

COMPLETE TEXT:

HOW THE CIA RUNS BOLIVIA

**Why Arguedas Gave
Che Guevara's Diary
to the Cubans**

Student Struggle Opens New Chapter in Mexican Politics

by Ricardo Ochoa

**Daily World's Prague Correspondents
Speak Against Gus Hall's Line**

Full Text of Interview:

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[Under the title, "A Tangled Story of the C.I.A.," the New York Times in its August 25 issue gave an account of a press interview in La Paz, Bolivia, in which Antonio Arguedas Mendieta, one of the highest officials of the Bolivian government, who gave the Cubans a copy of Che Guevara's diary, revealed the role of the Central Intelligence Agency in Bolivian state affairs.

[The Times described Arguedas as follows:

["Until one month ago, Arguedas was Bolivia's Minister of Government, one of the highest Cabinet offices, which combines the functions of Interior Minister, Chief of Police and Chief of Intelligence. There probably were very few state secrets unknown to Arguedas, and he naturally had access to the still secret diary Guevara had written.

["Three months ago, Cuba announced that it had obtained a copy of the technically still secret Guevara diary and was giving copies to Ramparts in the United States and to the Chilean leftist periodical Punta Final. The announcement came as a thunderbolt here, because it was immediately apparent that the Bolivian Government had been infiltrated at the highest level by one or more foreign agents.

["And on July 18, Arguedas fled from Bolivia to begin a month of travels and adventure that have the flavor of a television espionage show.

["Returning to La Paz last weekend to 'tell the Bolivian people the whole truth about what American imperialism has done to this country,' Arguedas was promptly arrested for having leaked the Guevara diary to Cuba. But the Bolivian Government permitted him a press conference lasting more than an hour and a half.

["The declarations he made, if true, would indicate that the Bolivian Government for the past three years has been little more than a mouthpiece for the United States, notably the C.I.A."]

[The Times condensed Arguedas' revelations and charges into a few paragraphs and then dismissed the matter by saying: "Obviously, most of Arguedas' statement could not be checked, either with Bolivian or American officials, who were unwilling to make any comment."]

[In Bolivia, the transcript of

Arguedas' press conference was published in the La Paz daily La Presencia of August 18. Feeling that the English-speaking world has a right to know what has been revealed to the Bolivians about the operations of the CIA in the Andean republic, we have made a translation of the full text which begins below.]

* * *

Question (La Presencia): "You have made sport with international public opinion, taking contradictory positions spiced up with statements that are very hard to believe. You know that you are to be tried by a military tribunal. This is, we believe, your last chance to freely present your revelations and accusations against the CIA and its intervention in Bolivia. I urge you, Señor Arguedas, in the name of public opinion, to give a detailed account of the CIA's activities in our country.

Answer: I will try to sum up as briefly as possible my relations with the United States Central Intelligence Agency. In 1964, as a result of the popular and military insurrection which brought an end to the MNR [Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario -- National Revolutionary Movement] regime, I was named undersecretary in the Ministry of the Interior. Sixty days after being named to this position, Colonel Edward Fox of the United States Air Force informed me that if I remained in the Ministry of the Interior, the USA would suspend economic aid to Bolivia and institute the most drastic sanctions and pressures against the government. To prevent this, I resigned my post.

About twenty days later I again approached Colonel Fox, who told me that there was a way out for me, that I had to talk to an American diplomat in Bolivia to exchange views. He introduced me to Mr. Larry Sterfield, who was then the chief of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency in this country. Sterfield proposed that I submit to interrogation outside the country to ascertain whether or not I had ever been a member of the Communist party or if the Communist party had planted me in the government then in power.

I was subjected to questioning for a period of four days by the CIA in Lima. I went to this interrogation voluntarily. The first of these four days I was interviewed; the second day questioned directly; the third day I was subjected to interrogation with a full range of electronic aids; the fourth day, so as to

leave nothing hidden, I was interrogated under truth drugs. The CIA verified that I had not been a member of the Communist party and that my exclusive and sole motivation in participating in the November 4 revolution had been my desire to liberate our people from the MNR dictatorship.

During my stay in office as undersecretary, the CIA had me undertake a series of operations in our country -- both in gathering intelligence and in informing them.

Before I was named Minister of the Interior, the Central Intelligence Agency invited me to go to the U.S. I was given the sum of \$6,500. I was put up at the Hotel Plaza in Washington, at the American government's expense. I was given sort of a general briefing. One session was on the political activities of the different Latin-American governments and the other was a detailed course on what were claimed to be the activities and plans of the Cuban government. After this was completed, I returned to Bolivia and accepted the post of minister.

Once I was Minister of the Interior, the CIA failed to keep its promises. It began to force me to accept many operations by blackmail alone. These operations were of various types. When the guerrillas arrived on the scene, the CIA forced me to bring Cuban agents into the intelligence service. I did so. Among these agents were Gabriel García García, Fernández, and Mario González -- who was Régis Debray's interrogator -- as well as other agents whose names I can't remember at the moment.

In certain cases, the CIA gave me money with which to bribe Bolivian citizens. I was given the task of buying off, let us say bribing, the mine union leader Federico Escóbar Zapata. The chief of the CIA in La Paz gave me \$2,500 to go to Santa Cruz and make a proposition to Escóbar that he reveal all the contacts he had in China and on his tour through the socialist camp. I went to Santa Cruz but Escóbar categorically refused to accept a bribe. He insulted me and told me that I should not play this base role.

As regards concrete operations, the CIA recently called on me to discredit the journalist Bailey (coeditor of La Presencia). This gentleman had organized a civic group to conduct a campaign of aid to the countryside. This greatly worried the CIA chief and he gave me various sums of money. One amount was to have posters pasted up indicating that this group was a political party. These posters were pasted up on walls in La Paz. A second sum was for a petticoat scandal cooked up against Bailey.

Another specific operation I can tell about in this short space of time has to do with the fact that the copies of Che Guevara's diary that I sent to Havana were given to me by a CIA agent, Hugo Murray, who was working in close contact with me in the Ministry of the Interior. I was not given the copy by the Bolivian government. The Central Intelligence Agency gave it to the ministry for informational purposes. I received this copy in the middle of November of last year.

Question: Can you tell us more about the CIA intervention in Bolivia?

Answer: They spread stories, often false, in an effort to prejudice certain credit negotiations in France. Then there was the question of infiltrating political agents, of recruiting agents in the country. There was cooperation with some persons in whose military or political career the CIA took an interest.

Question (El Diario): As a legal man and an ex-official how would you characterize the crime of allowing photocopies of Che's diary to leave the country for Cuba? What court should judge such an act and what should the penalty be?

Answer: I have kept my word. I said that I was going to return to Bolivia to put myself at the disposal of the court which considers itself competent to try me. I am not going to go in search of my judges.

As for the secrecy they are trying to attribute to Che Guevara's diary, that is a complete fake and concoction. More than one hundred persons were familiar with the diary, and the Central Intelligence Agency, that is a foreign government, was certainly already familiar with it because it was this organization that gave me Che Guevara's diary.

Question (Ultima Hora): Mr. Minister, according to the magazine Confirmado Internacional, you met with Chilean chancellor Gabriel Valdés in order to get Chile to back the regime of General Barrientos because General Ovando was trying to sign a pact with the president of Argentina of an aggressive nature against Chile...

Answer: That is another intrigue cooked up by the CIA to deceive Bolivian public opinion. When I arrived at Iquique and sought political asylum, saying that the U.S. CIA was trying to eliminate me, the Chilean police took me into custody and held me incommunicado. From that time on I spoke only with the Chilean deputy director of investigation, Mr. Zúñiga, and with an agent of the American intelligence service who said nothing, giving no sign

of approval or disapproval.

At one point, Zúñiga told me, amidst the worst insults against our country, that my version would not be believed and that I could make a great fortune blaming General Ovando for selling Che Guevara's diary. Then they told me I should tell stories about President Barrientos. They told me that I should maintain that I was the sacrificial lamb in this matter and that the CIA would give me a blank check so that I could live wherever I wanted, but otherwise my ruin was imminent and that they would show me that in the course of the affair.

Question (Jornada): In your capacity as an ex-minister and according to the Constitution, your case is inevitably a case for the Supreme Court, that is, it will have to be judged by the National Congress. Does your previous declaration mean that you would not raise any legal objection if you were remanded to a military tribunal or a regular court without competence or jurisdiction in this matter?

Answer: I have said that I came to put myself at the disposal of the court that considered itself competent to judge me. Here I am. I am not interested in the opinion of the courts, what interests me is the people's opinion of my conduct. Hundreds of people in this city knew of my leftist leanings. I talked to many of them as a revolutionary...

(At this point, an official of the Ministry of the Interior interrupted the press conference and said: "Pardon me, Colonel Ríos of the police says that disturbances have occurred and that this press conference must be suspended." The reporters protested since they knew that there had been no disturbance at that time. Amid shouts of protest, two uniformed policemen took the ex-minister from the office where the press conference was taking place.)

(Two hours after the press conference was interrupted, the reporters were invited to a new meeting in the Ministry of the Interior. At five in the afternoon, when the journalists had gathered in an office of the ministry, they were taken to the office of the minister for the resumption of the press conference.

(The Minister of the Interior, Captain David Fernandez, introduced his predecessor, Antonio Arguedas Mendieta, as follows: "Gentlemen, this morning information reached this ministry that Mr. Antonio Arguedas might be attacked. That was the reason why my office suspended the press conference in the old terminal of Lloyd Aéreo Boliviano. Unfortunately, this position was not understood by some journalists, who made some unjust comments and drew some unfavorable conclu-

sions about this. Only the negative side was seen, without considering that in moving as it did, the Ministry of the Interior was safeguarding the life of Mr. Antonio Arguedas, who is here before you to continue his statements.")

Question: Mr. Minister, are you on the track of those suspected of plotting an attack against Mr. Arguedas, or have they been arrested?

Answer: In fact...You know that sometimes all kinds of telephone calls are made to stir up panic. We had several insistent telephone calls. Of course Mr. Arguedas has not been pressured at any time to change or modify his statements. I must state moreover that in view of the efforts which have been made to clear up the puzzling points in this unfortunate case, I think that it is strange that the government's good faith is being doubted. The government is trying to establish a crystal clear account of this affair. I would not like to believe that anyone is trying to use this case for sensationalistic propaganda along the lines followed by the urban subversives. I must tell you that there are no time limits for this press conference. All the points you want to clear up must be cleared up.

Question: Mr. Arguedas, we know that you left a tape recording with a certain person in Lima which would reveal secrets if anything happened to you. Could you give us the text of this taped statement?

Answer: To begin with it gives me profound satisfaction to be a man again and to see that the truth can be told in my country. The Chilean scum and the American imperialists tried to make me look like a wreck, like an irresponsible adventurer. They said I was trembling at the Chilean police headquarters. That is completely untrue. I told the Chilean police the truth, the truth that you yourselves are going to hear. I was not afraid to return to Bolivia for one moment.

I know that the Central Intelligence Agency operates in this country and I know its methods. But there is only one way to crush imperialist intervention: all Bolivians must unite and take their destiny into their own hands. I do not support the present government. On the other hand, I feel that I am responsible for many of its mistakes. I am guilty of cooperating with the Central Intelligence Agency in supplying information on a series of matters and of spreading a number of rumors. I am going to answer all the charges brought against me.

Here are some of the answers I am going to give out loud in our country. I was afraid because after I was taken into custody at Iquique the CIA constantly

threatened me with two measures: a mob attack on my family and a coup d'état in Bolivia. Not wanting to bring about either of these things, in my press conference in Santiago de Chile I held to an agreement I had reached with the CIA: not to disclose its activities -- to discuss American imperialism and my real position but not to reveal any of the CIA's secrets. When I learned through the Peruvian press that the CIA was not keeping its part of the bargain, despite everything I had been told in London and New York, I decided that I had to face up to an all-out battle. I did not ask for any monetary recompense in New York or London; the only thing I asked was for the American CIA agents, who have no business here, to pack up and go back to their own country. I also asked that the American economic and technical advisory commissions return to their own country and that if the American people wanted to send aid to the Bolivian people that they do it through a government chosen by Bolivia and not through a mass of agents who act like a government, and who interfere with the work of, let us not say of only this government, but any government this country might have. The U.S. AID should get out, this whole mob of satraps should get out; the only thing they do is waste this so-called aid on bureaucratic posts. This aid does not reach the people.

Question: Dr. Arguedas, who is the head of the CIA in Bolivia at the present time?

Answer: Up until a few days before I left Bolivia, the head of the CIA was Mr. John S. Tilton. During the time I was out of Bolivia he was replaced by an American citizen named Thomas who lives at No. 7 Calle de Obrajes. I never caught his first name because I was used to dealing with Americans on a last-name basis. However, his second-in-command who maintains the CIA's connections with its Bolivian agents as well as its own various offices in this country is Mr. Hugo Murray, whose official position in this country is that of advisor to the Public Security Department. I don't know if this gentleman is still in the country. I must qualify all the statements I have made since my arrival in La Paz in that way.

Question: Dr. Arguedas, what is the CIA's system of intervening in Bolivia?

Answer: On the one hand, the intervention in the ministry I was in charge of consisted of taking over the state intelligence service. In the second place, the CIA infiltrated political agents into some political parties. I am going to tell you the truth because there are some people on El Diario working for the CIA who say that I am going to spread a lot of gossip, that I am going to dishonor

Bolivian citizens. My intention is not to dishonor anybody. Mr. Victor Andrade Uzquiano was introduced to me by Mr. John S. Tilton as a friend of the service. I know that Bolivian politician.

