to Asians in the Soviet Union.

"Life expectancy [in Uzbekistan]," Austin continues, "which was 40 years before the revolution, is 70 today." Life expectancy in Afghanistan is still around 40, but the government the rightist guerrillas are trying to over-

throw has been expanding medical facilities.

"There is one doctor for 386 people [in Uzbekistan]," Austin explains. "In Pakistan, by contrast, there is one for 6,000." The government of Pakistan is arming and equipping the right-wing rebels.

"In the four other Central Asian republics," says Austin, "the progress is almost as striking, though all five are still behind the rest of the Soviet Union in economic development."

This progress has been possible because of the planned and nationalized economy, which is an enduring conquest of the October 1917 revolution. The parasitic caste that took hold of the Soviet government under Stalin reversed many of the progressive measures of the Bolsheviks, including the steps to eliminate national oppression among Asian and other non-Russian peoples. In addition, workers and peasants in these areas suffer under the undemocratic policies and bureaucratic misrule that victimizes all working people in the Soviet Union.

But in their struggle against the Kremlin bureaucracy, the Central Asian peoples will not look for inspiration to the reactionary landlords, usurers, and opium smugglers that have kept the Afghan peoples uneducated, hungry, disease-ridden, landless, and unemployed.

—Steve Clark

Rumblings of Discontent

Moscow did not seek to promote domestic Afghan opposition to the monarchy, but it developed anyway, rooted in the social conflicts inherent in Afghan society.

During the late 1940s and early 1950s a prorepublican urban opposition movement, the Wikh-i Zalmayyan (Awakened Youth), emerged to challenge the government's policies. A number of its supporters were elected to the showcase parliament. Noor Mohammad Taraki and Babrak Karmal, who were to become central leaders of the April 1978 revolution, were both members of the Wikh-i Zalmayyan at the time. The amir cracked down in 1952, however, and the movement was suppressed.

A decade later, Zahir Shah authorized the establishment of a new parliament and again allowed elections. A number of oppositionists were elected, including Karmal. In October 1964, several hundred students demonstrated in support of Karmal and other opposition members, leading to clashes with the army and several deaths.

In January 1965, the first congress of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) was held in Kabul, electing Taraki secretary-general and Karmal to the Central Committee. It was a pro-Moscow Communist party, its leaders having been educated in the policies and practice of Stalinism.

The PDPA's program called for a "national democratic revolution" and advanced a series of elementary democratic demands, including recognition of the language rights of all nationalities, equality for women, a ban on child labor, and an end to imperialist influence over the

country. Within just a few years, however, the party split into two public factions, the Khalq (Masses) wing led by Taraki and the Parcham (Flag) led by Karmal.

The formation of the PDPA was symptomatic of a more general discontent that was surfacing, particularly in the cities.

Students demonstrated in opposition to the American intervention in Vietnam. The Afghan working class began to stir, launching the biggest strike wave in the country's history. Between April and June 1968, there were twenty-one strikes affecting the construction, transport, textile, cement, petroleum, and gold industries. Students demonstrated in support of the strikers. In May-June 1969, up to 15,000 university and high-school students clashed with riot police. In 1970, women took to the streets to protest against restrictions on their rights.

The PDPA, despite its Stalinist approach and its internal factional disputes, won growing influence. It was the only organized political force to offer any real opposition to the monarchy. Karmal's Parcham faction in particular carried out clandestine political work within the military.

Discontent was further heightened by a severe famine in the early 1970s, in which up to half a million persons died while landlords and traders hoarded grain and corrupt officials misappropriated relief aid.

The 1973 Coup

The social tensions building up within Afghanistan fostered divisions among ruling circles and undermined the monarchy's position.

Seeking to head off a mass upheaval, Mohammad Daud, the amir's cousin and former prime minister, seized power in July 1973 while Zahir Shah was abroad. He abolished the monarchy and declared Afghanistan a republic.

Reflecting the pressures he was under, Daud initially adopted a seemingly radical stance. He appointed four members of the PDPA's Parcham wing to the cabinet (pro-Parcham officers had played the central role in carrying out the coup). Political prisoners were released. All banks were nationalized. A land reform program was drawn up. Daud appeared to favor even closer ties with Moscow.

These policies marked only a very limited change, however. Although the government was republican in form, members of the royal family (like Daud himself) continued to wield considerable influence. The Parcham supporters of the regime were soon removed from positions of authority and political repression was stepped up. Daud moved to establish a one-party state, with all parties outlawed except his own Hizb-i Inqelab-i Melli (National Revolutionary Party).

The land reform program demagogically announced by Daud was never implemented.

Worried about Daud's initially more pro-Soviet posture, Washington and the shah of Iran went on a concerted campaign to woo Daud toward an openly pro-imperialist stance.

Agents of the shah's secret police, SAVAK, began to play an important role in Afghanistan and helped Daud purge the armed forces and administration of suspected radicals. Under American and Iranian urging, Daud closed the border with Baluchistan, across which Baluchi guerrillas had been operating in their struggle against the Pakistani regime; he soft-pedalled his earlier proposals for the establishment of a separate Pushtunistan. The shah offered Daud \$2 billion in credits for the construction of a railway from Kabul to the Iranian city of Mashad. The number of Soviet military advisers in Afghanistan dropped from 1,000 in 1972 to 200 in 1976.

By early 1978, after nearly five years of the Daud regime, the Afghan masses con-

tinued to face conditions as wretched as those under the monarchy.

Average life expectancy in the country was a bare forty years. Half of all children died before the age of five. In some areas, three-quarters of the population suffered from trachoma. Half of all Afghans had intestinal problems.

Illiteracy was between 90 and 95 percent. Although education was supposed to be free and compulsory, only 17 percent of all school-age children were actually in school in 1977; of those, only 11 percent were female.

Women were barred from most urban employment. In rural areas, young women were still being sold into marriage.

Unemployment was high. Poor peasants were tied to their landlords through constant debt, as virtual serfs. Per capita income was among the lowest in the world.

It was conditions like these that provided the social tinder for the revolutionary upheavals that began in April 1978. □

U.S. Farmers Protest Carter's Grain Embargo

By Osborne Hart

The Carter administration's decision to place an embargo on grain shipments to the Soviet Union has drawn sharp reactions from U.S. farmers.

The American Agriculture Movement, which in recent years has organized farmers to protest government farm policy, issued a statement in Washington D.C., January 9, saying: "We all know that previous actions of this type disrupted not only the immediate sale prices and supplies seriously, but they had even a more serious effect on long term sales not only for the farm sector but the entire nation."

In a telephone interview with the *Militant*, Tom Benson, a Minnesota farmer and AAM national treasurer, said, "The embargo quite seriously and naturally affects farmers. That's evidenced by the price decline."

With thirty-three percent of farm acreage used for the export market, farmers' dependence on sales to the Soviet Union—which would have been the third largest consumer of U.S. grain this year—is very high.

It is anticipated that the Carter embargo will cost U.S. farmers \$7 billion in lost revenues. Carter halted the sale of 17 million metric tons of grain and 1 million metric tons of soybeans, a sale that farmers had especially counted on because the corn and soybean crops are a record yield, and the wheat harvest is the second largest ever.

As for the winter harvest, "the 1980 winter wheat crop has been planted with the idea of substantial demand from the Soviets in mind," commented Winston

Wilson, a Texas wheat farmer, to the *Christian Science Monitor*. "The financial commitment has already been made."

To appease farmers, Carter announced government plans to purchase the 17 million tons of embargoed grain. But many farmers don't believe him.

"The president says the government will move right in and support the farmers," remarked C. William Swank of the Ohio Farm Bureau. "It's never happened before and I doubt that it will happen this time."

In fact, the decision to buy 17 million tons of grain was made only after the Department of Agriculture met with representatives, not of the farmers, but the major grain companies—such as Cargill, Continental, and others—that own most of the 17 million tons.

The AAM denounced Carter's complicity with the grain companies: "The administration's policy has protected the grain merchants for 100 percent of their entire sales, yet the farmers are put in the position of selling their entire inventory and also future production at low or disastrous prices."

Farmers have been protesting the rising cost of producing agricultural commodities due to inflation, rising fuel costs, and expensive machinery. Even before the embargo was imposed, predictions were that there would be a 10-20 percent drop in farm income during 1980 because of increased costs to farmers.

The AAM has called a farmer protest for February 16 in Washington D.C., and a two-day conference February 18 and 19 to focus on the plight of farmers. □

'A Heroine of the Cuban Revolution'

By David Frankel

Celia Sánchez Manduley, a leader of the Cuban revolution, died January 11 at the age of fifty-two.

The daughter of a doctor from the town of Pílon, in Cuba's Oriente Province, Sánchez was one of the finest representatives of a generation of revolutionaries who were ready to take any risk and make any sacrifice in the struggle to rid their country of the Batista tyranny and build a decent society in Cuba.

"Founder and leader of the July 26 Movement in the southern region of the old province of Oriente, she distributed *History Will Absolve Me* [Castro's 1953 courtroom speech denouncing the Batista regime], and organized and consolidated the Movement in Manzanillo, Sofia, Estrada Palma, Calicito, Campechuela, Ceiba Huca, San Ramón, Media Luna, Niquero, Pílon, and other places," said an editorial in the January 12 issue of the Cuban daily *Granma*.

Sánchez worked together with Frank País in laying the July 26 Movement's vital underground network in the cities. This, together with the guerrilla struggle in the mountains and countryside, eventually destroyed the Batista dictatorship.

It was Sánchez who was in charge of the camouflaged trucks that waited for the rebels sailing to Cuba in the boat named

Granma on November 30, 1956. The *Granma*, overloaded, antiquated, and meeting heavy weather, arrived two days late and the result was a stinging defeat. But the fighters of the July 26 Movement soon demonstrated that the dictatorship's claims of victory were premature.

Raúl Castro described the importance of the urban underground in his November 30 speech commemorating the uprising in the city of Santiago de Cuba that was meant to coincide with the landing of the *Granma*.

"The struggle in the cities was part and parcel of our revolutionary struggle," Raúl noted. "If this chapter is not so well-known or if some comrade is temporarily forgotten, it is because we haven't yet been able to systematize our efforts . . . so as to be able to provide a complete, all-around picture of the role played by thousands of comrades who carried out countless revolutionary actions."

Raúl also stressed that leaders like País—and Sánchez—were "always aware of the fact that such [underground] work could not be left solely to a group of daring men willing to risk their lives but had to be expanded to include the masses, chiefly the workers, obtaining their support."

Talking about the early period of the guerrilla struggle, Fidel explained, "Celia,



who was in Manzanillo, helped us greatly and sent us the first supplies, the first clothes, and the first money."

On March 19, 1957, Sánchez joined the Rebel Army in the mountains. As well as being one of the three women in the central leadership of the July 26 Movement (the other two were Vilma Espin and Haydée Santamaría), Sánchez was also the first woman to be integrated into the ranks of the guerrillas in the mountains.

The *Granma* editorial on her death notes that "she became, together with Fidel, one of those who pressed forward the creation of the female 'Mariana Grajales' platoon and the incorporation of women into the armed insurrectional struggle."

At the time of her death, Sánchez was a member of the central committee of the Cuban Communist Party, secretary of the Council of State, and a member of the National Assembly of People's Power.

An indication of the continuing power of her example—and that of the Cuban revolution, which she helped to bring to victory—was the Nicaraguan delegation at her funeral headed by Humberto Ortega and Bayardo Arce, leaders of Nicaragua's Sandinista National Liberation Front.

Tens of thousands, headed by Fidel Castro and other leaders of the Cuban revolution, turned out for Sánchez's funeral January 12. A eulogy was given by Armando Hart, a veteran of the July 26 Movement. As the statement on her death released by the central committee of the Cuban Communist Party declared:

"The homeland is in mourning. One of its most resolute and loyal daughters, a tireless fighter, a heroine of the Cuban Revolution, has fallen." □



Fidel Castro, Armando Hart, Celia Sánchez, Raúl Castro, and Javier Pazos during guerrilla war.

3,000 in El Salvador Attend Unity Conference

SAN SALVADOR—The big law school auditorium here could barely hold the roughly 3,000 activists who had come on January 11 to take part in the formation of the National Coordinating Committee of Revolutionary and People's Organizations.*

By 9 a.m., a long line had formed outside the door; everyone was searched before entering. The auditorium was soon filled to overflowing. The heat, the slogans, and the revolutionary songs added to the air of excitement. A colossal ovation greeted the arrival of the delegations.

The coordinating committee encompasses the three main revolutionary organizations—the People's Revolutionary Bloc (BPR), United Front for People's Action (FAPU), and February 28 People's Leagues (LP-28)—as well as the Nationalist Democratic Union (UDN), the Communist Party's legal organization.

The meeting still had not come to order during the first bars of the national anthem, and the noise died down only with the first few notes of the *Internationale*. The woman chairing the rally explained with conviction that the ruling oligarchy had usurped both the Salvadoran national anthem and flag, but that the Salvadoran people should turn them into the symbol of their anti-imperialist struggle for El Salvador's national liberation.

Héctor Bernabé Recinos—general secretary of FENASTRAS, the main union federation, and a member of the FAPU national leadership—read the text of the unity appeal.

Then, leaders of the four organizations spoke. Each one strongly emphasized the historic importance of the meeting and their shared commitment to fight to the end, with arms in hand, for the national and social liberation of the Salvadoran people.

The presence of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) was greeted by long and enthusiastic applause. The meeting owed a great deal to the victory of the Nicaraguan revolution. The unity achieved by the three currents of the FSLN, which contributed to that victory, had set an important example.

Applause also greeted the announcement that representatives from other international organizations were present. These included the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT) of Mexico, the Revolutionary Com-

munist League (LCR) of France, and a representative of the Fourth International.

A long political statement (see accompanying article) had been published the night before, signed by the CP, the Farabundo Martí People's Liberation Forces (FPL—a political-military organization with ties to the BPR), and the Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN—tied to the FAPU).

The unity achieved at the January 11 meeting testifies not only to the profound impact of the Nicaraguan revolution, but to the irrepressible radicalization of the Salvadoran masses over the last few months, despite fierce repression that has taken the lives of more than 600 workers and peasants since the October 15 coup.

This also explains why the CP made a turn toward unity with the revolutionary groups after having participated for two months in the government set up by the military junta. The CP's working-class

ranks and youth are susceptible to this revolutionary upsurge.

The four organizations issued a call for a general strike on January 22, which has already received the support of the main trade union organizations and other revolutionary groups.

January 22 is the anniversary of the 1932 insurrection in El Salvador. That year Salvadoran peasants, under the leadership of Agustín Farabundo Martí, rose up in arms in a massive revolt against the military dictatorship of Maximiliano Hernández Martínez. The uprising was defeated, drowned in blood. More than 30,000 peasants were massacred, and the leaders of the insurrection, Farabundo Martí among them, were executed.

Forty-eight years later, the workers and peasants of El Salvador are taking up the heroic legacy of the 1932 insurrection, this time with the firm determination to carry their revolutionary struggle through to victory. □

'Sandinista Victory Opened Era of Revolution'

SAN SALVADOR—The statement of the FPL, FARN, and CP rejected the perspective of cooperation with the military junta established October 15 following the bloodless overthrow of Gen. Carlos Humberto Romero. The junta had initially promised democratic and social reforms. Rather than following through on these, however, it continued to carry out repression against the workers and peasants.

As mass struggles deepened despite the repression, the regime sank into deeper and deeper crisis. In early January almost the entire civilian cabinet appointed by the junta resigned. The new civilian cabinet, made up of figures from the Christian Democratic Party, has little or no prospect of establishing a popular base to resolve the crisis.

"The attempts to establish a third historical alternative—reformism—have been frustrated," the statement of the three organizations said. "The events we have witnessed throughout the period created by the October 15 coup have revealed that the crisis cannot be resolved in this way, as some sectors of the imperialists, the bourgeoisie, and the middle layers claim.

"The efforts that are being made to salvage the reformist project, which are now getting stronger support from the United States government, are doomed to failure. The most reactionary oligarchic and imperialist sectors, who are partisans of the counterrevolution, do not support

the reformist project and are trying to force the country into a genocidal war, slaughter tens of thousands of workers and intellectuals, humble folk, the entire people. . . .

"No one should be confused: the only real alternative and effective solution to the national crisis in the interests of the people is the armed people's revolution, whose forces are rapidly maturing among the people. This revolution will not be an act of vengeance, but of justice and liberating transformation.

"It will guarantee democratic freedoms and rights to the entire people. In this way, real democracy will be established. The land will be turned over to the vast majority in the countryside, to those who really farm it and make it produce. Real national independence will be won, returning to our people the right to freely determine their destiny. With these and other fundamental changes, decent material and cultural living standards will be guaranteed to the working people.

"These big tasks can only be carried out if the revolution first triumphs, that is, if it takes power, destroys the oppressive, corrupt, and bloodthirsty apparatus of the military tyranny, and establishes a revolutionary democratic, anti-imperialist government based on people's power. These are the strategic goals of the revolution for which our organizations are fighting to-

*An initial account of this meeting and report on the political situation in El Salvador appeared in last week's *IP*/I.

gether with the vanguard of the people."

