

# Intercontinental Press

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## Postal Workers Defy Nixon's Threats

The Coup in Cambodia

The Battle of Nanterre

First Time in English:

**Trotsky on Women's Liberation**

Hugo Blanco:

'The Government  
Is Not Nationalist'



SIHANOUK: Slipped during balancing act.

## Deepening Political Crisis in West Bengal

# Chemical Onslaught

"Ten billion dollars [the amount allotted for Nixon's four-year water pollution-control program] is only a drop in the nation's bucket of dirty water. The cost of cleaning up Lake Michigan alone has been expertly estimated as high as \$10-billion. The ultimate prospective cost of cleaning all the nation's waterways is out of sight, somewhere beyond \$100-billion."

This was only one of many gloomy remarks in Gladwin Hill's survey of Nixon's water program in the March 17 issue of the *New York Times*.

It is not, after all, that the U.S. government does not have that kind of money. Washington has spent more than \$100,000,000 in the last few years on the Vietnam war alone, an expenditure which the opinion polls indicate was opposed by the majority of the American people.

The pessimistic note in Hill's article comes from his grudging realization that—under the present system—it is extremely unlikely the government will ever move effectively even to slow down the increase in pollution.

On proposals before Congress to increase the federal government's powers to press suits against polluters and to force the states to establish standards on the amount of filth that can be dumped into public waterways, Hill wrote: "These are radical steps . . . and they are expected to elicit opposition of many sorts from members of Congress, states, cities and industry. It has taken years of argument and maneuvering simply to shape a law covering the relatively uncontroversial problem of maritime oil spills."

Hill adds a note: "While it has always been assumed that community water systems could transform even tainted supplies into something harmless and potable, that assurance is wearing thin."

"Our treatment plants," he was told by Dr. C. C. Johnson, head of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's consumer protection division, "are not designed for, nor are they prepared to take the chemical onslaught now coming from our streams."

## In This Issue

		<b>FEATURES</b>
	266	Chemical Onslaught
	277	Trotsky on Women's Liberation
		<b>U.S.A.</b>
Les Evans	267	Postal Workers Shout Defiance at Nixon's Threats
Art Sharon	283	General Strike Threat Wins Gains in San Francisco
George Novack	284	Scholars File Suit in Mandel Case
		<b>CAMBODIA</b>
Gerry Foley	269	Nixon Settles Accounts with Sihanouk
		<b>FRANCE</b>
Laurence Becker	271	Meetings for Soldiers' Rights Outlawed
Daniel Bensaid	274	The Battle of Nanterre
	276	Against the Disciplinary University!
		<b>INDIA</b>
Kailas Chandra	272	Deepening Political Crisis in West Bengal
		<b>PERU</b>
Hugo Blanco	278	"The Government Is Not Nationalist"
		<b>BOLIVIA</b>
	280	Secret Trial of Che's Supporters in La Paz
		<b>IRAN</b>
Javad Sadeeg	281	Tehran Bus Boycott Forces Shah to Back Down
		<b>GREAT BRITAIN</b>
Susan Lind	282	Biggest Display of Student Militancy Yet
		<b>SPAIN</b>
	285	The Crisis in the Communist Party Editorial from "La Batalla"
	288	Appeal of the Garcia-Gomez Group Garcia Arrested in Madrid
		<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>
	288	Joint Antiwar Action Now Set for May
		<b>DRAWINGS</b>
Copain	265	Prince Norodom Sihanouk; 271, Georges Pompidou; 272, Ajoy Mukherjee.

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# Postal Workers Shout Defiance at Nixon's Threats

By Les Evans

MARCH 22—The postal strike that began in New York City March 18 has now spread across the United States in defiance of federal injunctions, appeals by the "official" leadership of the unions to go back to work, and the thinly veiled threat by President Nixon to use the army or national guard to break the strike.

Nearly 200,000 postal workers have gone out, in the first strike in the 195-year history of the Post Office Department, tying up the mails and paralyzing much of the normal operation of business and government in cities from New York to San Francisco, including Los Angeles, Detroit, Denver, Minneapolis, Boston, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Newark, and Milwaukee. The nationwide character of the wildcat walkout became definitive March 21 when Chicago postal employees joined the action. Chicago is the Midwest hub of the whole postal system and the nation's largest mail-processing center, clearing some 18,000,000 pieces of mail a day.

The federal government has declared an embargo on thirteen major cities to prevent undeliverable mail from piling up in deserted post offices. Nearly half the country is presently without mail and the strike is still spreading. Only the South is relatively unaffected.

The postmen's defiance caught the government by surprise. The postal unions have long been among the most bureaucratized and conservative in the country. There are stiff penalties against strikes by federal employees which have never before been successfully challenged. It is a felony punishable by one year in prison and a \$1,000 fine to participate in a strike against the government. There is a law calling for the mandatory dismissal of any federal employee who so much as advocates the right to strike against the government. Even to take a strike vote was an "illegal" act for which all participants, including the union officials, are subject to prison terms.

The enforcement of penalties, of

course, becomes more difficult when the scope of the walkout is so massive. Federal judges in New York, Philadelphia, and Detroit have issued injunctions ordering the strikers back to work, but the injunctions have been ignored. In Chicago a federal judge refused to grant a request by a United States attorney for an injunction inasmuch as it had become obvious it could not be enforced.

The biggest test of the strikers' will to struggle came yesterday when officials of the seven postal unions tried to "sell" the workers an agreement made in Washington the day before by which they would return to work immediately and only then would negotiations begin on their demands. The proposal had Nixon's personal blessing.

In New York, the pacesetter of the strike, a tumultuous meeting of 6,000 letter carriers shouted down the proponents of the government's offer. The March 22 *New York Times* reported the meeting:

"'No! No! Strike! Strike! Strike!' shouted the letter carriers here when the proposal was read to them by Gustave J. Johnson, president of Branch 36 of the National Association of Letter Carriers, the local that began the strike last Wednesday. . . . 'A lone 'aye' was heard near the speakers' stand when Mr. Johnson called for a vote. Then the armory [where the meeting was held] rocked with a mighty 'no!'

"Before the meeting began, workers hanged in effigy the union's national president, James H. Rademacher, who had promised the Administration he would try to 'sell this pact' to negotiate grievances to his membership. Mr. Rademacher was not present. Throughout the meeting, his effigy dangled on a rope from a balcony over the speakers' stand."

Workers carried posters declaring, "We Have Them By the Throat — It's Now or Never," "Watch Out for Tricky Dick [Nixon]," "Rat-emacher Must Go," and "We Have No National Leader."

Legally only Congress can vote a

pay increase for federal workers. There were loud complaints at the meeting over Congress's refusal to even discuss the postal workers' demands until after its Easter vacation—complaints made more bitter by the recollection that Congressmen voted themselves a 42 percent wage raise last year, bringing their salaries from \$30,000 to \$42,000 a year.

A union official appealed to President Nixon from the speakers' platform of the meeting: "President Nixon, in speaking for my people, I beg you now to intervene and make us an offer." The *Times* reported that "Loud boos greeted the mention of the President."

Nixon, only hours before the Manhattan meeting, had held a press conference in which he threatened "to see to it that the mails will go through" and denounced the strike as "illegal." Under "no circumstances," he said, "will any grievances be discussed with any Government employes when they are out on an illegal strike. Any strike involving essential services by Federal employes is illegal."

Nixon did not specifically threaten the use of troops against the strike, but the *New York Times* reported, "An Administration source said later that speculation about the possible use of the Army or National Guard to move the mail was 'probably correct' . . ."

The *Times* added that there was also "unusual activity at the Pentagon this afternoon [March 21]."

The *Times* itself, usually the urbane spokesman for the Eastern establishment, began to froth at the mouth at this challenge to the power of capital. In a March 22 editorial it declared: "Now President Nixon is left with no choice except to mobilize Army or National Guard units to deliver the mail . . ."

It called on the postal workers—in the name of "sanity"—to "return to work by tomorrow." "But," the paper added, "if they persist in their folly, the President cannot delay in making good his commitment to get the mail

through. More than the mail depends on that; the future of a government based on law is in the balance."

Of course, what was meant by the wealthy editors of the *Times*—who like to think of themselves as representatives of the "majority" of American public opinion, in opposition to what they call a mere "group" of 200,000 postal workers—is a government based on capitalist law. In this sense the *Times* is right.

The action of the postal workers is a direct challenge to capitalist rule although the challengers are fighting only on the limited question of wages; they still lack any national leadership and have no program beyond the immediate bread-and-butter demands that precipitated the strike. They are also handicapped by the fact that there is no political expression of their revolt. The Republican and Democratic parties still have a virtual monopoly of the political process as it affects the working class, and there is no mass labor or workers party to defend the strikers and to solidify any gains they may win.

Postal employees have traditionally been taught to think of themselves as "civil servants." They are as divided racially, regionally, and politically as any other section of the working class. The only thing to distinguish them from a dozen other sectors is a heavier representation of Blacks, Puerto Ricans, and Chicanos. Yet in this strike the post office employees have chosen to identify themselves first and foremost as workers and to submerge all other divisions in their ranks to the basic class division in society.

And their united action has given an example of the huge potential power of the working class. Everyone takes the mail for granted, but when it stops so do a lot of other things. Some 18,000,000 pieces of mail had already piled up before Chicago joined the strike. Among those hardest hit are banks, brokerage houses, insurance companies, publishing and credit-card concerns, public utilities, and government agencies.

Bills are unpaid, and unpayable; mail-order sales are lost; perishable items are rotting in the post offices; big seasonal garment sales for the Easter season are going down the drain; small businesses that operate on a shoestring are going bankrupt because the circulation of their capital

has been interrupted; the stock market cannot transfer shares by mail; pay-rolls are going unmet.

Large magazines and newspapers are piling up issues in warehouses because they cannot be delivered. The New York Telephone Company is losing \$7,000,000 a day in unpaid bills. The government also depends on the postal system to communicate with itself. The March 21 *New York Times* reported, "The Labor Department was sending one messenger by car from Washington and another from New York to meet and exchange crucial mail midway on the New Jersey Turnpike." Even the Selective Service System has announced that it will have trouble meeting next month's military draft quota because the induction notices have been stalled in the mails.

The postal strike is the most dramatic expression to date of a process developing inside the labor movement since the mid-1960s. Its immediate predecessors were the General Electric strike that began last October and the four-day strike of municipal workers in San Francisco that ended March 16, the day before the first strike vote was taken by the New York letter carriers [see page 283].

The most pressing cause of the rising militancy has been the rampant spiral of inflation that has meant a loss of real wages for the American working class as a whole. This has affected federal employees particularly severely because they do not have recourse to real collective bargaining.

A mailman starts at \$6,176 a year. After twenty-one years on the job he can hope to earn \$8,442 (even this is not guaranteed because of bureaucratic red tape). The starting pay is \$600 below what the government itself says is required for a "low standard of living" for a family of four in New York City. A New York cop, paid by the city instead of by the federal government, after twenty years earns \$3,000 a year more than a postal worker. The strikers are demanding a schedule that would range from \$8,500 a year to \$11,700 with top pay in five years.

According to postal union officials, 7 percent of their membership in New York are forced to the humiliating extreme of getting a dole from the Welfare Department to supplement their postmen's pay. Many with large

families say they could make more money by quitting their jobs and going entirely on welfare. Large numbers of postal workers "moonlight" by taking a second job at night or on weekends.

But there are other factors besides economics affecting the changing attitudes of the working class. These include the general youth radicalization, revulsion against the war in Vietnam, and sympathy for the Black liberation struggle.

As the postal strike has developed it is clear that the young Black and white workers in the post office have taken much of their inspiration from the independent antiwar movement, which has shown that effective mass struggle can be waged against the "powers that be." In the March 21 union meeting in Manhattan, over and over again workers gave the clenched-fist salute and the "V" for victory popularized by the Black power and antiwar movements.

The administration has chosen to treat the strikers much the way it treats the people of Vietnam. Nixon's offer to the postal strikers is the same in essence as that he has made to the Vietnamese: first surrender, then we will discuss the terms.

It is significant that when these workers, angry and disenchanted with the status quo, decided to act, they chose to use their union as the instrument for action. Even more interesting, the rank and file were able to take control, for the moment, of unions as closely integrated with the capitalist state as these, that never in their history engaged in a strike. The old leaders were either shouldered aside or forced to go along with the ranks. (The spectacle of Rademacher's effigy dangling from the balcony must have been a strong argument for a number of secondary bureaucrats, who suddenly decided they were "for" the strike.)

What the postal workers have done already is a powerful example for other sections of the working class, including other federal employees who are learning to look on the government as an *employer*, like any other boss. If, as appears likely, Nixon tries to use troops to break the strike, he will provoke something much bigger: the most serious confrontation between capital and labor since the upsurge following World War II.