As for Mr. Juan Lechín Oquendo, I confirm what I have said all my life. The head of the Central Intelligence Agency in the United States called me to his house and asked me to get a passport for Lechín under a different name because he was interested in getting him out of the country. I was unwilling to go to such lengths and told him I was not going to issue such a passport, that I was not going to have anything to do with Mr. Juan Lechín Oquendo.

I am not going to disclose any other name despite the fact that false reports about me are being spread by a press which is honeycombed with CIA agents. They are echoing what the Chilean press said; they have distorted the truth. From the moment I crossed the Chilean border I was held incommunicado; I was not allowed to talk to anyone, not even my brother who was in a separate cell, until I was brought into the press conference.

They only agreed to allow me to hold a press conference after I had conceded to the CIA that I would not reveal its secrets; that I could refer to American imperialism, etc.

I must repeat one thing. I had no contact with the Chilean police, or with the chancellery, or with any high Chilean official. Colonel Walkers who is the chief of investigation in Chile had been in touch with me as a result of this fraternity which exists among intelligence services. The only country the CIA tried to put me in touch with was Chile. My contact was with Colonel Walkers. I dealt with him.

In Chile I was in the hands of the CIA agent Nicolas Leondiris. He came to Santiago de Chile from Colombia or Venezuela, where he is working in their public security assistance programs, expressly for that purpose. I was in contact with Mr. Zúñiga, who is the deputy director of investigation. These two men were in charge of all the questioning.

In fact, they asked me about things that had nothing to do with the case. I insisted I had declared that I was a victim of political persecution in my country and had asked for asylum and that there was no reason for my being questioned. But the Chilean police did not respect this. They held me incommunicado and threatened to give me the third degree. The threat of a coup d'état was used to intimidate me. I was told that a coup had occurred and that the new president of Bolivia was General Marcus Vasquez, who had declared at a

press conference that I would be shot. I was told that Chile was going to deport me because I was showing a lack of respect for the Chilean police by refusing to answer the questions they were asking me, that they did not consider me a political prisoner or a minister, that I was a criminal and would be treated as such.

Question: Mr. Arguedas, could you reveal the names of the journalists cooperating with the CIA and the names of other agents?

Answer: I don't want to get involved in gossip. I gave one name in my statement in Lima. I am not going to give any more names and I am not going to blacken the name of any Bolivian citizens. I intend to conduct myself with the proper dignity. What I will reveal is the details of how Che Guevara's diary was delivered, how the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States turned me into its agent, and why I broke with the CIA.

Another fear which must exist in this country is that I am going to reveal the names of a lot of secret agents. I am not going to do that. I want those who have been infiltrated to face their own consciences. I do not want to play games, but I know that the CIA is going to drop all its collaborators because it already considers them compromised. If the press demands these names through the judiciary, I promise to disclose them only then under oath.

I am not seeking publicity. I only want to tell the truth about everything that happened during my terms as under-secretary and as minister of the interior, and to alert not only the present Bolivian government but all future Bolivian governments and all Latin-American governments on how the American imperialists are subverting their intelligence services in order to mislead them, to present a picture different from reality, to obstruct their economic relations with other countries, and finally to get them on their payroll.

My problems with the CIA also began this way. Because I did not enter the Ministry of the Interior as a politician. After November 4, the state security apparatus was virtually smashed. I came into the ministry and only in this way did I learn the American intelligence service's secrets and its manner of operating. Otherwise, it would have been very difficult. I am convinced that many MNR ministers of the interior did not know the truth about what was going on in their ministry. They had trained San Roman, it must not be forgotten, in the FBI. He was an agent working in close contact with them. I do not mean by this to exon-

erate the MNR, but to tell the truth -- the full truth probably not being known to many.

Question: Mr. Arguedas, is it true that you got fifty thousand dollars for turning over a copy of Comandante Che Guevara's diary to the Cubans?

Answer: You know that is one of the crudest stories that could be cooked up. In connection with that accusation against me, I am keeping two documents abroad. One is signed by the Browning Engineering firm in which I was offered a million-and-a-half dollar cut to expedite its bid for constructing Highways 1 and 4. And I have another document signed by a Bolivian citizen connected with U.S. AID in which he offered me one hundred and fifty thousand dollars to execute a certain administrative decree. What I mean to say is that I could have made a great fortune without sending Comandante Guevara's diary to Havana. The claim of theft won't stand up.

I remember a Mr. Troche. Here I must explain. The presence of a guerrilla group in Santa Cruz was being investigated. The person who provided the information was the double agent López Durán. He told us that a guerrilla group of the Peking Communist party was organizing in Santa Cruz. Then I ordered Colonel Roberto Quintanilla to investigate this individual because I knew that he was only telling the government half of what he knew and was to a certain degree covering up the activities of his party comrades.

But in the process of investigating this person's activities, we came on a house near the Mexican embassy where a supposed press service of a Mr. Monje Pinedo was operating. They had electronic apparatus, means for tapping telephone conversations. Colonel Quintanilla and Colonel Loayza's agents captured the members of this network. One of them was a Mr. Troche.

That morning, as we were accustomed to do, we were going to hold a press conference announcing that the Peking guerrillas' intelligence network had fallen into the hands of the state security department. However, to my great surprise, when I arrived there at 9 o'clock, I met Mr. Hugo Murray. He was very angry and he told me that this apparatus belonged to him. Once matters were cleared up it turned out that, although the Central Intelligence Agency had great influence in the Ministry of the Interior, it was nonetheless organizing its own network.

What were we to do? A complete dossier on who's who in the country's army. I took the folder and brought it to the president, telling him not to return it. That was the only thing I took. But, so as not to be accused of being a Communist or

have it said that I want to reveal the government's secrets in front of you, I am going to the Palace and leave it up to the president.

At that time also in taking a glance through the CIA papers I saw that there was a part following February 18, 1966, where Dagnino Pacheco was already under CIA surveillance. That is, thirty-five days before the first clash with the guerrillas the CIA was already informed of Pacheco's activities. Since we know that he was the guerrillas' treasurer, that means that American intelligence was already to some degree aware of the guerrillas before they were discovered by the Bolivian intelligence service and before the first clashes occurred. I have given this explanation because a Mr. Troche was a member of Monje Pinedo's little apparatus.

Question: You have admitted being a CIA agent. At what time and in what circumstances did you stop being one?

Answer: That is precisely what I wanted to explain. A few minutes before the press conference was interrupted, I was talking about what my relations with the CIA were like. Colonel Fox introduced me to Mr. Larry Sterfield. Sterfield told me that my case could be settled if I voluntarily submitted to a loyalty check and questioning abroad. I will be honest with my people. Partly out of opportunism and partly out of curiosity, I agreed to let myself be questioned.

They gave me, I think, sixty or ninety dollars for passage to Lima and gave me an address on the Avenida Piérola. I went there escorted by the agent Nicolas Leondiris, who at that time was the advisor attached to the public security department in Bolivia. When we arrived I met two Americans. They greeted me cordially and the first phase of my questioning began. This consisted of interviews. I was asked who my friends were, who I had relations with, what my ties were with the Communist party in Bolivia, what leftist leaders I knew, when had I talked to them.

The second day I was questioned on my personal history. Then I was bombarded with a mass of questions about my friends, etc. On the third day I was subjected to interrogation by electronic means. There were electric connections to my hands, my heart, my head. Then I had to answer just "yes" or "no" to the questions -- to see if I had told the truth.

For example, they asked me if it were true that I had never been a member of the Communist party. I answered that that was true, because it was. They asked me if I were a Marxist, if I knew Mr. Monje, Mr. Kolle, Mr. Otero, etc., if I were

a member of the Communist party of Bolivia. I was a Marxist, let me say frankly, an individual Marxist. I was never a member of an organization, although in my university days I helped the party; that cannot be denied, I helped the Communist party.

On the last day of questioning, the fourth day, they offered me a Coca Cola and we began to talk about walks in Lima, about girls and the things friends talk about. I began to feel a great weariness. At about 7:30 in the evening I recovered. The questioning was over. I couldn't remember what I might have said, why I thought I had been under the effects of some drug. But I felt two sensations -- a physical sensation of extreme cold and an absolute moral depression. I was capable of jumping out of the window on the fifteenth floor. I recognized that my consciousness had been stripped bare. This feeling overshadowed the future. Then I felt the need for vengeance. I said that I would get even one day.

When Mr. Leondiris told me that the CIA had verified that what I said was true, I said to myself that now we would go forward and see what we would do. I came here to the Ministry of the Interior. While I was undersecretary I never doubted Colonel Quiroga's loyalty. Then the CIA gave me minor jobs, like getting articles into the press by one channel or another; I never played an important role. I fulfilled all the duties given me in the ministry. Later it was planned that I would be Minister of the Interior. They told me, "Brother, we are not going to keep watch over you. You are already a part of the service." For its agents the American intelligence service is sort of a lodge. Saying that you are a member of the service is the password in Japan, the United States, in Bolivia, etc., the service is a fraternity. Secrecy must be maintained.

Then they told me, "It's a sure thing that you're going to be minister. We won't blackball you. Just the opposite. We're going to praise you everywhere; we're going to set you up as the ideal person for the job." The president of the republic did not know about my connections. I must be honest. I have no reason to defame anyone. He thought that I had gotten to be friends with the Americans at cocktail parties and receptions, through my work. He did not know that I had come to be, let us say, manipulated by this foreign intelligence service.

I was named minister after an invitation that was reported in all the papers. I went to Washington at the invitation of the American government. Before the trip, I was given \$6,500. I was put up at the Plaza Hotel. There I wasn't subjected to any questioning. They treated me with the most complete courtesy. An

interview was set up for me with an American official who gave me a briefing on each one of the Latin-American governments. Later a meeting was arranged for me with an expert on Cuban affairs. He told me about all the difficulties and all the errors of the Cuban revolution and all the international conniving against that revolution.

I returned to Bolivia and was named Minister of the Interior. After I was in office, I spoke to the Americans who had promised to cooperate with me in every way. They were committed to extend aid for the construction of a prison which required 300 thousand dollars. No aid was forthcoming. They told me there wasn't any.

I asked for sidearms for the police, which was another of the basic points of our agreement. They didn't come through on that either. They gave me 500 revolvers. I asked them to give me a certain number of vehicles to set up a motorized patrol in the city, but I didn't get anything. But they told me, "You're efficient. You don't need any aid. You can find what you need in your own country, so let's do it that way."

The guerrilla movement arose in the midst of the dilemma I was experiencing. I had no connection with the guerrillas nor with the Castroist movement. I had already broken relations with the Communists in effect in 1956. I had absolutely no ties of friendship with the Communists or the Castroists.

Then the head of the CIA called me up and told me, "We're going to bring in some advisors for you because your security agents aren't any good. They're just a bunch of good-for-nothings. Then you'll have to introduce them to your agents." Then he brought in the Cuban gusanos who were here, a García, a Ramos, a Mario González Hernández and here in the ministry a lot of the employees recognized the gusanos because many of them called them "gusanos."

This group began to work under my orders at first. They did what they were assigned. We carried out some interrogations. But a time came when Mr. Gabriel García decided he had to proceed completely independently. He spoke English perfectly, had the CIA's confidence, etc. Without my consent, García set up two interrogation centers, one in the Plaza Isabel la Católica, and the other in Sorata. That made me furious because already some Bolivian citizens were beginning to make complaints about questioning and torture at the hands of people who by their speech were foreigners. Then I gave notice that that could not continue. The Americans ignored us.

Mr. Gabriel García found himself a Bolivian mistress linked to various circles. He told her all the secrets of the state security service; and one of his fellow operators did the same. Bolivian internal security was an open book to various opposition groups thanks to this Cuban because the only thing he was interested in was the struggle against Communism. I was interested in safeguarding internal security against all groups. In that respect I was absolutely loyal.

Then the break came. We had continual friction with the Americans. Another bone of contention also turned up. The Corporación Minera de Bolivia [Bolivian Mining Corporation] was in court with Lipez Mining. The CIA put pressure on me to get a decision favoring Lipez Mining. They told me that we had to safeguard private enterprise. But I received instructions from the government that the court ruling should be correct. The ruling had to be what it was and nothing else. I told the Attorney General that this case should be conducted with absolute probity, because if there was any favoritism shown to Lipez Mining I was going to bring him before the Supreme Court for fraud. And the ruling was in accordance with the law. This exasperated the Americans. They thought I was gradually slipping out of their control.

When my birthday came on June 13, the head of the CIA called me up -- note this presumption -- and told me to come to his house to receive his greetings. I became indignant. I really felt that I was a minister. How could I go to the home of the head of the CIA. I was rather disturbed by this kind of treatment and I didn't go. But on the fourteenth, Murray came here and told me that Thomas was annoyed. "He says he has a gift for you sent from the United States and that you have to come."

In order to avoid a new clash with the Americans I kept this date with the CIA head, as I said, at No. 7 Calle de Obrajes. He said, "How are you, Antonio, I'm happy to see you. I have a gift for you." He gave me a box which I thought was a notebook. I took the gift. Thanked him. We chatted a little while. I had a cup of coffee, since I don't drink, and returned here to the ministry.

When I arrived at the ministry, out of curiosity I opened the gift. It was a pistol with a cartridge belt and an empty clip. I opened the other box and there was a picture of Comandante Fidel Castro, a picture of Che Guevara, a picture of Raul Castro taking ammunition from another guerrilla. I thought that this was the first step in blackmail, that by this the CIA was letting me know that if I didn't work completely for them I was going to

be framed up as a Castroist.

In one of the drawers in my desk, on the right-hand side, I had the negatives of Che Guevara's diary. In a word, I boiled over. I took a piece of paper, wrote a note to Castro, took out the negatives, and sent them to Havana. The die was cast. There was nothing left for me to do. The note to Castro was categorical. I did not tell him I was his agent or anything. I told him I was a friend of the Cuban revolution and was sending him Comandante Guevara's diary and that he could publicize it as he wished, that I wanted no money in return. That was the situation.

