

Hugo Blanco Wins Freedom

Eduardo Creus Still Held

The Workers Insurrection in Poland

Antiwar Strike Called

Sydney

The Australian Builder's Labourers Federation [ABLF] has projected work stoppages early this year in opposition to the Vietnam War.

At its Federal Council meeting in Hobart the last week in November, this militant union, which has recently occupied work sites during strikes, passed two resolutions:

● "This meeting of Federal Council supports the principle of 'stop work to stop the war'. Federal Council further calls upon the branches to discuss with their members at meetings and through other forms of propaganda and calls for their participation in direct action in the coming moratorium. The Federation will support any forms of activity designed to stop the war and for the withdrawal of U.S. and puppet troops from Vietnam. We therefore recommend to the branches and the members that they participate in all forms of stop work action on the day of the moratorium."

● "Federal Council deplors the continuation of the U.S. raping of Vietnam. We strongly condemn the recommencement of the bombing of the D.R.V. We demand the bombing cease. As a tangible contribution in helping to bring about the end of the war and the withdrawal of U.S. and satellite troops from Vietnam, we determine to withdraw our members from any project where a contractor or client has any financial and immoral interest in the conduct of the war against the Vietnamese people."

Various construction firms and companies such as Honeywell and Dow Chemical may be affected by the ABLF's action. □

Gets High on Mao Tsetung Thought

Hsinhua, the Chinese government news agency, reported that Ni Chih-chin was able to break the world high-jump record November 8 because he told himself before jumping: "This was not just a contest but a report on my ideological revolutionization to Chairman Mao and the entire people of the country."

In This Issue

	2	AUSTRALIA Antiwar Strike Called
	3	PERU Campaign for Hugo Blanco Ends in Great Victory
	5	The Events that Brought Blanco to World Attention
	6	BOLIVIA Regis Debray Freed, Deported
Les Evans	7	SPAIN Worldwide Protest Saves Basque Prisoners U. S. A.
Allen Myers	10	YSA Convention Marks Decade of Growth
	20	Mendel Rivers—the Pentagon's Man in the House
Gerry Foley	12	POLAND The Workers Insurrection
	18	SWEDEN Demonstrators Support Polish Workers
	19	SOVIET UNION Moscow Hijacking Trial Aimed at All Minorities
Armona Woka	23	NIGERIA Plan to Seek Imperialist Investment
	24	CZECHOSLOVAKIA Demand Release of Socialists Held in Prague Prison
	21	REVIEWS Trotsky on Marxism in the United States
	22	DOCUMENTS Demonstrate Solidarity with Polish Workers! [Statement of the Fourth International]
	22	Tenth Congress Scheduled by Fourth International
	23	"Everyone in the Streets April 24!" [Statement of the Fourth International]
	4	PHOTOS Hugo Blanco
Copain	8	DRAWINGS Luis Carrero Blanco; 15, Wladyslaw Gomulka; 20, L. Mendel Rivers

Intercontinental Press, Post Office Box 635, Madison Square Station, N. Y. 10010.

EDITOR: Joseph Hansen.

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.

MANAGING EDITOR: Les Evans.

EDITORIAL STAFF: Gerry Foley, Allen Myers, George Saunders.

BUSINESS MANAGER: Reba Hansen.

TECHNICAL STAFF: H. Massey, James M. Morgan, Ruth Schein, Steven Warshell, Jack Wood.

Published in New York each Monday except last in December and first in January; biweekly in July, not published in August.

Intercontinental Press specializes in political analysis and interpretation of events of particular interest to the labor, socialist, colonial independence, and Black liberation movements.

Signed articles represent the views of the authors,

which may not necessarily coincide with those of Intercontinental Press. Insofar as it reflects editorial opinion, unsigned material expresses the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism.

PARIS OFFICE: Pierre Frank, 95 rue du Faubourg Saint-Martin, Paris 10, France.

TO SUBSCRIBE: For one year send \$15 to Intercontinental Press, P. O. Box 635, Madison Sq. Station, New York, N. Y. 10010. Write for rates on first class and airmail. Special rates available for subscriptions to colonial and semicolonial countries.

Subscription correspondence should be addressed to Intercontinental Press, P. O. Box 635, Madison Sq. Station, New York 10010. Because of the continuing deterioration of the U.S. postal system, please allow five weeks for change of address. Include your old address as well as your new address, and, if possible, an address label from a recent issue.

Copyright © 1971 by Intercontinental Press.

Campaign for Hugo Blanco Ends in Great Victory

[The following statement was issued by the United States Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners on January 5. The address of the USLA is P. O. Box 2303, New York, N. Y. 10001.]

* * *

A Reuters dispatch from Lima, Peru, dated December 22, announced that Hugo Blanco was among "about 100 political prisoners" freed that day. The dispatch was a very short one. It mentioned no other names than that of Hugo Blanco, and it was given hardly any publicity in the United States. Even the *New York Times* printed it only in an early edition.

Through its own connections, the USLA was able to verify the report. A friend of the USLA in Lima mailed newspaper clippings, and finally one of our supporters called in to tell us that he had been able to talk with Hugo Blanco on the telephone.

The government of General Velasco Alvarado signed an amnesty December 21. Besides Blanco, it included the well-known revolutionists Héctor Béjar and Ricardo Gadea.

The Lima daily *Correo* of December 23 listed the following, in addition, as having been freed:

Gerardo Benavides, Pedro Candela, Armando Freyre, Omar Benavides, Antonio Meza, Adolfo Calderón, Miguel Tauro, Abelardo Collantes, Mario Calle, Marcelino Fonkén, Elio Portocarrero, Cirilo Mendoza, John Suárez, Mario Cossi, Eduardo Espinoza, Ernesto Alvarez, Oscar Ramos, and Sandro Mariátegui.

At least fourteen political prisoners are still being held, including an Argentine revolutionist Eduardo Creus, now recovering from an illness that required his being transferred to the prison hospital at Callao, Lima's port city.

Creus was arrested in 1962 on charges connected with the holdup of a bank in Lima by students seeking to raise funds for the guerrilla struggle in Peru.

The defendants in the bank holdup

case were not brought to trial until July 1967. Although convicted, most of them were immediately released since they had been held in prison for periods of time equal to their sentences.

Creus, however, had been sentenced previously for his involvement with Hugo Blanco in organizing peasant unions in the valley of La Convención. Therefore, he was not freed with his codefendants in the bank case.

Over the telephone, Hugo Blanco said that he heard of the amnesty from other prisoners after it had been announced on the radio.

At first none of the prisoners believed the news. Blanco himself thought it might be a cruel joke.

On the morning of December 22, Blanco was still not prepared to believe it. His wife, Blanca, and his seven-year-old son, Chaupimayo, came to visit him and tell him the good news.

Hugo was cross with his companion. "Why did you have to tell that to the boy . . . They'll suddenly not let me go, and he'll suffer a lot."

Right after that, the order came to bring those named to the Palace of Justice.

The political prisoners in El Frontón affected by the amnesty were taken to the dock of the island prison.