The statement also included an appeal to the ranks of the armed forces. "The soldiers and junior officers are those in the army who best understand the people's struggle," it said, "because they themselves are workers and the sons of workers, and have a guaranteed place in the people's army. Together we will build a society wherein the army will truly be the weapon of the people, the defender of their freedom and justice, the firm guarantee of sovereignty, now stolen, and of independence, now trampled underfoot."

Internationalism also characterized the appeal: "The heroic struggle of the Nicaraguan people, victoriously led by the Sandi-

nista National Liberation Front, is another source of inspiration to our unity and readiness to fight until victory. The Sandinista victory has opened an era of revolution in the Central American isthmus; we are enriched by its experience and will know how to take advantage of it, adapting it to our situation and problems. . . .

"We see the revolution in El Salvador as a part of the revolution in Central America, and as a special contribution of our people to the struggle for the liberation of all the peoples on the continent. . . .

"We are eager for Central American unity, but we reject the idea that it can be

built on the basis of foreign intervention and the subjugation of our peoples. . . .

"We support in all points the agreements of the Sixth Conference of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries held in Havana."

The document concludes with the slogans: "Long live the firm and full unity of the Salvadoran people! Long live the worker-peasant alliance! For a popular revolutionary government! Long live the international solidarity of the peoples! With the unity of the people until the final victory! Revolution or death! The armed people will win! Proletarians of all countries, unite! Armed struggle today, socialism tomorrow!" □

Belize—Thatcher's Military Base in Central America

By George Kerevan

[The following article appeared in the January 10 issue of *Socialist Challenge*, weekly newspaper of the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

President Carter is mounting a war drive in the Caribbean to isolate the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions. Last autumn a full-time military task force was set up to "respond rapidly to any attempted military encroachment in the region." Its first exercise was a massive mock assault on the US base at Guantanamo in Cuba—an example of military encroachment if ever there was one!

Among those who have opposed these moves are former British colonies in the Caribbean such as Grenada and Jamaica. This raises the danger that Carter will call on the Tory government to exert its considerable political and military presence in the area to stem further revolutionary developments in its ex-colonies. Though little known to the British public, the Thatcher government has formidable army, naval and air forces in the British "dependency" of Belize on the Guatemalan border, only a short distance overland from Nicaragua.

Belize—known as British Honduras until 1973—lies on the east coast of Central America and is the second smallest country on the American continent, with a population of 130,000. A stooge government under the so-called People's United Party has controlled Belize domestic affairs for 15 years.

Yet this obscure corner of the world is "defended" by 2,300 British troops, a massive air component consisting of a squadron of the latest Harrier jump-jets, and batteries of Rapier missiles. Army detachments including Irish Guards and Gurk-

has are rotated every six months. They have support from big Puma transport helicopters, and smaller, armed Scout helicopters. The heavily defended Belize International Airport has been extended to accommodate American-built C-130 Hercules troop transport aircraft and VC-10 jets.

A British journalist recently reported: "There was no sign of the Harriers, which I was to discover later in camouflaged hides with reinforced blast pens, but the RAF Regiment, responsible for the protection of vital installations at the airport, makes no secret of its presence, with a Rapier unit on the side of the runway which tracks every aircraft as it approaches." (*Air International*, November 1979.)

When added to Britain's naval presence in the Caribbean spearheaded by a frigate, the obvious question arises: just what is it that Thatcher is so anxious to "defend" in Belize?

The official story is that Britain is defending Belize from Guatemala. The true story is that British imperialism grabbed Belize from colonial Spain. When the Spanish colonies in America fought for and achieved their independence, Britain hung on to Belize as a little insurance that the "free" Central America republics would fall within Britain's trading empire. Guatemala has demanded for well over a century that the British get out. Belize effectively blocks Guatemala from the sea.

In 1859 Britain forced Guatemala to sign a treaty in which the latter "recognized" British control over Belize in return for the construction of a cart road from the Atlantic coast to Guatemala City. The British of course never built the road, and in 1945 the Guatemalans rightly tore up the treaty.

The current massive British military build-up in Belize stems from 1977 when the Guatemalans threatened to take back

their territory by force, and the Labour government under James Callaghan decided to send in the modern equivalent of the gun-boat—the Harrier jump-jets. But as the *Air International* reporter noted: "The Guatemalan Air Force's one squadron of Cessna A-37Bs does not pose a very potent threat."

In fact Britain keeps a military presence 5,000 miles from home in Central America for quite different reasons. It is an insurance policy for heavy British investments in a part of the world where Britain has been unable to impose stable repressive neo-colonial governments following independence. For instance, in March 1979 an insurrection in Grenada overthrew the pro-Western dictatorship of Sir Eric Gairy. Other tiny and impoverished island statelets are rumoured to be going the same way.

Even Jamaica, relatively stable until now, has seen increasing signs of unrest. Prime Minister Michael Manley has accepted Cuban aid and denounced the American troop build-up at Guantanamo. This has provoked an American inspired de-stabilisation plan, and September saw right-wing riots. An obvious ploy might well see British forces rushed to "friendly" countries facing a break-down of law and order, courtesy of the CIA.

Meanwhile the British forces in Belize are getting plenty of training. The *Air International* correspondent reports going on a practice operation with Forward Air Controller "Russ Nutter" and watching the Harriers drop bombs, fire their 30-mm cannon and let off air-to-ground rockets. It is not yet possible to get that sort of training in Belfast or Derry. But if British workers don't start an immediate campaign to get British troops out of the Caribbean, it is only a matter of time before the Nutters of this world are used to defend capitalism in Britain itself. □

WORLDWIDE CAMPAIGN FOR AID TO NICARAGUA



What Nicaragua Needs to Improve Health Care

[The following interview with Dr. Jean-Michel Krivine, following his recent visit to Nicaragua, appeared in the December 14-20 issue of the French Trotskyist weekly *Rouge*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

Question. How did you happen to go to Nicaragua?

Answer. For several months the Sandinistas have stressed their deep concern about the health-care situation in Nicaragua and asked that international aid in this be given top priority. In France and in Europe as a whole there are many people who would like to help but don't know how.

Lists of items that are needed have been circulated, but they are generally of limited use for anyone who does not have the resources of a state. I was sent to Nicaragua by the France-Nicaragua Solidarity Association* to draw up, with the help of the health-care officials there, a short list of urgently needed medical items that could be obtained through the work of European solidarity committees.

Q. What was your overall impression?

A. I was only there a week and had no time to get outside of Managua. So my impressions—on anything other than health-care—would be extremely superficial.

Q. Did you visit medical establishments?

A. I visited two hospitals and a health center. The health-care center in eastern Managua is the largest in the city; it provides medical attention for 40,000 families. You can spot it a long way off by the crowd in front of it, hundreds of persons standing in line.

When you enter you can see that it is very well organized and that everyone will eventually be examined. Many mothers are now bringing their children in for vaccination, for there have been four recent cases of diphtheria, resulting in two deaths. While there is a sufficient supply of vaccines, the center lacks syringes, antibi-

otics, and medicine for diarrhea and respiratory infections.

Managua's hospitals have 1,200 beds (for 500,000 inhabitants). The shortage of medication and equipment is such that only urgent cases can be taken care of. In one institution, the Mother and Child Hospital (420 beds, the sole establishment of this type in all of Nicaragua), I saw two children, and at times two women, in each bed.

There are forty to fifty births a day at this hospital—a total for which the facilities are just barely adequate. At times the number of deaths there from nutrition-related diseases are quite high—as many as nine a day.

At Manolo Morales P. Hospital in eastern Managua, the best equipped hospital in the country, there is no more film for X-rays, lab work has had to be cut in half because of a shortage of litmus paper, there is no more anticoagulant or cortisone in stock, very little in the way of antibiotics—and yet the emergency room receives 400 patients a day.

Q. What effect has international aid had?

A. There have been a lot of promises but little concrete aid apart from that from Cuba and, I think, Sweden. I saw packages of American gauze stamped with the date 1957.

The French government has been hailed on television for having sent two tons of medical supplies. But that amounts to only about four or five cubic meters of supplies—coming from a state it is the equivalent of a coin tossed in a beggar's bowl. France has also promised to help in the construction of a hospital. UNICEF has distributed packets of rehydration salts made available by Sweden, an extremely useful medication for combating infant toxemia. They can be added to babies' formula.

Q. How can the solidarity campaign in Europe be of help?

A. It should focus on the objectives we discussed with representatives of the Ministry of Health in Nicaragua. Essentially what is needed is help with equipping rural health-care centers, for the situation in the country-side is even worse.

There are only thirty-five centers, one for

every 20,000 to 30,000 inhabitants. There are also 148 clinics, each covering 2,000 to 10,000 persons. These facilities, which are often rudimentary, are almost totally without supplies. Nonetheless, they constitute the basic health-care unit.

Solidarity committees should undertake to provide for each one of them the following:

- A set of surgical instruments.
- A blood-pressure gauge and stethoscope.
- Portable sterilization equipment, the kind that can be fired either by wood or petroleum-based fuel.
- A small stock of indispensable drugs, such as penicillin, aspirin, and antidiarrhea medicine.

A precise list, with prices, will be issued soon by the France-Nicaragua Solidarity Association, which has undertaken the task of purchasing the items at the best price possible and assuring their delivery.

The packages that are sent will of course bear the names of those who raised the funds for them, and we hope to receive acknowledgement of delivery regularly from Managua, so as to help facilitate the campaign.

Q. Are volunteers being asked for?

A. They have asked us to hold up on this. At present it is impossible to assure volunteers a wage, and there are problems in providing housing and meals. We were promised that the embassy would let us know when these problems are resolved, because doctors, surgeons, dentists, and trained nurses would be of great help. □

Nicaragua Film Tours Scotland

More than 140 persons attended showings of the film *Nicaragua, Free Country or Death* in Scotland in late December.

The film tour, aimed at building up a network of local solidarity activists, was coordinated by the International Marxist Group and covered five cities.

At colleges in Paisley and Aberdeen students are planning further activity in conjunction with the Nicaragua Co-ordinating Committee.

In Edinburgh, the organizations that sponsored the tour are seeking to initiate a local solidarity committee linking labor and student organizations.

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Nicaragua's Indian Communities Join in Revolution

[The following article appeared in the December 6, 1979, issue of *Poder Sandinista*, weekly organ of the National Secretariat of Propaganda and Political Education of the Sandinista National Liberation Front. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

The Indian peoples of the Atlantic Coast region have long suffered the historic evils of colonialism—English, Spanish, U.S., and even internal colonialism during the Somozaist period.

Various ethnic groups make up the population of some 150,000 Indians—Misquitos, Sumos, Ramas, Criollos [of mixed Spanish and Indian descent], Zambos [mixed African-Indian], and Garifis. The Garifis are facing extinction.

All the colonialists tried to fight the Indians' existence, force them into submission, and change their customs and traditions. But what is most impressive is the Indians' deepgoing vitality as a people, the racial pride that has enabled them to preserve their own identity in face of all aggressions.

Geographic isolation—the lack of highways and the precarious condition of trails, the absence of bridges across the big rivers and the small ones as well, and the lack of communications media—held back the arrival of techniques for social development. But this very isolation also had the positive effect of impeding ideological penetration by cultural and moral values foreign to the Indians' way of life—a civilization in which individualistic patterns of social relations and all their bourgeois consequences did not predominate.

Economic Relations

Three types of production coexist in Mosquitia [the name applied to northeastern Nicaragua]: communal, *mano a la vuelta*, and individual.

In the communal type, production, distribution, and consumption all are done collectively. The social division of labor here is simply a technical one, and all members of the community participate of their own free will. In the past some of these communities were governed by Councils of Elders that discussed all problems. One example was Awascar, a community based on turtle fishing, in which the products of a hunt were divided equally among all without regard to the number who participated.

Mano a la vuelta involves cooperative labor. Property in land is held individually but worked in common by all members of the community. Farming methods are rudimentary; the plough is not known. For

one individual to clear, sow, and harvest his own hectare of land is too time-consuming, so the entire community or a good part of it join to do all the work on a member's plot in a single day. On the following day the next plot is worked, and so on from field to field. No payment is made for such labor, and the harvest from each hectare belongs to its owner.

The characteristics of individual production are well known.

The main crops are rice, beans, and *yuca* [a starchy root widely consumed in Nicaragua]. Fishing for turtle, *chabaleta*, and *rondón* round out the Indians' basic diet. Consumption by the immediate producer is the norm; exchange of products takes place through simple barter. Only once the multinational companies and the commerce controlled almost exclusively by the Chinese community came on the scene were the Indians penetrated by the laws of the capitalist market and confronted with money and consumerism.

A People That Survived Colonialism

The energy and vitality of these peoples in face of successive invasions is truly impressive. An important measure of this is their preservation of their own languages and dialects. The Misquitos are zealous about their culture, and although they have adopted Spanish as a means of communication for commercial purposes, they continue speaking Misquito among themselves. More curious is the case of the Sumos, who by custom refuse to use their own language in the presence of strangers—partly in order to preserve it and partly out of shame.

The influence of English on the vocabulary is undeniable, but in the expression of ideas and the repetitive structure of sentences the language is purely Indian.

Religious influences on the language should also be noted, especially those brought in by the Moravians [missionaries from a U.S. Christian sect]. The fact that the majority of the Moravians are *gringos* has exercised a powerful influence on the language, particularly the hymns sung in English. The Moravians also barred the participation of women in festivals and dancing.

The basic musical instrument is the guitar, sometimes purchased but often made by hand. Jawbones of horses, drums with special skins, and other instruments are also used.

As we know, family institutions are determined by the economic base. Owing to the collectivist modes of production and labor and the isolation of the communities, family forms are loose and nonpossessive and sexuality is more normalized. The

entire family and the community as a whole take part in the care and education of children. Owing to high infant mortality and the absence of contraceptive methods, couples have an average of eight children.

Of course, the religious missionaries have intervened strongly to impose monogamy, punish incest, and so on, sweeping aside the indigenous family forms and imposing their own concepts of the bourgeois family and moral values—which they seek to make the Indians believe are universal ones.

Relations With the Sandinista Revolution

The Atlantic Coast region did not participate directly in the insurrectionary process. But the FSLN's role is recalled in Bocay [where the first guerrilla front was set up in 1963], and in some places Sandino's presence is remembered. Through Radio Sandino, the unfolding of the revolutionary process has been followed in all the communities.

In all populated areas the Indians have always been among the least-favored social layers, so they objectively sympathize with the policies of the FSLN. They also have confidence in the process because of the inherent collectivist aspects of their own communities. But their confidence is not simply a product of naivete: the Indians have suffered exploitation, marginalization, and poverty under all governments in all periods. So they anxiously await the practical achievements of the revolution. They thirstily drink in the revolution's statements, while examining down to the last millimeter the relation of words to practical results.

The Indians are aware that some people are skeptical about their being organized as ethnic and marginal minorities, fearing that this could be utilized by the counterrevolution. But SUMIRASATA* has made its position quite clear:

"We understand that the Sandinista Revolution and its objectives are popular ones, and that the revolution is the expression of the popular will and places confidence in the people. We representatives of 150,000 Indians have put our trust in the Government of National Reconstruction and the Sandinista National Liberation Front. We offer our support and solidarity and we are certain that we will be dealt with in the same way. We want the economic, social, and cultural aspirations of our Indian communities to be the same as those of the GRN [Government of National Reconstruction] and the FSLN."

Now that the Indians have ceased to be

*Sumos, Misquitos, Ramas, and Sandinistas United.

second-class citizens, it is necessary not only to respect and enhance their existence as a people but also to take up the positive aspects of their ancient development so that these can be the heritage of the revolutionary process as a whole.

There is one indicator that the Indians

are watching expectantly to gauge their incorporation into the revolutionary process—the second great battle of the Sandinista movement, the literacy campaign. The Indians fully expect that in the planning of this campaign their own peculiarities as a people will be taken into

account, and that the campaign will be a bilingual one—first in their own mother tongue and then in the common language [Spanish]. They want their views considered now in preparing the materials for the literacy campaign and for education in general. □

Why Iranians Want the Shah Back

Interview With Students at the U.S. Embassy

By Cindy Jaquith

[The following appeared in the January 25 issue of the *Militant*.]

* * *

TEHRAN—On January 2 I was invited to the U.S. Embassy here, renamed the spy den, to conduct an interview with the students inside.

Although it was 9:30 in the morning, there were already several hundred Iranians outside the main gate. They had come there to demonstrate their support for the return of the criminal shah.

A Mexican television reporter and a radio announcer from Nippon Cultural Broadcasting in Japan had also been invited to do interviews. We were taken through the main gate to a small room in one of the embassy buildings.

Spanning one wall of the room was a huge banner that read: "We differentiate between the United States corrupt government and fair, honest Americans."