Once I had sent Che Guevara's diary off, I let the president know about the gift I had received from the CIA, not about my sending off Che's diary. I said that I was beaten. I wanted to be relieved of my duties. The Americans sent me this gift which I feel puts me in an extremely difficult position. I would like to forestall any provocation against the government or the country.

The president told me that we would have to wait and see what happened. "Why don't you calm down? I notice that you're extremely nervous." The following day I called the chief of the CIA. Still feeling that I was an official, I asked for an explanation. He told me that it was a joke, that the previous CIA head, Mr. Tilton, who was the one who had kept regular contact with me, had given me the pistol and possibly the pictures of the Cuban leaders to use for target practice. Unfortunately, that was the push that made me decide to send Che's diary to Havana.

As I pointed out, I had obtained the negatives of the diary last November 15. On that date the agent Murray gave them to me in a yellow envelope along with all the documents relating to the guerrillas. Out of curiosity, I had some prints made from the negatives so that I could read it sometime. On the following day, I gave them to the CIA agent Gabriel García García. He also received a copy of Che's diary but only the second notebook.

You are Bolivian journalists and are familiar with them. You know that there is a red notebook, which is the first part, and another one, a bound notebook, which is the second part. At one time, General Barrientos gave me this hard-cover notebook to have negatives made for him. That is, one of his aides brought it to the ministry. He didn't give it to me personally. He told me to make prints of the negatives. His aid came. The prints were made. They gave me one copy and the president another. The diary did not stay in my hands.

Question: Dr. Arguedas, do you remember what the note said that you sent the Cuban prime minister? Could you repeat it for us?

Answer: I told Comandante Fidel Castro. There were two notes. The address I had obtained was from one of the guerrillas who fell at La Higuera. These documents were here ten minutes, when they were brought from La Higuera. I noted down an address in Europe. I noted it down, to speak frankly, in case I wanted to contact them one day. The address was under the glass on my desk.

I wrote "urgent" on the envelope, "a gift from the Minister of the Interior of Bolivia for Comandante Fidel Castro Ruz." I wrote a note telling Comandante Castro that it was a gift from me to him and to the Cuban revolution, that I was asking for no monetary reward, and that I was an admirer of the Cuban revolution. The note was no more than ten lines. The note sent to the European address was no more than three lines. It asked that they send the envelope immediately to Comandante Castro.

I realized I had done a stupid thing because this address might have been under surveillance. But those who know me know I lose my temper at times. I have had dealings with many journalists, I have a lot of friends, and they can tell you that there is nothing unusual about my losing my temper. I have even insulted many journalists when I have been angry.

Question: Mr. Arguedas, two questions. According to your information what role did Douglas Henderson play in all these CIA machinations? Were you threatened in New York, or subjected to any kind of pressure from the CIA?

Answer: In the first place, to my knowledge, Douglas Henderson had no ties with the Central Intelligence Agency. The head of the CIA usually operates over the head of even the ambassador. I know that Henderson was a powerful man, a foe of the present government in Bolivia, and that he had great contempt for Bolivians, which he showed on many occasions in his treatment of many Bolivian citizens. But I don't know if he was linked to the American CIA.

The CIA heads I dealt with personally were Mr. Larry Sterfield and Mr. Rot Tilton -- as I told you I don't remember Tilton's first name but I know his address -- and with Mr. Leondiris who was the first one and Mr. Murray who must still be walking the streets of La Paz, working as a security advisor, if he isn't hiding out somewhere. Murray was in La Paz. I even had a check for him, because we had some business dealings. He had me sell a refrigerator and a broiler and I had a \$700 check for him.

When I left Chile, I was escorted by the agent Nicolás Leondiris and the Chilean police agent Oscar Pizarro Barrios. Accompanied by these two, I left Chile on the route Buenos Aires-San Pablo-Rio-Las Palmas-Madrid-London. The agreement between the Chilean police and me was that I would be given asylum but that I had to leave Chilean territory on the first available plane.

After the questioning and brutal treatment I had gotten from the Chilean police, they eased up. They realized they could not liquidate me. They could not drop me at the border and they couldn't come up with any solution. They told me that they needed American aid, that a drought was causing a lot of damage to the country, and they doubted that I would behave properly. They thought that I would blow up at any moment and say a lot of wild things about the Americans. So they thought the right thing to do was for me to be given asylum and then leave immediately for some other country.

Argentina came to mind. But when the first secretary of the Argentine embassy saw me come to apply for a visa accompanied by two policemen, he got upset. Because he told me, "Come back in two hours. I am going to consult my government."

Zúñiga, the deputy chief of the Chilean police, told him, "But Mr. Ambassador, you have to give it, the visa is urgent, it is important to us."

"And who are you?" the secretary of the embassy asked, "Are you his lawyer?"

"No, sir," Zúñiga replied, "I am from the Chilean police."

"You can't get a visa," he said right then and there. "You are not going to Argentina."

He hustled me out before even finding out his government's opinion about the pressure from the Chilean police.

We returned to the police office where I had been held. Again I was held incommunicado. Leondiris came and we discussed where they might send me. I suggested Peru. He told me Peru was no good, that none of the Latin-American governments wanted me because they considered me a dangerous criminal. "Why don't you go to France?"

"I am not going to France. I would rather go," I proposed, "to New York."

"And what are you going to do in New York?"

"If you don't keep your word I am

going to go to the United Nations and denounce this whole business."

When he saw this firm attitude, Leondiris said, "Let's talk." The visa was delayed still further and my Chilean passport was stamped for entry to New York.

With this, I left on a BUA plane and went to London. Once in London, somebody must have taken the matter in hand. When I arrived, there were two television cameras. They observed me but they were not permitted to approach. I went to immigration and the agent told me to wait. Not a word more. And they moved me to one side.

The Chilean, who spoke English perfectly, wanted to intercede and they shut us up in an office. At no time did the English police speak to me in Spanish. They talked the whole time with the Chilean policeman. After three hours of being detained, the American agent Leondiris appeared and told me, "Take it easy, we are going to take care of this and leave here and nothing is going to happen."

I said to him, "Why get into a hassle? Since my agreement is to go to New York, why don't we take the plane for there?"

Leondiris told me, "We have our problems too. I will explain the difficulties." He stalled a while longer until an English official came and gave me a change in notification in Spanish. He didn't say a single word. The note said, "Sir, you have entered the United Kingdom illegally and may stay only three days."

They stamped my Chilean passport, took me to a taxi, and with my two escorts had me driven to the Hotel Apollo. They had already registered me in the Hotel Apollo under the name Mendieta. The Chilean registered as Barrios. I don't know how the American registered. They gave us our rooms. I don't speak English; I was completely at sea. I said to myself that something had to happen and that I could have confidence.

In fact, something did happen. Two days later, they told me, "You know, there's a lot of heat among the MP's, they are demanding your release, they want you to speak, etc. So let's establish our sureties. Up until now we have had a guarantee that doesn't affect you here. Now, to let you speak in Spanish, we want a concrete guarantee. We want you to show your good faith, that you are not deceiving us in some way."

I told them, "I am going to show you my good faith in a matter which does not concern me. A friend of mine in La Paz has the complete account of Che Guevara's death from Lieutenant Jaime Terán. She lives at this address, call this telephone

number. Then, let me speak to her."

Under this guarantee, they let me talk to the officials in the Foreign Office, with the Bolivian ambassador, also in Spanish, and with the Cuban ambassador. I let all three know that I was firmly determined to return to Bolivia, that on my first opportunity I was going to return to Bolivia because I wanted to make my exposures here in this country. Because the people are here, the witnesses are here, the actors, let us say, in this drama.

Question: To whom did you give this guarantee?

Answer: To the CIA. All the guarantees were to the CIA. The first guarantee they held was the threat of a coup d'état here (in Bolivia) and of sending a mob to attack my house. All right, I had to avoid this. I must not give away their secrets, because if I did the government and my family were finished. This was the first thing they were holding over me.

But they were uncertain of that and when they saw that there was great pressure in England for me to be allowed to talk with the Foreign Office officials in Spanish and with the Bolivian ambassador also, they demanded proof from me that I was sticking to the straight and narrow. They said to me, "You must have something. How could you have nothing? How could you have nothing in reserve, just in case?"

"I told them, yes, of course, I have something important, I have this statement by the lieutenant which such and such a person is holding." I gave them the telephone number and told them to call up. This person has absolutely nothing else, don't give her any trouble. It was confirmed. On August 8, the Americans picked up the tape.

Question: Did they continue to consider you a CIA agent?

Answer: They still thought I was redeemable. I told the Americans and the Chilean police my story. The Americans became indignant. They thought the provocation of the pictures, the revolver, etc., was one of the CIA's big blunders, considering that there had already been tensions.

I had already played a dirty trick on them here in La Paz, which the personnel in this ministry know about. They delivered five old trucks to us, indicating that that was U.S. AID's assistance to the Bolivian police. I had them drawn up in formation. After two or three days these trucks were in bad shape. And since we had confiscated \$20,000 from the guer-

rilla Dagnino, I ordered the purchase of jeeps. Then, I had the vehicles we had bought with this \$20,000 brought up in formation on this street (in front of the ministry), along with the old cars the Americans had given us.

Then, when they came with great solemnity to make the presentation, I told them, "Make your speech on this side and we will thank Castro for giving us these new vehicles."

There had already been, let us say, no end of frictions, of clashes, and that kind of tension that sets in when a certain kind of relationship begins to break down.

Question: Was your trip to New York, which you decided on, made with any idea of continuing your ties with the CIA?

Answer: No, I had broken definitively with the CIA. When I made my declaration to the Chilean police, I spoke also with officials of CORPO. I told them the truth as I am telling it to you. I felt a great load off my conscience. I had stopped being a foreign agent in my country. I had recovered my human dignity. I never thought of becoming an American agent again.

As I told you, the first suggestion they made was that I tell false stories about General Ovando, that I say that Ovando had sold the diary to get money for his election campaign. And if I would say that, they would give me money, I could go live in Europe with what they gave me. We would keep the problems of the service secret. When I didn't accept this, they told me, "Perhaps you feel some sympathy for him (General Ovando). Denounce the president. Say that the president is the one."

Then I told them, "I am not going to tell any wild story. I turned over Che's diary."

Then they told me, "Vásquez wants to shoot you. Accuse Vásquez and let's strike up a bargain."

I told then, "I am not going to accuse anyone. I am going to tell the truth from here on out. I am going to follow the sublime example of Che Guevara. I am only going to tell the truth. I am not going to lie." Therefore our arrangement was that I would not say some things but I would not falsify the facts.

Question: Mr. Arguedas, I repeat, why did you go to New York?

Answer: Out of necessity. They told me that no country in Latin America wanted to take me. It was convenient for the CIA to take me to Paris and to make it hard for me to get back. I handled the problem in such a way as to assure my getting back

to Bolivia. And it is for that reason that I am speaking here. If I had not accepted, it is very likely that at this moment I would not be here but in Europe trying to find some way to get back to Latin America.

You know the power the CIA has in all the Latin-American countries. It is not just in our country but in all the countries of Latin America that the CIA seeks out confidants and plants them in the intelligence services to mislead the governments and carry out espionage in the service of American imperialism.

Since I was well aware of these facts, how could I fail to take advantage of a deal that would enable me to reveal the truth? I took advantage of the opportunity. I realize that this was not very noble but I think I acted like a man.

Question: Dr. Arguedas, now that you have come back to the country and exposed the CIA's activities, do you feel that your conscience is clear?

Answer: I have returned with a clear conscience. I told them in Chile and I told our ambassador in London that I was not going to follow the devious and ignoble path of those Bolivian politicians, who, once they leave a government, become its most irreconcilable foes. I stand behind everything done in this country by the present government up until I left my post. If I am going to be punished for all the mistakes this government is charged with, that is what I am here for.

I said clearly also at my press conference in Lima that I didn't want to be a leader of the opposition. I know that my political career is ruined. I only want to regain my personal peace of mind. I have not endorsed anybody. In my message to the citizens of Bolivia, I told them to read Sergio Almaraz, Amado Canelas, and René Zavaleta Mercado; and to listen to Ambrosio García, Jordan Pando, and the young Christian Democrats, because these young political leaders are the hope of the country.

If they bend the knee to imperialism, this country is doomed. We will have no country. I think that it is the duty of all Bolivians to safeguard the dignity and sovereignty of Bolivia.

When I said that my conduct must not serve as a pretext for a coup d'état, I did not say it to protect the present government, I said it to protect myself. It would be easy for the Americans at this point to stage a coup d'état, murder me, and make a deal with the politicians who are always waiting on the doorstep of the U.S. embassy for a convenient occasion to strike up a bargain. I know that. So many offer to sell themselves to imperi-

alism.

I had sufficient moral integrity to throw away an assured political career. You know that I had prestige. You wouldn't say I was an outcast. I was the darling of the reactionary circles. Who could have any doubts about me? The embassy showered me with gifts, with money and junkets, and with everything I asked for. The only thing I asked for was the sovereignty of our country, which is the duty of every Bolivian.

I am not saying that the United States backs the government that arose in this country. There must be free elections here. The elections must not be rigged. But a lot of elections are being rigged in this world. The CIA is omnipotent, even in its own country.

Once while I was walking with CIA agents in New London, they talked about running for congress in the United States. When I asked them if they had money, because the campaign would be expensive, they told me that "the service is going to help us." This means that even at home, in the United States, the CIA has its means and a great potential for exerting influence. But above and beyond all this, the truth must be told.

Another thing commonly repeated in this country to discredit me is that I said that I am a Castroite. My press conference in Chile was clear. I am neither a Castroite nor an anti-Castroite. I repeat, I have never been a member of the Communist party. I am a Marxist of the nationalist left. I do not aspire to leadership. I only want to tell the truth.