There a crowd of prisoners shouted farewell and good wishes to them as they boarded a launch. The launch took them to Callao, and from there to the small jail of the Palace of Justice. From the jail they were taken to Lurigancho prison where they were released later in the day.

Blanco went immediately to the central prison office in Lima to ask about his comrade Eduardo Creus and why he, too, had not been freed.

The authorities told Blanco that Creus would not be released, because he was "not a political prisoner."

Blanco also went to the Ministry of the Interior to take up the question with the higher authorities, but they refused to see him.

A defense committee was thereupon set up in Lima for Creus and others still being held and it immediately

began distributing literature describing why they were political prisoners and why they, too, should be granted an immediate amnesty.

Blanco attributed the amnesty, which was opposed editorially by some bourgeois papers (notably *La Prensa*), to the international campaign in defense of the political prisoners.

An immediate factor, he said, was the desire of the Velasco government to gain popular support from the Peruvian masses. This could be done more cheaply by releasing political prisoners than by granting wage increases or other economic concessions.

The revolutionary fighter asked that the following message be forwarded to the USLA and all its supporters:

"I want to thank all the organizations and individuals who joined the many years' campaign for my freedom. They saved my life at the time of my trial and now they have won my release. I ask that all those to whom I owe gratitude now open up a campaign for Eduardo Creus and the others who are still in prison. I ask them to fight the same way they fought to win freedom for me."

The December 24 issue of the Lima weekly magazine *Oiga* carried an interview granted by Hugo Blanco to Federico García.

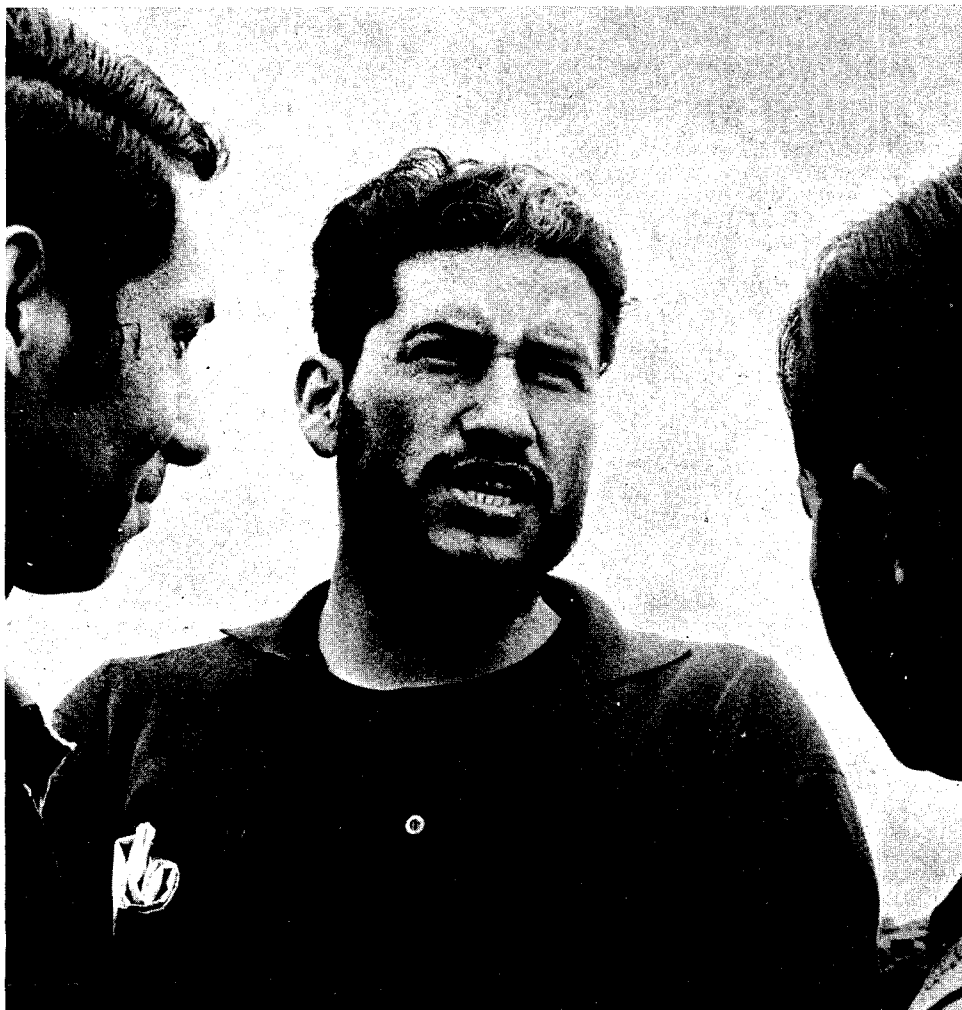
Oiga's correspondent was interested in how Hugo Blanco felt after seven years and seven months in prison, part of it in solitary confinement.

"In the first place," Blanco said, "you have to understand that I am absolutely disoriented. My world, my whole world, was reduced to the prison. It is difficult to regain the feeling of being free. Everything seems new, different."

This sensation seemed to grow as Blanco talked. It became more and more difficult for him to speak. Nevertheless, he repeated his basic conceptions with the greatest firmness.

"I believe only in the socialist revolution," he said. "I am a militant in the Trotskyist movement; and I probably always will be."

Hugo Blanco, continued García, was especially grateful for the solidarity



HUGO BLANCO, interviewed in Lima after more than seven and a half years in prison, reaffirms his revolutionary socialist convictions and his adherence to the Fourth International. Reporters noted that his hair was now streaked with white. The amnesty came so suddenly and so unexpectedly that the Peruvian peasant leader was in a partial state of shock and said he felt "disoriented." Nevertheless, within a few days he addressed a huge crowd of 10,000 persons. He appealed for a thoroughgoing agrarian reform and for a campaign to release all the political prisoners. The cheering crowd bore him off triumphantly on their shoulders.

that had been shown toward him both in Peru and internationally.

"This solidarity shown by the popular organizations in Lima as well as in London or Paris helped me overcome the feeling of loneliness and the difficult hours. It's extraordinary to get messages of support and even checks from people you do not know, written in foreign languages, making you realize that you are not alone. It's like a handshake coming through a letter. The conscious solidarity of the workers is a great and beautiful thing!"

Asked about his plans, Hugo Blanco responded:

"I am not going to return imme-

diately to Cuzco. I have to get over this feeling of disorientation which is almost a physical pain.

"Although it may not seem to you that I'm telling the truth, I am learning all over again how to see, to hear, to cross the streets.

"All I feel like doing right now is to appeal for freedom for Creus and the other five comrades who are still in. Also I want to add my voice to the worldwide campaign seeking to rescue the Basque patriots from the clutches of Franco. In Mexico, too, there are political prisoners, like José Revueltas, and all kinds of patriots rotting in the prisons of the military dictatorships in Latin America."

As for the position of the political tendency he represents in Peru, Hugo Blanco said:

"My political group has made an analysis of the national situation. I hold to its conclusions. Nevertheless, it is necessary to recognize that a change has occurred in the situation so that it could now well be designated capitalist reformism. I can't attempt a definitive judgment because of this syndrome of disorientation that makes it difficult for me to coordinate my views. I have the sensation of having just arrived from the moon and of discovering this planet all over again."