# Nixon Settles Accounts with Sihanouk

By Gerry Foley

A combination of economic, political, and military pressures—stepped up by the Nixon administration's determination to pursue its aggression in Vietnam and Laos—has ended the Cambodian regime's balancing between the advancing forces of the revolution in Southeast Asia and American imperialism. With the overthrow of the neutralist Prince Norodom Sihanouk March 18, the small Indochinese country seems about to be absorbed into the American military machine operating in the area.

The leaders of the coup were Sihanouk's own handpicked premier and first deputy premier, Lieutenant General Lon Nol and Prince Sisowath Sirik Matak. Prince Sirik Matak is a cousin of the ousted chief of state. The premier, General Lon Nol, was described in a dispatch by T. D. Allman in the March 14 issue of the *Washington Post* as "Sihanouk's closest confidant in the armed forces."

The installation five months ago of the governmental team that has now assumed undivided power already marked a turn toward the right. The creation of the new government appeared to reflect a crisis in Cambodian policy. Sihanouk officially baptized it "the government of national salvation."

In his report in the *Washington Post*, Allman described mounting economic pressures which were apparently an important factor in the change of government:

"In November 1963, Sihanouk sent the massive U.S. aid establishment packing. In a corresponding effort to reduce Chinese and Vietnamese domination of the economy, he nationalized all foreign trade, the banks and insurance, and launched a centrist economic system called 'Khmer Socialism.'

"These tactics helped Cambodia stay neutral, and out of the Vietnam war. But in the six years since, Cambodia has been short of development capital.

"A government monopoly of all import-export trade also has stifled economic growth. Last year a bad harvest

underlined the economy's stagnation."

After less than a week in office, the new government devalued the Cambodian riel by almost 50 percent. It increased government and army salaries. Among other measures, the government reactivated Cambodia's membership in the Asian Development Bank, invited a World Bank team to do a study of the country, and prepared to join the International Monetary Fund.

At the beginning of this year, Sirik Matak outlined a new economic policy, including reprivatization of all exports except the three main staples—rice, maize, and rubber. It was specified, moreover, that even in the staples, export trade "may also be carried on by the private sector." At the same time certain economic concessions were granted to foreign capital.

The stage was set for Sihanouk's ouster by a series of government-sponsored mob attacks March 11 on the embassies of North Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam. Attacks were also carried out against Vietnamese shops and even religious institutions. The campaign was billed as a "spontaneous" outburst of patriotic rage against violation of Cambodian territory by North Vietnamese and National Liberation Front forces.

Queen Mother Kossamak, Sihanouk's mother, removed any doubt that the government was behind the riots in a national broadcast March 18. According to the *New York Times* of March 19, she was reported to have "expressed 'great joy' over the 'full dignity' of the Cambodian people since the attacks on the Vietcong and North Vietnamese missions in Phnompenh last Wednesday."

The U.S. capitalist press hypocritically supported the nationalistic pretenses of the right wing in Cambodia, and printed "background articles" explaining the "traditional antipathy" between the Cambodians and Vietnamese.

A detailed report on foreign military operations in Cambodia by T. D. All-

man appeared in the February 26 issue of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, published in Hong Kong. He indicated that so-called North Vietnamese and NLF violations of Cambodian neutrality were minor in comparison to transgressions by U.S. forces.

In November 1969 American forces in South Vietnam staged a full-scale air assault on the Cambodian military post at Dak Dam, slaughtering its defenders. The reason the American army commanders gave for the raid was that NLF artillery in the Dak Dam area was shelling U.S. emplacements across the South Vietnamese border. Air strikes were needed, the American commanders explained, because the area was out of range of U.S. artillery. The question left unanswered was how the NLF artillery could hit U.S. emplacements without American artillery being able to reach the same distance.

An American sympathizer in Phnompenh had an explanation. Allman reported: "The Americans are allowed to fire if fired on from Cambodia. There is also the rule of hot pursuit. The Americans were obviously trying to draw fire, so they could pinpoint the Vietcong guns and destroy them. The Cambodian post had some new 37-mm anti-aircraft guns. When the Americans flew over—in Cambodian air space—they fired. The Americans lost their cool and levelled the place."

Allman commented: "If this hypothesis is correct, the Americans lost their cool for a full 48 hours. There were two major air raids, a day apart, and numerous smaller attacks."

Allman came to the following conclusions, among others, from a trip through the border province of Svay Rieng: "The Vietcong use Cambodian territory much less than the Americans in Saigon claim; US aircraft violate Cambodian air space and bomb and strafe Cambodian territory in violation of the US guidelines, frequently with no cause at all, and more often than the US admits."

The district officer of Chantrea gave



Allman statistics showing that American actions in the region were much more extensive than any by the NLF: "Area [of the Chantrea district]: 31,461 hectares; population: 30,000 . . . no Khmer Rouge [the antiregime guerrillas]; no Vietcong. During 1969, in this one district of Svay Rieng province, nine Cambodians were killed by American bombs or guns; 20 Cambodians were wounded; 100 hectares of rice paddy were damaged; and more than 100 farm animals were killed; no Vietcong were killed by Americans, and no Cambodians were killed by Vietcong."

One reason U. S. military commanders have put so much pressure on the Cambodian border areas may be that they have hoped to force the Cambodian army to join forces with them in their antiguerrilla operations near the frontier. A move toward combined actions against Vietnamese national liberation forces paralleled the coup.

On March 16 Cambodian commanders reportedly requested artillery support from the Saigon army for an attack on Vietnamese guerrilla forces in the vicinity of the border district of Anphu. "American officials said it was the first time they knew of Cambodians and South Vietnamese working openly together against the Vietcong," Associated Press reported March 17.

On March 20 what appeared to be a second battle was reported in the same area, this time with the involvement of American aircraft as well as Saigon artillery.

*New York Times* correspondent Terence Smith reported: "The South Vietnamese district chiefs along the border in Chaudoc province have been ordered in recent days to provide all possible assistance short of troops to the Cambodian units operating across the border. The United States military advisers stationed in the border districts have been directed to attempt to establish communications with the Cambodian commanders on the other side.

"In addition, Maj. Gen. Nguyen Viet Thanh, the South Vietnamese IV Corps military commander, today authorized his commanders to provide forward artillery spotters for the Cambodians . . .

"The American hope," Smith explained, "is that the advisers and South Vietnamese will be able to get valuable intelligence from the Cambodians on

Vietcong movements and occasionally catch the enemy troops in a pincers movement as they attempt to cross the border.

"'We can't help but benefit from this situation as long as it lasts,' a senior American adviser said here today. 'At least for the moment, we have the Vietcong in a bind, and we plan to make the most of it.'"

Also, the rapid deterioration of the military situation in Laos from the American point of view may have motivated Nixon to press for incorporating Cambodia into the counter-revolutionary military effort in Southeast Asia. It is possible that Washington anticipated a rapid spread of the war to Cambodia. Or the war planners may have felt a need to get a firm hold on the country in order to use it as a staging area, or for other strategic reasons.

Some American capitalist elements favoring de-escalation of the Vietnam war interpreted the coup in Phnompenh as part of an attempt by the U. S. government to win a military victory in Southeast Asia by widening the war.

One of the capitalist dailies most anxious for a de-escalation, the *New York Post*, suggested in an editorial March 20 that the coup had been masterminded by the CIA. The editorial added: "Is Washington really prepared to take on new clients in Cambodia? Isn't one Thieu far more than enough? What application does President Nixon propose to make of the 'Nixon Doctrine' for progressive military disengagement now? Does the siren-song of 'quick military victory' really sound appealing?"

It is not clear to what extent the growth of native revolutionary forces was a factor in the decision by the right wing to take over Cambodia. T. D. Allman's report in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* indicated that the left forces active in the country represented no immediate danger to the regime.

According to Allman, two insurgent groups exist. A force of about 1,000 rebel Khmer Loeu tribesmen are reportedly operating in the hilly area of Rattanakiri province north of the Se-San River. The tribesmen, Allman wrote, are equipped with old carbines, rifles, and homemade muskets. The Cambodian government has claimed that the Vietnamese national liberation

forces have sent propaganda teams to work with the Khmer Loeu.

The second group reported active is the Khmer Rouge [Red Cambodians]. According to Allman: "The top estimate of their countrywide strength is only 1,500, including wives and children, accompanying the wandering armed bands. The Khmer Rouge appear to be an unco-ordinated collection of genuine Cambodian communists, radical intellectuals and school teachers who have fled into the bush, villagers who for one reason or another have gone outside the law, and ordinary bandits and smugglers. Except for the four training camps in South Vietnam, there is no indication of them being trained, equipped, directed or advised by the Vietnamese communists."

The Cambodian government's main charge of political intervention by Vietnamese national liberation forces centers on the claim that the North Vietnamese set up four Khmer Rouge training camps in Vietnam.

It is likely, however, that as the revolutionary war in Vietnam has tended increasingly to spill over into Cambodia and the economic situation of the country has worsened, even the existence of small insurgent nuclei could be regarded as an acute threat by the Cambodian ruling class.

The French capitalist daily *Le Monde* expressed such a view three days before the coup. In an editorial in its March 15-16 issue, it said:

"The complacent image of a Cambodia without grave difficulties and without social classes, which is very widespread in the world, is beginning to fade. The mass of Khmers feel more and more alienated from the festivities and intrigues of the court. They are momentarily being manipulated by the right. But if their condition does not improve, they may come to think that the guerrilla movement is not just the foreign intervention the official communiqués talk about. Along with the whole of Southeast Asia, Cambodia is experiencing 'spillovers' from the Vietnamese conflict. Many of its inhabitants are sincere when they say they fear that their powerful neighbor may be tempted to try to dominate them. But the same thing is true of the Khmer kingdom as of Laos—its problems are not confined to the unrest on its frontiers."

## Meetings for Soldiers' Rights Outlawed

The French minister of the interior issued a sweeping decree March 13 outlawing, seemingly, all mass protests in defense of the political rights of soldiers. The decree declared that "all mass meetings of a nature harmful to the morale of the army organized by leftist movements are forbidden in all of the national territory."

The minister's announcement was aimed specifically at two meetings scheduled to be held in Paris March 14 and 17 to protest the political victimization of three young soldiers.

The three conscripts — Serge Devaux, Michel Trouilleux, and Alain Hervé — were sentenced February 6 to terms of one year, eight months, and four months, respectively, by a court-martial in Rennes.

These youths were accused of inciting the troops to commit acts of indiscipline. The basis of the charge was that they had expressed antimilitarist views and protested against the brutal treatment of a fellow soldier by the French army brass.

The evidence produced to support the accusations was copies of mimeographed soldiers' papers and the draft of a petition drawn up to protest the beating of a soldier by an officer.

The Committee for the Release of the Imprisoned Soldiers was formed to fight these victimizations. Jean-Paul Sartre; Michel Rocard, a leader of the PSU [Parti Socialiste Unifié—United Socialist party]; and Alain Krivine of the LC [Ligue Communiste — Communist League, the French section of the Fourth International] represented the committee at a January 27 news conference.

Hundreds of local chapters of the committee were organized in high schools, universities, neighborhoods, and factories. The list of endorsers of the defense campaign broadened to include even local union leaders of the CGT [Confédération Générale du Travail—General Confederation of Labor, the Communist party-led union], and the other major union federation, the CFDT [Confédération Française et Démocratique du Travail — French Democratic Confederation of



The Pompidolian Regime.

Labor, an independent union of Catholic origin].

A high point in the committee's campaign against political repression in the army was to have been the mass meeting scheduled for March 17 at the Mutualité in Paris. Sartre, Rocard, and Krivine were to speak.

Another meeting in defense of the imprisoned soldiers was organized by the Gauche Prolétarienne [Proletarian Left], a Maoist group. It was scheduled for March 14 also at the Mutualité.

Both meetings were banned March 13 by the prefect of the Paris police. The next day the minister of the interior issued his decree, which apparently banned all public manifestations of support for the political rights of soldiers.

This move indicated that de Gaulle's rather pale successor, Premier Georges Pompidou, fears that his regime is not strong enough to tolerate normal democratic freedoms—certainly no independent thinking in the army. In this case, what the French newspapers like

to call the "Pompidolian era" is likely to be a period of intense struggles for democratic rights.

The sponsors of the banned meetings made strong protests against the government's dictatorial actions. The protests, however, reflected a very different approach to the problem on the part of the groups involved.

Speaking for the Gauche Prolétarienne, Alain Geismar, former head of the university teachers' union, declared: "They can ban a meeting but not Maoism, which is the very expression of the people's struggle."

Geismar also included a denunciation of the Communist party in his protest. He accused the CP of being "social fascists . . . who divert and attack the people's struggles."