I think that the truth will benefit everyone. If tomorrow the Falange comes to power, or the Christian Democrats, they will need to know what is going on in their state security service, in their intelligence service. Because if the CIA sooner or later corrupts other citizens, what will happen? The facts will be falsified.

Question: Dr. Arguedas, as a lawyer, what article do you think you will be tried under?

Answer: In my defense, I will explain my legal point of view. I have not stolen any Bolivian state secrets. Che Guevara's diary was given to me by the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

Unquestionably this was one of our country's secrets but everyone knows that that secret was sold to a foreign publicity agency. You know that within two days of its publication in Havana, the firm of Stein and Day announced that it was going to publish the authentic version of Che Guevara's diary. That is, it was no longer a

state secret. Besides, eighty pages of Che's diary have been published in various magazines. And, finally, many people had read it. It is not true either that there were just three to seven initiates. At least a hundred persons must have read Che Guevara's diary. Thus any secrecy about it was lost.

If I should be punished for anything in this country, let the whole reactionary press, which is crying for me to be made an example of for being a Castroite, that I be punished for being a dishonest official who let himself be corrupted by the CIA. Let anyone who calls for my punishment call for that, nothing else. And they must not falsify the facts, they must tell the truth.

Question: Do you know if the CIA has imposed conditions on other state officials including the chief of state?

Answer: I don't know. The CIA confines itself to individual cases. They only talked to me about myself. Colonel Fox spoke to me only in discussing the possibility of a deal. I don't know personally that any other official has been compromised. I have [not] given you the names of those persons or politicians for whom the CIA did favors.

I am going to keep the secret for the present, unless the press compels me to reveal it in court. But I have no intention of doing the sort of thing that El Diario wrote in one of its columns that I was going to do, that is intimidate citizens, etc. I have the names of the agents, my conversations with the Americans, the affairs I participated in, and all that recorded on a tape abroad.

If there is a big trial, I will produce my proofs. I will not exaggerate. I will tell the truth. But I am not looking for any scandal. I have said that I only want to tell the truth without any reservations. Then I will face the consequences. I am not worried about the consequences. I know also that certain papers are going to try to say that the government is protecting me. But let them come to my cell at the DIC [Dirección Investigación Criminal -- Criminal Investigation Bureau -- the Bolivian political police]. I am in a six-foot, totally unheated cell with filthy walls, like all prisoners in this country. That is the shame of our country. I could not ask for anything else. I don't want any gossip on this score. I don't need anybody's favors. I want the eyes of the nation to be opened, and they are opening.

The fact is that there is an excess of personal ambition. Bolivia is becoming aware of its shame, of its dependence. There are anti-American feelings in all the political parties. In all the

groups there are currents which are aware of the pernicious role the United States is playing in the life of this country. This national awareness must sharpen and the people will say the last word.

I will not be their spokesman. If some day, besides being a man, I can rise to the level of being a revolutionist, I will be one of the most humble fighters, there where what constitutes the truth for the Bolivian people is being created. Otherwise, I will be satisfied with having regained my personal dignity, with having told the truth at a time when it had to be done.

I could not allow Cuban [CIA?] agents to torture Bolivian citizens implicated with the guerrillas. The right thing to do was to try them according to the law. But, if to obtain some information they resorted to violence, I do not agree and never did agree. There is a person I can cite as a witness to that, Miss Loyola Guzmán, who was held here. She was not tortured when she was sent to jail to be held for trial. Many of the prisoners held by this intelligence service know that Bolivians were treated humanely -- that in spite of our differences, in spite of the guerrillas, no physical repression was unleashed.

We did not resort to torture. The ones who resorted to torture were Mr. García and his friends. I think that my decision was correct and proper at the time. I don't think there are more than three citizens who can [not?] accuse García.

Question: Could you give an account of your last day in Bolivia before leaving for Chile?

Answer: I was not informed through the government about the delivery of the copy of Comandante Guevara's diary. Two persons gave me a tip that something abnormal was up. A photographer told me that I was the one responsible for it. I don't want to implicate that photographer; he will appear at the trial and I don't want to take any revenge. He is certain to be a witness against me. He will certainly present himself and make a statement at the opportune time.

Secondly, what made me leave Bolivia in a hurry was that I got a call at 7:30 p.m. from García, who told me that it was urgent that I come to the Puente de la Florida. "I have a vitally important piece of news I must give you." I realized that something abnormal was happening. García had treated me with respect, he had asked appointments at my office to speak to me.

Then, since I knew that I had sent Che's diary to Cuba, I said to myself that they would cut me down with a burst of machine-gun fire or make me pick up a ma-

chine gun and say later that the Falange or leftist terrorists killed our great Minister of the Interior. They would drape my casket with a flag and carry me to the cemetery on their shoulders, using this as a pretext to unleash an unjust repression.

Besides I felt a profound obligation. My country's armed forces had helped with my professional training. I am not a general, or colonel, or officer. I was a simple soldier. But I was grateful to my government and the armed forces for the pains they had taken, for giving me a profession, for making it possible for me to get a college education, for accepting me into the Villarroel lodge with the young officers to get rid of the MNR regime. I was grateful for all that. I could not be a rat. I could not let what many people consider a crime to fall on the institution or some other person. I was the one responsible. Matters took a rapid turn.

The line of action I thought of taking was to hold a press conference at a certain moment, like this one, and say, "Gentlemen, I was the one who sent Che Guevara's diary to Cuba." Make a full statement, and then leave Bolivia and go away somewhere and join one of the guerrilla groups in Latin America. That was the decision I had made, but things were moving too fast.

Question: Did you have any intention to provoke a coup d'état by declaring that the country had been undermined by a foreign power?

Answer: It was never my intention to provoke a coup d'état. I think one of the biggest possible mistakes is to get rid of a government through a coup d'état. Many coups d'état are rigged by the CIA and the victors find themselves under much more onerous obligations than the vanquished.

I think that the only alternative, when all other possibilities have been exhausted, when there is a major political crisis, is to demand that general elections be called. I have said this to many of my colleagues in the cabinet and to many armed forces leaders. I told them that if the political situation in Bolivia continued to worsen, that if the people lost all confidence in the government, the situation should not be allowed to reach such an explosive point that it would justify a coup d'état accompanied by an uprising.

The proper thing to do was to work out with all the Bolivians, in whom we can trust, how we could set up an unimpeachable electoral tribunal, and have this court hold general elections without officially designated candidates, without

backing from any foreign government, whose results we would all be duty-bound to respect. That was the alternative I projected.

I have friends even among the opposition deputies and I told them that the only solution I saw to our problems was a court everybody would have confidence in. But they didn't tell me who could meet these conditions. All right, I told them that the members of this court could be the bishop, the rectors of the universities, representatives of the press. We had to agree on something, we had to put our confidence in someone, but we must not resort to armed struggle. No one wants his homeland to be turned into a "Vietnam," but if imperialist oppression continued, if the people don't find any democratic way out, if they don't get freedom of expression, inevitably the time will come when they will have to take up arms, not only in Bolivia but throughout the continent. Latin America will become a Vietnam if American imperialism keeps on manipulating governments, manipulating officials, manipulating institutions, in favor of the interests it represents.

That is my prediction and that is what I want to say. I am not looking for scandals. I was a member of the government and of the armed forces and I will clarify everything that needs to be clarified through the proper channels. I will speak only about my personal conduct, about how I was corrupted by American imperialism, about how I was degraded, how they caught me in their web, and also why I broke with them. Because I think that there is one thing a man can never sell, that is his conscience. We can make a lot of mistakes, but there comes a time when we see the truth.

Question: It is said that Gabriel García García made a card index in this ministry with cards for a hundred thousand citizens. Do you know about this?

Answer: Gabriel García was building a card index like that and informed me of it. But he was not making this card index in the ministry. He was doing it at home, and I know that his house has been broken into.

Question: Mr. Arguedas, do you think that the president was aware of the CIA intrusion in Bolivia?

Answer: I don't think so. But I think he was also pressured in many ways, as all the governments in Latin America are pressured. There is indirect diplomatic pressure. The United States even dared to pressure the Soviet Union at one point. How could they not pressure countries as weak as ours?

You know that the chaos and bank-

ruptcy of our economy make us dependent on American aid. My country's position is so miserable, I said abroad, that all the American imperialists would have to do would be to stop wheat shipments, and in a month and a half there would be no bread in the streets of La Paz. And when there is no bread, I say, what government can stay in power. You had to recognize these facts.

Question: How were you able to return to Bolivia in spite of your break with the CIA?

Answer: I made a deal with them in Santiago. I could come back to Bolivia if I didn't reveal their secrets. But they, in return, also had to do certain things; as I told you, withdraw their agents. I told them that since they have a lot of influence in the United States, they should also explain to their government that the American services' planting agents in the Ministry of Agriculture, in the Ministry of the Economy, and a series of bodies that you are familiar with, must stop, that the American aid must be on a government-to-government basis. If the United States wanted to give Bolivia twenty million dollars in aid, let it give it to the Bolivian government but not set up a watchdog over it inside the country -- for example Mr. Tragen and a number of Americans who ultimately pass on our programs.

But what happened? While they were holding me in London and in New York, these characters were spreading gossip in close collusion with the Chilean government. They were trying to make me look like a lunatic, like a muddlehead, saying that I had gotten money from Cuba, etc.

The agreement was broken; I was in Lima. I didn't like the way they published Mr. Troche's stuff. I called the CIA agent. I met him in Lima. I told him, "You have broken our agreement and now we are in a fight."

"I want to talk to you," he said.

I told him, "I am not going to talk to you so and so's." I went to the Bolivian embassy -- the government had made declarations that it would extend me guarantees. I presented my visa. I left in the company of journalists and after that they couldn't prevent me from returning to the country.

Question: Why hasn't there been any attempt on your life? What is the explanation for the fact that you were able to arrive without difficulty?

Answer: I left them very little time and it was partly due also to the Peruvian police who proved very obliging, assigning agents to me who stayed with me

constantly. Later there were a lot of reporters who didn't let me walk the streets [alone]. Even lady journalists asked me to walk with them, etc., and we walked together from one end of town to the other. A provocation would have been very difficult.

Until Lima, I was a CIA agent. But no more after I saw that they weren't keeping their promises. They began to slander me. Fourth-rate \$200 agents began to write, for example, that little note that came out today in El Diario.

These were all their machinations. Since they couldn't liquidate me physically, they had to destroy me morally, making me look like a traitor, a scoundrel, a bad Bolivian, and lately anything that suits them.

Doubts have even been sown about where the money came from to pay for the cables I sent to the press here. I want to point out that in London the CIA gave me 500 pounds sterling and 1,000 American dollars. And I had left Bolivia with \$1,800. So, I had money. I didn't need a fortune to send the cables; they cost \$200.

Question: Since you have exposed the CIA and its activities in Bolivia, what do you think is in store for you? Do you think you will get a fair trial?

Answer: In the present circumstances, I am not interested in government protection. I do not need to be protected. If the admirers of the U.S., who talk about this friendly and allied nation, want to put me in Hugo Fuentes' cell, let them do it. I do not need protection.

I know that the CIA is going to go on slandering me. It is not going to stop its machinations. But I have told the people the truth and I am content with that. If the CIA finds a patriot tomorrow who puts a bullet in me, let it be welcome. The biased articles in the press are going to continue to appear. I know. I know the methods by which, betraying the trust of the Bolivian press, we planted the article on Tanya which accused her of being a Soviet spy. The head of the CIA gave me that article for publication in El Diario. He told me to tell them that it came to me from Germany, that they shouldn't know it came from the CIA.

Question: What relations did you have with Inti Peredo?

Answer: The last time was three years ago in the Altiplano book store. We discussed a book by Amado Canelas and we got in an argument. Coco Peredo intervened to keep us from fighting.

After the guerrilla action began, I got information that Inti Peredo was alive but very sick in a little village in Beni,

on the El Diablo y Yomonito ranch. Gravely ill.

Question: Is the Peace Corps an instrument of the CIA?

Answer: It is one of the instruments -- not of the CIA but of the U.S. Information Service.

I sent a secret agent to make an investigation in the province of Inquisivi and in Larecaja. The lawyer to whom I gave this task told me that the Americans were in one way or another taking the power into their hands and that one day Ambassador Henderson would overrule the president. The Peace Corps people are the ones who bring penicillin; they are the good guys in the movie. They blame the government for everything bad and give all the credit for everything good to the CIA.

Question: Do you think there is a crisis situation in Bolivia at the present time?

Answer: I am no longer Minister of the Interior and I don't want to make any predictions about internal politics. I would only say this: if people think the situation is critical, they should demand elections. There must not be a coup

d'état because that would not do the country any good. The embassy will certainly manipulate a coup d'état in a way most favorable to their interests at a given time. I am convinced of this. I am not saying it to shield the present government.

Question: Would you say now again as you did in Santiago that you would take up arms under Comandante Coco Peredo?

Answer: I think that as a Bolivian I must do honor to a Bolivian guerrilla fighter. On the other hand, if imperialist oppression continues, if the American embassy keeps giving the orders in this country, if they keep bringing in spies as advisers, the time must come when the people will have to rise up in arms. And whom do we have now as an example of a revolutionary fighter? We have the example of Roberto Peredo. I admire him as a Bolivian revolutionist.

* * *

Thus the press conference given by ex-Minister Antonio Arguedas came to an end. Before the reporters left, he appealed to all Bolivians to unite, to listen to the young politicians who have a duty to the fatherland to defend its sovereignty, to disregard all petty interests.