The Comité de Defensa de los Derechos Humanos [CODDEH — Committee for the Defense of Human Rights], which directed the campaign in Peru for the prisoners' release, was jubilant over the great victory that had been scored.

The amnesty, CODDEH pointed out, was unconditional. The decree itself stated:

"Amnesty and pardon is granted to all those accused, indicted, or sentenced for crimes defined as political, social, or of a related nature."

CODDEH sponsored a giant fiesta in Lima December 30 to celebrate the victory.

Some 10,000 persons attended and heard speeches by the freed prisoners.

Hugo Blanco talked about the problems of the peasantry and the need for a genuinely thoroughgoing agrarian reform.

He then talked about his cellmate and comrade, Eduardo Creus, and the other political prisoners still suffering in the dungeons of Peru, and called for their release.

He received a huge ovation and was carried off in a triumphal march on the shoulders of the cheering crowd. □

Sad Twist for Stockholder

The long decline in the U. S. stock market has ended in twisted fates for many investors. The November 30 issue of *Newsweek* reports that one man who didn't sell his stock in time is now selling pretzels on the streets of Philadelphia.

Aren't They the Same?

President Jose Velasco Ibarra of Ecuador has warned that he will order the arrest of priests "who insult the government or the rich."

The Events that Brought Blanco to World Attention

The release of Hugo Blanco is an inspiring victory for the entire Latin-American revolutionary movement. Peru's outstanding revolutionary figure became famous throughout the continent for his method of going directly to the peasants and helping them to organize themselves into powerful and militant unions, principally under slogans demanding recognition of their democratic rights, particularly those associated with a thoroughgoing agrarian reform.

The freeing of Hugo Blanco is likewise a great victory for the world Trotskyist movement. In court, facing a death sentence, Hugo Blanco proclaimed his adherence to the Fourth International and emphasized that the building of a revolutionary-socialist party represented the key to winning new socialist revolutions in Latin America following the Cuban revolution.

Every member of the Trotskyist movement internationally can feel proud of the success that finally crowned their persistent efforts, first to save his life and then to win his freedom through a worldwide defense campaign.

Hugo Blanco's release came a little more than seven and one-half years after his arrest. He was held for more than three years in Arequipa in solitary confinement, before he was finally brought to trial in Tacna.

After being sentenced, Hugo Blanco was taken to the prison island of El Frontón, notorious for its brutal conditions.

In both Arequipa and El Frontón, Hugo Blanco staged various hunger strikes in protest against the vile conditions under which he was held, or in solidarity with other prisoners whose rights were violated.

Captured by the Peruvian military forces, who hunted him down as a guerrilla fighter in 1963, Blanco was twice threatened with judicial murder, his life being saved in each instance only by a massive campaign of international protest.

Hugo Blanco grew up in Cuzco, where he saw at first hand the desperate poverty of the oppressed Indian masses who constitute the majority of the Peruvian population. From his youth, he spoke Quechua, the Indian language, as well as Spanish.

In the early 1950s, Blanco went to Argentina, where he studied agronomy and worked as an active union member in an American-owned meat-packing plant. When he returned to Peru, he helped to organize the giant demonstrations at the time of the visit of the then Vice-president Richard Nixon in 1958. Forced to flee Lima, Hugo Blanco returned to Cuzco, where he and his comrades began to organize peasant unions.

In the upsurge of the Latin-American revolution inspired by the establishment of a workers state in Cuba, Hugo Blanco became a legendary figure in Peru. Working among the landless peasants of the valley of La Convención in the Cuzco region, he organized unions to defend the rights of the landless against the *hacendados* (big landowners).

Blanco translated the Trotskyist program of mass struggle in accordance with Peruvian conditions. In the winter of 1962 and spring of 1963, the revolutionary peasant unions led by him engaged in large-scale "recuperations" of lands illegally held by the *hacendados*.

The landowners responded with army and police attacks, and in the ensuing battles, several soldiers were killed. Hunted by the military, Blanco was hidden successfully by the peasants from November 1962 until May 30, 1963, when he was captured.

In a book published in 1964, Hugo Neira, a correspondent for the Lima daily *Expreso*, described the peasants' attitude toward Blanco:

"Fought by the right, his image distorted by prestige due to erroneous reports about him being a guerrilla fighter, injured by the silence, if not sabotage, of the traditional, bureaucratic groups of Communism, extolled by the FIR [Frente de Izquierda Revo-

lucionario—Front of the Revolutionary Left], feared and hated by the unorganized *yanaconas* [Indians bound to personal service to the landlords] and the *hacendados*, admired by the union ranks, Hugo Blanco looms over the whole South.

"This is the straight truth, without falsification, of what this man, who is a prisoner today in Arequipa, means to the peasant masses. . . . 'We owe him everything,' say the peasants. In fact every change in Convención and elsewhere in the country was accelerated due to the danger they saw in the peasants having no hope other than hope in the revolutionary unionism of Blanco.

"Devotion to Blanco is total; they don't dare bring him to trial. I am referring to the unionized peasants. 'He is our chief,' they say. . . . And in every peasant's home there is an empty bed. It's the one that was waiting hopefully for the leader when he was going around the region organizing or when he was passing during the night, under the stars, fleeing from the police. . . .

"In the Plaza de Armas in Cuzco, the evening came, dressed in red, flaming. The meeting of the peasants was languishing. The crowd, disciplined, standing, listened, applauded, laughed, or yawned.

"Then a student came forward. . . . He took the mike and shouted in Quechua:

"'Causachu compañero cuna, Hugo Blanco . . .'

"The crowd awoke and responded with great shouts:

"'Causachu, causachu, causachu.'

"'Long live! Long live! Long live!'

"I saw this repeated throughout the South. No other name arouses greater fervor among the men in striped ponchos who speak the euphonious Quechua. The shadow of Hugo Blanco was present at all the interviews I conducted in the South.

"I am not exaggerating: the unity of this agrarian movement that has no limits, like an immense ocean, whether in ideology or comportment,

which can just as well turn peaceful and cooperative as explode in blood and gunfire, has, nevertheless, a name that unites the people of the mountains and the valleys, of the hacienda and the community—Hugo Blanco."

Support for Blanco extended into the urban working class as well, as was demonstrated by a twenty-four-hour general strike demanding his release that paralyzed the city of Cuzco in December 1963.

* * *

The Cuban leaders, even though they were at variance with his tactical approach, were well aware of the importance of his work. In 1963 Che Guevara said of him:

"Hugo Blanco is the head of one of the guerrilla movements in Peru. He struggled stubbornly but the repression was strong. I don't know what his tactics of struggle were, but his fall does not signify the end of the movement. It is only a man that has fallen, but the movement continues."