In contrast, the Committee for the Release of the Imprisoned Soldiers issued a communiqué calling for a broad front of opposition to the government's attack which is now directed not only at the political rights of soldiers but at the basic political rights of civilians as well. "This measure," the communiqué said, "has shown the government's determination to restrict free speech.

"At a time when the [defense] campaign was spreading like wildfire in the army and taking on an ever more important scope, it is significant that the government thinks it can halt it by banning a public meeting."

The committee appealed "to political and labour organizations to protest this ban, which threatens their free speech, and to give a common answer to a government which wants to monopolize all means of informing the public."

### Report on Vietnamization

"It must be something to do with the atmosphere in Saigon, but increasingly its politicians, officials and leaders of the armed forces are relying on the advice of seers and fortune-tellers. Omens rather than judgment are deciding policies. Palm prints, birth dates and signatures of national leaders are on sale in the shops and stores of Saigon's innumerable astrologers, palmists and fortune-tellers. The war is being fought on many fronts."—*Far Eastern Economic Review*, March 12.

## Deepening Political Crisis in West Bengal

By Kailas Chandra

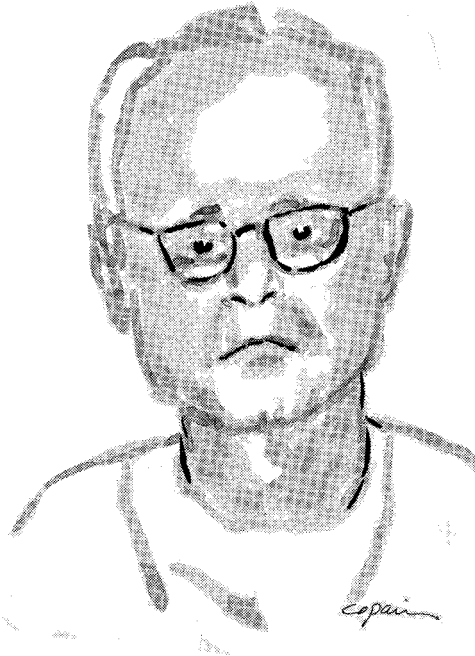
Bombay

The "left-dominated" United Front (UF) ministry in West Bengal is on the verge of collapse with the threat of the Bangla Congress, headed by Chief Minister Ajoy Mukherjee, to quit the government.\* This comes in the wake of a series of physical clashes involving different constituents of the UF, especially in the rural areas of the state. The Communist party of India (Marxist), as the dominant partner in the thirteen-party UF, has been accused of using the police department under the charge of Deputy Chief Minister Jyoti Basu of the CPI(M) to suppress the other constituents of the coalition.

Should the UF ministry fall, which seems very likely, there is indeed a move sponsored by the pro-Moscow Communist party of India [CPI] and the Bangla Congress to set up a "mini-front" government in West Bengal from which the CPI(M) would be excluded. The project has the blessings of the ruling Congress party of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, as a part of its strategy to isolate the CPI(M), which is admittedly the largest single mass party with big influence amongst the rural poor in the state today.

In fact, the Congress party extended its support to the pro-Moscow CPI and its allies (the Muslim League, etc.) in Kerala to topple the CPI(M)-led United Front ministry there and install a "mini-front" government led by the pro-Moscow CPI.

\* Mukherjee resigned March 16 and the multiclass United Front government fell. The Communist party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)] is attempting to form a new coalition, but nine of the parties in the United Front have announced their refusal to join it in a new government. According to the March 17 *New York Times* "many observers think that Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's Government will dissolve the Assembly and impose President's rule, which would put the state of 44 million under New Delhi's administration until the turmoil subsides enough to hold new elections."—IP



AJOY MUKHERJEE

But in West Bengal, unlike Kerala, there are strong mass organizations of the urban proletariat and the rural poor. Should the CPI(M) be thrown out of office, a section of the capitalist parties, including Mrs. Gandhi's Congress party, fears that the CPI(M) will be forced to organize mass resistance against the state, despite its own parliamentary illusions, perhaps as a tactic to retain its popular electoral support in the state. This situation could have far-reaching repercussions throughout the country. In fact, it is this fear of a mass upsurge that has thus far restrained the Congress party and the CPI(M)'s partners in the United Front from wrecking the present coalition government in the hope that the mass discontent could be contained within the constitutional framework.

\* \* \*

The class struggle as emerging in West Bengal, radicalized by recent political developments in the country, however, has its own logic. Contrary to the relative increase in political

apathy demonstrated by the working class in other states, including industrial centers like Bombay in the recent period, the working class of West Bengal, in the jute, engineering, and textile industries as well as tea plantations, went into strike action and won some significant economic concessions from their employers. The struggles in the villages, especially between the rural poor on the one hand and the rich peasantry and the capitalist farmers (jotedars) on the other, have assumed more spectacular forms.

The peasant upheaval in the Naxalbari region of Darjeeling district of West Bengal in 1968, in which the landless peasants resorted to armed resistance against the police to retain the land captured by them, was only a beginning of the new upsurge in West Bengal. The various Maoist tendencies called Naxalites — dissidents from the CPI(M) who led the Naxalbari upsurge — are indeed finding themselves isolated today and hopelessly divided into numerous rival factions.

For one thing, the "Naxalite" groups, inhibited as they were by the Maoist concept of a four-class "people's democratic" front, including the rich peasants, could not develop independent class movements of agricultural workers and poor peasants. And they did not believe in linking these struggles with the urban proletariat.

Besides, the UF government under the pressure of the mass movement introduced legislation aimed at "redistributing" landholdings in an attempt to keep the upsurge of the rural poor within safer "constitutional" channels.

The UF government did take administrative action to allot several thousand acres of fallow and forest land among landless peasants. In some cases forcible occupations of land by peasants were also legalized through governmental decrees. But these steps could touch only the fringe of the problem and could not satisfy the land hunger of the vast majority of the landless peasants and agricultural workers



who found themselves cheated by the "land reforms" of the UF government—which were in no way better than the "land reform" laws enacted by the Congress of "capitalist" governments in other states. It could not be otherwise within the framework of a backward capitalist economy, such as the one prevailing in India.

There was also a movement for "re-distribution" of "surplus" land held by the landlords (jotedars, etc.) over and above the ceilings fixed by law. But the limitations of such a movement, within the prevailing capitalist framework, were obvious. For one thing surplus land, fraudulently held by landlords by means of legal gimmicks—dividing titles of land among different members of the same family and manipulation of tenancy laws—could not be handed over to the tillers even by the UF government without engaging itself in prolonged litigation. Besides, in any case, even if all the surplus holdings of individual landlords were occupied, experience showed that the "pool" could meet the demand of only a small fraction of the land-hungry peasants.

This was the background in which the various left constituents of the UF government, including the CPI(M), CPI, Revolutionary Socialist party [RSP], Socialist Unity Centre [SUC], Forward Bloc, etc., organized the so-called land-seizure campaigns in their respective pockets of influence.

Supporters were exhorted to occupy lands wherever they could find them with promises that such occupation would be later legalized. But these seizure campaigns led to violent "interparty" clashes in different districts involving the supporters of different UF parties in almost all cases. According to official reports more than 200 persons were either killed or murdered during the last year in several areas of Bengal in disputes over land "distribution."

The opportunist character of the multiclass coalition of the traditional left with bourgeois parties like the Bangla Congress was exposed all the more as a result of these clashes. The CPI(M), for example, which claimed to be the biggest champion of the cause of the landless peasants in some regions, found itself fighting on the side of the landlords or rich peasants against the rural poor in other regions, where other parties were head-

ing the land-seizure campaigns. This could be said of the CPI, RSP, SUC, and other constituents of the UF as well. It is still anybody's guess what percentage of the landless peasants could benefit from the campaign, which assumed a bizarre character.

Thus what was in reality a new manifestation of class struggle in the rural sectors of politically advanced Bengal was distorted and transformed into unprincipled conflicts among supporters of various left parties. The exploiting classes in the rural areas represented by the Bangla Congress, etc., have raised the cry of "law and order in danger."

These conflicts in fact were at the bottom of the present crisis of the UF government. The bourgeois press and right-wing capitalist parties have indeed utilized them to discredit the left movement as a whole in the eyes of the rural masses who have reasons to feel disillusioned by the performance of their traditional left leaders.

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It is in this background that the Socialist Workers party [SWP], the Indian section of the Fourth International, has entered the political scene in West Bengal with a program of building independent class organizations of the agricultural workers and poor peasants in the state.

The left constituents of the UF have deliberately sabotaged the prospects of independent class organizations of the rural poor, to serve their narrow sectarian ends.

The West Bengal Village Workers and Peasants League [VWPL], led by the SWP, conducted a successful strike struggle of agricultural workers in about sixty-five villages in Bankura and two neighbouring districts of Midnapore and Purulia during the last harvesting season (October-November 1969) and won for the first time a substantial increase in the wages paid to farm labourers by landlords and rich peasants.

This was a new experience in rural Bengal, where all national parties have refrained from organizing independent class action of agricultural workers—who constitute 30 to 35 percent of the rural population—lest they antagonize the rich peasants, their "allies" in the UF.

The main demand of the strikers

was a wage raise. The VWPL demanded a daily wage of six kilograms of paddy [threshed unmilled rice] in kind, in place of the prevailing rate of two-and-a-half kilograms of paddy.

After the seventh day of the strike the landowners in most villages agreed to raise the daily wage to four kilograms of paddy plus two free meals a day. In some villages the workers gained as much as five to six kilograms of paddy.

The outcome of the strike had an electrifying effect on the agricultural workers of Bankura and adjoining districts. Soon the Trotskyist leader in the district, Jagdish Jha, became a central figure of the new rural awakening. Branches of the VWPL were formed in various villages by workers and poor peasants almost spontaneously. Numerous mass meetings have been held in various villages and towns explaining the eighteen-point charter formulated by the Workers and Peasants League.

Although the agricultural workers have won a victory, they are now facing attempts by the jotedar landlords to terrorize them with the indirect support of left parties represented in the UF.

Fearing the growing influence of the Trotskyist movement in rural areas of Bengal, the CPI(M) held a conference of its own supporters in the region at Krishnapur, one of the important towns in Bankura district, as a part of its strategy to wean the peasant masses away from the influence of the SWP. The leadership of the CPI(M) finds it difficult to attack the new movement. As a strategy it is opposed to the creation of class organizations of agricultural workers, lest it would alienate rich peasants who constitute their real base in rural Bengal.

There are, however, attempts by jotedars—often supporters of the CPI(M)—to intimidate activists of the VWPL with the help of hooligan elements and the local police. Several false criminal cases have been registered against the VWPL organizers.

In view of this terror campaign let loose by the police and jotedars, the VWPL has found it imperative to organize its own defense guards to defend the activists. A volunteer corps of the VWPL with a unit in each village is being organized.

The work of the VWPL is being handicapped by lack of resources and

the SWP has called for a fund-raising drive to assist the comrades in West Bengal.

\* \* \*

The eighteen-point charter of the VWPL covers the demands of the poor peasants also. It includes:

1. Jobs for all village youth, or unemployment doles.

2. A minimum wage of six kilos of paddy for every agricultural worker.

3. Full employment in all seasons through development of public relief work.

4. Pensions and doles for aged and physically disabled rural labourers.

5. Enactment of laws banning eviction of sharecroppers and tiller-tenants.

6. Forfeiture of all land held by jotedars in excess of legal ceilings and its redistribution among actual tillers.

7. Expropriation of land held by non-agriculturalist absentee landlords.

8. Annulment of old government loans given to poor peasants holding less than thirty bighas [six acres] of land.

9. State aid to poor cultivators and

supply of manure and seeds free of cost to them.

10. Initiation of state projects to build (or repair existing) small dams, reclaim marshy land for cultivation, excavate silt from rivers, canals, and ponds to increase land under cultivation.

11. Immediate electrification of villages for irrigation purposes so that at least two crops can be raised on every plot of land.

12. Promotion of agro-industries through peasant cooperatives with state subsidies and protection.

13. Vesting of control of forests and government land in elected committees of peasants in each village.

14. Opening of at least one primary school in each village with full schooling facilities for every child.

15. Free food and books to children of parents owning less than ten bighas of land or with less than Rs.3,000 [US\$400] income per year.

16. Free education up to pre-university level to all children of families with an annual income of less than Rs.5,000 [US\$666].

17. Free state care for orphans, deformed and crippled children, and old people without relations.

18. Free medical treatment for all poor peasants and agricultural workers.

\* \* \*

Although the above demands sound modest and elementary, they have assumed a revolutionary significance in the context of the present stage of the movement of the rural masses in India who have remained unorganized by and large so far. It is still the initial stage of the class movement of the agricultural workers. Based on the experience gained in West Bengal, the SWP is trying to organize village workers' and poor peasants' unions in Kerala, with considerable success, and also in other states.