STUDENT STRIKE STRUGGLE OPENS A NEW CHAPTER IN MEXICAN POLITICS

By Ricardo Ochoa

Mexico City

SEPTEMBER 9 -- It is now a month and a half since the student strike struggle began in Mexico, yet the federal government has not succeeded in getting the National Strike Council [Consejo Nacional de Huelga], the top body of the movement, to back down. More than 200,000 students, involving the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México [UNAM], the Instituto Politécnico Nacional, the Escuela Nacional de Agricultura (Chapingo), and dozens of schools in lower brackets are still in action.

The effect of the student struggle in the national scene is already of historic proportions. In his fourth report to Congress, President Díaz Ordaz, in his own peculiar way, displayed his awareness of this fact. He devoted more than an hour to dealing with the problems raised by the students. This testified to the way the students have shaken the "bourgeois peace" in the country from top to bottom.

The student movement was touched off July 26 by a brutal attempt at police

repression. From the beginning it assumed a clearly defined political nature, differing in this respect from the struggle of 1966 which sought purely "internal" aims, the "reform" of university rules and regulations.

The defeat of the 1966 movement led a large number of students to conclude that a thoroughgoing reform was impossible so long as society as a whole continues to suffer from the chaos of capitalism.

The current struggle began where the 1966 struggle left off, but it quickly advanced to a much higher level. Virtually all the university students in the federal district and other areas are participating and they have taken over the slogans formerly advanced by students of the revolutionary vanguard.

The students are fighting for six demands: (1) The freeing of all political prisoners. (2) Repeal of the law designating "social dissolution" as a crime. (3) Removal of the main heads of the police in the federal district. (4) Dissolution of the granaderos as a repressive police. (5) The payment of indemnities to

the families of persons killed in the July 26 repression and in other assaults mounted by the police. (6) Fixing the responsibility of the public officials involved in the repression.

Vanguard groups have struggled for the first two demands for ten years. Since 1959 when the railway strike was broken through the use of troops and its principal leaders were imprisoned, the left has had to swim against the stream. The political prisoners who have filled the jails since 1959, especially after Díaz Ordaz took office in 1964, were symbols not only of the heavy defeat inflicted on the Mexican working class, but of the inability of the revolutionary movement by itself to halt the repression that constantly bore down on it. For ten years the defense of political prisoners has had to be carried on without the support of the masses.

The defeat of the railway workers coincided with a turn in the economy that brought certain sectors of the populace a relatively better standard of living, particularly in the cities, which further reduced militancy in view of the low political level of the working class.

For ten years, no president of Mexico felt under sufficient pressure to conclude that he had to deal with the problem of the political prisoners packing the country's jails. Only occasionally, in passing, a president would boast that Mexico has no political prisoners, "only common criminals."

This is now ended. The 1968 student struggle took as its main aim from the very beginning the task of launching a gigantic campaign to free the hundreds of political prisoners. Thus it was that an impressive success was registered August 27 when about 500,000 students, workers, and poor people marched through the center of the city and gathered in the Zócalo in a demonstration such as this city had never before seen.

Thousands of portraits of Demetrio Vallejo (a leader of the railway strike, in prison for more than nine years, now on a hunger strike) gave substance to the main point of the struggle: Free the Political Prisoners!

In a meeting later, the speakers pointed to a list of eighty-six political prisoners who are still being held in Lecumberri prison, and to others in jails in the federal district.

It was a gratifying moment for the small revolutionary groups to see their struggle bear such splendid fruit.

But this was not all. Other old slogans of the small "sectarian" groups,



DEMETRIO VALLEJO

as the reformists and opportunists of all stripes, including the Mexican Communist party, called them, were picked up. Among these were Organization of Political Brigades and Unity of the Workers and Students.

The political brigades that arose during the struggle, are a living expression of the link between the students and the people, particularly the workers.

Composed of from five to thirty members, according to circumstances, the political brigades have gone through every neighborhood in the city spreading the message on the real significance of the student struggle, circulating hundreds of thousands, perhaps even millions of mimeographed leaflets.

Through this activity, the student movement was able to counteract the lies of the bourgeois press and tilt the balance of popular opinion in favor of

their struggle.

The struggle is likewise having tremendous impact in student circles. The students themselves recognize this. In answering the president's fourth report, the National Strike Council said: "The July events...taught us more than anything we could have learned in the classrooms."

The students found themselves abruptly submerged in a popular struggle, a democratic popular struggle with revolutionary features. All the problems of political strategy that appear in a popular struggle were posed with genuine urgency. The atmosphere of dogmas, of simplifications, was left behind. The leading cadres had to test in practice their capacity, not to discuss in the abstract, but to meet concrete issues affecting the mass movement.

It is not too much to say that the ultraleft sects, such as the followers of Posadas, some of the Maoists and even Fidelistas were greatly weakened by this crucial test, if they were able to survive it at all.

As for the Mexican Communist party, it suffered a devastating blow. Although it can be expected to make some gains in a situation like this, with thousands upon thousands of students awakening to political life, its policy of following the lead of the progressive bourgeoisie undermined its standing in the universities, particularly among the teachers.

What the Mexican CP tried to do was convert the student struggle into a struggle to "democratize" the country -- meaning by that gaining recognition as a legal opposition party, a kind of left PPS [the Partido Popular Socialista headed by Vicente Lombardo Toledano, a supporter of Díaz Ordaz]. The president responded in his fourth report by implying a possible change in the traditional attitude of the government toward the Mexican CP. He said that any "illegal" opposition was "subversive" and that "the revolution [the government] might open the possibility for a legal opposition."

As always, the Stalinists view every popular movement as an instrument for strengthening their position, without being much concerned about the fate of the movement. This attitude has been glaringly apparent in the current situation.

The student movement has swept over the reformist framework within which the Mexican CP operates. That is why the CP leaders will do everything they can to tame it and block the formation of a student and youth organization of a genuinely national character and of far more representative nature than the Juventud Co-

munista and the Central Nacional de Estudiantes Democráticos. They are above all concerned lest a competitor appear to the left. It will not be easy for them to succeed in blocking such a development.

If we leave aside the bourgeois response to the situation, which can vary from outright repression, including putting troops on the campus, to considerable concessions, such as releasing the political prisoners, two new factors must now be weighed in forecasting the probable direction of the current movement.

One is the "political brigades" in which hundreds of students have learned a type of action completely different from the one customary to the bureaucratized organizations, particularly the Mexican CP. These brigades constitute the backbone of the movement that is beginning to form contacts in an organized way with key sectors of the working class such as the oil, electrical, and railway workers.

The brigades are also in touch with peasant circles, as in the town of Topilejo, near the university, where they are helping the townspeople stop trucks in order to put pressure on the trucking companies to pay indemnities for accidents. The people of Topilejo have responded unanimously to the appeals of the students; and despite the efforts of the government to play on their religious and anti-Communist sentiments, the peasants there are following the lead of the students. The intelligent way in which the brigades have conducted their activities in this town symbolizes the advanced political level of the student struggle.

The brigades did not approach the peasants talking about their own "student" grievances (although these in reality also directly affect the peasant sectors despite their failure to understand this as yet), or advancing Marxist theories beyond the level of comprehension by the peasants for the time being; they skillfully utilized the situation facing the town and started from that.

For example, the funeral held for people killed in an accident involving a trucking concern served as a political meeting in the form of listing the grievances of the dead. Not wanting to get into a conflict with the local priest, they paid him a formal visit and placed themselves at his disposition. Assuming the local mannerisms in speaking, they used language comprehensible to the peasants: "God doesn't want accidents like this to happen again." "We will give the victims a Christian burial." "Their souls are on the watch to see to it that no more trucks are allowed to go through before they agree to pay indemnities."

The brigades, which include ten-

dencies ranging from the Social Democrats to the Trotskyists, constitute the basis of another process of growing strength in the movement.

The brigade members themselves have perceived the necessity for a political orientation, an organization in which the next steps to be taken could be discussed, a unifying political context that would give greater centralization and effectiveness to their efforts.

The vanguard of the movement is coming around to the conclusion that a political group is needed, a revolutionary Marxist organization.

Thus the spontaneous movement has grasped the lesson which the small organized vanguard has sought to impress for months.

Since the revolutionary events in France last May, which had big repercussions within the student vanguard at the UNAM and the Instituto Politécnico Nacional, a sector of revolutionary Marxist students began to work toward the formation of a revolutionary Marxist youth organization. The project was discussed and a coordinating committee was set up which began to draw up the essential documents.

Discussions as to the specific nature of the group to be formed held up its official formation and in the very midst of the organizational work came the events of July and August.

Naturally the preparatory organizational meetings were suspended. The blossoming movement in the streets and on the campus demanded the full attention and energy of the militants. But with the prolongation of the movement, they came to realize the urgency of constructing a Marxist vanguard group to orient their activities.

In this way a fusion occurred between the Marxist vanguard and the vanguard of the movement that had surged up owing to deep-going causes, those of a national and international order behind the entire student rebellion we are now witnessing on a world scale.

When the president of the republic in his fourth report to Congress, September 1, talked for more than an hour on the problems raised by the student movement, the political impact of that movement was indisputable. Díaz Ordaz denied that Mexico has any political prisoners, although he recognized that at least some people were trying to win amnesty for

them. But "when pressure began, this was refused." ["Cuando la presión comenzó se negó a hacerlo."]

Also he took up whether Congress should open a broad discussion to determine whether the law referring to "social dissolution," which happens to be in violation of the constitution, should be repealed -- his own view being that it should be retained.

Finally, he expressed confidence in his highest functionaries in the army (which he repeatedly praised) and even the police. He demonstrated how rigid and sclerotic a decaying system becomes.

In their reply, the students denied that the president had offered any "openings" for a way out of the conflict. "The dilemma placed before us between accepting his solutions or waiting for complete repression, is another false dilemma because it does not offer any solution to the two points which were taken up in the report; the other points did not receive the slightest attention."

Mexican bourgeois society as a whole has met the challenge of the country's student youth with coldness. Where did these rebels come from? How is it possible that the preceding decade of calm could have created this youth which shows in such numbers how proud it is to carry the portrait of Che?

The president of the republic himself, from the highest tribune in the country, showed how he shared the perplexity of his class. In his report, he could not resist referring to "the modern philosophers of destruction."

Other commentators, sharing his concepts, like Agustín Barrios Gómez, have taken up presenting in the press and over radio and television what the president was referring to: the philosophy of Marxism, from its founders to its most representative modern exponents -- Che, Marcuse, Mao, Ho Chi Minh, Fidel Castro, etc.

Naturally this same bourgeois press has not forgotten the "grupúsculos," the "splinter groups," which it so depreciates yet at the same time fears, the "Trotskyist Communist parties."

Through its many organizations, the national bourgeoisie has rallied in support of the policies of the regime with manifestos appearing almost daily in the press. Just the same, there are rifts over what to do about the situation. Their biggest fear is the speed with which genuinely revolutionary ideas may now find a receptive hearing among the masses.

ELIO PORTOCARRERO RIOS KIDNAPPED BY LIMA POLICE

The Peruvian Comité de Defensa de los Derechos Humanos [CODDEH -- Committee for the Defense of Human Rights] reports that the Lima police have kidnapped Elio Portocarrero Ríos, a law student at the Universidad Nacional de Trujillo and a leader of the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria. He was seized in his home August 22 without a warrant.

According to CODDEH, Portocarrero is now threatened with a death sentence under Peru's witch-hunt laws, if he is

brought to trial. A more immediate danger is that he might simply "disappear" while in the hands of the police as in other recent cases.

CODDEH has opened a campaign to save Portocarrero. It is appealing for international solidarity.

Demands for the immediate release of Portocarrero can be sent to President Fernando Belaúnde Terry, Lima, Peru.

MARTHA FLORES DE PORTOCARRERO APPEALS FOR HELP

[The following letter was sent to the dean of the Colegio de Abogados (Law School) in Lima, Peru, by Martha Flores de Portocarrero, the wife of Elio Portocarrero Ríos, a leader of the MIR (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria). The text was released to the press August 26 by the Federación de Estudiantes de la Universidad Nacional de Ingeniería (Student Federation of the National University of Engineering). The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

* * *

Lima
August 23, 1968

Señor Decano del Colegio de Abogados de Lima, Doctor Alberto Ruiz Eldredge.

Señor Decano:

It gives me pleasure to address you, and through you and your high office, the Colegio de Abogados de Lima, in order to express the great respect which I hold for that body.

I know that you defend genuine justice in our country. I say genuine justice because in our country there is also to be found a misapplied justice, practiced continually by the authorities under the current regime, which does not hesitate to go to scandalous lengths, freeing lawbreakers, letting crimes occur daily in what they call "rehabilitation centers" which are actually foul holes, subhuman dens.

In view of the standing which you and the Colegio de Abogados have, I take the liberty of bringing to your attention the following:

On the twenty-second of the present month, my husband Elio Portocarrero Ríos was arrested in his home. The arrest was made in a brutal way. Fifteen armed

men broke in. The rough way they dealt with us made me think that dangerous attackers were involved. They tried to drag Elio out half dressed, threatening us with their automatic guns and pistols. One of these men even hit me and then fired his gun over me. My left hand still shows a bruise. All this amounted in practice to assault and kidnapping at pistol point in our home, without any warrant having been issued by a court, without the least respect for our human dignity, my condition as a mother, or the presence of my two youngest children, who are five and three years old and who suffered serious shock.

Not content with this, these gentlemen of "law and order" returned that night, and taking advantage of my anger over the fate of my husband, broke in again, turning things upside down, trying to seize valuable things, and taking away a large number of books which they could hardly call "subversive" if that was the kind of literature they were looking for. In addition, this time they were so shameless as to terrorize my children, telling them that I "would not come back home" because I was "an unnatural mother."