Hugo Blanco's standing with the new revolutionary generation in Peru can be judged from the following comments by Héctor Béjar in his book *Peru 1965: Notes on a Guerrilla Experience*:

"... under the influence of the left in some instances and spontaneously in others, the unionization of the peasantry broadened from 1956 up to 1962. The highest point of this great wave, because of the political quality of its leaders, was in the valleys of La Convención and Lares and the most outstanding figure was Hugo Blanco."

This widespread support for Hugo Blanco proved to be a great embarrassment to the Communist party, particularly in view of the fact that the CP had contributed to the defeat of the peasant movement by withholding aid because of Blanco's Trotskyist affiliation.

Héctor Béjar describes in his book the impact that Blanco's movement had on the radicalizing Peruvian youth, many of whom had been influenced by the CP's anti-Trotskyism:

"But Hugo Blanco was a disciplined Trotskyist militant. This fact presented a serious problem for the left. Hadn't it been said for many years that the Trotskyists were agents of imperial-

ism? Hadn't it been repeatedly claimed that Trotskyism was a counterrevolutionary current? The years of Stalinism were not in the distant past, and in any case, even with the idol of Stalin fallen, the supreme anathema against Trotskyism had not been withdrawn by anyone; it remained in full force.

"This, on the one hand. On the other, the left as a whole did not become fully incorporated into the peasant struggle. It directed the organizations 'from above,' advised the unions, sent organizers temporarily into the field, but it did not lead 'from within' the way Blanco did.

"On the one hand, its still existing political prejudices prevented it from giving Blanco the collaboration he merited. On the other hand, its inertia kept it locked within the old urban molds."

* * *

Hugo Blanco and twenty-eight other peasant organizers were brought to trial before a military court on August 30, 1966. *Prior to the trial*, newspapers reported that the prosecutor would ask for a twenty-five-year sentence and that the judges would increase the sentence to death.

But although the trial was held in the tiny, isolated village of Tacna, Blanco's supporters were able to mobilize sufficient public attention to stay the hands of the executioners. The military judges rejected their legal adviser's recommendation of the death penalty and sentenced Hugo Blanco to twenty-five years' confinement in the island prison of El Frontón.

Not content with this savage sen-

tence, Peru's rulers soon made a second attempt to place Hugo Blanco before a firing squad. When his lawyer appealed the sentence to the Supreme Military Court in November the prosecutor also appealed, asking the court to order Blanco's execution.

For the next eleven months, the revolutionary leader's life hinged on the outcome of the international campaign in his defense. Demonstrations, resolutions, appeals were launched around the world—Japan, France, Canada, the United States, Belgium, England, Scotland, Greece, Italy, Chile, Sweden, West Germany, Nigeria, India, Mexico, Argentina, as well as in Peru.

Blanco received the support of Amnesty International, Jean-Paul Sartre, Bertrand Russell, the Chilean MIR [Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria—Movement of the Revolutionary Left], Labour members of parliament in England, the Québec Federation of Labor, the Italian General Confederation of Labor, the Walloon Workers party, and numerous other organizations and individuals.

In New York, nearly 400 participants in the Socialist Scholars Conference signed a petition demanding amnesty.

Shortly thereafter, the United States Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners [USLA] was organized. USLA took on an increasingly larger role in the defense of Blanco, and after Peruvian President Fernando Belaúnde Terry yielded to the international pressure and permitted the Supreme Military Court to confirm Blanco's original sentence in October 1967, USLA continued the campaign for his release. □

Torres Bows to Pressure from Left

Regis Debray Freed, Deported from Bolivia

The French revolutionist Régis Debray was released from prison in Bolivia December 23. He and five other prisoners were flown from Camiri, in the southeastern part of the country, to Iquique, Chile.

The author of *Revolution in the Revolution?* was captured by the Bolivian military on April 19, 1967, shortly after he had left the guerrilla camp

of Che Guevara. Debray was convicted by a court-martial on charges of murder, robbery, and treason for allegedly participating in the guerrilla movement. While not attempting to conceal his support for the guerrillas, Debray testified that his only role had been that of a journalist.

He had served more than three years of his thirty-year sentence. Re-

leased along with him were the Argentine painter Roberto Bustos and four Bolivians: Antonio Dominquez Flores, Orlando Jiménez Bazán, José Castillo Havez, and Eusebio Tapia Arumio. All had been captured at the same time as Debray. Bustos was sentenced to thirty years. The four Bolivians were never brought to trial.

The amnesty decree was signed by President Juan José Torres, the general who came to power October 8 on the back of the mass upsurge touched

off by an attempted coup of extreme right-wing generals. Torres has been under considerable pressure to justify his claims to being more "leftist" than his predecessors. The *Christian Science Monitor's* Latin America correspondent James Nelson Goodsell wrote December 29:

"It is generally assumed in La Paz . . . that Gen. Juan José Torres . . . is using the release of Mr. Debray to curb some of his own leftist dissent in Bolivia over his go-slow approach on effecting reforms which the Left seeks."

Torres apparently had to overcome opposition in the armed forces in order to release the six prisoners. An Associated Press dispatch from La Paz printed in the December 24 *Washington Post* said that army officers involved in the suppression of the 1967 guerrilla operation had objected to the amnesty. (Torres himself helped direct the campaign against Guevara.)

The amnesty decree barred the released prisoners from ever returning to Bolivia. □

Franco Regime in Crisis

Worldwide Protest Saves Basque Prisoners

By Les Evans

The worldwide outcry on behalf of six Basque nationalists, doomed by a Burgos military court, succeeded in forcing Franco on December 30 to commute the death sentences to thirty years in prison. The extraordinary move by the aged dictator appears to have been too little and too late, however, to extract fascist Spain from one of the most serious crises the country has faced since the "caudillo" seized power.

In the weeks since the court-martial of sixteen Basque political prisoners began in Burgos on December 3, demonstrations of support for the defendants flared throughout Europe as well as in Spain itself. As the January 1 *New York Times* commented:

"Day after day, readers of the Spanish press were told about demonstrations in Brussels, boycotts of Spanish shipping in Marseilles, telegrams of protest from the Slovak shoemakers' association, caricatures in the Scandinavian press showing Generalissimo Francisco Franco with fangs dripping blood."

The regime proved to be divided on how to meet the challenge, with the result that an open split appeared between the new capitalist representatives in the present cabinet and the older forces of the former Falange party and the army bureaucracy.

The government's indecision helped to provide time for the mobilization of international public opinion. In the

past, the Franco dictatorship has kept such affairs behind closed doors and rushed them through to a summary conclusion. This time, however, the world press was invited, apparently in the hope of presenting a case to the reporters against Basque "terrorism." Instead the regime was put on trial in its own court for torturing prisoners, proscribing the rights of legal defense, and fabricating evidence.

The sixteen prisoners, all members of the revolutionary Basque separatist organization ETA [Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna — Basque Nation and Freedom], were charged with banditry with subversive intent, murder, terrorism, armed robbery, and possession of arms. Concretely, the main accusation was that six of the defendants had allegedly participated in the August 1968 killing in Irún of Chief Inspector Melitón Manzanás, the regional head of the secret political police.