Hitherto only isolated attempts have been made to organize independent unions of agricultural workers. The SWP is initiating a new phase of the revolutionary struggles in the rural areas. If properly coordinated with the working-class movements in the urban areas, these struggles can play a decisive role in throwing up a revolutionary leadership of the Indian working class.

## France

# The Battle of Nanterre

By Laurence Becker

### Paris

The events which took place at Nanterre University March 3 mark an important stage in the renewal of campus struggles here in France. Since the beginning of the school year, the government has waged an offensive against students and faculty. This has taken various forms, notably the intimidation of students and professors having "dissident" views, including actual dismissals. There has been a move to eliminate certain departments, such as philosophy and sociology, where leftists are strongly represented.

Another method of making the university more manageable is by reducing its size, and making sure that only the most serious students finish their education. This is accomplished by giving students a series of highly

competitive examinations early in their studies; or by augmenting the number of credits one needs in order to continue from the first year of study to the next, and then making it impossible for students to earn the credits by limiting the size of the classes. Often a student gets only three out of six courses that he needs in the first term. This means that in the next term he must take nine courses in order to complete all twelve by the end of the year.

In almost every case the government measures have been met with strong resistance by students and faculty. The fall and winter were marked by university strikes throughout the country, one of the longest and most important taking place in the field of medicine.

Since May 1968 Nanterre University, a sprawling, modern "factory" located right next to Bidonville—a poverty-stricken community made of tin shacks which houses the most poorly paid workers, North African immigrants—has been looked to as the barometer of student sentiment and combativity.

The form the government's offensive took at Nanterre was to violate the autonomy of the university—guaranteed by law since Napoleon's time—by allowing police to regularly patrol the campus. The pretext for this move was a series of clashes between left-wing students and neofascists, the most serious of which took place at the end of January, and two sharp battles between the Maoists and supporters of the Communist party on

February 11 and 12. There were also a number of robberies and assaults attributed to the ghetto youth of Bidonville.

The administration could no longer assure the personal safety of anyone, it said; rape and even murder could be committed at any moment. The dean, acting at the request of the Conseil de Gestion (the student and faculty advisory and decision-making committee), ordered the end of campus autonomy. This meant that the campus was to become a thoroughfare like any other street and that police would be allowed on campus. It did not imply that police presence was obligatory. Nevertheless, on February 27 they arrived. The police intervention was carefully preceded by an intensive press campaign about armed groups of extremists, both left and right, illustrating the danger of such groups by repeating the story of the battle between Maoists and CGT [Confédération Générale du Travail—General Confederation of Labor—the CP-led union] activists from the Communist party which resulted in a fractured skull for one of the CGT members.

The presence of police was sheer provocation. They encircled the university completely and a number of police walked around on the campus itself to prove that they were allowed to be there. What resulted from this was a three-day series of battles between students and police, the most serious of which took place March 3.

A meeting had been called for that afternoon to discuss events since the arrival of the police. This gathering of students and faculty was one of the largest held since May 1968 and assembled nearly 4,000 students. As the meeting broke up around 4:00 p.m., students gathered outside one of the buildings and a demonstration began with the chant "cops off campus."

The cops charged immediately; students and faculty sought refuge as they had the day before in two of the classroom buildings nearby. For almost three hours, cops used the tactic of fighting students in one building until they were tired, whereupon the cops would shower the building with tear-gas grenades and move to the other building where they would start the process over again, then move back to the first building while its occupants were still recovering from the last assault.

March 30, 1970

Students used parts of broken desks and chairs to defend themselves; barricades were hastily thrown up as the fighting began, but were destroyed by bulldozers. When the wind was in favor of the students, they caught the tear-gas grenades and hurled them back at the cops.

As the fighting continued, many students, trapped inside the buildings, nearly suffocated. Although the police had no orders to enter the building, they came into the ground floor in order to throw tear gas into the stairways. Finally, after about two and a half hours of fighting, an assistant to the dean announced by loudspeaker that, following negotiations, the forces of "order" were soon to be withdrawn, permitting students to leave.

It was decided by students inside that for security reasons all buildings where fighting had taken place should be evacuated, that students living off campus should leave, and that other militants who had to remain on campus go to the student cafeteria.

The cops were temporarily withdrawn and students began to leave as decided. Those remaining headed toward the cafeteria at the other end of the campus, but as they arrived the police charged again. These were fresh forces that had not participated in the previous battle. They launched a full-scale attack, clubbing students mercilessly, and throwing tear gas onto the second floor where some 400 students not involved in the fighting at all were eating dinner.

The lights went out. The students panicked and, choking from tear gas, ran outside for air, only to be clubbed by police. The cops, regular forces from the town of Nanterre, were so brutal that the intervention of the special, more disciplined gendarmes (riot police) was necessary in order to prevent students from being killed. The gendarmes formed a cordon around the students, some of whom were already seriously injured.

The cops, mad with rage, began shouting things like "death!" and "hearse, hearse!" as ambulances drove up to evacuate the wounded. Unable to continue beating students, the cops proceeded to take out their anger on the cars parked nearby, breaking windshields, slashing tires, smashing hoods with their clubs.

Classes were suspended for the remainder of the week, although the

campus was not closed. The administration, in an embarrassing position to say the least, abdicated all responsibility by announcing that once again the question of how to "normalize" the campus would be left up to the Conseil de Gestion.

A mass meeting was held on the Nanterre campus March 6 with the police discreetly out of sight. The meeting assembled some 5,000 students and faculty from the Paris area, although Nanterre itself is situated outside of the city. Afterwards, the masses of students returning to Paris by train held a demonstration in the Gare St-Lazare. Many passersby stopped to listen to the students and discuss with them the recent events; in some cases discussions continued for hours.

One week after this meeting, the situation at Nanterre is still unresolved. Some classes have resumed, with police still near but out of view. Voting will be held tomorrow on the proposals of the Conseil de Gestion. One thing is certain, however: police were brought on campus hoping to take advantage of a disunited left to impose serious restrictions on the political freedom won by students in the past. The administration and government seriously underestimated the desire and ability of students to respond to such provocation.

The attempt to force radical students into submission has not only helped to unify their ranks, but has served to radicalize new layers of students who may have been indifferent to radical faction fights but are not indifferent when the cops attempt to run their university.

March 12.

#### Sokagakkai Criticized in Diet

Charges that Sokagakkai, Japan's powerful ultranationalist Buddhist sect, and its political arm, the extreme rightist Komeito party, tried to suppress a book critical of their movement, reached the floor of the Japanese Diet in the first week of March.

Yoshikata Aso of the Democratic Socialist party, a moderate formation, demanded a thorough investigation.

Aso submitted a tape recording of conversations between a representative of the book published and a representative of distribution agents for the publishing company as material evidence that the ultraright grouping had applied impermissible pressures to prevent sale of the book. The distributors' representative, Aso said, was forced to drop the book.

# Against the Disciplinary University!

By Daniel Bensaid

[The following article has been translated from the March 9 issue of the French communist action weekly *Rouge*.]

\* \* \*

Since May 1968 and the peak of the March 22 Movement, the gap has steadily widened between the campus movement and the mass of students.

On the one hand, there has been a desperate student movement caught up in the dreams of May and a paralytic UNEF [Union Nationale des Etudiants de France—National Union of Students of France], where any political debate has been replaced by fights over accreditation of delegates between opposing sets of lawyers.

On the other hand, there has been the mass of students trapped in scholastic routine by the Faure reform.\* It has been an atomized mass, dispersed to suit the new university installations (Clignancourt, Dauphine, Vincennes, St-Maur, Asnières), fragmented by increases in academic credit requirements and multiplication of UERs [academic governing bodies], without any unity or organizational centers. It has been a milieu held on a leash by continual examinations, a milieu exasperated by the incantatory mobilizations of the veterans of May, whom it has not recognized as its own.

And now this milieu is stirring. The regime's policy for higher education—whose aspiration has been to meet simultaneously the needs of order, elitist selection, and austerity—has pushed the students too far.

The government has not been cautious as to the means used to implement this overambitious policy. It has used systematic repression against the teaching staffs, who have been made vulnerable by the introduction of the contract system throughout higher ed-

ucation and the different levels of the faculty. Weeding out of students has been organized and planned by the various departmental orders of Guichard and Boulin in medicine and Guichard in languages.

The university freedoms have been destroyed with the end of autonomy on the Nanterre campus. There has been ever increasing collaboration and collusion between the university administrations and the bourgeois regime, as shown by the Schwaetzer\* affair in the science department, where Zamansky is a perfect embodiment of the teacher-cop.

This is a policy of making the universities profitable and establishing disciplinary institutions of higher learning. Peyrefitte made the logic of this explicit on his return from the USA. And his explanation confirms the analyses made by the revolutionists. "Without competition," he said, "university autonomy leads to ossification and isolation!"

In plain language—hurrah for the competitive autonomy heralded by the devaluation of the philosophy, mathematics, and political economy diplomas at Vincennes! Furthermore, "free education produces irresponsibility." By "pricing education at cost," they will get responsible students . . . and profitable ones, at the rate of 5,000 francs [about US\$1,000] a year. Remember the little feeler they sent out at the beginning of the year by increasing fees!

Confronted with this overly greedy government policy, the new student

\* Thomas Schwaetzer, an American citizen resident in France for about fifteen years and an activist in the movement against the Vietnam war. An expulsion order was issued against Schwaetzer in September 1968. He was informed of it in January 1969 and finally expelled in October 1969. A candidate for an advanced degree at the University of Paris, Schwaetzer came to Paris to defend his thesis on February 25 of this year but was not allowed to stay to do so. Zamansky, the dean of the science faculty, was accused by students of collusion with the police in victimizing Schwaetzer.

milieu finds itself catapulted into struggle. The first stage of its mobilization has been on *immediate*, or even special-group interests—against this or that aspect of the government policy. But from the outset this struggle has had a *mass* character, it is a mobilization of a mass of students suffering the same fate and who have long been reduced to silence.

Finally, inasmuch as it directly confronts the regime, and a regime which is unwilling to give an inch, this mobilization has a dynamic of very rapid radicalization and politicalization, as the struggles of the language and psychology students attest.

As a reminder, I can cite the following struggles that have taken place just in the last few days: mass demonstrations of language students in Grenoble, Clermont, and Montpellier, and strikes in the lycées [academic high schools]; and the convergence in Bordeaux of the struggle against the Guichard order and against the invasion of the office of the AGEB [Association Générale des Etudiants de Bourdeaux—General Association of Bourdeaux Students] by police looking for Molotov cocktails which turned out to be only paintpots! In Le Mans there was a demonstration by 1,000 students against the arrest of activists belonging to the PCMLF [Parti Communiste Marxiste-Léniniste de France]. In Marseilles there was an assembly on Palestine of 500 persons. And this is without going back to the strikes in the medical schools.

The mobilization of this new milieu must be paralleled by the development of a new movement. UNEF, structurally outmoded and politically ossified and bureaucratic, does not express it.

Against the policy of the regime it is possible to create a united front of struggle which can give confidence to the students and rally the vanguard in opposition to the government.

By abolishing the autonomy of Nanterre, the regime sought a test of strength on the campus. It succeeded

\* De Gaulle chose Edgar Faure as his minister of education after the May-June days. Faure instituted a reform of education designed to pacify the campuses.

only in spotlighting the failure of participation, already undermined by austerity. This move succeeded only in consolidating the revolutionary opposition.

It is now possible to win certain limited victories on the campus. No matter how limited, these will be the first victories since May 1968, and by this fact alone have the potential of reviving the mobilization. In order to achieve this, we must reinforce the unity of the struggle:

- against the abolition of university autonomy at Nanterre, for the with-

drawal of the police from the campus, for the resignation of the Conseil de Gestion [Administrative Council];

- against the weeding-out decrees;
- against the contract system in hiring teaching staffs;

- against the disciplinary university and for Schwaetzer's right to defend his thesis;

- against the violations of political rights: searches, arrests of activists, and expulsions of foreign nationals and immigrants.

On this basis, we must create a united front of struggle against the

disciplinary university! The united mobilization Friday, March 6, must be a first step in this direction. We must link up with the teachers of *Réno-*vation Syndicale [Trade-Union Renewal], *l'Ecole Emancipée* [the Free School], SNCS [Syndicat National des Chercheurs Scientifiques — National Union of Scientific Researchers], and the minority faction of SNESup [Syndicat National de l'Enseignement Supérieur—National Union of College Teachers], who are the organizers of the March 6 meeting.

March 5.