Posters decorated other walls. There was one that said "No negotiation—just deliv-

ering the shah," another with a picture of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, two posters put out by the Muslim Students Association of the United States and Canada, and one advertising a conference of national liberation movements held in Tehran January 3-9.

Students in the room urged us to take as many posters as we wanted, and also gave us copies of U.S. Embassy files showing the record of CIA spying in Iran.

The *Militant* interviewed two spokesmen for the Muslim Students Following the Imam's Line, the name the students occupying the spy den have chosen. A woman student provided the translation.

In the interview the students explain that they believe the American people, and people around the world, have a common enemy—U.S. imperialism.

The spokesmen detail the horrors of life in Iran under the shah—torture, poverty, absence of democratic rights. They explain how the U.S. government was behind the shah's regime every minute of the way.

They express their view of the Iranian revolution and where it is going.

We have also reprinted here excerpts from the interview with the students conducted by the Mexican reporter.

The students stressed the importance of getting out the truth about the shah and the U.S. role in Iran. They told the *Militant* how the mass media in the United States has consistently distorted their statements and interviews. For example, they said, ABC, CBS, and NBC all censored the film of the hostages' Christmas celebration. The three networks cut out the most important part of the film, which was an appeal by one of the hostages to the American people.

In the interview, the students call on the American people to help them get out the truth, to help "in exposing the crimes of the [shah's] regime and of imperialism so that the peoples will not be abused anymore by their oppressors."

The full text of the interview begins below.

Question: You have appealed to the American people to support your struggle against the U.S. government. Based on the deep opposition in the United States to the Vietnam war, are you optimistic about winning solidarity with the people of Iran?

Answer: We believe that the imperialism of the United States, by its evil and oppression, has dominated all the people of the world. It has used and exploited the nations.

The United States has dominated the peoples of the Third World with guns and poverty; the people of the industrialized world by the philosophy of consuming, by unawareness, and by broadcasting systems and devices which do not give the people the truth but seek to deceive them.

The oppressors try to destroy these freedom-seeking peoples when they rise up to gain freedom and independence.

The different sectors of the United States administration and the different parties—who we believe are all of the same nature—use everything for their own benefit and in order to become president.

The crimes of the Republican Party in our country are evident to us. The coup d'état [that returned the shah to power in 1953] was made at the time of a Republican president.

But now the Republican Party says that Carter has to explain the crimes of the shah in the last two years. This is not acceptable to us.

The people of America have seen the crimes. They have seen the bodies of 100,000 martyrs of our revolution. But now some people try to say that those crimes were only taking place in the last two years.

The Imam [Khomeini] said that a court must be set up so that it will be clear who has given orders to the shah for twenty-five years. And the shah has also said that if he is tried the presidents of the United States of his time should be tried, all of them, as well. This shows how the life of the United States government has depended on crime, on oppression, on bloodshed. And we expect that the Ameri-

Two HKE Prisoners Released, Another Hospitalized

In another victory for democratic rights, Mustafa Gorgzadeh and Morteza Gorgzadeh, two of the members of the Iranian Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) who had been imprisoned in Ahwaz, have been released. This brings to nine the number of HKE prisoners who have been freed on bond.

One of the remaining five HKE prisoners, Fatima Fallahi, has been gravely ill, suffering comas and severe loss of weight. On January 14 she was transferred to a hospital in Ahwaz after supporters of the Iranian revolution urged that this antishah fighter receive emergency medical attention.

Mahsa Hashemi, the other woman prisoner, has been transferred to Behbahan prison in southern Iran.

can people will understand this and protest it.

The Blacks in America and the Indians are oppressed like us. In the meeting of their ministers, in their demonstrations, and in the support messages that they have sent to us we see that they understand much of our cause.

We are sure that this wave of awakening will spread throughout America and the whole world. The people will revolt against the oppressors and this corrupt system will be destroyed forever.

All oppressed peoples, intellectuals, and revolutionaries who desire to struggle against evil must rise up and struggle to expose the crimes of the shah and the United States to the American people.

We believe that if the American people understand all of what happened and all of what is coming to other nations, they will support these other peoples.

The evidence is the time of Vietnam. When the American people understood what was coming to the courageous and militant Vietnamese people, they rose up and supported them. The evidence of the crimes that have taken place in Iran is the 100,000 injured, the U.S. Embassy documents, and the poverty. But unfortunately the United States government is distorting the reality. It is putting pressure on the Iranian Muslim students in America who are helping to expose the crimes of the United States. The government is not allowing them to use their limited resources to express the truth to the American people.

We ask the intellectuals and the revolutionaries to support the Muslim students in

America. Help them in exposing the crimes of the regime and of imperialism so that the peoples will not be abused anymore by their oppressors. This will be achieved by reaching the society of justice and unity and freedom for all nations.

Q: Thousands of people, most of them very poor, have come to the U.S. Embassy to support the demand that the shah be returned for trial. What has the Iranian revolution meant for their lives?

A: In the name of God, the beneficent, the merciful. The Islamic revolution of Iran was a movement; we are behind it. All classes of the people were united.

For years the Pahlavi regime and its dominance had made the Iranian people suffer very much. This regime, to secure its dominance and increase its power, made the Iranian society vulnerable for every U.S. influence possible.

The regime came to power by a military coup d'état staged by the United States. It massacred our common people in the streets many times. And in one year it killed 15,000 of our people. The terrible prisons of the shah are famous everywhere. There they tortured the fighters and the youth of Iran.

This regime destroyed our agriculture. Instead of planting useful crops they planted crops which have no use for us. They destroyed our economy and our culture.

This regime claimed to be Muslim, but in reality it betrayed all of the nation. Thus when the masses understood all of these realities, they revolted against their main enemy.

This revolution was in the direction of building a society based on Islam. A society where justice prevails, where there is no evil, no oppression.

Man has two dimensions, and the spiritual dimension must be considered as well as the economic one. The masses want an Islamic society. On this basis and based on the method that Islam gave, they revolted. We students see ourselves as part of the people. We believe that revolutions in the world before the Islamic revolution had come to a dead end and to a stop. But this Islamic revolution has introduced a new method and a new dimension for the oppressed nations of the world to obtain freedom.

Q: You are hosting a Gathering of International Liberation Movements in Tehran January 3-9. What are the goals of this conference, and how do you see the Iranian revolution in relation to national liberation movements around the world?

A: The goals of the gathering of the liberation movements in Tehran is for these movements to come here and see our revolution, see our people, see the crimes the shah has committed so as to understand them.

In this country we have 100,000 handicapped people who are clear evidence of the crimes of the shah. We have villages and cities which are made of mud houses. We have great graveyards which are full of our martyrs—youth, children who have struggled and stood up against the oppressors. We want to expose this evidence and the crimes of the shah to the people of the world. And we want to introduce them to the methods of our struggle.

The international courts have no value. The courts must be in the hands of the oppressed nations. We believe that the best of the judges are the people of the nations. They can judge better than anyone else. We believe that the realities must be known to all peoples of the world.

If possible we would bring all the oppressed peoples to Iran. But since that wasn't possible, we brought their representatives.

The oppressed peoples of Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East have a similar situation as us. They have a common enemy: imperialism. They must explain to each other their problems so as to recognize their enemy and find a common solution.

The United States has committed crimes here. This must be shown to the American people—that beneath the claims of Carter that he is for human rights something else was happening. These were only lies to deceive the people. They must understand the evil nature of their government and rise themselves in struggle to overthrow their oppressors.

One of the other goals of the conference is to introduce our revolution to all peoples of the world. The Iranian revolution disrupted the normal values and criteria for a

Interview With Mexican Reporter

Mexican Television: Now that the shah has gone to Panama, does this change your plans? Will you take action against Panama?

Answer. Although the United States government tries to claim it is the defender of human rights, all of its actions are against human rights.

The shah has done nothing for the Iranian people. He has betrayed the Iranian people. He has tortured our youths. He has destroyed our agriculture. He has given our lands to foreigners. He has destroyed our economy. He has destroyed our culture.

Our people lived in mud huts and then last year, the people revolted, the shah escaped, and afterwards, the United States, our main enemy, gave asylum to this criminal under the pretext of sickness.

This was a great insult to our people.

Such criminals must be tried, for their trial is the trial of all oppressors. The demand of the Iranian nation is un-

changeable. This is a demand of the people who have arisen and will continue to struggle until they have achieved their demands. . . .

The United States is the great python. And similar pythons are around us. This is an Islamic idea. All around the world imperialism puts up puppet regimes dominant over the people.

Panama is in the same situation. It is controlled by a dictatorship, a puppet of the United States. It is taking orders, like the regime we had before here, from the United States. And it is easy, just like the regime in Iran was, to be overthrown.

Since all peoples of the world are united, the Panamanian people began protests against the shah being there. We only gave them a message of thanks. But we know that the Panamanian people will ask their government to give the shah back to Iran—or else the Panamanian people will do with their government what we did with ours.



Cindy Jaquith/Militant

Display on Nicaraguan revolution outside U.S. embassy in Tehran.

revolution. It was something unique. When people with no weapons and empty hands, with only faith and unity overthrow the largest power of the world, this brings hope for all people.

Iran is a class where revolutionary methods stemming from the masses and based on the Islamic revolutionary ideology is taught. This is an ideology based on a complete understanding of the needs of man. And this understanding brought this great freedom.

Another one of the conference's goals is to introduce the invited liberation movements to the peoples of the world including our people. We hope to increase the support of our people for these movements, and also obtain the support of the administrative sector of our government for the struggles of the oppressed peoples in different parts of the world.

Q: You have released secret files found at the embassy to show how the U.S. government is still trying to penetrate Iran economically and politically. Recently, you called on the Iranian people to express their views on these revelations—to say if they wanted more documents exposed. Based on their response, what will you do now?

A: We have released the documents to clarify the methods by which the United States was increasing its influence and penetrating the Iranian nation. These files show the covers under which the U.S. government was working to gain more dominance and to secure its interests and benefits in Iran. It was gaining dominance to exploit our people. Our nation wants to understand these methods so as to be able to stop any such influence.

Our people, just as they have persist-

ently struggled against the shah's regime, will now persistently and firmly struggle to cut off the influence of the United States in Iran.

6 U.S. Clergymen Visit Iran

'Let Shah Face Jury of Maimed and Tortured'

By Janice Lynn

[The following article was published in the January 25 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary socialist newsweekly published in New York.]

* * *

Six American clergymen who returned from a fact-finding trip to Iran told reporters at a January 4 news conference they concluded that the United States had supported a terrorist regime under the shah.

The Rev. William Kirby, Methodist-Presbyterian chaplain at Princeton University, said, "I believe the American government should ask forgiveness for its past sins and repent, which means to turn around and follow a new path which does not interfere with the Iranian people."

Kirby added, "The Iranian people are angry at the American government, not at the American people. We must tell the American people the truth."

The six clergymen and one American professor visited Iran from December 23 to January 3 as part of a delegation headed by the Rev. Jimmy Allen, of the Southern Baptist Convention. Allen is also a personal friend of Carter's.

For a short time no documents were released. This was to clarify whether the Iranian people desired more exposures. During this period it was made clear to everyone that the Iranian people do want to know the methods by which the United States carried out its dominance in Iran. The people's support shows that the students are not terrorists, but are backed by the population. They are supported by the leader and the people.

We believed before that the exposures should continue. They will go on from now on.

These documents belong to our people but not only our people. They belong to the peoples all over the world, since the United States has committed many crimes in other nations and other American embassies have the same nature as the embassy here.

Our message to other people is that they should open up these dens of espionage to clarify the nature of what the U.S. was doing. If the American people would go to the CIA center or to the Defense Department they would see documents there against the American people, documents of plotting against the interests of the nations.

We will continue our exposures and the people will continue to follow. □

The seven met with Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, whom Allen described as "a man of great principle." Allen warned against following a caricature of Khomeini as an "inept religious fanatic." He also said the current political decision-making in Iran goes "from the people up" rather than from the leaders down. This "inverts the decision-making process we're used to," Allen stated.

Dr. Thomas Ricks, a specialist in Iranian and Middle Eastern affairs at Georgetown University, said, "My hope is that the shah indeed be returned to face the jury of the maimed and the tortured."

Rev. John Walsh, Baptist chaplain at Princeton, added that they had learned during their twelve-day trip that "sufficient information exists that calls for an international tribunal" to try the shah.

Rev. Charles Cesaretti of the Episcopal Church in New York City agreed. "Let him stand in the public arena and explain his actions," he told the news conference.

The sentiments expressed by these clergymen reflect the thinking of more and more Americans as they learn the truth about the shah's crimes against the Iranian people. □

Relief Groups Rebut U.S. Lie That Pnompenh Blocks Food

The Carter administration's latest move against the Heng Samrin government in Kampuchea has been a phony intelligence report claiming that Kampuchea, Vietnam, and the Soviet Union are deliberately blocking the distribution of food aid to the Kampuchean people. Carter hoped to use such charges to provide the humanitarian cover for a boycott of aid to the war-torn country.

One Red Cross official reportedly echoed Carter's charges and the World Food Project responded by announcing that it was stopping food shipments until distribution problems are solved. The Red Cross is continuing its modest aid shipments, however.

Both the Red Cross and the World Food Project have been pouring aid to the Khmer Rouge forces along the Thai border. They have made not a peep of protest against the fact that the overwhelming bulk of this aid is going to Khmer Rouge troops and storehouses, and never reaches the Kampuchean civilians for whom it is supposedly intended.

Carter hides the fact that Vietnam and the Soviet Union have provided Kampuchea with nearly 300,000 tons of food—a glaring contrast to his administration's performance in the face of hunger in Kampuchea.

Carter's charges ran into opposition from relief agencies which know the real situation in Kampuchea. Even officials of UNICEF, which retains close ties to the Khmer Rouge, challenged his assertions. Such groups as Church World Services (an affiliate of the National Council of Churches), the American Friends Service Committee, and Britain's Oxfam exposed the falsifications.

Four examples are reprinted below.

* * *

[The following are major excerpts from a letter to the editor that appeared in the December 28 *New York Times*.]

In his column on Soviet activities in Indochina (Dec. 12), James Reston relies on a recent U.S. intelligence report to make a variety of allegations that have the effect of discrediting international relief operations in Cambodia.

During two recent visits to Cambodia to examine needs and plan Church World Service's response, I had occasion to meet with representatives of various relief agencies operational there. I traveled in several provinces, visiting cities, refugee camps and villages. I spoke with international observers who have traveled rather extensively in central Cambodia.

I heard no allegation from any source in Phnom Penh which would support charges of massive—or even significant—delays or diversion for political reasons. To be sure, there are serious logistical, administrative and security obstacles to distribution, but these are understandable and are being overcome.

I observed food being distributed to civilians in a number of locations and was even able to observe a noticeable improvement in the physical condition of people during the three weeks which separated my visits. I did not observe or hear of actual starvation in areas controlled by Phnom Penh. Conditions in contested areas near the Thai border and elsewhere, where relief distribution is either impossible or quite irregular, may be much worse.

Food is now being harvested in Cambodia. The current crop is, of course, not nearly sufficient to meet the needs of the whole nation. When the harvested crop is consumed, the country will need to rely almost totally on relief supplies now being provided by the international community (including Vietnam and the Soviet Union).

Traditional farming methods require that a portion of each crop be left in the fields to full maturity to provide seed for the subsequent crop. This may explain reports that the harvesting process is being strictly controlled. . . .

Church World Service remains confident that international relief assistance to the people of Cambodia will be an important factor in their future. The present system for distribution is imperfect, but we do not believe that this is the result of a conscious policy. While we all seek dramatic improvement in the distribution process, attempts to pressure Phnom Penh, Hanoi and Moscow by exaggerated or unwarranted allegations can serve no useful purpose. On the contrary, we believe that the American Government and people can continue to make positive contributions to the people of Cambodia through quiet, creative diplomacy and full cooperation with relief efforts.

Kirk Alliman
Southern Asia Area Director
Church World Service
New York
Dec. 20, 1979

[The following letter appeared in the December 28 issue of the *Christian Science Monitor*.]

It has come to my attention that a remark attributed to me in a story on Soviet assistance to Cambodia gives the impres-

sion that I believe that most Soviet food assistance is intended for Vietnamese troops, while "some of the aid . . . could be spilling over to starving civilians." In fact, I would put the emphasis just the other way around.

Based on conversations with Soviet officials and the eye-witness accounts of colleagues who have recently visited Cambodia, I have every confidence that Soviet food assistance is intended primarily for civilians, while some of it may also be used in support of Vietnamese and Khmer troops—certainly a normal procedure between allies. I regret the misunderstanding, which may have resulted from a lack of precision in my conversation with your reporter.

William D. Herod
Consultant
Office on Indochina Relations
Church World Service
Washington

[The following communication from Pnompenh appeared in the December 2 issue of the French revolutionary socialist weekly *Rouge*.]

Within the context of operation Cambodia Solidarity, four cargo planes chartered by eight French and ten foreign organizations arrived in Pnompenh between November 18 and December 2. They carried a total of 160 tons of food supplies, medicine, and other materials.