The ETA had claimed responsibility for Manzanás' killing, but all of the defendants denied that they were individually involved. Manzanás was widely known and hated in the Basque region, with a reputation as a sadist. The December 3 *New York Times*, for example, described him this way:

"In the eyes of the Guipuzcoans and Vizcayans [that is, of the two largest Basque provinces], the late Melitón Manzanás represented everything that

was oppressive about Madrid's treatment of the Basques since the Spanish Civil War. He may have been the most hated man in Guipúzcoa. . . .

"He made a point of leading raids on Basque meeting places, confiscating books and pennants, and pointing out those he wanted arrested.

"He was said by persons with first-hand experience to have taken an active interest in the forceful and painful interrogation of Basque nationalists suspected of crimes. His interest was said to be especially marked when the suspect was a woman. . . .

"The reaction in Guipúzcoa at the time [of the killing], even among the many Basques who disliked the rebels' activism, was that it was not a bad thing."

No evidence was ever produced to link the six defendants to Manzanás' death. The police were reduced to citing "confessions" that all of the prisoners repudiated in court as having been extracted under torture.

Public opinion was further outraged over the trial being held before a military rather than a civilian court. Under army regulations, the defense lawyers were not permitted to subpoena witnesses nor to cross-examine hostile witnesses. The defendants during most of the trial were not permitted to testify as to their political beliefs or motives, and were only briefly allowed to recount the tortures used to extract their "confessions." There is no right of ap-

peal from a military court.

During the trial the prisoners were handcuffed together in pairs, and during the first few days at least, were forced to wear earplugs that prevented them from even hearing the proceedings.

The Burgos trial was further prejudiced by the fact that it unfolded under martial law, imposed first in the Basque province of Guipúzcoa December 4 and extended to the whole of Spain December 14. The pretext for Franco's action was the December 1 kidnapping in San Sebastian of Eugen Beihl, a West German businessman and part-time diplomat. The ETA disclaimed responsibility for Beihl's abduction, which was attributed to a Basque splinter group. Beihl was released on Christmas.

On December 8 the presiding judge in Burgos announced that no further testimony would be permitted on the subject of police torture and that the prisoners were to strictly refrain from any political statements. The following day the defendants demonstratively instructed their lawyers to withdraw from the trial, which was declared finished by the judge.

The military tribunal took more than two weeks to arrive at a verdict. On December 28 it handed down sentences even more savage than asked for by the prosecutor. Six defendants were given the death penalty: Francisco Izco, 29; Eduardo Uriarte, 25; Joaquim Gorostidi, 26; Francisco Larena, 25; Mario Onaindia, 22; and Jose Dorronsoro, 29. The others, including two women and two Catholic priests, received terms ranging from twelve to fifty years in prison.

During the interim before the verdict was announced the protests continued to swell.

In Milan, Italy, a student was killed by police December 12 following a march of some 5,000 persons protesting the Burgos trial. On the same day, in Berne, Switzerland, police used water guns and tear gas to disperse a rally of 3,000 people in front of the Spanish embassy.

After the sentences were announced, several European governments appealed to Franco to spare the lives of the defendants. Even the British government, which had remained aloof in the interests of protecting its base at Gibraltar, expressed its confidence that Franco would "take humanitarian considerations into full ac-

count" in reviewing the penalties imposed by the military.

The pope reportedly made a personal telephone call to Franco to ask for clemency.

In Genoa, Italian longshoremen carried out a one-day boycott of Spanish ships December 29, while 10,000 in-



CARRERO: Franco's aide under fire.

dustrial and commercial workers in the city held a two-hour work stoppage.

In France on the same day tens of thousands of workers participated in nationwide strikes called by all the major union federations.

Some 4,000 people took part in a march on the Spanish consulate in Bayonne, the largest Basque city in southwestern France.

Inside Spain the protests were even more dramatic, considering the repressive power in the hands of the regime. On November 30, before the trial had even begun, some 100,000 students and workers smashed cars and shop windows in Barcelona. Franco retaliated by rounding up scores of leaders of the bourgeois opposition—even of the most moderate variety—in hope of heading off further protests.

A petition demanding that the death penalty be abolished was signed by 2,000 prominent Catalonians and delivered to the chief of the combined general staffs, General Manuel Díez Alegria.

On December 3 some 100,000 workers went on strike throughout the Basque region in northern Spain. The strike lasted several days.

In Villabona, villagers blocked the main highway December 4, refusing to move even when threatened with submachine guns by the *guardia civil*.

One of the most dramatic incidents was the December 13-14 occupation of the mountain monastery of Montserrat near Barcelona by 300 Spanish artists, poets, and intellectuals led by the world-famous painter Joan Miró who is seventy-seven years old. The Paris daily *Le Monde's* special correspondent Marcel Niedergang, writing from Barcelona in the December 17 issue, said this revolt of the Catalan intellectuals was "unprecedented" under the Franco regime. He summarized their manifesto:

"... this text demanded the abolition of the death penalty, and called for the formation of an 'authentically popular state guaranteeing the exercise of civil liberties and the rights of the peoples and nations that comprise the Spanish state.'"

"These demands," Niedergang commented, "may appear commonplace beyond the Pyrenees. Here, where the police forces have had a green light since Monday to arrest, interrogate, and hold in prison any Spanish citizen without recourse to the judicial authorities, to voice such demands shows what courage and impulsion to speak out is beginning to be aroused in some of the signers."

It was the first time in thirty years that antigovernment mobilizations had taken place simultaneously in Catalonia and in the Basque provinces.

The social crisis began to be reflected in a governmental crisis as well. The army, which generally favored harsh repression of the Basque nationalists, objected to being made responsible for the sentencing, especially after a public trial. Old-line fascists among the officer corps accused the civilian cabinet headed by Franco's vice-president, Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco, of endangering "order" by their attempts to clean up Spain's image among the capitalist democracies of Western Europe.

The main targets of the military are Foreign Minister Gregorio López Bravo and Planning Minister Laureano López Rodó, who are both leaders of the "Europeanizing" tendency that

won ascendancy in the government in October 1969. Both ministers are reputed to be supporters of the semi-secret Catholic lay organization Opus Dei [Work of God].

Discontent in the military began to take organizational form months before the opening of the Burgos trial. According to Anatole Shub and Miguel Acoca, writing in the December 24 *Washington Post*: "In September, irate army captains began to organize in small secret cells a movement that ultimately became known as the Junta of National Affirmation."

The immediate demands of these groups included higher pay and faster promotion, but they soon escalated to more political questions.

"It is impossible to determine how far their activities were sanctioned, or even inspired, by senior officers," the *Washington Post* correspondents wrote. "Nevertheless, the captains drafted a six-point manifesto which, by early November, was signed by some 5,000 junior officers.

"The captains' manifesto made three principal demands. First, the restoration of order and authority in the streets, factories, press and universities. Second, austerity and honesty in public administration] including thorough investigation of all fortunes accumulated through political influence since 1940.* Finally, resignation of the present government (excluding Franco), appointment of a prime minister (provided for in the constitution) and installation of a new government with a clear program capable of realization within a year."