On the following day when I went to the Prefectura where my husband had been taken, as various accounts in the newspapers reported, they would not let me talk with him and in an extraordinary abuse of authority they held me for more than four hours, members of the PIP [Policía de Investigaciones del Perú] attempting to make me testify against my own husband.

This is not the first time that we have been subjected to this kind of treatment. In July, 1965, while I was in the eighth month of pregnancy with my second son and traveling from Ayabaca to Piura for treatment at the hospital there, I was detained immediately after leaving the city by members of the Guardia Civil

and the PIP, roughly handled and taken to the Comisaria. I was threatened and beaten in an attempt to get me to testify against my husband. When I refused, they hit me and threatened to kill my unborn son. Two more episodes of different severity occurred like this, with frequent threats aimed at turning me into a stool pigeon against my companion.

In addition, two of Elio's brothers have been held prisoner, one of them (Javier) for eighteen months one time and again for one month; and the other (Carlos) for six months.

These are the facts, Señor Decano, which I place before you and over which I

would like to voice my protest -- for the detention of my husband without a warrant; for the violent way in which he was arrested; for the violence done me personally. I protest as a woman, a wife and a mother.

I also make the request, that in case charges are placed against my husband that he be tried in a Peruvian civilian court, by civilian judges, and not by military men masquerading as judges.

Counting on your support and with hope of a future with justice for all, I am, cordially,

Martha Flores de Portocarrero

PERUVIAN MIR FEARS PORTOCARRERO WILL BE KILLED

[The following press release was issued September 5 by the Central Committee of the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR) from somewhere in Peru. The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

* * *

One of the most valiant revolutionary fighters and leaders of the guerrilla movement of 1965-66 has fallen into the hands of the repressive forces.

Elio Portocarrero Ríos, national leader of the MIR, persistently hunted by the enemy for the past three years, was taken prisoner August 22 in the city of Lima. Since then he has been held in isolation in the sinister installations of the División de Seguridad del Estado [State Security Division].

He is faced with the extremely grave danger of "disappearing" -- like Enrique Amaya Quintana and so many other fighters of the people -- or of being condemned to the death penalty under "military justice."

Public opinion in our country and abroad must intervene immediately in order to save him from assassination. The demand should be raised that our comrade be granted the elementary right to defend himself.

The police and military forces are systematically capturing and eliminating our members and leaders, applying the policy of selective assassination advocated by the Yankee military mission in Peru.

But the Peruvian people have not forgotten the shining examples of Comandantes De La Puente, Lobatón, Velando and all those who through their blood and the sacrifice of their lives made possible the guerrilla victories of three years ago.

Neither this nor many more repressions can make the MIR deviate from its firm position of starting up the guerrilla struggle once again in our country.

Until the final victory!

THE EXTRAORDINARY CASE OF THE DRAWING AT THE BLACK DWARF

Scotland Yard detectives raided the office of the Black Dwarf newspaper in London September 3. The paper is edited by Tariq Ali, the well-known socialist and anti-Vietnam-war leader.

The sleuths, after searching drawers, closets, and files, turned up nothing more than a drawing of a Molotov cocktail scribbled in crayon on one wall. Tariq Ali and the staff were questioned for nearly an hour. Ali later told the Times of London, "They asked me who drew the diagram and instructions on the wall but I

was unable to tell them. I certainly did not do it myself and, so far as I know, none of my staff did.... Anyone could have done it. Frankly, I think the whole thing was rather childish anyway. In fact, I pinned two posters over the drawing some time ago with the intention of painting it over..."

The intrepid men from Scotland Yard were not to be put off so easily. When they left, they took the two posters with them. The wall with the offensive drawing, however, was left behind.

A REVOLUTIONARY COUP IN FRANCE BY HALLOWEEN?

By Alain Krivine

[The following letter by Alain Krivine, the leader of the Jeunesse Communiste Révolutionnaire (Revolutionary Communist Youth), was published in the French daily Combat on September 2. The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

* * *

During the months of May and June, Monsieur Marcellin* displayed his talents as an impresario of clubs and grenades. Today, he is revealing great aptitude in the field of literature. In the book he has just published and in his "knowledgeable" articles for the press, the "Minister of Repression" engages in witch-hunting of a kind seldom seen in our country. To voice its terror over May-June, the French bourgeoisie, it appears, has reverted to the communicative level of the Versaillais.**

What did we have? A vast plot spawned by a devilish brew of terrorists, anarchists, Trotskyists, PSU [Parti Socialiste Unifié -- United Socialist party -- a centrist formation] members, pro-Chinese, and a lot of others besides. The argument is simple. The May demonstrators retaliated with paving stones against the clubs of the CRS [Compagnies Républicaines de Sécurité -- Republican Security Companies -- elite state security troops]. That proves there was a paramilitary organization. Similar demonstrations broke out in several countries. That proves there was an international plot.

The French put the blame on German agitators. The Mexicans turn up French intriguers. And to put an end to this "common market of subversion," everybody decides to blockade the air lanes to Cuba. This would be laughable if it were not for the fact that under this pretext hundreds of workers have been victimized and dozens of foreigners have been forc-

ibly escorted to the border.*

Unfortunately for our Bobbies, the first accusations fell flat. Since no proof could be produced of the existence of armed groups, the first wave of "preventive arrests" in June ended without a single indictment. Now they are switching to a witch-hunt in hope that will be more successful. The May days were only an hors d'oeuvre, you are going to see a "Red October." The reactionary press is ready to reveal the plans of the insurrection. The police are well informed, and after months of study they have uncovered the hair-raising method that is to be used -- "entrism."

This is a sensational revelation. Revolutionaries will work in trade unions and other mass organizations like the Action Committees. It is obvious to everyone what a new tactic this is. It makes it more difficult to discover the subversive since he will no longer necessarily have a paving stone in his hand. Always up to the minute, the police have now countered this formidable enterprise by disguising their "Sherlocks" as beatniks, that is, as students. After smiling again at these antics, we must look to the meaning of this operation.

In promoting the notion of a "Red October," the bourgeoisie has two aims in mind. The first aim is to discredit the revolutionary vanguard by claiming in November that the attempt at a revolution in October, after being isolated, ended in failure. The second aim is to condition public opinion for stepped-up repressive measures against this vanguard.

Thus we are offered an occasion to reveal our secrets. For revolutionary Marxist militants, a revolutionary struggle is not set off by a decision taken by a minority group. A revolutionary situation is created by the conjuncture of various objective factors.

Without going into the events of May-June in detail, it is an established fact that the student movement was able to set the working class in motion by its

* Appointed minister of the interior on May 30, he is the commander-in-chief of the French police.

** During the Paris Commune of 1871, the bourgeois provisional government of Tiers moved to Versailles, a Paris suburb, accompanied by a horde of well-to-do refugees. Their hysteria over the government established by the workers in Paris is illustrated by such concoctions as the tale that instead of gold the Commune intended to base its currency on the constrained favors of women of the upper class. -- I.P.

* Notably the Belgian Marxist economist Ernest Mandel. Returning through France from his vacation, he was stopped and escorted to the border. Now he is also "interdit de séjour." [This official phrase meaning "banned from the country" became famous when it was applied to Daniel Cohn Bendit early in the May-June upsurge. -- I.P.]

exemplary struggle because a revolutionary potential existed within the working class to which none of the bureaucratized parties had given expression.

It is true that at that time the student movement, by its strength, its militancy, and its national base, was able to exercise the function of a vanguard for several weeks, a role no local sector of the working class was able to play because of the nature of its organization (for example, Caen, Le Mans, etc.). But it is no less true that by the time a certain stage of the process was reached, in which the question of power was posed, the student movement had exhausted its potential.

The vanguard was not sufficiently prepared to take power and hold it. There was no alternative leadership recognized by the workers. Consequently the pendulum swung back the other way with the balance of forces again momentarily turning in favor of the bourgeoisie. To think that the conditions when school opens will be the same as in May, forgetting the outcome in June, would be proof of a dangerously mechanistic analysis.

Certainly the economic and social situation will not be much improved. The wage increases have already been partly wiped out by price increases. The speedup is increasing at the same time as unemployment. But this will not necessarily lead to a general movement. After the May-June experience, the workers have become conscious of their strength and of the need to employ new forms of struggle. But the most conscious of them recognized the weaknesses of the movement and the feeling of betrayal will not disappear immediately.

Saying that the system has entered a phase of crisis and profound shake-ups does not mean that it will be possible to overthrow it in October as it was possible in May. The student movement must set objectives in accordance with this situation and with a responsibility all the greater because it now represents a rather considerable political force. The government has understood this situation and is now trying to regain the initiative by choosing its own ground to fight on.

It will not hesitate to use its police to "mix" with the student milieu; and street provocations are a danger. In its plan, the government is striving to reduce the May revolution to a mere student revolt. Therefore, we can expect major temporary concessions in the universities (political freedom, abandonment of the weeding-out process, educational reforms...) That is Edgar Faure's policy. Once the university ghetto is reformed this way, has been pacified and isolated,

Marcellin will take care of the rest, that is the streets and, if need be, the factories.

Divide and rule, isolate the students from the workers and the revolutionary students from the student mass in order to pursue an essentially anti-working-class policy, that is the objective of the parliamentary majority.

In meeting this, the students of May have sufficient maturity to avoid the traps and choose their own ground to fight on in accordance with the opportunities offered by the class struggle in this country. Marcellin, weapons ready, is waiting for October to crush the vanguard; but we are not going to give him that satisfaction.

The objective of the first battles will be to preserve the gains of May, both the political freedoms in the university and the ties between the workers and students in the Action Committees. Starting with the new academic year, the examination system must be reformed and struggles must be waged to dispose of the present form of examinations. While it is clear that the student movement can no longer play the same role as in May, its role is still decisive for the formation of a new revolutionary vanguard. And it will play this role by refusing to let itself get trapped on the campus.

The transformation of the UNEF [Union National des Etudiants Français -- National Union of French Students], planned at the Assembly of Grenoble, will permit a lot of clarification. The UNEF can become the meeting ground of all the anticapitalist currents on the campuses. Its new democratic structures should make it possible to put an end to the organizational confusion of May, when in the face of a variety of decision-making centers, a little group uncontrolled by the rank and file took all the key initiatives on its own in the last analysis.

In the period opening up, regroupment of the revolutionary Marxist vanguard is imperative. The question is whether this will occur legally. Marcellin has said that he "was not attacking political ideas." Good. Now the government is on the spot and must decide whether it wants to assume the responsibility of driving thousands of militants underground by banning any new formation to the left of the PCF [Parti Communiste Français -- French Communist party].

In conclusion, I will tell Marcellin another secret. We have discovered who was responsible for the revolts in Paris, Mexico, and Berlin. There is really an International at work, the capitalist International.

CANADIAN STUDENTS SUPPORT OCTOBER MOBILIZATION AGAINST VIETNAM WAR

Toronto

The 100,000-member Canadian Union of Students voted decisively to support the International Week of Protest, October 21-27, at its recent congress in Guelph, Ontario. The union is the equivalent in English-speaking Canada of the National Student Association in the United States.

Originally the congress had been presented with a resolution simply stating opposition to the war and calling for U.S. withdrawal and an end to Canadian governmental complicity in the war. However, Joe Young, chairman of the Student Association to End the War in Vietnam, spoke to the congress, having returned the day before from the U.S. Student Mobilization

Committee conference in Chicago.

He pointed to the growing disillusionment with the Paris talks and to the complete failure of the McCarthy campaign to win even the smallest concessions from the big-business Democratic party. He went on to describe the growing resentment against the war among GI's and urged the congress not only to condemn the U.S. aggression but to act to end it.

The movers of the original motion then amended it to state that the Canadian Union of Students would "support the International Week of Protest and help build mass demonstrations on October 26." The congress supported the motion by a majority of seventy-five percent.

BIG OCTOBER DEMONSTRATION AGAINST VIETNAM WAR PLANNED IN LONDON

By Ernest Tate

London

Plans are now well under way for one of the most massive Vietnam protest mobilizations ever to take place in Britain. The mobilization will be in central London on October 27. Even sections of the British press are predicting that the turnout may be 100,000.

The action is being organized around the following slogans: "Defeat U.S. Aggression in Vietnam"; "Victory to the National Liberation Front and the Vietnamese Revolution"; "End the Labour Government's Complicity in the War."

The October 27 Vietnam Ad Hoc Committee, which is organizing the demonstration, was set up after a national appeal by the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign (VSC). The VSC is well known for the leading role it played in preparing the huge mobilizations of October 1967 and March 17 of this year.

The Ad Hoc Committee, an all-inclusive body open to any group supporting the minimum slogans for the demonstration, has attracted new forces and considerably extended its base. Most notable has been the entry of the Communist party and the Young Communist League into the coalition.

Before the March 17 demonstration, the Communist party publicly attacked the VSC as allegedly being secretly controlled by the Fourth International. Now, however, after a short delay the CP has responded to the VSC appeal and begun to partici-

pate, sending several representatives to the Ad Hoc Committee. The CP daily, Morning Star, has reported favourably on the October 27 preparations.

Most tendencies on the British left have representatives on the Ad Hoc Committee; among them, International Socialism and the International Marxist Group, the latter being affiliated to the Fourth International.

One exception is the Socialist Labour League, a group which claims to be Trotskyist, but which follows a policy of abstentionism in relation to the Vietnam protest movement in Britain, confining its activities to small demonstrations of its own members. It has drawn upon garbled and hostile press accounts about the Ad Hoc Committee in order to attack the committee and its work.

This sectarian policy stands in remarkable contrast to the SLL's attitude toward the mass protests of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, in which it participated a few years ago. But that was when the SLL was still responsive to the views of the world Trotskyist movement.