The shipment was divided up between the ministries of health and commerce and the Cambodian Red Cross. The representatives of the various participating organizations, who were present in Pnompenh, helped with the unloading, transport, and distribution of the cargo.

Accompanying officials of the ministry of health, they distributed foodstuffs and medicines in three provincial hospitals (Takeo, Kompong Speu, Kompong Chnang) and to various rural dispensaries.

They verified the enormity of the needs, the destitution of the hospitals and dispensaries, the crying lack of cadres—for the most part massacred by the Khmer Rouge regime. They noted that despite the unimaginable difficulties, the country has been reorganizing itself little by little, especially through the efforts of surviving cadres, the population as a whole, and the government of Kampuchea.

They ask that in France and in Europe that solidarity current that has developed should be intensified in order to provide the population of Kampuchea with the means to assure its own rebirth.

Pnompenh, December 8, 1979
The Representatives of: Catholic Commit-

tee Against Hunger, Ecumenical Aid Service, French Committee for Medical and Health Aid to the Cambodian Population, Ecumenical Church Council, TROCAIRE (Ireland), Development and Peace (Canada).

[The following article by New York Times reporter Ralph Blumenthal appeared in the January 13 issue of that newspaper.]

Soviet stevedores are helping to unload international relief supplies in the Cambodian port of Kompong Som, according to the head of a Quaker aid group who recently toured parts of Cambodia.

David L. Elder, coordinator of Southeast Asia programs for the American Friends Service Committee, said he saw and photographed some of the estimated 100 to 200 Russians unloading Unicef-purchased Japanese trucks at the port during a nine-day visit that began Dec. 15. The Russians were living on a ship in the port, he said at a briefing Thursday in Quaker House near the United Nations.

He said that if he had to cite one "lemon" in the aid effort it would be the Soviet export of corn to Cambodia. The Cambodians despise it, he said.

Disputing earlier charges by the White House and a private aid group that the Soviet-supported Vietnamese occupiers of Cambodia were blocking the distribution of relief supplies, Mr. Elder said he had found evidence to the contrary. "There is a willingness, desire and urgency to move supplies," he contended, adding that the effort was hampered by a lack of trucks and administrators.

He said he saw no sign that the Vietnamese Army or the Cambodian militia was diverting relief supplies for its own use. He and his aides were allowed to wander among rice fields in Kompong Speu Province, he said, leading him to discount the allegations of refugees that the fields were mined to reserve the harvest for the soldiers.

Outside militarily contested regions, the immediate danger of further famine has receded, he said, although after the current rice harvest—a poor one—is completed in March there will be a serious gap until the next harvest in December.

"We bought some time," Mr. Elder said, "but there's another cliff ahead."

He agreed with other aid officials that "mountains of supplies," including rice and Soviet soap, were backed up in warehouses in Kompong Som. But he said he saw some Unicef medical supplies at a hospital in Takeo, about 50 miles south of Phnom Penh, and other food and medical supplies in other areas.

More trucks to move the supplies were arriving, he said. The several dozen vehicles he watched the Russians unload were part of the 260 Japanese and English trucks that were contributed by Unicef and

Oxfam, he said. In addition, he said, he saw the first 150 trucks of a Soviet delivery of 300.

Mr. Elder, who insisted that his account was not colored by any fear of offending the Cambodians or Vietnamese and thus jeopardizing his agency's work, also reported growing signs of recovery in Phnom Penh. Emptied of its millions by the Com-

munists after their 1975 takeover, Mr. Elder related, the capital is now bustling with truck traffic, sidewalk vendors and people bartering. The only currency used for purchases, he said, is the Vietnamese dong, with some transactions in gold.

His Government interpreter put the city's population at 200,000, a figure Mr. Elder said appeared credible. □

Longtime Australian Trotskyist

Ted Tripp, 1900-1979

Ted Tripp, one of the early leaders of the Australian Communist Party and Trotskyist movement, died in Melbourne September 21 at the age of seventy-eight, following a long illness.

Tripp, a committed socialist for more than sixty years, was one of the major figures in the early socialist movement in Australia. He had rejoined the Trotskyist movement in 1978 after a forty-year break with organized Trotskyist forces.

It was in 1917 in Britain, under the impact of the Russian revolution, that Tripp became a socialist. Shortly after emigrating to Australia in the early 1920s he became involved in union struggles in Queensland, including the 1926 rail strike, during which he published one of the country's first strike dailies.

Recruited to the Communist Party, he organized the first CP branch in Townsville, Queensland, and represented the branch at the CP's 1927 national congress. He then began playing a leading role in the party, becoming one of its first candidates for public office.

Shortly after the election the CP selected Tripp to be its first student for an extensive study and training course at the Lenin School in Moscow.

While in Moscow, Tripp attended meetings and conferences of the Executive Committee of the Third International and was able to witness firsthand the practice of Stalinism in the Soviet Union and the growing Stalinization of the Communist parties throughout the world.

As he had always been a keen student of the Russian revolution, Tripp could not help but notice the falsification of its history. It was the vicious campaign against the ideas of Leon Trotsky and the Left Opposition that helped bring him to a realization of the process that was occur-



TED TRIPP

ring.

But he still believed that all would be different back in Australia. Upon his return he found otherwise and came into immediate conflict with the Comintern representative who had been sent to Australia.

Although he became part of the CP's central leadership, he was excluded from decision making.

After openly criticizing the course of the Comintern in Germany at a CP conference in 1932, he was relieved of major party assignments in 1933 and was expelled from the party in 1934.

Tripp immediately joined the Workers Party, the name of the Trotskyist formation at that time, and became one of its leaders, serving as an educator and working on the party's newspaper, the *Militant*.

A few years later he left the Workers Party and began to publish a Trotskyist magazine, *Permanent Revolution*, based on a Trotskyist grouping at Sydney University.

During World War II Tripp moved to Melbourne and after trying to establish a Trotskyist group there withdrew from activity in the socialist movement. He opposed Australia's involvement in the imperialist war.

For more than two decades Tripp served as a secretary of the shop committee at a munitions plant near Melbourne. From 1945 on he was associated with the Victorian Labor College and was its secretary for more than twenty years.

When he joined the Socialist Workers Party in 1978, Tripp once again established formal links with the revolutionary-socialist movement. "There is no doubt in my mind," he said at the time, "that my joining the SWP is a continuation of my membership in the Communist Party of Australia in the 1920s and the early Trotskyist movement in the 1930s. . . . The SWP is a continuation of this revolutionary tradition."

A memorial meeting was held in Melbourne December 2 to pay tribute to Tripp. His death is a great loss for the Socialist Workers Party, the Victorian Labor College, and his many students and friends. □

Pentagon Ups U.S. Nuclear Arsenal in Europe

By Will Reissner

Throughout the past decade, Washington has been trying to force its European allies to shoulder more of the financial and political burdens of defending imperialist interests around the world. That campaign registered a tentative victory on December 12, when the North Atlantic Treaty Organization* (NATO) voted to develop and deploy on West European bases 572 medium-range, nuclear-armed missiles capable of reaching targets in the Soviet Union.

Under the plan, 464 ground-launched cruise missiles are to be placed at U.S. air bases in West Germany, Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Italy; 108 Pershing II ballistic missiles will be placed in West Germany. All these missiles will remain under exclusive U.S. control, although the host country will be responsible for building facilities to house them.

Deployment of these missiles was first proposed by President Carter in 1977. The drive to convince the NATO allies to accept the political risks of housing the missiles picked up steam after protests in Europe and the United States forced Carter, in April 1978, to halt plans to deploy neutron bombs in Europe.

The government of the Soviet Union has bitterly protested this escalation of the arms race in Europe.

In a mid-January statement distributed by the Soviet news agency Tass, Premier Leonid Brezhnev said:

It was the United States that in December 1979 forced on its NATO allies the decision to deploy in a number of West European countries new medium-range nuclear-missile arms, this leading to a new spiral of the arms race. Washington virtually muzzled those of its allies who were inclined to positively respond to the Soviet Union's constructive proposals to hold talks on this matter.

Brezhnev said that "the leading circles of the United States and of some other NATO countries have embarked on a course hostile to the cause of détente. . . ."

Although the SALT II "arms limitation" treaty actually allowed a major expansion of both the size and diversity of the Pentagon's nuclear arsenal, Moscow had been pushing it as the road to world peace. It

read the NATO decision both as a direct military threat and flouting by Washington of even the SALT II formula.

NATO propagandists have tried to cover over the fact that this move represents a major new escalation of the arms race by raising a hue and cry about an alleged Soviet missile build-up aimed at Europe that threatens the balance of terror on that continent.

The facts, however, show a very different picture. Even the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, an imperialist "think tank" that was a prime mover behind the campaign to deploy the new NATO missiles, admitted in a recent study that "something very close to parity now exists between the theater nuclear forces of NATO and the Warsaw Pact" [emphasis added]. "Theater" nuclear forces are those designed for use in a specific area, in this case Europe.

NATO is hardly a defenseless lamb at the mercy of the big bad Soviet wolf. NATO forces already have more than 7,000 nuclear weapons in Western Europe. And while it now has no land-based missiles that can hit the Soviet Union from Western Europe, it can do so from 150 British and French submarine-launched nuclear missiles and some 500 nuclear-armed U.S. bombers in Europe.

The deployment of the new missiles is not, in fact, an attempt to match a supposed Soviet buildup. Rather it is designed to change a situation that is "very close to parity now" into one where the United States has a decisive nuclear advantage over the Soviet Union.

Ever since the defeat of the U.S. government in Vietnam, the sentiment among American workers against another Vietnam-style war has prevented Washington from directly intervening militarily in different parts of the world where imperialist interests have been threatened. Because of this, Washington has been trying to get its allies in Europe to take on more of the burden of policing the world.

That is why Gen. Alexander Haig, the former military commander of NATO forces, told a September conference on NATO's future that NATO's planning should be extended to cover operations in the Middle East, the Arab-Persian Gulf, and other areas. This same point was repeated at that conference by NATO Secretary-General Dr. Joseph Luns of the Netherlands, and by Henry Kissinger.

The NATO countries have already been engaged in a substantial build up of both

their conventional and nuclear arsenals for several years. Arms spending by the eleven European NATO members jumped by \$20 billion in 1979 alone, and all have pledged to further increase 1980 war spending by more than 3% over inflation. In all, the fifteen alliance members spent \$211.6 billion on arms in 1979.

On the same day that the NATO council approved the deployment of the new missiles, President Carter announced that the U.S. war budget would rise by 4.5% a year, in real terms, for the next five years.

The price-tag for the new missiles to be placed in Europe will be more than \$5.5 billion. Of this, Washington will spend some \$5 billion to develop and build the missiles and its allies will spend \$500 million to build the installations in their countries.

That the NATO decision had no relation to a Soviet "buildup" was clearly confirmed by NATO's categorical rejection of Moscow's offer to unilaterally decrease its missile force aimed at Europe if NATO would agree not to deploy the new missiles.

On October 6, 1979, Brezhnev announced in East Berlin that the USSR would unilaterally withdraw 20,000 troops and 1,000 tanks from East Germany in the next twelve months. In his speech Brezhnev went on to say:

We are prepared to reduce the number of medium-range nuclear means [missiles and bombers that can reach Western Europe] deployed in western areas of the Soviet Union as compared to the present level, but of course, only in the event no additional medium-range nuclear means are deployed in Western Europe.

Brezhnev, along with other Soviet leaders, also made repeated offers to hold talks "without delay" on cutting troop and weapons levels in Europe.

In line with Brezhnev's announcement, the Soviet Union began withdrawing the 20,000 troops on December 5.

If NATO were really building these new missiles only to match a Soviet build up, then one would think that the alliance would jump at a Soviet offer to cut back on its existing missiles in return for a NATO agreement not to build new missiles.

But that is not what happened. U.S. National Security adviser Brzezinski rebuffed Brezhnev's offer, stating "we intend to proceed with the proposal [to build the new missiles] we are discussing harmoniously with our allies." Vice-president Walter Mondale dismissed Brezhnev's proposal as an attempt to "lure NATO away

*The fifteen NATO members are the United States, Canada, Iceland, Portugal, France, Britain, Luxembourg, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Italy, West Germany, Greece, and Turkey. Of these, France and Greece are not part of NATO's military structure.

from crucial conventional and theater nuclear force modernization."

Whether the U.S. and its allies are actually able to deploy the missiles, which will not be ready until 1983, is still an open question. The strength of popular opposition, particularly in the workers' movement, to the neutron bomb in 1978 forced Carter to cancel plans to deploy that weapon in Europe, although neutron bombs are still being built.

There has already been big opposition in Europe to the new missiles. In 1977, when the proposal was first raised, the West German government immediately agreed to take the new weapons—but only if at least one other European country (in addition to Britain) also agreed.

This resulted in a several-year-long campaign to convince the rest of the NATO members to take the weapons. U.S. and West German political and military leaders were hoping that the December 12 NATO vote would be unanimous.

They would have been successful, had it not been for the intense campaign against the weapons that has already developed in a number of countries. Opposition to the weapons forced the Dutch and Belgian governments to temper their support for the program.

Thousands of residents of Amsterdam, for example, participated in a torchlight demonstration against the weapons on November 15. An estimated 30,000 people marched in a December 9 Brussels demonstration under the slogan "No to the Missiles."

In a nonbinding vote, the Dutch parliament on December 6 flatly rejected the plan for production and deployment of the new nuclear weapons.

And although the Dutch government voted at the December 12 meeting that NATO should go ahead with the development of the missiles, it also put off deciding whether to deploy them in the Netherlands until December 1981.

The Belgian government felt it too had to water down acceptance of the program. While Belgium voted for the motion to develop and deploy the missiles, it added a proviso that it will review the decision in six months.

The Danish government tried to get off the hook by proposing that the deployment decision be put off for six months. Under pressure from the U.S. and West Germany, however, Denmark withdrew its proposal and voted for the plan.

As the *Wall Street Journal* noted, it was "snowballing domestic opposition—from anti-nuclear and environmental groups, left-wing elements and, most importantly, church groups—that made the Belgian and Dutch governments reconsider their decisions to take the cruise missiles."

Recent polls indicate that if an election were held now in the Netherlands, the left-wing parties, which oppose the missiles,



La Gauche

Part of Brussels protest of 30,000 December 9 against NATO nuclear missiles. Big sign says: "Turkish workers support USSR peace initiative."

would win a majority in the Dutch parliament.

Although the Italian senate voted, after five days of intense debate, to accept the missiles, there is widespread opposition in that country to the move.

In France, which though a NATO member has its own arms structure and is not directly involved in the missile decision, there is also widespread opposition to the development and placement of the cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe. On December 20, tens of thousands of people marched in a Paris demonstration against the missiles initiated by the Communist Party.

In West Germany, where Chancellor Schmidt has been pushing hard for the missiles, opposition to his position exists inside as well as outside his Social Democratic Party.

Because of the strength of opposition to the decision to go ahead and build the 572 cruise and Pershing II missiles, that step was coupled with a measure to reduce the present NATO arsenal of 7,000 nuclear warheads and weapons in Europe by 1,000. But this was purely a cosmetic move to try to counter opposition to the arms build up. As the *New York Times* pointed out, "Many of these weapons are considered obsolete as well as dangerous. . . ."

The new missile plan was also linked by its European supporters to the SALT II treaty. Daniel Southerland wrote on October 2, 1979, in the *Christian Science Monitor* that "many Europeans say they could only push ahead with the deployment of such controversial weapons if the move is linked with the continuing arms-control efforts guaranteed by SALT."

This is supposed to reassure nervous Europeans that the NATO plan is not really a big escalation of the arms race, that arms limitation progress is being made. Imperialism always tries to portray each escalation of the arms race as a further move toward peace.

But the SALT I and SALT II treaties were not, as is often claimed, arms reduction treaties. They simply redirected the arms build up into certain channels. Under SALT I, for example, the number of U.S. nuclear warheads grew from 4,600 in 1972 to 9,000 in 1979. SALT II would "limit" the number of U.S. nuclear warheads to 17,000.

Under SALT II the Pentagon has already begun developing a new generation of ballistic missiles, the \$40 billion MX blockbuster, as well as Trident nuclear submarines, new Trident II missiles for the subs, a new attack helicopter, the Pershing II missile and medium-range cruise missiles, an antisubmarine helicopter, the X-M tank, and other new weapons.

But now even the cover of the phony SALT II "arms limitation" has been temporarily stripped away by Carter's decision not to press ahead with U.S. Senate ratification of the treaty.

Proponents of the proposal to deploy the cruise and Pershing II missiles had also tried to quiet opposition by using the curious argument that the development of these new missiles would give NATO a bargaining chip to force the Soviets to agree to weapons reductions.

This argument was torpedoed by the Soviet offer, before the December 12 vote, to unilaterally reduce its forces and missiles in Europe.

The Soviet government announced on December 16 that since NATO had decided to go ahead with the new weapons systems, it was retracting the offer to withdraw medium-range weapons now aimed at Western Europe.