The captains' junta sought to provoke the government into clamping down on the mounting opposition, in part as a rebuke to the "leniency" of the cabinet. The *Washington Post* reported a series of unauthorized officers' meetings that preceded Franco's declaration of a national state of emergency:

"On Sunday, Dec. 13, at a cavalry school at Caravanchel outside Madrid,

* This is a reference to the so-called Matesa scandal which received big play in the Spanish press in June 1970. Opus Dei ministers, who are closely connected to industrial and financial circles, had secured large government grants to the Matesa company for "exports" that proved to be nonexistent. Two of Lopez Bravo's closest aides were indicted on charges of misappropriation of public funds.

a group of 30 cavalry captains held a political meeting about the crisis. Senior officers were excluded. The captains drafted a letter to Franco demanding firm policies to defend the honor of the army, allegedly compromised by the government's handling of the Burgos trial.

"Word of the Caravanchel meeting quickly spread to other military units. On Monday morning, Dec. 14, some 40 artillery captains held a similar meeting and endorsed the cavalry officers' demands.

"The third and perhaps most significant captains' meeting was held at general staff headquarters in the heart of Madrid. There, some three dozen general staff captains, after drafting a letter of their own, brought it to the chief of the general staff, Lt. Gen. Manuel Diez Alegria, for transmittal to Franco." Diez Alegria reportedly gave his approval to the captains' demands.

Luis Carrero Blanco sought to recover the initiative by calling an emergency cabinet meeting for that night, December 14. Significantly, neither López Bravo nor López Rodó attended, although the meeting made the decision to extend the state of emergency to the whole country.

The army followed up by organizing a series of "spontaneous" mass demonstrations, ostensibly in support of Franco against the Basques, but also against the cabinet.

Under tight army control, using all the resources available to a dictatorship, large rallies were held in Burgos December 16 and in Madrid the following day. Several accounts confirm the fraudulent character of these "outpourings." The December 23 weekly English edition of *Le Monde* reported from Madrid:

"It was said here that almost the entire strength of all the garrisons in Madrid had put on mufti to take part in the demonstration, which also included large numbers of civil servants based in Madrid."

The December 18 *New York Times* added:

"The demonstrators included Falangist groups, Government employes let off for the day, civil war veterans, many of the middle aged and the middle class, fewer of the young and very few workers."

The civil-war veterans' organizations are subsidized by the army. Private businesses were also asked by

the military organizers to close during the demonstrations and instruct their employees to attend. Pro-Franco demonstrations in the rest of Spain seem to have occurred only in cities with large army garrisons.

The army-instigated rallies had a virulent tone. One of the most common slogans was "ETA to the Wall!" Other chants and posters included "Long Live Saint Caudillo of Spain!" and "Spaniards Unite Against the World!" But equally common were shouts of "Out with the Opus Dei!"

Franco's December 30 commutation of the six death sentences did nothing to resolve the crisis brewing over his succession. The Opus Dei grouping, and Spain's "liberal" bourgeoisie whom they represent, have been thoroughly discredited by their long association with the Franco regime.

A return to the totalitarian terror of the post civil-war days, dreamed of by the army, is equally impossible for Spain's decaying ruling class in face of the rising mass mobilization. The changes going on at the base far outweigh the question of which faction wins the immediate struggle at the top. □

Confirmed by Science

A sociologist at the University of California in Los Angeles recently conducted an experiment with fifteen drivers, each of whom had driven for at least one year without being charged with any traffic violation.

The fifteen were instructed to drive through the city, carefully obeying all traffic laws. The cars they drove had slogans of the Black Panther party stuck to their bumpers.

In a period of seventeen days, the test drivers were ticketed thirty-three times for alleged traffic violations. Their fines totaled \$500.

High on Pot

The "Bonn Center," a building being constructed by the West German government, includes a "presidential suite" for visiting heads of foreign governments. The newspaper *Bonner Woche* reports that the suite includes a bathroom that "is among . . . the most comfortable of rooms: because of the airy height of the room, which cannot be seen into from outside, the interior designers could do without curtains. The guest enjoys the rare pleasure of being able to observe the activity around the Bundestag even from this spot."

YSA Convention Marks Decade of Growth

By Allen Myers

The tenth national convention of the Young Socialist Alliance [YSA], held in New York December 27-31, clearly demonstrated that the YSA has become the largest and most dynamic radical youth group in the United States today.

The more than 1,200 participants could see with their own eyes that the current period of radicalization is, as YSA National Committee member Frank Boehm characterized it, "good growing weather for American Trotskyism."

Boehm, who was elected national chairman at the final session, delivered the report on the political resolution entitled "After the May Upsurge—Young Socialists and the Student Movement." He traced the history of the YSA from its founding by fewer than 100 persons in 1960 to its present size and wide influence in the radical movement. The same period, he pointed out, has seen the demise of the Social Democratic Young People's Socialist League [YPSL], the disintegration of Students for a Democratic Society [SDS], the isolation of ultraleft groups such as the Maoist Progressive Labor party [PLP], and the failure of four attempts by the Communist party to establish a viable youth organization.

A key factor in the recent expansion of the YSA was the massive student upsurge in May 1970, following the invasion of Cambodia and the murder of young people at Kent State, Jackson State, and in Augusta, Georgia. Much of the discussion of the political resolution centered on the nature of the social crisis precipitated by thousands of students creating "red universities" in effect when they took over their campuses and used them as centers for antiwar organizing.

"The pattern established in May," the resolution noted, "illustrated the potential for the next upsurge to succeed in drawing in the participation of the organized working class, high-school students, the Third World communities and masses of women. . . . While the May strike fell short of touching off a generalized social upheaval, it came

close enough to let the ruling class see the outlines of a social revolution in this country. The capitalists were so frightened by what they saw that the threat of another May has become a permanent factor for them to consider before making any major moves in their continuous campaign to crush the world revolution."

The resolution went on to stress the necessity of the YSA continuing its work in the antiwar movement, women's liberation movement, the struggles of oppressed nationalities for self-determination, and in defense of the Palestinian revolution. Other reports and resolutions dealt with these areas in more detail.

The reporter on the antiwar resolution, Carl Frank, emphasized that the so-called "Vietnamization" has created a short breathing space for Nixon at the cost of even greater social explosions when the American public realizes that he does not intend to end the war. In the present situation, Frank said, Vietnamization is not a viable alternative from the standpoint of American imperialism. U. S. forces have lost the initiative, GI morale is at an all-time low, and the masses of South Vietnam are demanding the withdrawal of American troops. Given these conditions, Nixon is under increasing pressure either to get out or to reescalate the war.

Nixon's difficulties are further increased by the continued growth of the Student Mobilization Committee [SMC] as a mass student antiwar organization and by the activities of the National Peace Action Coalition [NPAC], which was able to unite a large number of groups in antiwar demonstrations October 31 in spite of the pressure of the elections.

NPAC has called for mass demonstrations in Washington and San Francisco on April 24, and the convention voted to make the building of these demonstrations a major task of the YSA in the coming period.