Another exception is the Maoists around the Vietnam Solidarity Front, an earlier split-off from the VSC. The Maoists started this as a competitive organization after walking out of the founding conference of the VSC, but they never got it off the ground. Now they have come around the Ad Hoc Committee, but not with a constructive attitude. Long after plans were firmly established and agreements

worked out between the collaborating groups, the Maoists invaded an Ad Hoc Committee meeting. They repeatedly interrupted and refused to let the meeting continue as the majority wished, and it had to be adjourned.

Despite such difficulties, the

main London committee has held several meetings with considerably greater attendance than at planning meetings for previous demonstrations. In response to an appeal from this committee, local Ad Hoc Committees have been established throughout the country and around London.

BRITISH PRESS OPENS WITCH-HUNT CAMPAIGN AGAINST OCTOBER DEMONSTRATION

London

A section of the British press is attempting to discredit the forthcoming October 27 mobilization and, if possible, to break up the coalition of left forces in the Ad Hoc Committee preparing the event.

The Evening News made the first move September 4, running a front-page banner headline: "YARD IN TERROR BOMB HUNT." The accompanying article, obviously inspired by a police "leak," stated:

"Scotland Yard and the Home Office are alarmed over reports that Molotov cocktails, home-made bombs, and possibly even firearms may be used in a major mass demonstration scheduled to be held in London."

It added that weapons were reportedly "being manufactured and stored at secret addresses in London."

"A specially picked undercover team from the Yard are working night and day to discover where the arms are stored, who was responsible for buying them, and who supplied the money."

The article concluded with the news that thousands of police will be on hand for the October 27 demonstration. A "senior officer" was quoted: "At all costs we must prevent central London from being turned into a battleground like Paris and Berlin."

The Evening News article did not produce any evidence to back up its charges, nor did it cite names or sources.

The following morning, the Times rose to the occasion, demonstrating once again the difference between "respectable" bourgeois journalism and the gutter scribbling of the yellow press -- namely, not much!

Repeating the Evening News material about "bombs," etc., the Times reported as fact that a "startling plot has been uncovered by a special squad of detectives formed to track down the extremists." At the end of the very same article it was blandly noted that Scotland Yard denied

it had received such reports or that such a special team was searching for arms.

But the Yard's denial went unnoticed. The story had served its purposes. To underline the point, the Times' lead editorial in the same issue called for the banning of demonstrations.

Several Tory MP's, among them right-wing Tory leader Duncan Sandys, have promised to raise the demand for a ban when the House of Commons reconvenes in October. Marcus Lipton, Labour MP for Brixton, stated in a public letter to Home Secretary Callaghan:

"This business of marching through the streets of London is liable to cause trouble and damage to individuals and property. Most people would not wish to ban the actual demonstration but the march should be stopped."

It would be wrong for the organizers of the October mobilization to take comfort in the fact that the threats are directed at "extremists" and not at the actual organizers of the activity. All the press articles state in passing that the organizers want a "peaceful" march; the danger, they stress, comes from unnamed "extremists." Only three months ago, it should be remembered, all those participating in the Ad Hoc Committee were regarded as "extremists."

One aim of the campaign of intimidation, no doubt, is to get the main organizers of the demonstration to start making public repudiations of the "extremists," whoever they are; this would begin to cut across the democratic character of the Ad Hoc Committee, one of its main strengths. A closing of ranks around the right of all opponents of the war to join in the demonstration, along with an appeal for more people than ever to come out and defend the right to demonstrate, is the indicated reply to the splitting tactic of the Establishment.

Another aim of the campaign in the capitalist press is to prepare public opinion for more brutal methods of crowd control than have been used in the past. Seeing their colleagues in other

parts of the world in action must make the British police itch to intensify the rather unsuccessful strong-arm tactics they have tried in the past.

The ruling class and its Labour government surely sense some major problems ahead, and they would be gratified to see mass action forestalled. Successful mass action on Vietnam would be seen as an attack upon the government and its lickspittle relation to American imperialism.

The Times states that the October 27 action could be the "biggest demonstration in London ever." If this proved to be the case, it could have profound implications for Britain. It would confirm trends that have been apparent over the past year -- seen in the student rebellions and in the last big Vietnam demonstrations -- toward more and more autonomous mass action. It would indicate that a huge mass of people are taking the

first step toward political action outside the structures of the Labour party.

In addition, memories of the May revolution in France must be fresh in the rulers' minds. The mass protest developing in Britain on the Vietnam issue is quite unlike the mass protests led in the fifties by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, which was firmly under the control of the right-wing reformists and pacifists.

The present movement is more potentially anticapitalist. The Vietnam Solidarity Campaign, the dominant Vietnam protest movement in Britain, is led by people who, while they may disagree with one another on many questions, have no illusions about Parliament and who generally consider themselves Marxists. For the first time, the revolutionary groups, the so-called "groupuscules," have the potential for a mass influence.

IN REPLY TO THE SLANDERS OF "THE NEWSLETTER"

[The following statement was issued in London September 6 by the International Marxist Group in reply to assertions printed in The Newsletter, a publication of the Socialist Labour League.]

* * *

Readers of The Newsletter will be familiar with the incessant sniping that paper indulges in against "Pabloites," "Revisionists," and with the numerous other epithets which are used to describe the supporters of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. When our group is described as "tiny" and "discredited," they might well wonder what all the fuss is about. This reply will attempt to answer that question.

In two consecutive issues (August 27 and 31), The Newsletter has criticised the role our group played in the two mass left-wing demonstrations against the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, in articles entitled, "Revisionists and anti-communists unite on Czech crisis" and "Capitalist Press praise Anti-Communists."

First of all, let us say that this is not an honest polemic -- this is so easily demonstrated that it is tempting merely to go through these articles and refute them point by point, but we consider it more important to expose the reason for this dishonesty, because these articles are an attempt to cover up the basically mistaken attitude of the Socialist Labour League [SLL] towards the massive radicalisation of youth over the

Vietnam question.

The most perverse charges against us are that we demonstrated alongside anti-Communist and reactionary elements in anti-Soviet demonstrations; that we have abandoned the slogan, "Victory to the N.L.F.," as a capitulation to the Communist Party in order to involve them in the forthcoming October mobilisation; and that we have thus gained the favour of the capitalist press.

To back up the first charge we are told:

"The most noticeable feature of the recent anti-Soviet demonstrations was the unity established between the various political groups.

"Alongside Young Conservatives (our emphasis) and Liberals eager for an anti-Communist orgy, shouted anarchists and pacifists.

"With them came the 'International Socialism' group who are accustomed to condemning 'Russian imperialism.'"

Another feature of the demonstrations it seems was "applause for Dubcek, the leader of one wing of Czech Stalinism, the burning of red flags (our emphasis), placards saying 'Down with Russian Imperialism!' and the shout 'Stalinism out, democracy in!'"

This technique is a familiar one; by taking a number of stray facts, dis-

torted reports, and direct lies, an amalgam is made by which you can "prove" the most slanderous and contradictory charges. It is a technique which Stalinism developed to a fine art and has no place in the pages of a professedly Trotskyist publication.

The slogans of the demonstration were "Withdraw Soviet troops from Czechoslovakia; withdraw U.S. troops from Vietnam." The August 27 Newsletter carries the headline, "WITHDRAW SOVIET TROOPS NOW!" So we presume that the S.L.L. does not object to the first slogan, and we doubt if they oppose the second, so what principles are violated by Trotskyists participating? Of course, a number of groups and individuals carried slogans which were the result of a mistaken concept of the class nature of the Soviet Union, but it is a principle on these mobilisations that each tendency has the right to carry its own slogans. Thus to impute responsibility for such slogans to the I.M.G. [International Marxist Group] is dishonest. In fact, our group fought against such concepts in the preparations for the demonstration, and in its statements, publications, and speeches and on its own banner stated "The Soviet Bureaucracy -- aggressive in Czechoslovakia -- passive in Vietnam."

But the main feature of the demonstration was not at all "anti-Communism," it was a sea of red banners; not only did it denounce the invasion, but it aggressively took up the question of the Soviet bureaucracy's betrayal of the Vietnamese struggle, and exposed the hypocrisy of those who have protested about Czechoslovakia, but have backed up U.S. aggression in Vietnam.

What place was there then for the Young Conservatives and the burning of red flags? The first is a direct lie: the young Tories were not part of the united front. Three or four of them did turn up, and when one of them tried to speak he received pretty rough treatment, was shouted down, and the microphone was hauled from his hands. The red-flag burning is taken from a garbled account in the Guardian of the Wednesday evening demonstration at the Earls Court Exhibition, when a provocateur on the fringes of the crowd set fire to two of the red flags which were being carried. The Newsletter has a touching faith in the accuracy of the capitalist press.

This faith really fouls them up over the charge that we have abandoned the slogan, "Victory to the N.L.F." Taking up another garbled story in the Guardian, they repeat the story that a recent meeting of the October Ad Hoc Committee broke up in disorder over the refusal to accept this slogan. This is what the small Maoist group which organised this

happening would like to spread around as the truth, but the fact is that they packed the meeting in order to attempt to impose a string of slogans on the committee, and broke it up when they were prevented from diverting the meeting onto whether or not "Long Live Ho Chi Minh" was a better slogan than "Victory to the Vietnamese Revolution."

As for our "honeymoon" with the capitalist press -- well, it was back to normal four days after the second Newsletter article, with the papers coming out with a scare story about petrol bombs being prepared for the October mobilisation, and M.P.s demanding a ban on the March. Incidentally, this looks like building up into quite a witch-hunt; we would have no objection to The Newsletter giving some space to combating the capitalist press lies.

Can we interpolate a comment on the attitude taken towards Tariq Ali? Firstly, we are told that the S.L.L. "is of course hated, and rightly so by Tariq Ali..." So far as we know Tariq has never made any statement of any kind about the S.L.L.; he has political differences, obviously, but to interpret this as "hatred" and to go on to say, "It's time Tariq Ali was told to shut his mouth," leaves a very nasty taste that we are sure most workers would not find pleasant. In other words it smacks of a Stalinist attitude towards political opponents.

But why does The Newsletter feel obliged to return again and again to attacking us? It would seem from scanning its columns that we have done little else for the past few years but capitulate, liquidate ourselves, collapse, betray, etc., etc. The truth is of course that as we have shown, any similarity between the facts about our activity and The Newsletter reports is purely coincidental.

But that the most vicious and slanderous attack to date should come at this particular time is significant. The reason is contained in the last paragraph of the August 27 Newsletter article: "VSC and its hangers-on are enemies of Marxist principles. Their 'October' campaign will be directed, not towards aiding the defeat of US imperialism, but towards confusing and misleading those who are seeking a road to revolutionary principles and a revolutionary leadership."

All of the extremely complex charges are directed towards proving the above, and justifying the S.L.L.'s opposition to the forthcoming October Mobilisation, and to the whole struggle which the I.M.G. has carried out to build a mass movement against the U.S. imperialist aggression in Vietnam.

The S.L.L. some years ago set out

to build a mass revolutionary youth movement. For this purpose it split away a section of the Young Socialists from the Labour Party. Despite all their statements to the contrary they never achieved more than very modest success with this perspective, and in recent years the "Keep Left Y.S." has stagnated if not declined. But to their horror the struggle in solidarity with the Vietnamese Revolution has drawn into activity, particularly around V.S.C. [Vietnam Solidarity Campaign], thousands of youth, both students and young workers, who, despite many elements of mistaken ideas, adventurist tendencies, etc., are eager for a showdown with capitalism. And not only can the S.L.L. not reach them, but they are bypassing the S.L.L. on the left. It is from these youth that the core of a new revolutionary party will be built; therefore for Trotskyists to be unable to influence them is a very serious matter. The S.L.L. does not present it in this way of course; by slander techniques it tries to dub this movement as "petty bourgeois," etc., and to denounce the various groups involved in V.S.C., but even if these groups were pure shit, they do not amount to more than a few hundred people, while the mass mobilisations activate thousands of youth. I.M.G. is confident of the strength of the ideas of Trotskyism; that is why we are eager to participate in this movement -- we are eager to prove the superiority of our theories in action.

This is why we set so much store on mass actions against the Vietnam War. Experience in every part of the world confirms our contention that this war is the central problem of world imperialism, and that movements against this war very rapidly develop consciousness of the nature of imperialism, and how the war is linked to the problems of the day-to-day life of young workers and students. In fact the experience of France shows that young workers and students involved together in a struggle against imperialism can become a very socially explosive mixture.

But to involve the maximum number

of youth, a correct approach to building the movement must be taken. This is why we fought for the line of unity on one issue between all of the groups which agreed with the struggle for solidarity with the N.L.F. It is very foolish to counterpose to this the argument that Lenin and Trotsky carried out a different tactic in a different epoch, for different purposes, and under different circumstances, merely because our present tactic is loosely called by the same name -- "united front."

The lesson of the last two years is that once the factional wrangling between the various Marxist and Left tendencies is broken through, and joint action carried out on vital issues, real progress can be made, and the differences can be fruitfully discussed in the light of this experience.

We note that The Newsletter is campaigning for an "All Trade Union Alliance," to fight against the government's attacks on the workers. We find this interesting: what is the basis of a trade unionist participating in this campaign? Does he need first to denounce the Communist Party? Does he require to have a correct theory of the nature of the Soviet state? We rather think not. But if no principle is betrayed in such an organisation, what is the difference with the Vietnam struggle? And if a sectarian attitude is held toward the Vietnam struggle, will this not affect adversely the building of unity amongst trade unionists?

The International Marxist Group therefore rejects the slanders of The Newsletter. We will not diverge from the course of fruitful work in which we are engaged, and we give notice to the S.L.L. that it will not for long be able to pose its sectarian attitudes and slanderous methods as genuine Trotskyism.

Long live solidarity with the NLF!

Long live the revolutionary youth!

Long live the Fourth International!