Whether the new U.S. missiles will ultimately be placed in position and aimed at the Soviet Union will depend on the strength of the campaign against deployment. The potential for a massive movement that can stay NATO's hand certainly exists. □

Behind the Strike in British Steel

By Patrick Sikorski

[The following article appeared in the January 3 issue of *Socialist Challenge*, the weekly newspaper of the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

The Tories want a showdown in steel. The wage "offer"—representing no new money—came in the same week as the announcement to the unions that the British Steel Corporation [BSC] wants another 60,000 redundancies.

This is in addition to the 15,000 jobs that will be lost as a result of the closure of the Corby and Shotton steel plants, which was announced last July.

Sir Keith Joseph has made it clear to BSC chairperson Sir Charles Villiers that the corporation must balance its books by next March or make the "necessary" cuts.

This makes a nonsense of the Tories' claim that they will not intervene in negotiations between management and employees. As Industry Secretary, Keith Joseph is in effect chief executive of all the nationalised industries.

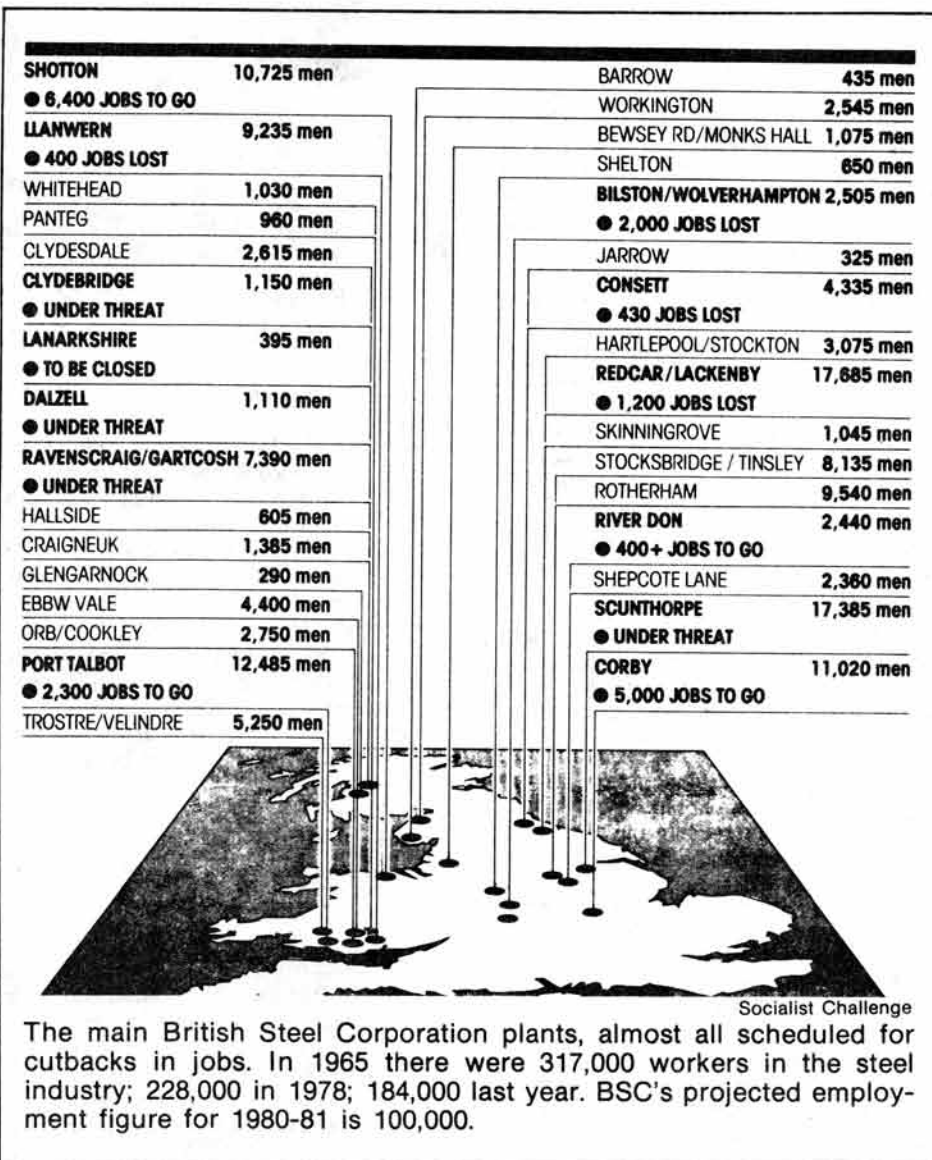
The miners were able to settle for a 21 per cent pay rise without any productivity strings despite being told that there was no money for rises over 15 per cent. The Tories were understandably not keen to take on the miners. With the appalling record of the leadership of the steel unions, especially the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, the Tories are confident that the steel workers are a soft option.

As well as the closures and mass redundancies, what's on offer to the steel workers is a wage cut, through the removal of the guaranteed working week and weekend working, productivity dealing, and no new money when inflation will reach 20 per cent this year.

The Tories' plan is to rationalise the steel industry by shrinking the present production capacity of 21.6m tonnes into line with demand, now running at 17.6m and still falling. BSC will probably notch up an even bigger loss in 1979 than its £309m deficit the previous year. The corporation has lost over £1,000m since 1975.

Looking at figures like these it would seem that the arguments of the mass media, the Tories, and the management that BSC's problems are caused by poor productivity (for which read "a lazy, overpaid workforce"), foreign competition, and a cash crisis must have some foundation.

A cash crisis does exist in BSC and British steel is being undercut by imports. But these are only symptoms, not the disease.



The main British Steel Corporation plants, almost all scheduled for cutbacks in jobs. In 1965 there were 317,000 workers in the steel industry; 228,000 in 1978; 184,000 last year. BSC's projected employment figure for 1980-81 is 100,000.

The crisis in the steel industry is a structural one. The heart of the matter is that the British steel industry failed to adopt the oxygen steel making methods after the Second World War. Instead the private owners clung to the outdated hearth method. To modernise the industry would have taken around £4,000m at 1967 prices in a situation of collapsing profits.

Only the state could spend this kind of money. BSC was formed by the Wilson government in 1967 to take this step. Along with the investment required was the need to scrap old plant with resulting mass job loss.

The aim was that instead of the 30 or so major steelmaking plants BSC should

concentrate production at five plants. These were to be Scunthorpe, Redcar, Ravenscraig, Port Talbot, and Llanwern. But no sooner had the bulk of the investment programme finished than it became clear that the projected boom in the '70s would not last and that prolonged recession was approaching.

Was this the bad planning and inefficiency of which the nationalised industries are regularly accused?

The simple truth is that private capital was not prepared to invest in restructuring the industry.

The first nationalisation of the steel industry, by the 1945-51 Labour government, was viciously opposed. Even with

the outdated plant there were fat profits to be made by the private owners in the immediate post-war period. At this time the West German and Japanese steel industries were in ruins. This was still largely the case in the early '50s and the Tories after their election victory in 1951 denationalised steel.

But by the 1960s competition from the giant, modern, fully-integrated steel mills in West Germany, Japan and the USA had cut 14 major British companies to ribbons. British capital needed bailing out and Harold Wilson obliged. The 16-year gap between the two nationalisations meant that the problems faced by the steel workers today are much more acute than they would have been in the '50s.

The emphasis of the first nationalisation was on increasing capacity and production during the post-war boom. Labour's policy for BSC in the 1960s was to eliminate costly and outdated plants on a large scale.

Now the Tories want to push through massive restructuring in bulk production to serve sections of British industry which would have to pay more for steel from abroad, and to provide basic steel for the privately-owned specialised producers. Profitable sections of the industry will be hived off to the private sector.

The only interest of the private owners and their Tory representatives in parliament and government throughout the post-war history of the industry has been to extract the maximum profit from steel at the least risk to their private capital. They have not been interested in a British steel industry.

It would be fatal for the labour movement to take up the call to save the British steel industry. To do so would be to accept that the industry has to be made "viable"—that is profitable—before it can be re-expanded. That is to accept the need for massive rationalisation.

The workers' interest is to defend their jobs and living standards. The fate of British steel is not their responsibility. The farce of worker directors and union officials like Bill Sirs who sit on the BSC board at present and who are powerless to stop mass sackings and closures makes this clear.

What is needed is a campaign based on the independent self-activity of the rank and file workers. The national strike on pay must become an all-out strike against all job loss as well.

Mass meetings of the whole workforce should elect steel action committees in every plant to run the strike. It was strikes led by such rank and file committees in the Port Talbot, Velindre and Trostre mills in South Wales in 1976 which turned back Labour's plan to cut the wages bill by £179m at the expense of 40,000 jobs.

These committees will have to immediately move to shut down the private steel mills. Bill Sirs has said that they are

exempted from the action and has even suggested that BSC sells Corby to a private buyer!

But they account for a third of the total value of steel business in Britain. Not to picket them would be to lose the strike before it starts.

However, even if the strike were successful and the closure plan were withdrawn it would only be yet another temporary respite. What is needed is protection against a reduced work load, whether through recession or technical change. What should happen is that the contracted workload should be shared by the same number of workers with no loss of pay.

A fight for this demand must be taken

up in the course of this strike—not after it. If it isn't then the strikers will have no answer to the attacks from the management and the Tories that their strike will only drive the industry deeper into bankruptcy, resulting in more redundancies.

The demand for work-sharing with no loss of pay would unite all steel workers, overcome sectional conflicts, and avoid tying up the struggle in secondary wrangles about whether this or that plant closes down.

The guaranteed working week partly establishes the principal of work-sharing with no loss of pay. This is why BSC is so keen to get rid of it. Far from being sacrificed, this gain must be extended. □

200 Attend GRS Rally in Martinique

Two hundred people attended a public meeting of the Groupe Révolution Socialiste (GRS-Antilles section of the Fourth International), December 20. Held at the Municipal Theatre in Fort-de-France, Martinique, the meeting marked twenty years since the first stirrings of the anticolonialist struggle in Martinique in December 1959.

Speaking under a banner that read "Neither independence without socialism, nor socialism without independence," GRS leaders Gilbert Pago and Philippe Pierre-Charles outlined the struggles in Martinique and Guadeloupe in which the GRS has been participating.

Sam Manuel and Janice Lynn of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party and Alain Krivine of the French Revolutionary Com-

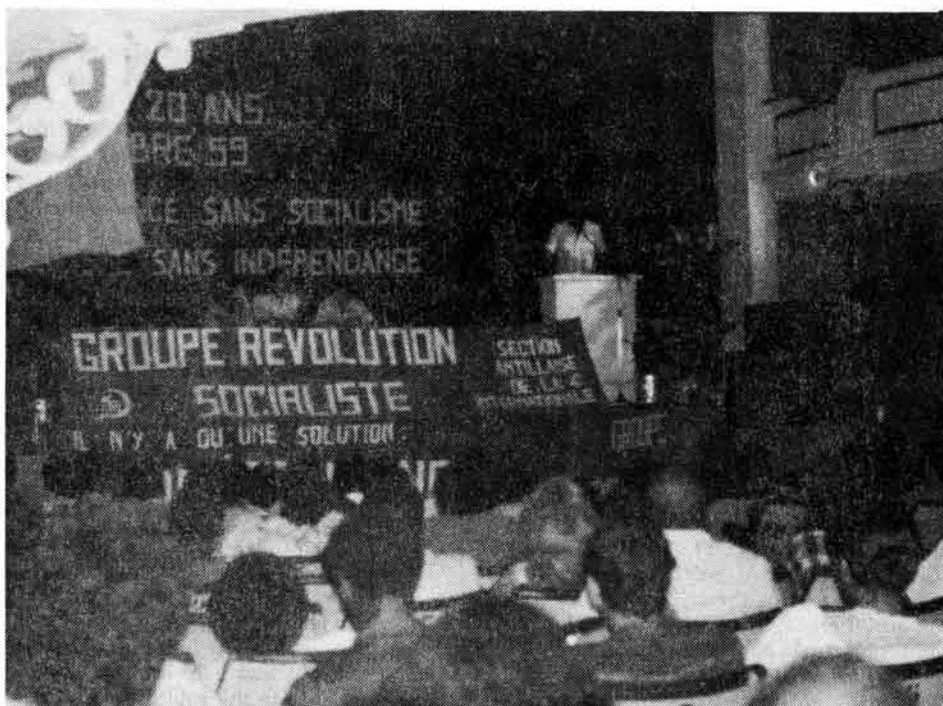
munist League (LCR) also spoke and expressed their solidarity.

Harold Lovell of the Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement brought greetings to the rally.

The rally marked the opening of a three-day congress of the GRS. Reports and discussion took place on the international situation; the political situation in the Caribbean; union work; youth work; and women's work.

Youth in the Antilles have been in the forefront of the struggle against French colonialism. This fourth congress of the GRS took an important step forward by voting to construct a Trotskyist youth organization.

The GRS also decided to launch a Caribbean-wide campaign of aid and solidarity with Nicaragua and Grenada. □



December 20 rally opening three-day GRS congress.

Sam Manuel/IP-I

Why Canadian Trotskyists Are Making Turn to Basic Industry

By Jim Upton

[The following letter and reply appeared in the December 24 issue of Montreal fortnightly *Socialist Voice*.]

* * *

The questions raised by Rhonda Sussman go to the heart of what the revolutionary socialist movement is all about.

Marxists understand that socialist society—the overthrow of capitalist rule and its replacement by a planned economy based on nationalized production, managed by the workers themselves—will only come about by the conscious action of the organized working class, led by a party rooted in the industrial working class.

The Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky, which led the first victorious socialist revolution, was built primarily among industrial workers. And the founders of the early Communist Party in Canada were, in the main, industrial workers themselves.

The Revolutionary Workers League's political "turn" to workers in industry, transportation, and communications is entirely within this perspective and tradition.

Changes in the class struggle today, both internationally and in Canada, make it imperative that socialists concentrate their forces in these strategically important sections of the working class.

For a lengthy period following the collapse of the postwar labor upsurge, the industrial working class was relatively quiescent. During the 1960s and early 1970s, the beginnings of a social radicalization—marked by the growth of the independentist movement in Quebec, the women's liberation, gay liberation, student and antiwar movements—were expressed mainly outside the organized working class.

The Trotskyist Fourth International correctly turned its attention to these developments, participating actively in these movements and winning the best of these forces to its ranks.

However, as the resolutions of the recent World Congress of the Fourth International explain, since the late 1960s and particularly since 1974 a new period has opened up in which the course of the radicalization has changed fundamentally. The relationship of forces is shifting sharply to the detriment of the capitalists.

It is a combined economic crisis—the most serious since the 1930s—and deepening social crisis, in which masses of working people are beginning to challenge some of the basic tenets of capitalist ideology. The crushing defeat of U.S. imperialism in Indochina qualitatively deepened antiwar

A Reader Asks . . .

It is with great concern that I note your organization's "turn to industry." Having experienced first-hand (as a member of the International Socialists) what this can do to an organization, I would advise you against putting it into action because:

1. An industrialization policy sees the working class as very passive, requiring the "intervention" of socialists to move at all. It denies the working class its ability for self-activity and self-organization. . . . The impetus for any working class movement should come from the indigenous workers themselves, not from declassed intellectuals parachuted into factories.

2. Tossing your membership into the "belly of the beast" will drastically depoliticize the RWL . . . the members could easily become good "labor militants" instead of revolutionary unionists.

Furthermore . . . [your meetings] will be given over to discussions of 30 for 40, COLAs (capped or otherwise), produc-

tion deals, time-and-a-half, one, two, and three year contracts, etc., etc. While these are all important items to unionists, they should not become of all-consuming interest to socialists, who should be trying to bring the ideas of socialism into workplaces. "Industrialized" comrades can't do this though, because they fear for their credibility as unionists.

3. I am not opposed to people working in industry. A unionized place is much preferable to a non-unionized one. However, factory jobs are unpleasant (an understatement). . . .

4. Dictating to people where they shall and shall not work is an extreme of life-stylism undreamt-of by the most isolated of counterculturalists. It is setting a precedent for more and more conservative dictates on behavior, personal life, and styles of dress, based upon notions of what will "alienate workers". . . .

Yours fraternally,
Rhonda Sussman

sentiment and distrust of capitalist politics and government among American workers.

The period of relative capitalist prosperity, in which students, women, and oppressed nationalities often won concessions through limited struggles on their own, is over. Today the capitalists need to qualitatively raise the rate of profit if they are to succeed in opening a new period of capital accumulation on a world scale. This requires a drastic lowering of production costs, which can be accomplished only through an escalating attack on the wages, living conditions, and democratic rights of the working class—especially those sections that are the major source of profits, the workers in basic industry, transport, and communications.

The industrial working class is beginning to respond to this attack. It plays an increasingly central role in the class struggle as a whole.

The Fourth International and the RWL are therefore directing the forces recruited and trained in the struggles of the 1960s and early 1970s into the industrial unions, to participate in and help lead this developing resistance to the capitalist austerity drive.