## 'Struggle Against the Barbaric Family Situation'

# Trotsky on Women's Liberation

[Printed here for the first time in English is a message by Leon Trotsky to a rally of women workers in Moscow in 1923. The text appeared in the November 28, 1923, issue of *Pravda*, the official newspaper of the Communist party of the Soviet Union.

[Trotsky's views are of particular interest today with the rise of the women's liberation movement in the United States and similar expressions of the fight for women's emancipation in Canada, Britain, and elsewhere. Speaking for the Soviet government, during Lenin's lifetime, Trotsky expressed the commitment of the Russian revolution to uprooting the oppression of women. This was no mere verbal promise. The early Soviet government instituted a series of deep-going reforms, including the liberalization of divorce laws, legalization of abortions, and the institution of community kitchens and nurseries.

[Under Stalin most of these reforms were abolished and the family on the bourgeois model was again sanctified. This great leap backward in social relations was summed up by one pro-Moscow observer in the Stalinist quarterly *New World Review* in its last issue in 1969. Pat Sloan, a former editor of *British-Soviet Friendship*, wrote: "From the permissiveness of the first 15 years, marriage and divorce laws were tightened up, so that divorce was made progressively more difficult. Abortion was again made illegal. . . . The Order of Heroine of

Motherhood was created for mothers of large families."

[Trotsky's brief message is a refreshing reminder that the retrograde attitude of the Soviet bureaucrats of today on the question of women's rights has nothing in common with Marxism. The translation from the Russian is by *Intercontinental Press*. This article will be included in a pamphlet entitled *Leon Trotsky on Women and the Family* to be published by Pathfinder Press, Inc., 873 Broadway, New York, New York 10003.]

\* \* \*

I am greatly aggrieved that a lingering cold prevents me from taking part in your rally celebrating the fiftieth year of the party's correct and extensive work among women. Allow me to send greetings in written form to the participants in the rally and, through them, to the women workers and peasants whom the party's work has already awakened and those whom it will awaken tomorrow.

The problem of women's emancipation, both material and spiritual, is closely tied to that of the transformation of family life. It is necessary to remove the bars from those confining and suffocating cages into which the present family structure drives woman, turning her into a slave, if not a beast of burden. This can be accomplished only through the organi-

zation of communal methods of feeding and child-rearing.

The road to this is not a short one: material resources are necessary; strength of will, knowledge, and effort are necessary.

There are two paths leading to the transformation of everyday family life: from below and from above. "From below" denotes the path of combining the resources and efforts of individual families, the path of building enlarged family units with kitchens, laundries, etc., in common. "From above" denotes the path of initiative by the state or by local Soviets in building group workers' quarters, communal restaurants, laundries, nurseries, etc. Between these two paths, in a workers and peasants state, there can be no contradiction; one ought to supplement the other. The efforts of the state would come to naught without the independent striving toward a new way of life by the workers' families themselves; but even the most energetic display of initiative by individual workers' families, without guidance and aid by the local Soviets and state authorities, could not bring great success either. The work must be carried on simultaneously both from above and from below.

An obstacle in this path, as well as in others, is presented by the scarcity of material resources. But this only means that actual success will not be



as rapid as we would have wished. It would be totally inadmissible, however, if on the grounds of poverty we began to brush aside the question of building a new kind of life.

Inertia and blind habit, unfortunately, constitute a great force. And nowhere does blind, dumb habit hold sway with such force as in the dark and secluded inner life of the family. And who is called upon first of all to struggle against the barbaric family situation if not the woman revolutionist? By this I do not mean to say at all that conscious workers are relieved of the responsibility to labor

toward the transformation of the economic forms of family life, above all the forms of feeding, child-rearing, and education. But those who fight most energetically and persistently for the *new* are those who suffer most from the *old*. And in the present family situation the one that suffers most is the woman—the wife and the mother.

That is why the proletarian Communist woman—and in her footsteps, every awakened woman—should devote a major part of her strength and attention to the task of transforming our everyday life. If our economic and cultural backwardness creates

many difficulties and only permits us to move slowly along this path, still it is necessary that the collective public opinion of all women workers be applied as pressure so that everything that can be done, given our present forces and resources, will be done.

Only in this way will we open up for the most backward and beclouded working woman, and after her the peasant woman, the door to the kingdom of socialism.

I wish you every success in your work.

Yours with Communist greetings,  
L. Trotsky.

## Peru

# 'The Government Is Not Nationalist'

By Hugo Blanco

### El Frontón Prison

Until a few years ago Peru was essentially in the hands of the oligarchy and of the imperialist interests bound up with this sector. Imperialist domination rested on the country's backwardness and its position as a raw-materials producer. However, within this imperialist structure a manufacturing industry was penetrating into the country and enjoyed favorable conditions as against the weak national bourgeoisie.

Although fundamentally benefiting imperialist sectors, this process of industrialization strengthened sections of the national bourgeoisie and the upper strata of the middle class (technicians, managers, engineers), which shared in this development.

It is these imperialist sectors, and the national sectors linked to them, that this government fundamentally represents, although it continues to be an arbiter among all the exploiters.

As a representative of these sectors, the government is interested in promoting the development of the country, but its aim is a bourgeois kind of development benefiting the new-type exploiting sectors and not the Peruvian people.

Measures such as the agrarian reform and the nationalization of La Brea-Pariñas reveal this bourgeois objective.

The formation of an extensive layer of agricultural proprietors who would consume the products of the manufacturing industry would benefit the interests of the capitalists and for this reason they have an interest in the agrarian reform. Moreover, this measure has the advantage for them of dampening the combativity of the peasants and creating a social base of relatively passive rural proprietors. This is what the new exploiting sectors want to do in the countryside. However, they cannot achieve it because of the manifold contradictions among the exploiters and between them and the people.

The nationalization of La Brea-Pariñas means cheaper fuel for industry, besides removing the source of embarrassment to the Peruvian government represented by the scandalous illegality of the possession of these oil fields by the IPC [International Petroleum Company]. This embarrassment was becoming intolerable in the face of the growing nationalist consciousness of our people.

A clear proof that the government is not nationalist is that it has not proceeded to nationalize the other enterprises in imperialist hands, such as Toquepala, Cerro de Pasco, Marcona, etc. On the contrary, the government not only gave assurances that the measure taken in the case

of La Brea-Pariñas was exceptional, but has continued the tradition of past Peruvian governments of selling the national resources, handing over the Cujone oil fields to the imperialists.

In the disputes between the imperialist companies and the workers movement, the government's position has been unquestionably proimperialist. We saw this in the strike of the Cerro de Pasco workers. We saw this at the time of the Toquepala strike against Southern Peru Copper Corporation (when the Peruvian workers were fighting heroically against this imperialist concern, the "nationalist" government was turning over Cujone to the same company).

We are seeing that in the conflict between the Texoro workers and the imperialist Duncan Fox company, the government is clearly and scandalously taking the side of the imperialist bosses.

The antiuniversity law is another demonstration that the government is not nationalist, since the objective of this law is to make the universities conform to the needs of capitalist development under the control of the Yankees and not for the benefit of the Peruvian people.

With the rise of Belaundismo [the politics associated with President

Belaúnde Terry, who was ousted by the present military regime], the developmentalist sectors took a big step forward, but one which was largely neutralized by the "opposition" representing the old oligarchy. With the coup d'etat, the developmentalist sectors won a greater victory. However, this does not mean that the oligarchy has been defeated. The struggle among the exploiters continues.

The promulgation of the agrarian reform law was a serious blow against the oligarchy; but the hardest blow was the expropriation of the industrial plantations of the *Costa* [the coastal strip], which is a strong bulwark of the old oligarchy. In its other aspects, the law does not differ essentially from the previous one.

By expropriating the industrial plantations and paying compensation in the form of bonds that can be invested in the manufacturing industry, the government is trying to liquidate this sector of the old oligarchy, not by crushing it economically but by incorporating it into the developmentalist sectors.

Two other important measures taken by the government against the old oligarchy are the reform of the judicial branch and the "Freedom of the Press Statute."

Although the reform of the judiciary proposes to streamline the ultracorrupt bourgeois court system, fundamentally it represents replacing the old oligarchical bureaucracy with a pro-junta bureaucracy.

The "Freedom of the Press Statute" is aimed at limiting the effectiveness of the great bulwark of the oligarchy: its control of virtually all the country's newspapers and magazines. Undoubtedly this "statute" will also serve the government as another instrument against the left, but its fundamental objective is to curb the power of the old oligarchy.

The old oligarchy is rending its garments for "democracy" and clamoring for elections.

The junta has expressed its intention to remain in power for a long time and someday to call a constituent assembly that would give the vote to illiterates (until now the great majority of the Peruvian people have been prevented from participating in our "democratic elections").

The FIR [Frente de Izquierda Revolucionario—Front of the Revolution-

ary Left—the Peruvian Trotskyists] fights for a workers and peasants government, for a socialist government. It fights for nationalizing the banks, foreign trade, and all foreign enterprises. It fights for putting the industries into the hands of the working class and the land into the hands of the peasants.

We know that we can achieve this only through a revolution, that the exploiters will not readily surrender power into the hands of the workers.

But we also know that the Peruvian people are still not ready to struggle for power.

The various popular sectors are struggling for their immediate, most deeply felt, and fundamentally economic needs.

We are accompanying our people in this struggle, realizing that all aspects of it, if they are conducted effectively, lead toward the revolution.

The masses learn in struggle, and this apprenticeship is not wasted when it is guided by a revolutionary party, when this party incorporates the best fighters in the mass struggle, when the party continues to learn from this struggle.

The Peruvian working class has two acute problems at the present time—the rising cost of living and unemployment.

The workers are continually struggling against these two tragic problems.

Unfortunately, mass mobilization methods are not being used correctly.

Moreover, the struggle of the workers is atomized. Every union confronts the employers separately. The CTP [Confederación de Trabajadores Peruanos—Peruvian Workers Federation] led by the APRA [Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana—American People's Revolutionary Alliance] never centralized the workers' struggle. Unfortunately, the CGTP [Confederación General de Trabajadores Peruanos—General Confederation of Peruvian Workers], led by the pro-Moscow Communist party, has continued this tradition and has never played the role of centralizing the struggle.

In view of this reality, our position is for centralizing the struggle and for systematic, rational utilization of mass mobilization methods.

The fight for centralization takes two forms: (1) unifying the unions engaged in struggle, giving them the maximum

support; and (2) striving to get the unions to present unified lists of demands at the level of the regional federations, industrywide, and at the level of the national confederation.

*Regarding methods.* The workers are accustomed to concentrating their efforts on the legal aspect of their demands, neglecting the need to mobilize. When they resort to mobilization, they do so at the last minute and in a debilitated way, sometimes finding themselves forced to adopt desperate attitudes.

We do not discount the legal aspect of economic struggles. We think that in order not to give the bosses any pretexts and so that the compañeros will see that we have exhausted all legal means, this aspect must be given careful attention. The difference is that we fight for centering the struggle from the beginning on a planned mobilization of the masses, and, if a strike is being considered, for calling the action after a whole previous mobilization has created a favorable atmosphere.

The recourses which are now used to win support for a strike after it has already been going on for several days must be employed not only from the beginning of the strike, but long before it begins, from the beginning of the presentation of demands through legal channels. And these methods must be utilized to the fullest extent and in a systematic way, mobilizing all of the masses. In its general lines, the problem of the white-collar workers is the same.

*On the peasants.* Our position is clear: *Land yes, payment no.* In my article on the peasants, I went into more detail on the forms this struggle is taking.\*

*On the students.* We support the valiant struggle of the student movement against the university law.

Unfortunately, even the students who already understand the necessity of a socialist revolution still do not understand that in order to give impetus to the revolutionary process, or even to strengthen their campus struggle, they must penetrate into the workers movement and the peasants movement. This more than anything would give solidity to the student movement.

*Anti-imperialism.* We are ready to

\* See "The Mobilization of the Peasants," *Intercontinental Press*, October 13, 1969, page 904.—IP

fight alongside all those who struggle for the nationalization of the foreign concerns and for all measures that represent a step forward toward national independence.

Our active solidarity with Vietnam, Cuba, and other countries in a similar position is part of the anti-imperialist struggle.

*Elections and civil liberties.* We do not confuse the struggle of the exploited sectors for their liberties with the struggle of the old oligarchy to recover its full power.

We are for a constituent assembly in which illiterates would participate. We know that neither this government nor any bourgeois government is going to surrender power to the workers through elections.

However, since the Peruvian people have not yet undergone this experience, they may be attracted by the lure of elections. It is our duty to accompany the people in this experience so that they will learn its lessons to the full, so that they will realize that, even if the exploiters give the vote to illiterates, there is no possibility that they will yield power to the exploited through peaceful means.

At present this point does not interest us greatly. The masses are concerned with immediate, essentially economic, gains. And the vanguard is already beginning to see the need for a socialist revolution, even though it does not know how to carry it out.