DAILY WORLD'S PRAGUE CORRESPONDENTS SPEAK AGAINST GUS HALL'S LINE

[The authors of the following open letter, Eleanor and George Wheeler, are (or were) the Czechoslovak correspondents of the Daily World, the newspaper of the Communist party of the USA. The CPUSA is one of the few Communist parties to support the Kremlin's invasion of Czechoslovakia. This stand followed logically from the previous position of the Gus Hall leadership, favoring Moscow's efforts to stem the movement toward socialist democracy in Czechoslovakia. The open letter,

which favors the opposite stand, was written before the invasion.

[A telephone interview with George Wheeler after the invasion was published in the August 31 edition of the People's World, the West Coast paper of the CPUSA. The division in the party over the invasion is indicated by the fact that in contradiction to the stand of the Gus Hall leadership, the People's World favorably quoted Wheeler as declaring, "There

was no counter-revolution here. Only plans for better socialism, for democratic socialism...The intervention is a tragic mistake -- one of the most tragic in history." Wheeler was described as a "veteran American Communist and a resident in Prague for two decades."

[The open letter is of interest because of the information it contains, which the editors of the Daily World saw fit to suppress.

[In a postscript, the two writers take strong exception to the August 2 issue of the Daily World. This was a particularly interesting specimen of the coverage given to the Czech events by the American CP.

[A banner headline proclaimed, "Details of Plot on Prague Bared." Featured on the front page was an article that appeared in the American Trotskyist weekly The Militant of the same date, entitled "Left Communist group forms in Czechoslovakia." The Daily World caption on this was: "Provocation in Czechoslovakia: The Militant, an American Trotskyist paper, proudly displays this example of Trotskyist treachery in Czechoslovakia."

[Participants in the "subversive conspiracy" were supposed to include "Prime Minister Couve de Murville of the Gaullist government of France; the Catholic parties of neighboring countries, particularly Austria; the leadership of the Socialist International...Radio Free Europe; the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States....[and inside Czechoslovakia] former Nazis, Trotskyites, the Social Democratic party [sic]," etc. The day after the paper was printed the Bratislava agreement was signed, and the Daily World never mentioned the "plot" again.]

* * *

Prague, Czechoslovakia
August 9, 1968

Open letter to Comrades Gus Hall, Henry Winston, the editor of the Daily World and of Political Affairs, and others responsible for the U.S. Communist Party policy:

Dear Comrades:

On August 3 in Bratislava an agreement was signed between representatives of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and the corresponding Party representatives of the Soviet Union, Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland and the German Democratic Republic.

Alexander Dubcek, First Secretary of the Communist Party and leader of the Czechoslovak delegation, told a television audience that the Czechoslovak Party had had two goals at the Cierna nad Tisou

meeting: (a) to assure room to continue with the progressive democratization of the country and (b) to prevent a split in the international Communist movement. He said that these goals had been achieved by the government with the Soviet leaders at Cierna nad Tisou and confirmed by the signatures of the six parties at Bratislava.

The maturity of the Czechoslovak delegation and of the press, radio, and people generally was shown both in the crisis and by the fact that they do not call the results of the talks a "victory", but regard them rather as opening a new stage in fraternal co-operation for the development of socialism. They also recognize that one factor in the victory for socialism was the fact that all of the European Communist parties, with the exception of the fraction of the Greek party with headquarters in Moscow, the West German and Luxembourg parties, analyzed this crisis correctly in advance of the Cierna talks and spoke up in favor of the right of the Czechs and Slovaks to democratize their country, ending the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat here.

From Portugal to Norway the Czechoslovak Party received messages of support from the Communist parties of those countries, as well as from Yugoslavia and Rumania. Our pleasure in the correct and wise solution of this crisis was clouded by our anxious waiting for the U.S. Party to speak up -- and then in the July 26 issue of the Daily World the editorial spoke up...but on the wrong side. This has had a sad effect on the prestige in Europe of the U.S. Party, and we wonder what effect it will have in the United States.

Before we turn to the merits of the crisis, our criticism of the U.S. party's handling of its part of it, let us keep the record straight. The movement in Czechoslovakia for a new and higher form of socialism is not anti-Soviet.

Criticism and self-criticism, which are essential to the life of any political body have fallen into such neglect that now many honest comrades are shocked and alarmed at the mere statement of truth.

For example, some of the Novotny group, trying to save their own skins, tried to place all of the blame for the Slansky trials on the Soviet secret police. The new leadership, in contrast, repeatedly asserted that the Czechoslovak could not evade responsibility. But the mere fact that this healthy discussion came into the open was branded by some commentators abroad as counter-revolutionary slander!

Now that the immediate crisis (and

it was a crisis) is over, we respectfully suggest that the leading members of our party reexamine the situation and their role in it -- including the type of coverage given by the Worker and later the Daily World and by Political Affairs. (Our hats are off to Jessica Smith, even though as a quarterly The New World Review could not, and is not intended to furnish current information.)

We know that we should have written more persistently but the editors did not use all the information which we sent, yet picked up completely distorted material originating far from the scene of action. For example, Political Affairs rejected a nine-page article George wrote in Mid-March. More than a month later the editors wrote (April 22) that "the article will not be understood by our readers since it deals with individuals and events with which they are not sufficiently familiar." This from the theoretical journal of the party!

George had written that "the Czechoslovak people have come a long way in what is essentially the transition from the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat* to full political democracy." That it was a new stage of socialism. It was not a splendid and definitive article, but it was good Marxism and simple to read. P.A. has a file copy so you can read it and judge for yourself.

Eleanor has sent several articles that have not been used, such as biographies of Dubcek which would have made readers of the party press as familiar with the new leaders as those of the New York Times. How can your readers become familiar with new and important people unless you print what they say and tell what they are doing?

We do not pretend to be good reporters, but we are both trained political scientists and what we have written has not often been misleading. We are busy, and it is literally painful for Eleanor, with failing eyesight, to write -- and more painful to be disregarded and second-guessed in New York. And if you did not trust us, why not use official Czechoslovak material, such as the Action Program? The Washington Bureau could have stepped over to the Czechoslovak Embassy in D.C. and come away with an armful of straight material, as well as checking on rumors.

No. We do not think it was lack of material (even the Portuguese Party got

enough information) or writing too difficult for your readers, but a failure either to use Marxian methods of analysis or a hesitation to print back up conclusions with action.

That it is at least partly a failure of ordinary journalistic analysis can be seen in such articles as that by Joseph North given the front page banner spot in the Daily World on July 30 and datelined Montreal -- on the spot reporting!

It is based on a report from West Germany by a Peter Lust and is headed "Neo Nazis Infiltrating Sudetenland. Were Czech defenses dismantled?" North knows so little about the situation that he refers to "Prime Minister Alexander (sic.) Dubcek." Actually Alexander Dubcek (pronounced Doobcheck) is First Secretary of the Communist Party.

North quotes Lust as writing that Dubcek ordered "all barbed wire entanglements and machine gun nests removed from the Czechoslovak, West German border last April." The final paragraph (in which the quotation marks are so mixed up that we can't tell what's being quoted) reads:

"He says the dream of Sudetenland once again being German remained a dream until 1968 when the Czechoslovak Prime Minister ordered the removal of all armed posts during his liberalization program. Then infiltration began."

Here the liberalization program is directly linked to the sell-out of the homeland. The question mark in the headline is replaced with the positive assertion. What is the truth?

First, the defense of Czechoslovakia is far more secure than before, army morale has jumped with the democratization program and the exposure of such sell-out artists as General Sejna. The frontier defenses were not dismantled, but instead were strengthened by replacing the unsightly barbed wire and electric fences with electronic devices that are more effective.

Previously tourists, who came in by thousands along the road from West Germany, had seen in those fences the visible "proof" that Czechoslovakia was one vast concentration camp. Many Americans commented on them to us. Now, with the new freedom of all to travel as they wish, the concentration camp argument is gone -- along with the easily visible part of the fence.

As for North's conclusion: "Then infiltration began". This, too, is bunk -- (to use a printable term) which also applied to the ridiculous play given to the alleged arms "caches". For many years

* Note -- Reference to the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat", is the decision of the 3rd Czechoslovakia Party Congress that they, like the Soviet Union, were becoming a "State of the Whole People".

Sudetens have come. Under Novotny during 1967 nearly 200,000 West Germans visited Czechoslovakia quite openly. This year about 100,000 more came. Also 450,000 East Germans so far this year, 200,000 more than last year.

Of course Sudetens were among them and if they had arms for fellow-conspirators why did they not drive into the garage or barn of their friends and hide the arms properly. Instead 1943 arms were found "hidden" in a culvert so conspicuously that the first passerby would notice them -- and even this did not satisfy the "Sudetens" -- they called anonymously to tip off the police! If it had been a Czech he would gladly have given his name to get credit for the discovery.

In any event the amount and type of arms discovered -- with no proof of any organization attached -- was insignificant from the point of view of national security. The play given to them in the press of Warsaw five was significant -- as was the later agreement to the six parties at Bratislava that Czechoslovakia was perfectly competent to maintain its defenses.

The West German bases and annual maneuvers have been there since 1946 -- and George's protests at giving priority to labor for their construction was one reason why he was fired in 1947. So why the uproar before Cierna nad Tisou, linking the maneuvers and "infiltration" with democratization?

Some honest people have come here expecting a counter-revolutionary upsurge to be in full swing: where there is so much smoke there must be some fire. "If you examine the smoke scientifically you will find that it was pretty thin stuff indeed. As one Comrade remarked wryly: there is about as much danger of counter-revolution here as of revolution in the U.S." Naturally all good communists are concerned about the security of socialism, particularly in a key country such as Czechoslovakia and particularly the Czechs and Slovaks are concerned.

But how is security attained? Certainly main factors are an economy which is functioning well, and a confidence of the working people in their government. The old Novotny regime had neither, the new one is certainly one of the most widely supported by its citizens of any government anywhere. The result is an army with a high morale and one determined to defend its homeland and socialism.

Otherwise, a main factor is the understanding by all Czechoslovaks of the dangers from West Germany and the need for an alliance with the Soviet Union. This did not mean that they want to be occupied by troops of any country -- and

any self-respecting person should be able to understand this.

A good part of the smoke for the crisis originated in "Pravda". Let us take an example from a field which we know best. On July 26 Pravda carried an article by Juri Zhukov on the dangerous tendencies here. He wrote: "Practical actions going on in Prague speak for themselves. One of the leading officials O. Sik spoke on television asking for 'encouragement for developing middle and small private businesses.'" In order to get the words for the part of a sentence he fabricated, into quotation marks, Zhukov had to use three paragraphs of Sik's text!

Sik in reply Rude Pravo 28 July merely quoted what he had actually said. "I don't see any reason why, let us say, a few (e.g. 4 to 10) skillful citizens could not form cooperatives either of producers or artisans." His only reference to middle size private business enterprises was to those now existing in the German Democratic Republic. As far as we know Pravda did not print any correction to this or any other of these scare stories.

Are such journalistic practices such an inherent part of building socialism that they cannot even be talked about without one being accused of being anti-Soviet?! In our opinion these arbitrary methods, giving only one, distorted, side of the argument harm the Communist movement deeply.

The [Czech writers?] protest bureaucracy, not socialism -- yet reimposition of censorship (and inevitably of such journalism) was the one specific demand in the Warsaw letter. We have confidence that socialism will outgrow such methods and that it will be much stronger when it does.

As George pointed out in his March 1966 article in P.A. censorship is incompatible with the needs of a modern socialist society. The sooner the socialist countries have confidence in their people and get rid of it the stronger they will be. Czechoslovakia has already demonstrated this, but it does not insist that its policies are an export item.

The prime exhibit proving the existence of counter-revolution here has been the 2000 word petition for a full purge from the party of those responsible for past distortions of legality. How many of you have read it -- not just a few lines, but the whole text? We do not agree with some of the formulations. But was it really seriously counter-revolutionary? It was in fact a naive attempt to support the new majority of the Central Committee of the Party -- a majority

which, incidentally, came to power in large part because it was insisting on carrying out the reforms adopted by the 12th and 13th Party Congresses.

Novotny and his group lost out because they refused to carry out that fundamental Party policy -- and had no alternative program for the new recruits, most of them young, and is far stronger than we have ever seen it. It now has the respect of literally millions of Czechs. Is this "counter-revolution?" Is this "dismantling the defenses of Czechoslovakia?"

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union made serious mistakes in this crisis -- a crisis which could have been entirely avoided. But it is a very strong party, a magnificent party, and it will overcome the effects of those mistakes, just as it recognized that it was making them and was magnanimous enough to rectify them before it was too late.

But what of the situation within our party in the United States? For many years we have resisted the idea that the C.P.U.S.A. was an irrelevant clique. We still think it is not. But we are seriously worried about the effect of the blunders in the Czechoslovak crisis. How many more shocks to its prestige can it stand? We believe that one thing that prevented the Party from understanding and acting was neglect of the study of the fundamen-

tal documents, such as Action Program and the answer of the Presidium to the letter of the Warsaw five.

Comradely yours

Eleanor Wheeler
George Wheeler

P.S. After we had written this we received the Aug..2 issue with its shocking articles -- completely undocumented and inconsistent, a wild collection of assertions of the McCarthy Beria type. We cannot answer them in detail because every paragraph has its distortions, misstatements and misinterpretations.

For example, there is no Social Democratic Party. There is no slogan "Absolute freedom". The slander against the Slovaks was a mark of the Novotny era. Now the breach is healing. Dubcek himself is a Slovak. The economic program is just as specific and closely resembles that of the Soviet Union. The economy is doing much better than under Novotny and is beginning to solve the heritage of problems he left.

We think, in fact, that you owe an apology to the Czechoslovakia Party. But, written just on its eve, the Bratislava meeting gave the full and final refutation of the Aug. 2nd analysis.

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