In carrying out the turn to industry, the RWL has not altered its socialist program or lessened its political awareness.

On the contrary! The turn has strengthened our understanding of the many-sided nature of the capitalist assault, the response of working people and how socialists can help to deepen that response and win new supporters.

RWL members in industrial unions are participating in a wide variety of discussions and activities that confirm the growing militancy of industrial workers and the increased interest by working people in what socialists have to say.

RWL industrial workers will participate actively in the Canadian Labor Congress [CLC] campaign in support of the NDP [New Democratic Party], as they did in last May's federal election. They worked in the NDP-CLC campaign to defend medicare. They have been involved in the fight to force the government to drop criminal charges against leaders of the Canadian Postal Workers.

For example, RWL postal workers helped convince the Alberta NDP to call for dropping charges against CUPW leaders at its recent convention.

Through these campaigns RWL mem-

bers have been able to discuss the socialist point of view with other industrial workers.

RWL members in the International Woodworkers of America in Vancouver participated in drafting a resolution opposing the use of nuclear energy that was passed by the 6,000-member New Westminster local of the IWA and later adopted by the convention of the B.C.NDP.

RWL members in the Edmonton local of CUPW helped organize support for the campaign of the Canadian Labor Congress to aid Nicaragua. The local contributed money to the campaign, sent a union representative to speak at a Nicaragua support rally in the city, and circulated a petition urging the Canadian government to send massive aid to Nicaragua.

Similarly, RWL members at the McDonnell Douglas aircraft plant in Toronto helped to organize a discussion on the CLC's Nicaragua solidarity campaign at a recent UAW [United Auto Workers] local meeting. The local voted to make a financial contribution to the campaign.

In Edmonton and Hamilton, members of the RWL are playing a prominent role in campaigns by women to force Stelco to hire women as production workers.

In Quebec, a women's conference organized by the Quebec Federation of Labor adopted a resolution supporting the struggle of women to work at CN Rail. RWL members have been among the women leading that struggle.

In recent weeks, RWL members in industrial unions across the country have participated in many discussions with workmates about the situation in Iran. Members of the RWL have defended the demand of the Iranian people for the return of the shah and explained the need to oppose imperialist military threats.

In weeks to come RWL militants will be helping to organize support in their unions for the CLC-endorsed International Women's Day activities being planned for March 8 in major cities across the country.

And as the referendum in Quebec approaches, members of the RWL in English Canada and Quebec will be defending Quebec's right to self-determination and the struggle for independence, in opposition to the pro-federalists of the Conservatives, Liberals, and NDP, and the Parti Québécois proposal to negotiate sovereignty-association.

One of the main ways in which RWL members seek to help build these various struggles, and discuss socialist ideas on the job, is through sales of *Socialist Voice* and *Lutte Ouvrière*. These newspapers campaign in support of all the struggles of working people.

The approach of the RWL is based on an understanding of what social forces have the power to transform society.

The power of working people to change this system lies in their ability to affect production.

Strikes by hospital or office workers, library personnel or teachers, do not directly affect production or profits. On the other hand the central role of workers in industry, transportation, and communications in production and profit-making gives these workers tremendous weight and strength in any struggle they undertake collectively.

As the capitalist class tries to drive down the living standards of industrial workers and weaken their unions and capacity to fight back, new leaders will be

thrown up with the capacity to transform the industrial unions into organizations that can play a central role in the fight for socialism.

Since socialist workers have a major contribution to make in this process, seeking jobs in industry is a political necessity. The RWL's efforts in this direction are not only timely, but have strengthened the ability of socialists to build the kind of party capable of leading the working class and its allies to victory. □

Reg Bullock, 1905-1979

By Robert Simms



REG BULLOCK

Socialist Voice

[The following article appeared in the December 10 issue of the Canadian Trotskyist fortnightly *Socialist Voice*.]

* * *

VANCOUVER—Reg Bullock, a veteran leader of the Trotskyist movement in Canada, died of a heart attack on November 20. He was 74 years old.

Reg was won to Trotskyism toward the end of the Second World War. Together with his companion Ruth Bullock, he played a central role in regrouping the Trotskyist forces in British Columbia following the war, leading to the launching of the Vancouver branch of the Revolutionary Workers Party in 1946. He served on the Central Committee of the Canadian Trotskyist organization for a period spanning 30 years.

The McCarthyite witch-hunt and the period of working-class political quiescence during the 1950s took a heavy toll of revolutionary cadres. Later the youth radicalization of the 1960s and '70s brought many new forces to the revolutionary socialist movement. Reg Bullock was one of the very few comrades who provided continuity with the revolutionary working-class battles of the past.

Reg was born in England in 1905. His family immigrated to Western Canada

when he was four. He apprenticed in the Vancouver shipyards and joined the Marine and Boilermakers Union in 1919, the year of the Winnipeg General Strike.

A socialist from his union experience, Reg later worked as a Marxist in the left wing of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) in British Columbia. He was provincial organizer of the CCF in 1936-37.

He won great respect in the B.C. labor movement for his work as a labor organizer and revolutionary trade unionist in the Marine and Boilermakers Union and the International Woodworkers of America. He brought his experience and authority and also his skills as a Marxist educator into the Trotskyist movement.

The one goal from which he never wavered during the last half of his life was to assist in the building of a party of the Fourth International in Canada and the struggle for socialism in Canada.

More than 130 comrades, fellow workers, and family members met in Vancouver December 2 to pay tribute to Reg Bullock. The keynote speeches were given by Robert Simms and Art Young.

Publishing Fund Launched

A highlight of the meeting was the announcement that former comrades and friends of Reg Bullock have launched the Reg Bullock Publishing Fund. The purpose of the Fund is to help speed publication of a new book by Ian Angus entitled *Canadian Bolsheviks: The Early Years of Canadian Communism*.

It is hoped to raise \$8,000 across Canada in coming months from supporters of the revolutionary socialist movement. The money will help the publishers, Pathfinder Press, to cover the initial cost of typesetting, layout, and printing.

Friends and associates of Reg Bullock attending the meeting contributed more than \$1,300 to launch the Fund.

Contributions should be sent to Reg Bullock Publishing Fund, 1208 Granville Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 1M4, Canada.

Right Wins Victory in Portuguese Elections

By Heitor Souza and Francisco Louça

[The following article was written in mid-December after the National Assembly elections.]

* * *

The atmosphere in Portugal in the last days before the December 2 elections for the National Assembly was marked by great uncertainty regarding the outcome. But as a result of the tremendous voter participation (87.5% of those eligible), which was far higher than in the 1976 elections, as well as a sharp drop in the Socialist Party vote (from 37.87% in 1975, to 35% in 1976, to only 27.4% this time) which was not totally compensated by the gains made by the CP and the far left, and greater homogeneity in voting patterns on a national scale, the right wing organized in the "Democratic Alliance" (AD) won a slim parliamentary majority.

The AD is made up of the bourgeois Social Democratic Party (PSD), the Social Democratic Center (CDS), and the People's Monarchist Party (PPM).

The entire imperialist press hailed this victory as a decisive and long-awaited turning point in the Portuguese political situation that has existed since the April 25, 1974 coup that ended five decades of dictatorship. During the campaign, Spain's ruling rightist Democratic Center Union mobilized all its technical and financial resources to assure the victory of Francisco Sá Carneiro's AD.

But the days immediately following the elections placed limits on the right wing's optimism. The mobilization of nearly a million workers around their contracts is a concrete threat to the new government.

Will the municipal elections on December 16 mirror the vote break-down in the legislative elections? The results of the recent legislative elections clearly indicate that the workers parties won 51.1% of the votes. The AD got only 45%, although this was enough to give it a slim parliamentary majority.*

In this context we can easily understand the meaning of the Spanish advice. Will Sá Carneiro be able to duplicate Spanish Premier Adolfo Suarez's feat, that is, to govern while confronted with an electoral majority for the workers parties? We will

*In the voting for the municipal elections December 16 the Democratic Alliance received 47.5% of the vote, the Socialist Party got 27%, and the Communist Party got 20.5%. Although the combined vote of the SP and CP was virtually identical to that of the AD, the AD elected 196 mayors, while the SP elected only 59 and the CP 50.—IP/I

Election Results By Party in Last Four Elections (Percentages)

Party	1975 Constituent Assembly (91.6% Voted)	1976 National Assembly (81.1% Voted)	1976 Municipal Elections (64.5% Voted)	1979 National Assembly (87.5% Voted)
SP	37.87	35.0	33.24	27.4
CP	12.46	14.6	17.68	19.0
UDP	0.79	1.7	—	2.2
UES	—	—	—	0.7
PSR	0.19*	0.3*	—	0.65
PSD	26.39	24.0	24.27	45.0
CDS	7.61	15.9	16.61	

*At that time it was the LCI. The PSR was formed in 1978 from the unification of the LCI and the PRT.

learn the answer quite soon, because in ten months there will be elections for a new parliament, and that is how long this government will last.

The reason new elections are to be held again so soon is due to the fact that Portugal's constitution requires that a full four-year legislative term can only follow a general election in 1980. In addition, the constitution itself, which is not popular with the bourgeoisie, can only be changed following the election of the 1980 parliament. The elections for the 1980 parliament, which can revise the constitution, will therefore, be a decisive battle for the Portuguese bourgeoisie.

Despite the fact that this government can only last ten months, it is a government nonetheless. As far as the AD is concerned, the government's main job is to prepare for the 1980 elections.

It will try to revise the election law to provide fewer opportunities for parties not represented in parliament and, more generally, for the left as a whole. In this last campaign, for example, the Portuguese Trotskyists of the Revolutionary Socialist Party (PSR) got more television time to explain their positions than any of the parties that make up the AD. The government will also try to demobilize the workers movement.

Sá Carneiro, already thinking about the 1980 elections, promised to reduce the inflation rate from 26% to 10%, and to reduce the number of unemployed from 500,000 to 100,000. But it is clear that this government will follow a policy that is absolutely opposed to the gains won by the workers and people as a whole, and that will attack those gains. This is the arena

in which the decisive battles for the 1980 elections will be fought in the next ten months.

Deep Instability

The decision to hold these interim parliamentary elections rather than try to hold out until the regularly scheduled elections in 1980 was made by President António Ramalho Eanes last July 13.

The basic reason for this decision was the defeat of several consecutive governments formed by the president in a deadlocked parliament. The formal majority of deputies from the workers parties, which was quite a bit larger than the majority that the right wing has now won, was not very solid.

For two years following the 1976 elections the Socialist Party had controlled the government. But the SP governments went down to defeat in parliament as a result of the policies they carried out, which went against the interests of the people, as well as its alliance with the CDS, the second largest party in the AD.

SP-leader Mário Soares had to pay the electoral price for following the policies of the International Monetary Fund, for the repression carried out in the region where the agrarian reform law applied, and for the anti-union laws. But Soares also paid the price for a weak election campaign that aimed to return a homogenous minority SP government to parliament, one that had no alliances with the right or the left.

After the defeat of the Soares government, President Eanes took control of the government. The majority from the workers parties was divided. The "non-party" government of Carlos Mota Pinto,

which conducted the most fierce offensive against the people, was able to remain in office for more than eight months until it was brought down in June.

Gen. Eanes tried to use the Mota Pinto government to regroup the bourgeois political forces into a new party, a party to be made up of the "reformers" (the right wing of the SP led by former agriculture minister Barreto), sectors of the military, and the majority of the PSD's parliamentary group which refused to remain within Sá Carneiro's party.

The defeat of this plan left the bourgeoisie without any alternative. One after another, the bourgeois personalities who had signed the call for the "president's party" abandoned it.

With an ineffective parliament, in which the left had a majority but had no possibility of forming a stable government, the president of the republic had no choice but to go ahead with the interim elections.

The December 2 victory of the AD takes place within this context of political instability, the contours of which will become defined in the course of the next ten months, with the evolution of the class struggle.

The Results of the Election

The first big surprise of the December 2 elections was the nearly 90% turn-out. All the parties expected an increase in the rate of participation since there was a clearly polarized electoral confrontation. But no one projected a figure that high. This high vote was the first result of an election campaign where the political alternatives were clear enough to be called by their names.

The second new aspect is the homogenization of voting patterns on the national scale. The AD increased its support in all the traditionally left-wing areas touched

by the agrarian reform and in the industrial areas. The CP in turn increased its vote in all the traditionally more conservative northern districts without exception, even doubling its votes in certain regions (Aveiro, Braga, Viseiro, Guarda, and Bragança, where the influence of the Catholic church is strongest).

The Socialist Party owes its big drop (260,000 fewer votes, nearly 8 percent) to the decline in its votes in the big cities and in the agrarian reform area. Its biggest declines came in Lisbon, where the CP passed it, and in Setúbal, Évora, and Beja where it ended up losing between a third and a quarter of its votes.

Recognizing the defeat, the Socialist leaders declared that they would oppose this Sá Carneiro government with street demonstrations. They even evoked the possibility that the SP might develop into an active opposition party. It is quite clear that this is the only policy that could give the SP any chance of recouping its political influence against a significantly strengthened CP, which leads the bulk of the trade-union movement.

The SP, however, is going to try to balance its opposition to the government with more active ties to the military hierarchy through the Council of the Revolution, and particularly through supporting a possible new candidacy by Gen. Eanes in the 1981 presidential elections if the AD puts forward a different candidate.

There has been a significant strengthening of the SP from certain sectors of the far left, especially the Movement of the Socialist Left (MES), which joined the SP on the basis of the argument that it was necessary to work in the "last barrier" that could impede the progress of the right wing. Today they are the best defenders of the candidacy of Eanes!

The CP's increase (4.4%) is an expression

of its big growth in strength. It has appeared to be the opposition to all the various governments for more than three years. It utilizes the support and credibility of the trade-union movement—where its strength lies—against an SP that cannot mobilize big sectors of the working class in action.

The CP has increased its already extraordinary hegemony in the areas where the agrarian reform has taken place and has made progress in the urban population, through an election campaign that was totally focused on the need to cast a "useful vote."

We should recognize that in the absence of any clear confrontation within the union movement between the CP and some alternative orientation, the CP's policy of dividing the workers has not become sufficiently obvious. However, the question of the unity of the workers movement must become an even more central task in the course of the coming months.

In the coming municipal elections the unity of the workers parties is an absolute precondition for being able to beat the AD. And the CP will have to confront this reality. The CP's first response to this need for unity was provided the day after the general elections, on December 3, by *O Diário*, the daily newspaper controlled by the CP. There was a full page article on page 3 by CP Central Committee member Domingo Abrantes entitled: "The UGT, Tool of the Counter Revolution." The UGT is the SP-led union confederation. The article concluded that "no unity is possible with this type of people."

The CP's response is clear: the CP backs union mobilizations and activities in opposition to the government, but only if they are controlled and if their sole objective is to increase the CP's electoral strength. It is not interested in any policy of unity that

Analysis of Vote Share of Major Parties in 1976 and 1979

Region	District	Socialist Party			Communist Party			PSD-CDS		
		1976	1979	% gain	1976	1979	% gain	1976	1979	% gain
Big Cities	Lisbon	38.3	25.8	-7.5%	21.8	26.1	4.3%	29.8	39.9	10.1%
	Oporto	41.1	34.8	-5.9	8.4	14.5	6.1	43.1	44.4	1.3
	Setúbal	32.1	21.3	-10.8	44.3	46.9	2.6	13.1	22.3	9.2
Agrarian Reform Zone	Évora	30.3	16.9	-13.4	43.0	48.8	5.8	17.9	26.9	9.0
	Santarém	38.3	27.3	-11.0	16.1	21.7	7.3	33.9	41.0	7.1
	Portalegre	42.0	29.7	-12.3	22.0	29.3	7.3	24.5	32.0	7.5
	Beja	31.8	21.9	-9.9	44.0	50.7	6.7	13.0	19.0	6.0
North	Aveiro	30.8	28.4	-2.4	3.8	7.9	4.1	57.9	56.6	-1.3
	Braga	32.1	30.2	-1.9	4.1	10.0	5.9	54.8	51.8	-3.0
	Viseu	23.0	30.2	-1.8	2.3	5.5	3.2	69.5	64.3	-5.2
	Castelo Branco	36.4	27.6	-8.8	6.6	12.4	5.8	42.6	49.8	7.2
	Viana	25.6	24.7	-0.9	6.6	9.8	3.2	57.0	34.7	2.3
	Guarda	25.1	26.1	+1.0	2.9	5.4	2.5	58.7	60.4	1.7
	Bragança	22.6	22.1	-0.5	2.7	5.8	3.1	62.8	60.5	-2.3

would make it possible to prepare for a victory in the coming elections.

But the increase in votes for the far left (nearly 5% of the total vote), votes critical of the SP and CP, is now a political reality that no one can ignore. Nearly all the far-left organizations increased their vote totals in this election and got significant results. The sole exception to this pattern was the Union of the Left for Socialist Democracy (UEDS), a party led by Lopes Cardoso, a former leader of the SP and ex-minister in an SP government.