We fight for unrestricted freedom for the workers', peasants', and students' movements.

We fight for freedom for the left movement.

We fight for freedom for the social and political prisoners.

The capitalist press has always opposed such freedom, such democratic rights for the Peruvian people. Therefore, it would be a foolish mistake to confuse our struggle for civil liberties with the struggle of the old oligarchy for its freedom of the press.

We fight to put the press, as an expression of power, into the hands of the workers.

Nor do we believe what the government says about "Peruvianizing" the press or putting the publishing concerns in the hands of the workers in some cases.

We know that the developmentalist

capitalist sector wants to move into the place of the old oligarchy in the area of control of the press.

We know that the press, like all other organs of power, will pass into the hands of the workers only as a result of a tenacious struggle against all

the exploiters. We know that, as always, in moments of danger all the exploiters will close ranks against us. They will forget their internal disputes to fight their common enemy — the working classes, the real Peru.

February 1970.

## Letter from Bolivian Political Prisoner

### Secret Trial of Che's Supporters in La Paz

[According to a report received by the French left communist weekly *Rouge*, a group of Bolivian political prisoners accused of organizing support for the 1967 guerrilla movement led by Che Guevara were put on trial secretly in La Paz February 2.

[The March 2 issue of *Rouge* published the following excerpts from a letter written February 5 by one of the prisoners in this group who is being held at the San Pedro prison in La Paz. The translation from the French is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

Our trial began two days ago. We were caught by surprise. The minister of justice had not announced the opening of the trial and even the lawyers were completely in the dark. Our comrades and I had intended to prepare our defense carefully, collecting all the documents and affidavits supporting our position. Now we will have to wind up everything rapidly because we are facing the judge empty-handed. We are doing everything possible, but I do not think that we can get the necessary documents in time.

This trial has some very curious aspects. First of all, *we are all being tried as common-law prisoners*. This is completely irregular and any sentence can be overruled on these grounds. Secondly, the *court hearings are being held inside the prison itself* and not in the court building in order to avoid a public trial. The judges have ignored our lawyers' protests. The press has been ordered by the government not to say a word about the case.

*Neither witnesses for the defense nor journalists (with one exception — a Communist party journalist!) have been admitted.* We have the impres-

sion that the "revolutionary" government wants to conduct this trial in strict secret and under a cloak of the most total silence.

Another curious fact is that Mario Monje, the former leader of the Communist party (who betrayed Che's guerrilla movement in 1967), has been included in the trial on the orders of the authorities. And he is to be tried on the same charge, "collusion with the guerrillas," although the government knows exactly what role he played.

The arrival of the ambassador of the USSR in Bolivia is now being awaited and we think that the CP has made contact with the government to demand Monje's release before the ambassador comes. Monje's presence is creating a very disagreeable climate and we have the feeling that we may find ourselves at any moment caught between the machinations of the CP and those of the "revolutionary government."

We have been trying — so far in vain — to break the silence of the press in order to inform the Bolivian public.

I ask you in the name of all my comrades to do the impossible to help us break the silence that is intended to stifle us. They want to condemn us secretly without witnesses and without the world knowing about the arbitrary way we are being tried. I hope that you will answer our appeal and act before it is too late.

#### Now About Those Letters. . .

Last November 4 Nixon went on TV to show stacks of mail backing his Vietnam policy. Lawrence H. Zisman of Piscataway, New Jersey, became suspicious when five letters to Nixon protesting the war brought no acknowledgment. Were only letters of support counted? He sent a "test" letter praising Nixon and received a note of thanks.

*Intercontinental Press*

# Tehran Bus Boycott Forces Shah to Back Down

By Javad Sadeeg

About 1,000 students were arrested in Tehran at the end of February as massive demonstrations including many workers protested an increase in bus fares decreed by the shah's regime. A three-day bus boycott throughout the city February 21-23 was so effective that the Iranian dictator had to interrupt his vacation in Austria to instruct his government to rescind the fare increase—an important victory for the popular movement.

The Western press did not report the events and *Ettela'at* [Information], the largest of the Tehran dailies, gave them only perfunctory coverage.

Three months prior to the boycott, the government, which controls and operates the Tehran bus system, started gradually to increase the fare. This was done by reorganizing the bus routes and charging an extra fare at the beginning of each "new" route. The plan ostensibly aimed at improving the service, but it amounted to an increase of 100 to 200 percent in bus fares (*Ettela'at*, airmail edition, February 24). More than 10 percent of an average worker's daily wage would thus be used up in bus fares. And for the students, who in general live on a meager allowance, this would also be a hardship.

The shah has become used to doing what he pleases to the Iranian people because he has gotten away with it for so long—since the CIA helped him to overthrow the Mossadegh government in 1953. He must have assumed the fare increase would be quietly accepted.

The first indication that mass resistance was building up came from an unexpected quarter: the shah's handpicked Majles (parliament). A few feeble remarks of protest were uttered on the floor of the Majles on February 15 (*Ettela'at*, airmail edition, February 15). This showed the extent of the pressure from below that affected this docile and well-fed body.

*Ettela'at*, which speaks for the regime, then remained silent on the ques-

tion for more than a week. Suddenly on February 24 it featured a statement by the government which was adopted, it said, after a three-hour deliberation by a high-level special commission presided over by the prime minister himself, Amir Abbas Hoveyda.

The government statement read: "In pursuing the order of the Shahanshah Aryamehr concerning the situation of bus transportation in Tehran, a meeting was convened at 5:00 p.m. with the prime minister. The new plan for the bus routes and the resulting increase in fares was discussed. Since the government has recognized that these changes, which were introduced in some lines as an experiment, when put into practice have resulted in an inordinate rise in bus fares in some lines, the prime minister ordered the bus routes and fares returned to their original situation . . ." In other words the shah backed down.

The statement did not explain why the government, with so many business and public-administration experts on its payroll, had to wait until the plan was in effect before "recognizing" that it was going to cause a rise in fares. Nor did it explain why the shah couldn't wait to return from his vacation in Austria before issuing the order to rescind the increase.

In fact, it became clear from what the paper said about the proceedings of the high-level special commission that the government knew precisely what it was doing when the new plan was put into action; they wanted to raise the fares.

It is clear that the government feared to give the real reason for the retreat and had to lie about it, and a crude lie at that.

*Ettela'at* mentioned a report by one of the four (!) commissions appointed (again in pursuance of the orders of the shah in Austria) to investigate the problem.

This report first mentions the protest movement (the translation from the Persian is ours):

"In the beginning the protest was started by the university students, but subversive groups began thinking of taking advantage of the situation and started agitating. Gradually the demonstrations changed their peaceful character and were led in the direction of violence." The paper did not elaborate.

The resistance to the fare increase actually started at Aryamehr Technical university. This institution—named after one of the titles of the much-titled and well-decorated monarch—was set up, ironically, to become an example of a "proper" university in contrast to the University of Tehran, which traditionally has been a center of radical activity.

The movement spread to the other universities and high schools—the high-school population of Tehran is almost 250,000—and then to the general population.

Handwritten leaflets were distributed urging people to walk to school and to work. There was a wide response. The resistance escalated to a total student strike on February 21. Workers joined in the bus boycott. Students stopped buses and prevented their movement. Quite a few bus windows were broken and some buses were overturned. Police and gendarmes were brought in, and about 1,000 students were arrested. The boycott lasted three days and the masses did not yield until the government retreated and issued its statement on February 24.

The retreat has produced a sensation all over the country. This is the first time since the early 1950s that the masses have openly opposed the regime in such numbers and with such militancy—and have won their demands. A new period of struggle is opening in Iran.

## Student Killed in Manila

Thousands of workers and students took part in a day of protest March 18 against the Marcos regime in Manila. A student was killed by security guards at a downtown office building which was a target of the demonstrators.

## Biggest Display of Student Militancy Yet

By Susan Lind

MARCH 11—The first ten days of March have witnessed what British newspapers are calling "the biggest display of student militancy yet seen." Strikes, sit-ins, and other forms of struggle have erupted on more than one-third of the forty-four English universities.

The wave of protest began at Warwick University early in February with a sit-in at the registry office to demand student and faculty control of a social building. During the sit-in, however, files were discovered showing that the university kept political dossiers of students and faculty, rejected student applicants on the basis of secret reports of their political activities, and cooperated with industrialists in spying on the local Labour party.

These discoveries prompted demands at other universities for a full disclosure of secret files to ascertain if similar blacklists were being kept. The biggest action took place at Manchester University February 27 when some 3,000 of the institution's 8,000 students took part in a demonstration, many with signs reading "No to Dossiers, Yes to Freedom."

"Although there have been other large student demonstrations in Britain," the *New York Times* commented February 28, "—notably a sit-in at the London School of Economics in 1968—the size and scope of the Manchester protest dwarfed virtually all the others."

The university administration sought to suppress the protest by seeking a court injunction barring four members of the campus Socialist Society from taking part in Student Union debates or actions. This only hardened the student resistance. David Wynn, the head of the Student Union, denounced the injunction as "a cold-blooded and deliberate attempt to smash" the union.

At this writing the occupation at Manchester has continued for thirteen days, and the London *Guardian* reported March 10 that the students had just voted by 1,344 to 1,010 to con-

tinue their sit-in. They have also called a mass march supported by students from other colleges in the city to demand an independent inquiry into the university's secret files.

By a 96 percent majority the 1,500 students at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology voted to support the Manchester University students by boycotting their classes.

By March 4 the protests had spread to universities across the country. The *Guardian* reported on that date that at Kent University 400 students took over a building to protest the administration's refusal to allow students to see their personal files. The Kent Students' Union voted to provide the participants in the sit-in with funds for food.

A strike was called by the London School of Economics Students' Union March 4. The same day students at Birmingham University were discussing direct action to demand an end to the university's links with the University College of Rhodesia.

At Liverpool University on March 10 about 300 students occupied the main administration building. The *Guardian* reports: "The occupants raised the red flag on the roof, barred the doors against invasion, and later issued five demands."

The demands included: (1) the resignation of the chancellor because of his racist statements and practices; (2) that the university make public a detailed list of all its investments; (3) for an independent inquiry into methods of keeping secret dossiers on students and staff; (4) that the vice-chancellor of the university answer all students' questions regarding political files kept on students and regarding chemical and biological warfare research being done at the university; and (5) no victimization of any students.

The disclosures at Warwick University had the impact they did because Warwick has gone so far in integrating its curriculum and administration with the needs of local business that it has

become almost a caricature of an institute of higher learning. It raised in other students' minds the not unfounded fear that here was a true representation of the future of their own universities.

Since it first admitted undergraduates in 1965, Warwick has boasted of its close connections with big business. Of the nine co-opted lay members of its ruling council, eight are prominent businessmen.

"With the aura of the board room pervading the university's hierarchy," the February 22 London *Sunday Times* commented, "industry has shown no reluctance in giving generous financial support."

The academic staff lists such peculiar posts as a "Pressed Steel Fisher Professor of Industrial Relations," a "Barclays Bank Professor of Management Information Systems," and a "Volkswagen senior lecturer in politics."

Edward Thompson, a reader in labor history at Warwick, told the *Sunday Times* that local industrialists regard the university "largely as a laboratory for their own research and development."

The exposure that this collusion extended to political spying was highly embarrassing to university officials. The administration immediately secured a court injunction prohibiting twenty-one students from retaining, copying, or disseminating any of the records taken from the administration files.

But the restraining order came too late. Some of the juiciest parts have been reproduced and circulated by the Leicester Students' Union.

The February 28 *New York Times* also quoted from the verboten documents, summarizing a "strictly confidential" letter to Warwick's admissions tutor:

"The letter, from Sidney Baxter, the Headmaster of the William Ellis School at Highgate, London, informed the university that an applicant was a



member of a 'schoolboy power' organization.

"Mr. Baxter said later that he was surprised to learn the letter had been passed on to the vice chancellor of the university, who wrote on it, 'Reject this man.'"

The most scandalous document in the Leicester collection is a letter to a high university official addressed from the headquarters of a large local corporation, reporting on a meeting of the Coventry Labour party held on March 3, 1969. A representative of the company was sent to spy on the meeting to report a speech by a professor at Warwick who is active in the Labour party. The company spy

was looking for evidence to prosecute the professor under the 1919 Aliens Restriction Act. In his report, which was forwarded to the university, the company agent complained that the professor's speech "... revealed a very definite bias against employers in general. I can only guess from seeing the man that he would be most likely to exhibit a similar bias in his lectures at the University. If this is the case the students would certainly be exposed to a most undesirable indoctrination, as I do not think he would put the other point of view at all."

Of course, now that students have tried to "put the other point of view"

in the very words of the employers themselves, they are hit with an injunction.