Two sessions of the convention were devoted to the deepening nationalist struggle in the United States. Norman

Oliver, later elected national organizational secretary, reported on the Black struggle. Mirta Vidal described the Chicano fight for self-determination.

Although nationalist sentiment among Blacks is increasing, Oliver said, the struggle continues to be marked by a crisis of leadership. Groups like the Southern Christian Leadership Conference [SCLC], though at times organizing mass struggles, have a reformist perspective and remain tied to the Democratic party. The Black Panther party, on the other hand, has moved away from its original nationalism and is unable, because of its ultraleftism, to organize the Black community in mass struggles.

A burning need of the Black movement is still a mass independent Black party. Such a party, the discussion emphasized, will be formed in the course of concrete struggles.

Both Oliver and Vidal noted that sentiment for a Black party had been encouraged by the example of La Raza Unida parties organized by Chicanos in Texas and Colorado. In Crystal City, Texas, La Raza Unida has already won significant electoral victories. The party there plans to expand in the near future into all twenty-six southwest Texas counties and later to organize on a statewide basis.

While it would be premature to describe La Raza Unida as a mass party, Vidal said, it is clearly moving in that direction. YSAers have the task of continuing to publicize and build the party and of fighting attempts by the Democratic party and Communist party to destroy La Raza Unida's independent character.

The YSA's strategy in the nationalist movements is determined by its analysis of the revolutionary nature of the struggle of oppressed nationalities. This was described in the resolution on the Black struggle:

"The coming American revolution will have a combined character; it will be both a socialist revolution and a struggle for the self-determination of

the oppressed nationalities, against a single, centralized capitalist state. This fact dictates the necessity of organizing a multinational revolutionary socialist youth organization and party to lead the American revolution to victory."

In 1970 the women's liberation movement in the United States demonstrated its mass appeal for the first time. The convention evaluated this development in a resolution entitled "The Struggle for Women's Liberation: Strategy for a Mass Movement."

Prior to the mass women's demonstrations on August 26, said Cindy Jaquith, the reporter on the resolution, the bourgeois media had treated feminism as a joke. When this became impossible after the success of the August 26 mass demonstration, the media shifted to a strategy of baiting the movement because Lesbians participate in it. One of the tasks of the YSA, outlined in the resolution, is to struggle against such baiting by insisting on the right of all women to join in the fight against their oppression.

The resolution placed the growth of the feminist movement in the context of the current radicalization, which is marked by widespread alienation from the social roles imposed by capitalist society. The anticapitalist direction of the movement is evident in the demands it has raised for free abortion, free community-controlled child care, and equal pay and advancement for working women. Jaquith, who was elected national secretary, stressed that for women to understand their oppression means understanding the need to end capitalism.

The YSA's strategy of mass united-front actions by the women's movement is opposed by virtually all the other left tendencies, she said. The Communist party, for example, fears the independent, revolutionary thrust of the movement, which it would like to see diverted into reformist channels. On the other hand, ultraleft groups see feminism as "dividing the working class" or as insufficiently "anti-imperialist." Thus reformists and ultraleftists bloc together in an attempt to divert the movement from mass struggles.

The YSA's support of feminism is based on understanding the revolutionary character of the fight against oppression. In discussing the resolution, the delegates emphasized that the feminist movement's demonstrated ability to draw new layers into strug-

gle—campus women, working women, white, Black, and Chicano women—meant a powerful addition to the current radicalization.

The success of the YSA's revolutionary program in winning recruits from the different mass movements was evidenced not only by the size of the convention—fifty percent larger than the previous one—but also by the attitude of other left groups. Members of nearly all other socialist-minded organizations in the country distributed their literature outside the convention hall in hope of influencing the proceedings.

Supporters of the Communist party from the Young Workers Liberation League [YWLL] distributed a leaflet attacking the YSA's support of socialist democracy in the workers states. The leaflet condemned the YSA's refusal to allow the antiwar movement to be diverted into purely rhetorical attacks upon "racism and repression." This was the first time that Communist party supporters had attempted such an intervention at a "Trotskyite" gathering, indicating the changing relationship of forces between Stalinism and Trotskyism in the United States.

The December 31 issue of the *New York Daily World*, which reflects the views of the Communist party, attempted to comfort its supporters by declaring that the convention attendance was only 300—one-fourth of the number who registered. As has happened before, the *Daily World* thus proved to be considerably less objective than some of the bourgeois newspapers. The December 28 late edition of the *New York Times*, for example, correctly reported convention attendance as 1,200.

The moribund Social Democracy also showed up with a full-page article in its newspaper attacking the YSA's support of the Vietnamese and Palestinian revolutions and its "anti-Americanism." The article went so far as to accuse the YSA of having "lost the Trotskyist way" — certainly the first time the Socialist party reformists have come to the defense of the revolutionary leader.

Equally misdirected were the activities of the Workers League, which shares the viewpoint of Gerry Healy's Socialist Labour League in England. The Workers League devoted no less than four pages of its newspaper to an "Open Letter to the YSA Conven-

tion," rehashing the opposition of the Workers League to Black nationalism and proclaiming a new "apathy" in the student movement that has so far escaped the attention of other observers.

If there is "apathy" among American youth, it has not affected the YSA's ability to recruit young revolutionists. The organizational report revealed that YSA membership is now over 1,300, a net increase of twenty-five percent in the last year. During the convention itself, an additional 125 persons applied for membership.

The delegates approved an ambitious program of activities designed to continue recruitment and to consolidate the gains already made. These included regional meetings in January, educational conferences in the spring, and a fund drive to finance the national functions of the organization.

Optimism about the continued growth of the Trotskyist movement was prevalent not only in regard to the United States, but on a worldwide basis. Outgoing National Chairwoman Susan LaMont, in her international report, described the recent Red Europe conference [see *Intercontinental Press*, December 7, 1970, page 1051], and predicted that the worldwide youth radicalization is laying the basis for the Fourth International to become a mass international party. □

East Germans Fight Pollution

The East German government has come up with two interesting measures to fight water pollution.

The measures, which are being applied along the Saale River, were described by Harry B. Ellis in the November 19 *Christian Science Monitor*:

"First, chemical and other factories in the area now must pay a fee for river water they use. This, according to Communist water board officials, impels plant managers toward economic water use.

"Second, if a factory pollutes its river waters beyond permissible limits, management must pay a stiff fine."

"Quite apart from their social responsibility to conserve the environment," Ellis reported, "factory managers were said to be finding it cheaper to install water purification plants than to pay the heavy fines."

Measures such as these, of course, are unnecessary in capitalist society, where managers are motivated solely by their sense of social responsibility.

The Workers Insurrection in Poland

By Gerry Foley

"What happened in Gdansk was a revolution—and a successful one. The local Communist party leadership hung a white flag from a window of the top floor and left the building with their hands up.

"The house was set on fire and party officials were seized by about 3,000 shipyard workers who had marched in from the harbor. . . .

"Riot police brought in from all over northern Poland fired on the demonstrators, but all eyewitnesses agree that only a few soldiers used their weapons.