The UEDS got only 42,000 votes, frustrating its hope to get several deputies elected by creating a bandwagon effect that a vote for the UEDS would be a "useful vote within the far left." Its leaders had said they expected to elect six deputies.

The UEDS's defeat can be explained by the non-specific character of the campaign it ran and by the electoralist policy it inherited from its past inside the SP.

The gains by the People's Democratic Union (UDP), which again has one deputy in parliament (presently Major Tome, who was adjunct commandant of the Military Police until November 25), is primarily explained by its real implantation in the working-class, despite a recent split primarily organized by Acacio Barreiros, their main public leader.

The PSR's Campaign

The PSR, the Portuguese section of the Fourth International, registered important gains and success in the elections. Doubling its vote to about 37,000 (the final figures are not available), the PSR would have had one deputy if proportional representation had been established on a national scale.

The PSR made gains throughout the country. Its gains were most pronounced in Setúbal (where its vote increased four-fold), in the agrarian reform area (the results in four districts: Santarém, 1%; Beja, 0.9%; Évora, 0.9%; Portalegre, 1%), as well as in some districts in the north (in Viseu, Guarda, and Bragança where it surpassed 1%). However, in Lisbon, Oporto, and Coimbra, where there was stronger pressure to cast a "useful" vote for the CP or SP, the results were more modest.

The press waged an intensive campaign against the PSR, utilizing the effects of the split within the Fourth International on the eve of its Eleventh World Congress. On the last day of the campaign the radio and television networks went so far as to falsely announce that the electoral courts had invalidated the PSR slates.

The gains the PSR made despite this intensive campaign should be chalked up to a well-defined campaign around several specific themes:

- The struggle for the unity of the workers parties (proposing a united agreement on candidates of the left, toward the

formation of a CP-SP government);

- For the unity of the trade-union confederations against the austerity plans;
- For the expulsion of the Republican National Guards from the Alentejo region;
- For women's rights.

This campaign had a great impact with regard to all the political initiatives taken so far by the Portuguese Trotskyists. It gave rise to several attempts at repression.

The Christian Democratic Party (PDC), Radio-Renaissance, and several AD candidates began a campaign against the PSR due to its public support for the right to abortion, which had a big public impact on television. They went so far as to demand that the court prohibit the PSR's candidacy.

The PSR's first candidate in Lisbon, Cabral Fernandes, who is a draftee in the armed forces, was first authorized, then later forbidden to run as a candidate by the military hierarchy. He was only finally authorized to run at the very end of the campaign.

Running 352 candidates throughout Portugal, the PSR had the right to 65 minutes on television, and 12 hours on various radio stations (of which six hours was on

national radio), which helped it make its positions known. Having profited from this unique occasion, the PSR is now trying to consolidate itself on a national scale and is beginning a recruitment campaign.

In the course of the election campaign, the PSR's politics were concretized in the proposals for a united workers front, in the trade-union field in defense of the gains of the workers as well as defense of the agrarian reform, leading to a campaign in favor of a unity agreement of the workers parties to be implemented for the next election. Such a pact would require all the workers parties to back the candidate of whatever party had the best chance in each district.

This pact would also be based on a political accord regarding parliamentary activity and for the formation of an SP-CP government.

This campaign will be the central axis around which to confront the division that now exists in the workers ranks and, at the same time, to respond to the general sentiment of the Portuguese workers that workers unity is the only barrier that can prevent the right from governing in the years to come. □

Statement of PSR Executive Committee

What the Election Results Mean

[Meeting in plenary session on the evening of December 2 and the morning of December 3, the Executive Committee of the Revolutionary Socialist Party (PSR) issued the following statement on the

results of the parliamentary election.]

* * *

1. Although the "Democratic Alliance" (AD) won only a minority of the votes, it

Votes for Far Left Groups

Group	1975 Constituent Assembly	1976 National Assembly	1979 National Assembly
UDP	44,877	91,383 (1 deputy)	127,825 (proj. 1 deputy)
UEDS	—	—	42,200
OCMLP ¹	33,185	—	3,393
POUS ²	—	—	12,573
PSR	10,835 ³	16,235 ³	36,415

1. In 1975 the OCMLP ran as the FEC-ML.

2. An organization with ties to the Organizing Committee to Reconstruct the Fourth International. The POUS ran in only five districts.

3. At that time the LCI.

nonetheless won a majority of seats in the Assembly of the Republic that was elected yesterday. The results of the election, therefore, constitute a defeat for the left and for all the workers.

The Sá Carneiro government will be an enemy of the Portuguese workers. The parliament will legislate against the workers and the government will act against them.

The PSR will do everything it can to help see that this government falls. It will support all the workers struggles. It will continue to unconditionally put forward the need for unity of the whole left, of all the left parties, of the whole working population. The majority in this country must make its voice heard against this government and its reactionary policies.

2. To find an explanation for this victory by the right, we must first look at the votes and policies of the big parties of the left. While the number of votes for the left as a whole increased in absolute terms, the growth was not enough to counteract a greater increase in votes for the right.

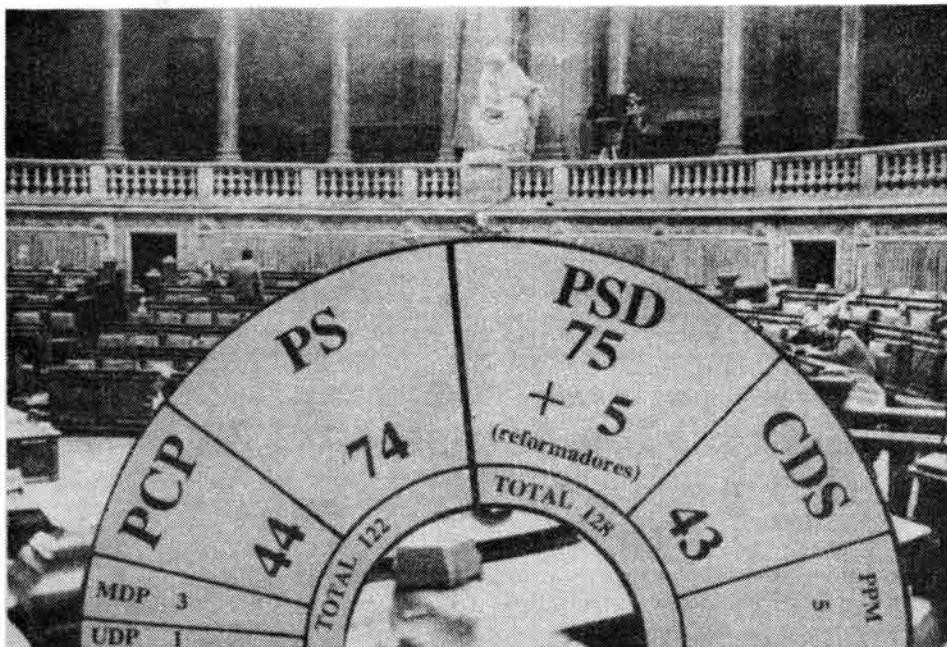
The victory of the right is explained by the Socialist Party's loss of hundreds of thousands of votes, especially in the region of the agrarian reform. This loss is an indication that after the experience of the SP government carrying out a right-wing policy, the SP's electoral base has no confidence in it.

Another reason for the victory of the right was the division of the left, the refusal of both the SP and the Communist Party to establish a public agreement on left candidates, their refusal to carry out a united fight against the right-wing alliance and against the governments of President Eanes.

3. In spite of the call by certain candidates for voters to cast a "useful vote," 250,000 workers voted to the left of the SP and CP. This figure roughly corresponds to the number of votes that gave the left a majority on a national scale (about 300,000). This vote has great importance since it expresses a criticism of the activity of the SP and CP, of the division of the left, of sectarianism, and is a call to struggle against the right and against Eanes's policies, and to struggle for the national mobilization of the unions.

Despite the threat of an AD victory, the PSR decided not to withdraw its candidates. The only way a PSR withdrawal would have had any meaning is if all the left parties, especially the SP and CP which were demanding that we step down, had reached a prior agreement to establish a public accord stipulating that the left deputies would form a government of the workers parties.

For such an agreement to succeed, the left parties would have had to agree on a national policy of all the left candidates in a district stepping down in favor of the front-runner in order to increase the possibilities of electing workers deputies.



Division of seats in new Portuguese assembly.

A Tarde

But this was not the case. Neither the SP nor the CP accepted such an agreement. Neither took the initiative to accept and defend such a unity policy. This element of the elections is important to bear in mind.

4. Within this framework, the vote for the PSR represents the development of a strong current that already exists throughout the country, that fights and will continue to fight against the right, for the unity of the workers, and for the rights of women and young people.

The PSR was the only party that more than doubled its votes compared to the 1976 election results, showing a 127 percent growth. This result can be understood only in line with the real impact of our campaign. The propaganda carried out by our candidates showed the breadth of the workers struggles. They focused on such dramatic and important questions as abortion, despite the countercampaign by the church and the AD. They denounced the role of Gen. Eanes and called for the withdrawal of the Republican National Guards (GNR) from the Alentejo region. They fought for a platform of demands to defend the standard of living and jobs through the unity of all the unions. They carried themselves as real defenders of the unity of the workers as well as defenders of a government of the workers parties, a government of the SP and CP.

The success of that campaign (despite the blackout by some of the mass media, especially by the RDP1 and RTP1, which announced on the final day of the campaign that the PSR slate might be prohibited) indicates the road that the PSR will continue to follow.

5. In the wake of these elections, the Executive Committee of the PSR feels that

there are four immediate objectives for the whole left.

a. To defeat the right wing in the municipal elections. On December 16 we have a chance to inflict an initial defeat on the Sá Carneiro government. All votes must go to the left parties so that the voice of the majority in this country can be heard.

b. Unity of all the left parties in parliament and in the struggles, in order to block all laws against the people's interests and to mobilize the working people against this reactionary government.

To assure victory in these struggles there must be trade-union unity between the CGTP and UGT* and nonsectarian unity of all the left parties.

c. To lay the groundwork for the defeat of the AD in the 1980 parliamentary elections, through an accord by candidates of the left that stipulates that they will establish a government of the left parties, while insuring that all parties agree to withdraw their candidates in favor of the leading left candidate in each district in order to make possible such a government and policy.

d. To lay the groundwork for a single candidate of the workers to defeat Gen. Eanes in the presidential elections.

Through its struggle to attain these objectives, the PSR has already demonstrated what its politics are. Strengthening the PSR is part and parcel of this struggle for unity and to defeat the reactionaries.

In the wake of this successful election campaign, the upcoming second congress of the PSR will show the road forward. □

*The CGTP (General Confederation of Portuguese Workers) and UGT (General Workers Union) are respectively dominated by the Communist Party and Socialist Party.—IP/I

For a Campaign Against the Military Trials

By L. Zaiansky

On Sunday, November 18, a military tribunal was convened to try some 350 persons accused of belonging to armed organizations, such as the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), the ELN (National Liberation Army), and the M-19 (April 19 Movement).

All the trials have been staged by the Military Institutes Brigade (BIM), which means that the accused have had no chance whatsoever to defend themselves. The trial judge is the same person who runs the main torture center in the country—the BIM—and the prosecutor is known for his use of repression against the mass movement.

On top of this, in recent months the military has sought to change the military code of justice in order to eliminate certain "obstacles." These included the obligatory reading of the indictment in each case, which in their view not only took too long but also enabled defense attorneys to prepare their cases more effectively. This procedure was abolished. Now the prisoners are simply brought before their accusers, who come into court with predetermined sentences.

All this makes it clear that the military still shares the philosophy summed up by Major Nungo, the prosecutor in a famous military trial, who said "It's better to convict an innocent person than to let a guilty one go free." Thus all the necessary means have been provided for the application of their concept of "justice" against political figures and mass leaders. This amounts to keeping in force the measures introduced under the Security Statute,¹ which date back to the inauguration of President Turbay, when so-called crimes against state security were placed under the jurisdiction of the military command—specifically, Defense Minister Luis Carlos Camacho Leyva and BIM chief Miguel Vega Uribe.

Many lawyers assigned to the defense of political prisoners in Colombia have complained of the problems created for them by the military, which makes its own rules of judicial procedure, denies defense attorneys access to sources of information, and prevents them from visiting the prisoners.

1. On September 6, 1978, just one month after taking office, Colombian President Turbay Ayala invoked the "Security Statute." This measure allows detention without charge for ten days, transfers jurisdiction over "political crimes" from civil to military courts, and declares "public disorder," "rebellion," and "subversive propaganda" to be crimes punishable with one to four years imprisonment.—IP/I



Guion

Garment sweatshop. Abysmal wages, high inflation, are fueling step-up in strikes.

The bizarre state of Colombian jurisprudence described here is nevertheless far from giving a true picture of the real situation, which is more shocking yet. The military itself has imposed new measures related to the Security Statute even though such measures were not included in any laws.

From the Passage of the Statute to the Unleashing of Repression

Following the seizure of weapons from the northern barracks by M-19 in December, a number of new repressive steps were taken. These included searches of homes, offices, and union headquarters, as well as arbitrary arrests and kidnappings. In the latter cases, nothing would be heard from the victims for weeks—until finally the BIM acknowledged having them in custody—after they have been tortured and submitted to all kinds of pressures.

In fact, certain persons have disappeared after being held at the army headquarters only to later be found lying dead along the highway somewhere. This was the case with Hernando Rubio, a student at the Colombian Teaching Hospital, who was seized by "unknown hands." It was only more than a month later, after a mass mobilization protesting his murder, that

the army admitted that he had died "in custody," at the hands of soldiers.

The same kind of thing has happened to other persons. One of them was a landowner, José Vicente Camelo, whose arrest had been the result of incorrect information circulated within the military. When they finally released his corpse, they claimed that he had died of a heart attack. Only after his wife had demanded that his body be exhumed was it discovered that he had died of bullet wounds.

Dario Arango, a member of the National Opposition Union and a city councilman in Puerto Berrio, was also arrested, and later, when his corpse was released by the military it bore clear signs of torture.

Needless to say, in none of these cases has the prosecutor conducted a serious investigation. It was that very prosecutor, Guillermo González Charry, who had categorically refused to admit that the military might have committed any excesses in its enforcement of the security measures. The president of the republic, Turbay Ayala himself, has given tacit but total approval to the methods used by the military, and in response to opposition from the trade unions and the parties of the left, threatened to step up such measures.

At the same time the military has organized a death squad, operating out of the barracks, which has "executed" political and mass-movement leaders without waiting for any judicial proceedings. The assassination, in the very heart of Bogotá, of Pedro Pablo Bello, an Assembly deputy from Cundinamarca, and several attacks against the newspaper *Voz Proletaria*, were carried out by rightist organizations that are really just a cover for B-2, the army intelligence agency.

Crisis of the Bourgeois Parties and the Mass Movement

The bourgeoisie has found no means other than repression with which to try to block the rising mass movement. Under the impact of the breakup of the Liberal and Conservative parties that for years had made it possible to maintain a coalition government, the galloping inflation that has driven down the workers' wages, combined with unemployment and the policy of superexploitation, the labor movement has begun to mobilize to win wage raises to make up for lost purchasing power, and to ensure the survival of their unions.

Pressure from the rank and file forced the four labor federations (the CTC, CSTC, UTC, and CGT²) to lay the groundwork for trade-union unity by calling the first citi-

zen's national general strike on September 14, 1977. Another such strike has now been called; it is to take place within the next few months.

Strike struggles have not declined, but on the contrary have increased in frequency and combativity. The strike by workers in the Ministry of Finance has dealt a stinging blow to the administration, and to the entire public sector.³ It served to reinforce the determination of other public-sector workers, who are calling for a nationwide strike.

This is why the Turbay government has been forced to resort to such extreme measures as the detention of trade-union leaders—although even this has failed to intimidate the workers.

The peasant movement continues to put up resistance against the landowners who exploit them. Guerrillas of the FARC continue their struggle, despite the bloody repression unleashed in the countryside, especially in the regions of Yasopi, Caquetá, Cimitarra, and Puerto Berrío. The movement of students and teachers, at all levels, is leading the fight against the educational reform that Education Minister Lloreda Caicedo—a leader of the Conservatives and a member of one of the most powerful families in western Colombia—wants to impose.

With the approach of midterm elections (held every four years, between national elections, to elect departmental assemblies and municipal councils), the bourgeois

political parties have begun to question the advisability of the repressive measures put into effect by the regime—specifically their impact on the elections. Numerous leaders of these parties, including the president of the Senate, have expressed opposition to the Security Statute, and are beginning to take their distance from the government's repressive measures.

Certain long-time leaders of these parties have not only led the opposition in Congress, but also agreed to participate at some point in meetings held by the left, to help establish the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (which was founded on March 31, 1979), and to take charge of distributing the book put out by the committee denouncing the use of torture.

The positions of the bourgeois press run the gamut from total support to the government (*El Tiempo*) to open opposition (*El Espectador*), including some (like *La República*) which go back and forth between support and opposition, all the while defending the conservative viewpoint of [ex-President] Pastrana and pushing the candidacy of Belisario Betancur for president.