Nevertheless it has created something of a sensation for members of the Labour party to discover that even when they hold "power"—exercised by a servile defender of capitalism like Wilson at that—they are still regarded as subversive by the Tory Neanderthals. The Labour weekly *Tribune* protested February 20:

"Labour members are horrified by the suggestion that files are kept on political views expressed by speakers at meetings held on their premises."

## City Employees' Walkout

# General Strike Threat Wins Gains in San Francisco

By Art Sharon

### San Francisco

The four-day strike of 14,000 city workers ended March 16 after the seven unions involved voted to accept the terms of a negotiated settlement. The agreement raised all wages 5 percent, preserved the annual 5 percent increment which in five steps brings the workers involved from starting-pay level to the highest for his job, and further provided for joint discussion of pay and conditions between the union and the administration.

This last was considered by the unions as a major breakthrough since actual "collective bargaining" is barred by city law. Labor leaders were jubilant over this clause, and George Johns, secretary of the Central Labor Council, is publicly quoted as saying that this is the most important breakthrough since the historic general strike of 1934.

These seven unions represent the so-called miscellaneous employees of the city, including office clerks, nurses, maintenance workers, cafeteria workers in the school system, janitors, and many other classes of workers who man the machinery of the city, exclusive of teachers, firemen, and police. They represent that large section of the working class whose decline in real wages has been the most painful and whose voice is rarely heard, ensnarled as

they are in all the specially designed red tape of civil service.

Through their unions they demanded a 10 percent raise in wages. The civil service machinery concluded after a lengthy study that they deserved a raise of about 7.5 percent with some adjustments in various classifications.

Mayor Alioto and the entire Board of Supervisors without exception not only rejected the union demands but also their own civil service commission's recommendation. They offered instead a lawyer's document which seemed to offer a 5 percent increase in wages but in actuality offered far less. This proposal would have included the abolition of the incremental steps that all city employees have enjoyed for the past twenty-seven years.

The mayor and the supervisors buttressed their position with a released breakdown of the total cost of their offer down to the last nickel. This was calculated to arouse the mighty hosts of the silent majority, the outraged small taxpayer. But it was very quickly pointed out to those who took the trouble to look closely at the figures that somehow there was a million-dollar discrepancy, which brings to mind the observation of the late Samuel Clemens, that while figures don't lie, liars often figure.

And as for the outraged small taxpayer, Alioto's chief support came from the Downtown Association and the angry mutterings of the Chamber of Commerce. These quarters were unanimous in their opinion that the strike was "illegal" and that the settlement was an added burden to their constituents.

It is too early to assess the real and actual gains made by the strike since all the public statements and claims made are suspect. This we will learn from the workers themselves who will make a very accurate assessment. Nevertheless, the other aspects of the strike are significant and deserve attention. As in the recent General Electric strike, their impact will spread.

The strike was like an explosion of anger. The combativity and élan shown surprised everyone. It quickly paralyzed all city facilities picketed. For the overwhelming majority of these workers it was their first strike experience. The last time there was a strike of city workers was in the 1934 general strike. Now, as then, Black, white, and Chicano workers by the thousands experienced for the first time that particular warm solidarity that cuts across all divisions of race, nationality, and job status. They were in a serious fight together.

The picket lines at schools were

joined by teachers, who are entering their own negotiations soon. Teacher and janitor, counselor and dishwasher marched together. There was an almost unanimous unity of all sections of the labor movement behind the strike. The AFL-CIO [American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations], the independent Longshoremen's union, and the Teamsters formed an official council to back the strike. This became, in fact, the biggest weapon of the strike. On the fourth day of the walkout it was due to spread to the waterfront and the airport, to eventually become a general strike.

The negotiations of the strikers' demands and the strategy were in the hands of a top committee of the city's labor movement, made up of George Johns of the Central Labor Council, Daniel DelCarlo of the Building Trades Council, Thomas Rottel of the Metal Trades Council, Jack Goldberger of the Teamsters, and William Chester of the Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union.

This extraordinary concentration of attention from the city's labor movement reflects the fact that unionization among the civil service workers of San Francisco came about historically through the close relationship of this segment of the working class with the organized labor movement of the city from the early 1930s. To permit the political apparatus of the city's financial elite to deal these workers a defeat would have been a demoralizing blow to the entire labor movement. In a certain sense, the action of the mayor, a much touted "friend of labor," and the supervisors was a direct challenge to the labor movement in what they considered to be a favorable antilabor climate.

There have been a series of local strikes in the Bay Area that have dragged on for long periods with meager results. The steady squeeze of inflation, the generally tougher boss response to resistance from the worker on the job, the workers' increasing dissensions and dissatisfaction, are preparing the kinds of explosions that were witnessed the past four days. The recent General Electric strike and the closing of labor ranks in its support was a preview of this one.

The threat of a general strike alarmed the business interests of the city who in turn gave the signal for

a retreat. On the whole, the working class of the city must draw the conclusion that the power of the united labor movement is formidable. This

## U.S.A.

# Scholars File Suit in Mandel Case

By George Novack

Six American scholars from five leading eastern universities brought suit in federal court in Brooklyn March 19 to restrain Secretary of State William P. Rogers and Attorney General John N. Mitchell from barring the well-known Belgian Marxist Ernest Mandel from visiting the United States.

They asked that a three-judge panel be convened to pass on the constitutional merits of the issues in the case. Mandel, editor of the Belgian weekly *La Gauche*, was twice refused a visa for a speaking tour last October and November. They contend that his exclusion restricts their freedom of academic inquiry and injures their constitutional rights to hear the opinions of other scholars in their field.

Bowing to wide public protests, the State Department last fall recommended that a waiver of ineligibility be granted so that Mandel could fill his speaking engagements. But the U.S. attorney general disregarded this advice and insisted upon excluding him from the country. The suit is designed to test the provisions of the McCarran-Walter Act under which Mandel and other foreign notables have been refused a visitor's visa.

The plaintiffs say that the author of *Marxist Economic Theory* has accepted an invitation to speak to various university groups who "want to hear him engage in a free and open academic exchange" in the spring and fall. But he is prevented from setting a precise date and place for these lectures and debates because of "existing uncertainty" regarding the status of his eligibility for receiving a visa. And he has accepted invitations on the condition that he would not be subject to the ineligibility provisions that have been arbitrarily exercised against him.

The scholars further contend that there was no evidence that he would engage in "unlawful speech or con-

duct" and that they have been deprived of equal protection of the law because the provisions of the act apply only to aliens having "leftist" political views and associations but do not disqualify aliens having "rightist" beliefs and associations, such as Nazi party affiliations.

The action was brought by the following scholars: Prof. David Marmelstein, department of social sciences, Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn; Prof. Wassily Leontief, department of economics, Harvard University; Prof. Norman Birnbaum, department of anthropology-sociology, Amherst College; Prof. Robert L. Heilbroner, department of economics, New School for Social Research; Prof. Robert P. Wolff, department of philosophy, Columbia University; Associate Prof. Louis Menashe, department of social sciences, Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn.

Several other prominent scholars are expected to join their colleagues in this action. This is the first challenge in the courts to the restrictive regulations of the McCarran-Walter Act, which was passed at the peak of the McCarthyite period and has now been reactivated as a punitive instrument by the Nixon-Mitchell administration.

The noted constitutional lawyer Leonard Boudin is the attorney in the case. It has been initiated by the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee with the support of the American Foundation for Social Justice and the Socialist Scholars Conference.

### "Concern" Over Defoliants

U. S. officials are showing "signs of concern" over the effects of defoliants on humans in Vietnam, the *New York Times* wrote March 15. A Bienhoa doctor quoted in the article said miscarriages in his area have doubled. "These women are convinced they are the victims of chemicals," he added.

# The Crisis in the Communist Party

[The following two articles have been translated from the January-February issue of *La Batalla*, the exile organ of the Spanish POUM (Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista — United Marxist Workers party), which is published in Paris. The first article is

a sketch of the developing crisis of the Spanish Communist party by Wilbaldo Solano, the editor of *La Batalla*. The second piece is a statement by the ultra-Stalinist wing of the Spanish CP attacking the party leadership.]

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## Editorial from 'La Batalla'

In late 1964, when the La Pasionaria-Carrillo team expelled the leaders of the "Italian" tendency — Fernando Claudín, Federico Sánchez, and Luis Balaguer — we said in these same columns that this measure would not provide the least solution for the ills of the Partido Comunista de España [PCE — Spanish Communist party].

Our prognosis was based on an analysis of the contradictions of our time and the world crisis of Stalinism. The debate with the "Italians" was centered on Spanish problems, principally on the meaning and scope of capitalist development in our country. However, fundamental questions — the consequences of the Russian Twentieth Congress, "de-Stalinization," socialist democracy, and similar problems — determined the direction of the polemic and its bureaucratic conclusion.

In the beginning the Carrillista team's tactic was to shift party policy to the left formally in order to isolate the "Italians" and give some satisfaction to the young members. This was the sense of the political declaration of June 24, 1964, a real monument of opportunism and confusion, where the Chinese conception of a "bloc of four classes" (the proletariat, peasants, petty bourgeoisie, and national bourgeoisie) was found side by side with the Poumist conception of a democratic-socialist revolution and with a slightly toned-down version of "national reconciliation."

Afterwards, with the Claudín group eliminated, Carrillo and his colleagues evolved gradually toward the "Italian" positions, as was emphasized in a document of the Communist group in Barcelona which revolted against

PSUC [United Socialist party of Catalonia, a Stalinist front] in 1967. This evolution was reflected magnificently in the pamphlet *Nuevos Enfoques* [New Focuses], which, moreover, can be considered a handbook of the most scandalous kind of opportunism. Later, at the time of the May-June 1968 events in France, Carrillo took a 180-degree turn, abandoned his ideas about "neocapitalism" (which were held by many people before the French explosion), and shifted to "leftist" positions with his report "La lucha por el socialismo, hoy" [The Struggle for Socialism Today]. Later when the aggression against Czechoslovakia occurred, Carrillo rushed to condemn it, even though he knew that his conduct was going to provoke new conflicts within the party.

For many Communist party members, these changes and these shifts are merely the expression of unprincipled opportunism. But they are only partly right. What in reality is happening is that Carrillo and his collaborators, like many other Communist leaders and activists, have been in the midst of a crisis since the Twentieth Congress of the CP of the USSR.

Accustomed for long years to reasoning and acting according to "the criterion of faith" in the Kremlin leadership (this is Carrillo's own expression) and monolithism, they feel disconcerted. The moral and ideological collapse of Stalinism has put them in a tremendously uncomfortable position. Now they have to think, they have to make choices, they have to revise ideas and methods which they thought immutable; they have to take a position with regard to the centrifugal forces that the world crisis of

Stalinism is releasing. And this is not easy for people who made Marxism into a compilation of theological dogmas which could automatically explain and justify the political oscillations of the Russian bureaucracy.

The discussion on Czechoslovakia — which Carrillo wants to shut off at the very moment when Husák is stepping up his offensive against the "forces of labor and culture" and inventing "Trotskyite plots" — has had the virtue of bringing to the surface all the contradictions and tensions existing within the Partido Comunista de España. This development is not unique — it has occurred also in the Communist parties of Finland, Italy, England, Holland, Sweden, Switzerland, and France. But the case of the Spanish CP is especially impressive because this party's leadership has a long and bloody Stalinist past and because Carrillo has gone a little further than other Communist leaders in expressing his sympathy for the Dubcek team.

Carrillo's attitude, inexplicable for certain party members, has provoked the appearance of an ultra-Russian tendency inspired by two Central Committee members — Eduardo García, the former organizational secretary, and Agustín Gómez. This tendency, which originally promised to "respect discipline," has recently gone on the offensive, publishing a series of documents in which Carrillo is accused of defending "anti-Soviet" positions. And, naturally, since a simple defense of the Kremlin's policy is no longer enough to win support in the Spanish CP (which gives an idea of how things are changing), García and Gómez had the nimbleness to criticize at the same time the most opportunistic aspects of Carrillo's Spanish policy (the attitude toward the church and army, overtures to the "evolutionists," etc.), as well as the general secretary's authoritarianism and his assuming a "starring role."

For the time being Carrillo's position seems relatively solid. The greater part of the CP leaders have experienced the harshest period of Stalin-

ism, some of them in the USSR or the "people's democracies." And however astonishing it may seem, in many areas they raise criticisms very similar to those that the POUM has voiced since the thirties. Today, if Ignacio Gallego, Santiago Álvarez, Antonio Mije, López Raimundo, and Santiago Carrillo himself could express themselves in complete freedom, they would say things like those Jesús Hernández said years ago and confirm the better part of what we have continually said, braving slanders and odious persecutions. On this point we have abundant and irrefutable testimony.

The dream of all of them is to achieve an autonomy and a freedom of movement that would enable them to develop along "Italian" or "Rumanian" lines, in order to put a little order in the ideological and political confusion in which they are foundering. But they do not have a state apparatus at their disposal and they are not in the leadership of a big mass party and therefore they are condemned to depend on other forces than their own. Moreover, the García-Gómez group already has support in several Communist parties and certainly in the USSR, as revealed by the conflict that arose in the orga-

## Appeal of the Garcia-Gomez Group

In the October 7, 1969, issue of *Mundo Obrero* [the Spanish CP organ], an unsigned letter appeared accusing us of "factional warfare." This perfidious accusation was accompanied by insults of all sorts. We cannot avoid replying to this attack, not only to safeguard our honor as revolutionists and Communists but, above all, because these infamous accusations against two honest militants reveal Santiago Carrillo's irrevocable decision to impose a line which in our opinion breaks from Marxism-Leninism. We address ourselves to you, our comrades in struggle, to clarify the truth and inform you of the real reasons for this attitude toward us.

It is clear to all that the Partido Comunista de España is suffering a grave crisis. The most evident manifestations of this crisis are the rupture of unity of will and action and the

nization of the Communists living in Moscow.

The PCE leadership's activity and possibilities depend on the direction the world crisis of Stalinism takes, on the realignment that is going on in the international Communist movement, and, in the last analysis, on the final outcome of the struggle among the cliques in the top leadership of the Russian bureaucracy.

If the Kremlin "restores order" in the international Communist movement, as it is doing in Czechoslovakia, Carrillo will have to choose between unconditional surrender and expulsion for . . . "anti-Sovietism." This choice is not a matter of indifference for us because all the effects it could have on the evolution of our workers movement concern us to a high degree.

However, the fate of the Stalinist leaders who are evolving toward Social Democratic opportunism or toward "national Communism" interests us much less than that of those Communist militants who in the clamor of the present crisis are getting to the bottom of fundamental problems and orienting firmly toward revolutionary Marxism. To these Communists, we say simply: Greetings, let us go forward!

abyss that exists between the orientations of the leadership and the sentiments of the majority of party members. As a result of this we are witnessing an alarming progressive weakening of our organization and the party's ties with the working class and its allies.

The source of the present difficulties lies in the anti-Soviet line which the leadership wants to impose on the party, in the gradual abandonment of revolutionary principles, and in the long-standing and increasing violation of Leninist methods by the general secretary and his group.

Unfortunately, starting with the events in Czechoslovakia, this keynote of our Party's past conduct has been abandoned step by step, provoking a rupture in our relations with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and with the other contingents of the Communist and workers movement.

At the present time the greatest danger threatening us is anti-Sovietism.

It would be unfair to call the comrades anti-Soviet who, owing fundamentally to a lack of information, did not understand, or still do not understand, the class essence of the events in Czechoslovakia; who did not approve, or still do not approve, of the entry of allied troops into that country.

But the general secretary and other leaders of our Party did know what was happening. They had considerable information at their disposal showing the counterrevolutionary danger in Czechoslovakia. Despite this, on August 28, 1968, a statement by the Executive Committee was made public condemning the internationalist action of the USSR and other socialist countries—a statement which Carrillo drew up on his own. All the comrades must be aware that the majority of the Executive Committee members did not meet until ten days later. With the exception of Eduardo García, who voted against it, they only ratified an accomplished fact. The principle of collective leadership was grossly and shamelessly violated.

This "anti-Marxist" position has its history. If you reread the articles published in *Mundo Obrero* and *Nuestra Bandera* prior to August of last year [1968], you will be able to appreciate the lightmindedness of their "analyses," their lack of class content, and their eagerness to take advantage of the negative developments in Czechoslovakia to promote a certain "model of socialism" for Spain. But besides this, many comrades will remember that in July and August, before the military action and when it was not yet inevitable, on the initiative of the general secretary and without the approval of the Executive Committee and the Central Committee, a campaign was organized within the Party against the CPSU and its leadership which in some cases assumed scandalous proportions.

Since August 21, 1968, attempts have continued to use the events in Czechoslovakia to keep up the treacherous and perfidious attacks on the USSR and the CPSU and to put every kind of obstacle in the way of the CP of Czechoslovakia in its difficult task of normalizing the situation in its country.

On September 15, 1968, the secre-

tary general delivered a speech to more than 700 militants to slander the leaders of the CPSU, extol the right opportunism in Czechoslovakia, and arouse nationalistic feelings in the Party. In this speech he also threatened and insulted the party members who oppose anti-Sovietism.

But the crowning demonstration of the obstinacy of the Party Central Committee, of its firm intention to maintain an "anti-Marxist" posture, was the declaration published in *Mundo Obrero* on October 8 of this year [1969]. This statement still considered "valid and fully justified" the position taken with respect to the events of August 1968 and expressed "profound concern in the face of proposals and accords which seem to contradict the conclusions of the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU and mark a regression to the methods justly condemned by the international Communist movement."

The "neutral" position toward the provocations of the Chinese leaders on the borders of the USSR imposed by Santiago Carrillo makes it evident that the attitude toward the events in Czechoslovakia was not just a special disagreement with the CPSU and the great majority of our sister parties but something much more grave. These events were a pretext for moving away from the principles of proletarian internationalism and facilitating the penetration of anti-Sovietism into the Party. For there could not be the slightest doubt about the responsibility of the Chinese leaders for the armed conflicts on the Ussuri river and at other points on the Sino-Soviet frontier.

The articles in *Mundo Obrero* and *Nuestra Bandera* and the speeches by the general secretary and other remarks by Party leaders which we have heard are in essence a justification of the Maoist aggressions. This criminal conduct by provocateurs in Peking was used as a pretext by Carrillo on April 5 of this year for making odious comparisons between the so-called "cultural revolution" and the period of the Stalin cult in the USSR. The thesis that the general secretary expressed in this speech was that "the strongest must make concessions" and that "it takes two to make an argument." Other Party leaders, imitating Carrillo, have not hesitated to say in front of many comrades that "nobody knows who shot first," that "nobody knows who

gave the first order," that "a piece of land isn't worth fighting over," and so forth. What kind of Communists and revolutionists reason this way?

The "neutrality" that the general secretary has imposed on the Party leadership is more than suspect. In reality it is just another form of anti-Sovietism and a sacrifice of principle for the benefit of the "trip to Peking," a trip whose objective is not to promote the unity of the international Communist movement but to find support for a policy that is isolating us and leading us to the most narrow kind of nationalism.

Those who heard the general secretary on July 4 could see that the International Conference [of Communist parties] was a hard bone for him to swallow. The communiqué published July 5 in *Mundo Obrero* made the following points: "the clearly positive results" [of the conference] resulted from the fact that "different points of view" were expressed in Moscow; "the conference just concluded" left "very clear the areas of agreement as well as of disagreement"; "the fact that the Czechoslovak problem was discussed at the conference was positive"; and "the majority-rule methods of democratic centralism valid for the internal life of every party are inapplicable to the Communist movement." In short, according to the communiqué from the Party leadership, the conference represented "an important step toward the new unity our movement needs today."

The fundamental theses developed in the essay "La lucha por el socialismo, hoy," which they tried to introduce into the main document of the conference, were not accepted. The international forum of Communists did not accept Carrillo's ideas about the "cultural forces," "unity in diversity," "different models of socialism," the "youth rebellion," the "first line," the "contradictions in socialism," and other things.

Therefore, when some people talk or write about "the success our delegation had in Moscow," they are distorting the truth and trying to hide from the Party the bankruptcy and isolation of our leadership.

Despite everything, the Party delegation had to sign the documents of the conference. This signing was a victory for the internationalist sentiments of our members, it was the

result of the pressure of the ranks on the leadership. But this struggle must be continued in order to force the leadership to respect and comply with the document they signed unwillingly.

The leadership is trying first of all to destroy the confidence of the Communists and the masses in the Soviet Union and in the CPSU. It is being said that with the existence of several socialist countries the USSR no longer plays the same role as before the second world war. It should be noted that some of those who defend this view with the greatest frenzy also assailed the Soviet Union and the CPSU in their youth when there was only one socialist country. These same persons accuse us—who continue to believe that the USSR and its great Communist Party are still the vanguard of our movement, its most important bulwark, and its decisive force—of being "superloyalists," "backward," and other such things. On the other hand, those who irresponsibly criticize the Soviet Union, who in one way or another deny its historical and present role, are advanced persons who "use their heads," who have "shaken off their dogmatism," and who understand "the new developments." For these persons, "freed from conditioned reflexes," the meaning of "pro-Soviet and anti-Soviet" has changed.

In the second place, in the campaign begun in August of last year, the leadership has been trying fruitlessly to break the historical continuity between indissolubly linked factors. For example, the "new critics" of the USSR and the CPSU have not yet dared to condemn the October Revolution. But they are trying to separate October from its results, that is, the world's first Socialist State. Distinctions are also being made between the Soviet people and the Party and between the Party and its leaders, of whom someone said in abject ignorance that "they are good technicians but very bad politicians." Some members of the leadership have had no scruples about expressing ideas very similar to those of the renegade Djilas on "the new class" or of Mao Tse-tung on "the new czars." From here it is only a step to concluding, as the Maoists and Trotskyists do, that the Soviet Union has "degenerated," a step that some irresponsible persons have already taken. Of course all this con-



traband is camouflaged with sweet words, with "noble and unselfish intentions," with hypocritical declarations about how "we will fight to the last drop of blood if the imperialists attack the USSR." But the harm that has been done is already incalculable.

As was to be expected and as was foreshadowed in last year's Central Committee meeting, this incorrect position of the leadership has permitted, has facilitated and encouraged a campaign by a whole series of irresponsible elements, intriguers, and unprincipled people, who are saying the greatest stupidities in the Party against the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, which out of respect for our readers we are not going to repeat here.

Yes, comrades, anti-Sovietism is a reality today inside the Party, in its leadership, in its information organs, and in its other activities. Therefore,

## Spain

### Garcia Arrested in Madrid

On March 11 the official Spanish government news agency EFE announced the arrest of "Jesús García, also known under the name of Juan Gamez, a member of the Central Committee of the Spanish Communist party normally residing in Paris. García was arrested shortly after his arrival in Madrid."

The Paris daily *Le Monde* reported from Madrid March 13 that it was likely the arrested man was Eduardo García, the former organizational secretary of the Spanish CP—one of the authors of the appeal printed above.

*Le Monde* said that García and Agustín Gómez, the two main organizers of the ultra-Stalinist wing of the Spanish CP, have both been expelled from the party's Central Committee for opposing the party's condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

The specific reason for the expulsion was alleged to be a breach of discipline. According to *Mundo Obrero*, the organ of the Spanish CP, García and Gómez violated a pledge not to "break the unity of the party." They were accused of sending letters to the provincial party committees denouncing the central leadership for "aban-

we are entitled to say that even the Central Committee's August 28, 1968, declaration has been discredited, which explicitly stated:

"Consistent with our invariable position, we energetically reject any attempt to exploit the events in Czechoslovakia for an anti-Soviet campaign."

If this part of the declaration had been respected, the differences in the Party and the Communist movement could have been overcome. If there had been no effronteries and failures in this respect, we would have found the strength to come out of the crisis without suffering serious damage. But Santiago Carrillo did not want this. And precisely for this reason, fourteen months after the events in Czechoslovakia, the leadership of our Party has not been able to normalize its relations with the CPSU and with other parties in the socialist and capitalist countries.

doning the principles of Marxism-Leninism" and "following a revisionist and anti-Soviet policy."

*Le Monde* said it is believed in Spain that if García has, in fact, been captured he must have entered the country to help organize the ultra-Stalinist faction in its fight against the party leadership headed by Santiago Carrillo.

## New Zealand

### Joint Antiwar Action Now Set for May

The Wellington, New Zealand, Committee on Vietnam decided February 28 to postpone until May its spring antiwar actions—originally scheduled for April—to make possible a joint mobilization with Australia against the war.

A letter from the committee in the March 6 issue of the biweekly journal *Socialist Action*, published in Wellington, said the Australian actions were called for the weekend of May 8-10.

"If it were not for the fact that the University capping weeks culminate on 7th or 8th May," the New Zealand letter said, "we would recommend that we make our dates coincide with the Australian dates. The best arrangement we can suggest . . . is to declare a *Mobilization Week* to span the two weekends May 1-2-3 and 8-9-10 with various activities."

The new schedule calls for a rally at Victoria University May 1, followed by a march to the U.S. and/or South Vietnamese embassies; a public debate on the war at the Wellington Town Hall Concert Chamber on May 2; a rally and march to parliament on May 3; and a conference on May 9 to discuss the week's activities and to plan the next stage.

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