In this context, the regime's image is going from bad to worse, and the campaigns launched by Turbay Ayala have not had the anticipated effect. Turbay's trip to Europe was marred by demonstrations of Colombian residents there, who staged successful protests. In Paris, a hunger strike was carried out in Saint-Merri Church to protest the military trials of 350 persons accused of belonging to armed groups, to denounce torture, and to demand that the government give an accounting of the disappeared.

The Tasks of Revolutionary Marxists

Today, at a time of escalating repression, defense of the democratic rights of the working class, peasants, students, and public employees is a priority for revolutionary Marxists. On the level of struggles for economic demands, the PSR⁴ has emphasized the need to work for trade-union

unity along the lines set out in the joint agreement of the four federations. There are also important political demands, such as the call for lifting the state of siege (which is the basis for all the present repressive legislation), and for respect of trade-union rights against attacks on the right to strike and arbitrary arrests of mass movement leaders. These issues require a united front of all the political groups and organizations of the mass movement. It was in response to this need that the Committee for Defense of Human Rights was formed, and that the left has come up with a platform for the elections which breaks with Liberal and Conservative politicians, and is running slates of worker candidates in the midterm elections.

However the Communist Party, along with the Firms group and the MOIR⁵ (whose sectarian attitudes have resulted in both of them abstaining from all united actions), prefer to support assorted Liberal and Conservative politicians, allowing them to reap the fruits of the mass movement's fight to free itself from repressive legislation and massive attacks on its standard of living.

But the time is right to present to the workers a class alternative, one that breaks with the old traditional parties and advances the workers' class independence. Revolutionary Marxists will continue to defend the workers' right to elect their own representatives, independent of bourgeois political formations. This is the political platform we will take into the 1980 elections. □

2. CTC—Confederation of Colombian Workers, linked to the Liberal Party. CSTC—Trade Union Confederation of Colombian Workers, controlled by the Communist Party. UTC—Union of Colombian Workers, linked to the Conservative Party. CGT—General Confederation of Labor, oriented to the Christian Democrats. These are Colombia's four big union federations. They participate in a national coordinating body called the CNS (National Trade Union Council).—IP/I

3. The 14,000 employees of the Finance Ministry have been on strike since late August for a 70 percent wage increase.—IP/I

4. Revolutionary Socialist Party, sympathizing section of the Fourth International in Colombia.—IP/I

5. Firms is an organization that arose out of a drive to collect 500,000 signatures on a petition urging a single candidate of "the left" in the June 1978 presidential elections. MOIR (Independent Revolutionary Workers Movement) is a formation of Maoist origins.—IP/I



Peasant hut, skyscrapers of Bogotá. Increased military repression enforces widening gap in standard of living.

The Fight for the Thirty-Hour Week in Sweden

By Gunilla Skeppner and Kia Mattsson

The international economic crisis has sharply increased unemployment in Sweden. Entire branches of industry that were previously the backbone of the economy are now in crisis. Women, immigrants, and youth—the weakest sectors in society—have been hit first, but the employers are planning increased attacks on the working class as a whole.

Despite the trade-union bureaucracy's efforts to put a lid on protests, ferment is starting to grow on a grass-roots level. The demand for a membership vote on the labor contract is being raised across the country, as is the demand for a general shortening of the workweek with no cut in pay. Women in particular have been in the forefront of the struggle for shorter hours of work.

Women Demand Shorter Workweek

In 1972, the Social Democratic Women's League (SSKF) raised the demand for a thirty-hour week in the section of their program on policy toward the family. "With an adequate child-care system," the SSKF said, "we see a future in which it would be possible for all of us to combine care of our children with the economic security having a job of one's own would mean. This is the best insurance for the future."

The Social Democratic Labor Party (SAP) added the demand for a thirty-hour week to its political program in 1975. The trade unions have also made this one of their demands, but only a long-range one. A series of motions on the question were brought up at the congresses of the National Federation of Trade Unions (LO—the main industrial union federation) and the Central Federation of Salaried Employees (TCO—the main union federation of white-collar workers). A committee was established to review the question of working hours but simply let it be "ground" up in the studies "mill."

At the 1978 SSKF national convention a report was presented on "What Has Happened With the Thirty-Hour Week?" The report drew attention to the fact that a shorter workweek for all was still nothing but words on paper. To be sure a few new laws had been passed, increasing the possibility of working part time—a possibility used almost exclusively by women. So what has been won by that? The new government also established the right to the thirty-hour week for families with infants, but of course with thirty hours' pay. Was that really a step forward?

At the SSKF convention one woman after another took the floor to speak for the

thirty-hour week with no cut in pay, women's right to work, and the importance of good public child care. They put forward demands far ahead of those advanced by the SAP today.

Union Bureaucrats Stress 'Realism'

The SSKF wanted to go on fighting for the thirty-hour week and turned to the SAP and LO, demanding that they start to discuss a timetable for the realization of the measure. The LO gave its answer right at the convention through its vice-chairman, Lars Westerberg. He spoke to the women in a patronizing way.

To be sure, he said, the LO looks positively toward a general cut in the workweek—that is, in the long run. It is a goal that everybody should work toward. At the same time, he stressed, it is necessary to be "realistic." A cut in the workweek can only be practical if it is combined with a rise in productivity. In other words, the thirty-hour week can only be won if the capitalists' profits are big enough.

The result of the pressure from the SAP and the LO was that the women's demand for a thirty-hour week was once more put off until later. After all, it was argued, in face of the elections that were coming up in 1979, the most important thing was that the whole labor movement be united.

Social Democrats Line Up With Bosses

According to the Social Democrats, a cut in the workweek would be very costly. Starting within the framework of solutions possible under capitalism, they added up the increased production costs and reached the conclusion that it would be impossible to cut the workweek radically without a cut in workers' pay. This is entirely consistent with the Social Democrats' view that working people should pay for all reforms.

So the politicians in the present openly bourgeois government, the Social Democrats, the trade-union leadership, and the employers are unanimous in claiming that we cannot afford a thirty-hour week. But the fact is that we could afford it if we used our resources in a different way.

The waste of human and material resources in capitalist Sweden is enormous. Hundreds of thousands of people are unemployed at the same time that great needs exist. The crisis of overproduction has led to factories working at only half capacity. The war industry, the police, and the military devour huge sums. The guiding principle is obviously production for profit—not for human needs.

Can we afford the thirty-hour week? Our answer is that we cannot go on like we do

now. The struggle for the thirty-hour week is an important part of the struggle against the enormous waste of capitalist society. It is also part of the struggle for a planned economy that does not subject working people to a continuous cycle of slumps and booms.

Lessons from Fight for 40-Hour Week

The thirty-hour week can be realized in different ways—either at the expense of the employers or at the expense of the workers.

In Sweden a cut in the workweek from forty-eight to forty hours was carried through between 1959 and 1974. The reduction in hours of work did not mean a lowering of real income. On the other hand, it did not mean a higher employment rate, a decrease in the discrimination against women in the labor market, or an increase in political, trade-union, or social activities either. The cut was carried out step by step. This made it possible for the employers to be compensated bit by bit. Rationalization, speedup, and layoffs were some of the methods used.

Those who today advocate a gradual cut in the workweek commit a basic error. They believe that such drastic interference in the employers' power over production can be undertaken within the framework of normal contract negotiations, peacefully and undramatically. According to this view, it could be carried out after a vote in parliament and centralized negotiations—if we just take things slowly.

But to win the thirty-hour week on the *working class's conditions* calls for a gigantic show of strength on the part of the unions—something far greater than is normal in the Swedish class struggle.

Both the Social Democrats and the Communist Party favor an approach by stages because this fits in perfectly with their policy of class collaboration. They prefer negotiating for a shorter week in return for lowering demands for wage increases. Their aim is to avoid both decreasing the capitalists' profits and mobilizing the working masses.

Example of German Steelworkers

This is not the way the thirty-hour week will be won. It is necessary to mobilize the working class. In West Germany, for example, tens of thousands of steelworkers went out on strike last year for a thirty-five-hour week. They made it clear that their goal was to reduce unemployment, and that they didn't intend to pay for the reduction in hours of work themselves.

This is the right way to fight for a shorter workweek.

Why has the demand for a thirty-hour week in Sweden gotten such wide support from women? The answer is that during the 1960s women in Sweden went out to work as never before. These were "good times" and women's labor was needed. Married women and mothers of young children went to work in hospitals, offices, day-care centers, schools, and factories.

In 1960, 16 percent of married women had jobs. By 1970, the figure had risen to 57 percent. Most of the jobs women entered were in the business and social-services sector. To a lesser degree they began to get jobs in industry—usually in such traditional "women's" sectors as textiles and food processing. But the greater part went into the expanding public sector—child and old-age care, administration, and education.

The increased number of women working for a living was the foundation of the radicalization of women during the 1970s. It is the basis on which real progress has been made, for example free abortion, increased (although still completely inadequate) day-care programs, and some reduction in the tremendous gap between the wages of women and men.

Women Workers Driven Out

But those "good times" are now over. The Swedish economy has been hit hard by the capitalist crisis and employers are trying to solve it on their own terms by cutting real wages, speeding up the pace of work, shutting plants, and dismissing workers.

The number of women working full time actually *decreased* in the 1970s. Between 1976 and 1978, for example, women lost 8,000 jobs in the metal and manufacturing industries. In textiles, jobs have been disappearing rapidly for many years. In fact, it is textile workers who have received the most notices of discharge per year, a situation that is expected to continue.

Key industries in Sweden have also felt the crisis. Shipyards and steel mills have stopped hiring; instead there are warnings about layoffs and plant shutdowns. These were industries where women were offered jobs during "good years." Now voices are being raised to say that it is time to go back to the old way of doing things, that men need jobs more than women.

In fact, some special job-training programs arranged by the national Labor Market Board (AMS) accept only men. Even in the public-service sector, a traditional source of employment for women, it is becoming increasingly common for men to be given the available jobs. The labor market for women—always small—is shrinking even more.

In short, the capitalist crisis represents a growing threat to women's right to work, to economic independence, and consequently to all the progress that has been

made toward women's liberation in the last decade. This threat must be beaten back.

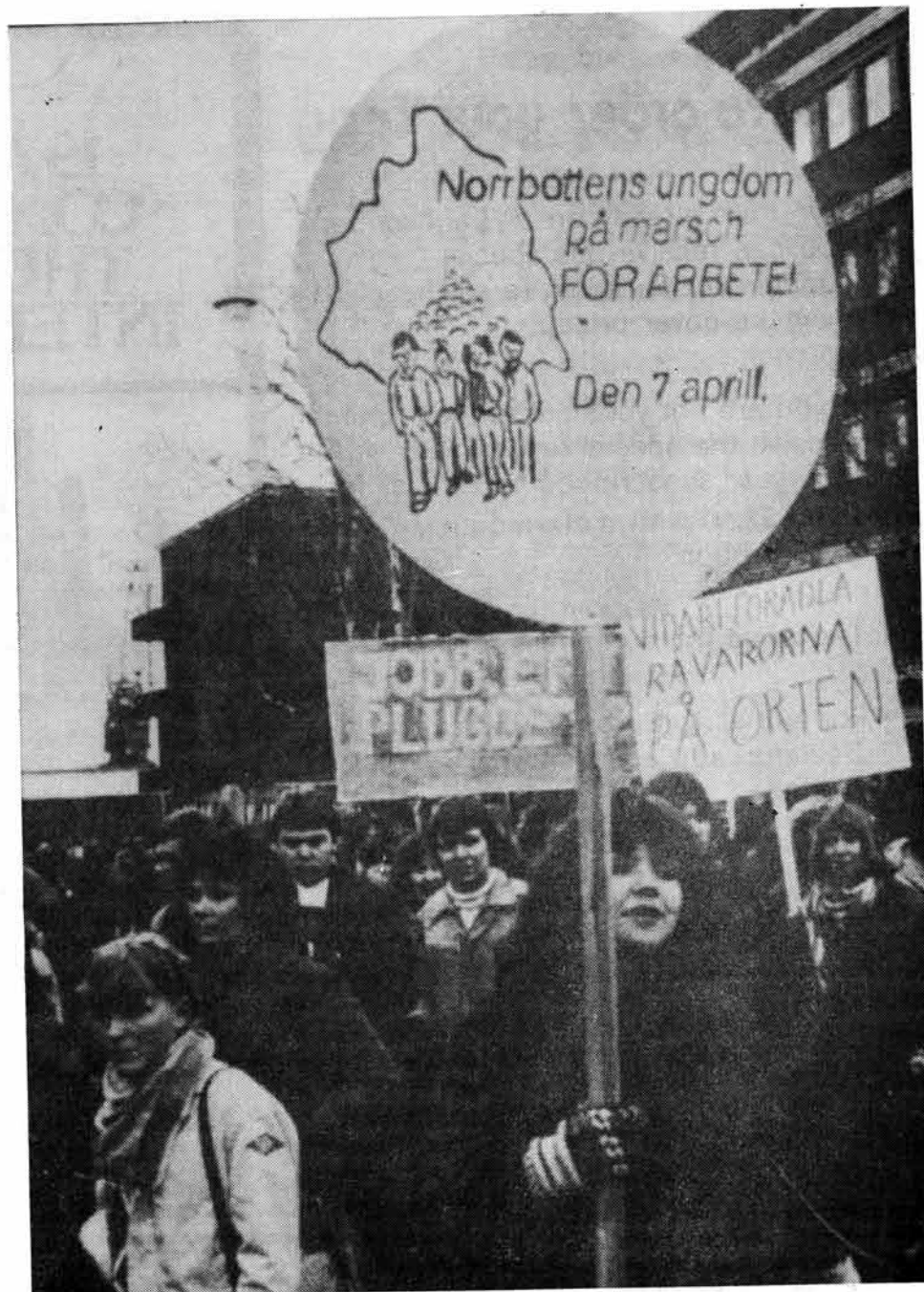
Attempt to Divide Working Class

To accept discrimination against women in employment means accepting a division in the working class. Every division of this kind is a threat to the strength and unity of the working class. Each time workers accept any group being hit by the crisis, it means that they accept that the crisis should be paid for by working people themselves. That is why it is in the interests of every worker to defend the right of

women to work and to fight against the discrimination they suffer in employment.

In the last analysis, what is needed to defend women's right to work is a struggle within the framework of a program of jobs for all. One of the central demands in such a program must be a general shortening of the workweek without any cut in pay, so as to spread available work among all who want jobs.

This is a concrete demand designed to fight unemployment, a demand in solidarity with all those who have been and will be thrown out of work by the economic slump. □



Unemployed youth march for jobs in northern Sweden.

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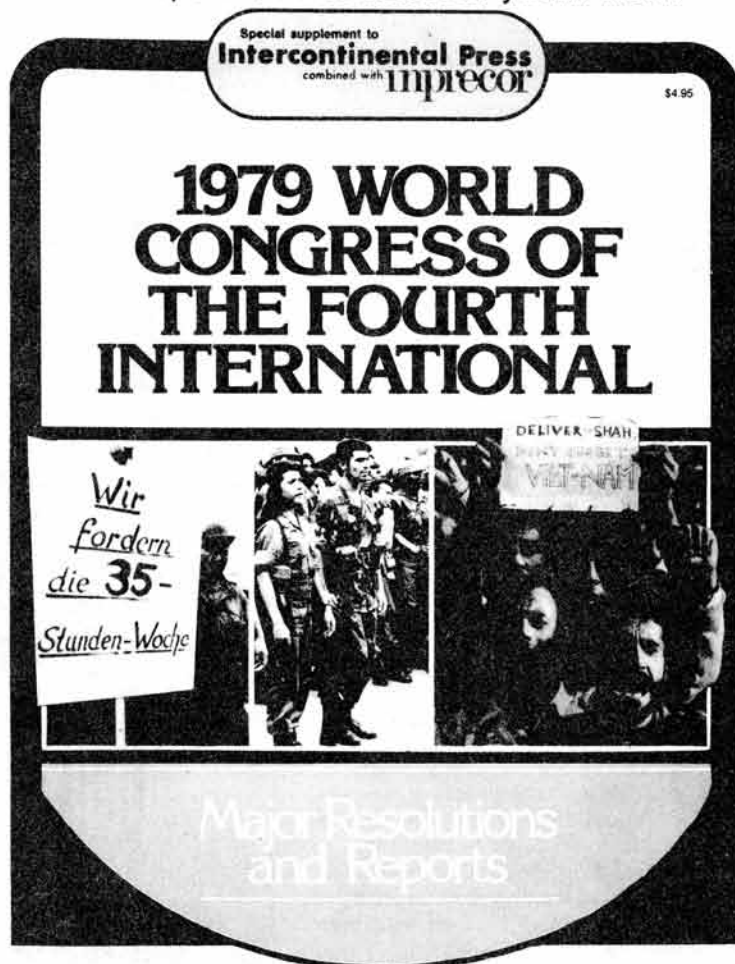
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