"When they were ordered to shoot, they shot into the air. Many of them threw down their weapons and said they could not shoot at their fellow countrymen."

This is the account of the start of the Polish workers' rebellion given by Kurt Karlsson, a reporter for the Stockholm daily *Expressen* who was in the port city of Gdansk during the initial fighting December 14 and 15.

On December 16, Reuters correspondent Ronald Farquhar cabled from Warsaw: "The eyewitnesses to the Gdansk rioting said that, in another clash Tuesday [December 15], shipyard workers went on strike and marched to a militia headquarters singing the Internationale—the Communist anthem."

By December 17 the insurrection had spread to the city of Szczecin on the East German border. Swedish radio reporter Anders Tunborg described the fighting there as follows:

"Thousands of workers tried to leave their work at the docks but were stopped by the police. Police sirens screamed and the police tried to make the workers return to work; but the angry workers overturned two police cars and threw bricks at them. More policemen arrived in jeeps and buses. The police surrounded the dock area and no outsiders were allowed in.

"At the same time, tanks were pulling up outside the central administration and party buildings, tanks filled with young military servicemen, many with just a few months' experience.

"More and more people arrived, and discontented housewives stood on the pavements talking. Slogans like 'We are workers, not roughnecks' were written on house walls and tanks. Youngsters gathered before the tanks singing national songs and shouting 'The soldiers for the people!'

"Then things began to move rapidly. The windows of the Communist party building were smashed. A group of youngsters climbed up the walls and into the building and began to throw out furniture, paper and other things, while people down in the street clapped their hands. When a very expensive table in jacaranda wood was thrown out of the window, everybody shouted with joy."

Workers Begin Taking Over

Writing from Warsaw December 31, *New York Times* correspondent James Feron reported that elements of work-

ers democracy had appeared in Szczecin in the wake of the uprising: "But in Szczecin, a strike that began on Dec. 17, also following clashes, was reported to have lasted through the weekend with the workers exercising a measure of control over the city before returning to work Dec. 22. . . ."

According to Feron, a "woman from Szczecin said most public facilities continued to function. The Szczecin radio, its staff in sympathy with the strikers, broadcast announcements from power and transportation workers saying they were maintaining service.

"The newspaper *Glos Szczecinski* appeared with a notice identifying it as a strike paper. . . .

"Strike committee representatives began negotiations, the Szczecin woman said. Strike leaders returned to the yards for changes to be accepted or rejected by the workers.

"The demands of one plant, the Polmo automotive company, contained 21 points. The first stated: 'We demand the resignation of the present labor union, which has never come out in defense of the working masses.'"

Point 19 of the list of demands called for "regular and honest information about the economic and political situation in the country through the mass media in programs aimed at the whole country." In a collectivized economy such a demand has a dynamic of direct workers' control.

Apparently spontaneously, the workers revived a key point in Lenin's program for fighting bureaucracy: "We demand . . . equalization of party workers' earnings with the average level of earnings in industry."

Opposition leaflets were distributed in Warsaw December 18 and the unrest was reported spreading to Poznan, the site of the 1956 workers' insurrection; Łódź; Wrocław; and Katowice, the center of the Silesian mining region. On December 19 the agitation reached the eastern city of Elbląg, and demonstrations occurred in Kraków in the far south.

Repercussions in the Government

The next day, December 20, Gomulka resigned his post as head of the party for "reasons of health." At the same time four of his closest political associates — Boleslaw Jaszczuk, Zenon Kliszko, Marshal Marian Spychalski, and Ryszard Strzelecki — left the political bureau.

Changes in the government followed December 23. Jozef Cyrankiewicz resigned the post of premier which he had held for twenty-three years, admitting that he had been unable to control the "recent events." He was kicked upstairs into the figurehead post of president. Marian Spychalski and Zenon Kliszko lost their leading positions in the government as they had previously in the party.

For the first time since the Hungarian revolution of 1956, a working-class insurrection had toppled a bureaucratic government. "Few . . . would have anticipated such

a rapid denouement," correspondent Bernard Margueritte wrote in the December 22 issue of *Le Monde*. "The persistence of the disturbances, which were gradually spreading to new regions doubtlessly speeded up the decision."

In the next issue of the Paris daily, Margueritte described the circumstances of Gomulka's fall: "The governmental shifts have produced a psychological shock in the country. It had been impossible to restore normality in a nation that had lost all confidence in its leaders.

"Any reforms, even the most justified, introduced by the old team would have had no chance of winning the support of the population. Furthermore, if these shifts had not been made—it is reported that they were decided on in an expanded session of the political bureau over the night of December 19-20 and confirmed on Sunday, December 20, by the Seventh Plenum of the Central Committee—it would seem that the situation could have deteriorated still further.

"Even in Warsaw many plant delegations had announced their intention to organize demonstrations before the holidays unless there was a new development in the situation. No one can tell what might have happened if the agitation had spread to the capital in this way."

Ferment had been previously reported in the Zeran automotive factory in the outskirts of Warsaw.

The bureaucracy made a humiliating self-criticism. In his speech on assuming power, the new party general secretary, Edward Gierek, did not make a single bow to his predecessor or to the continuity of party authority. To the contrary, he condemned "ill-considered" decisions by the previous leadership and hinted at withdrawal of the measures that had fueled popular discontent.

The Boost in Prices

The Western press attributed the Polish workers' revolt to the price changes announced December 13. At that time the bureaucracy announced the price policy it intended to follow under the 1971-75 five-year plan. Prices of basic necessities were raised, while those of expensive consumer durables were cut. Increases ranging from 11% to 33% for meat and meat products were reported. Boosts on medium-priced consumer goods such as leather shoes, carpets, clothing, kitchenware, and certain types of furniture ranged from 10% to 22%. Increases in the price of coal were from 10% to 20%, depending on the quality, just in advance of the coldest period of the fierce Polish winter.

At the same time the price of tape recorders went down 21%; car radios 19%; washing machines 17%; refrigerators, lamps, and vacuum cleaners 15%; television sets 13%; and sewing machines 10%.

The official Polish press explained that these measures were designed to "adjust the consumption structure to the development of the economy."

Capitalist analysts speculated that the Warsaw government had three objectives: (1) to "rationalize" prices, that is, bring them into line with economic costs and the law of supply and demand; (2) to promote the market for manufacturing industries believed capable of competing in foreign markets; (3) to encourage the private farmers, who dominate the agricultural economy, to produce more

by offering higher prices and subsidies for food production.

These analysts generally approved the Polish government's measures, which came within the framework of its policy of "technocratic" reform—that is, use of "market mechanisms" and the "profit criterion" to overcome the most irrational aspects of hypercentralized bureaucratic management of the economy.

As the demands of economic growth have become more complex, the tendency toward such reforms has become general in the bureaucratized workers states. Unable by its social essence to concede any measure of democratic control over economic decisions, the bureaucracy has had to fall back on "economic natural laws," or blind economic forces, to reduce the distortions of bureaucratic arbitrariness and corruption.

Western observers have naturally welcomed this tendency. Capitalist policy makers generally have a fine sense of the dynamic of collective ownership of the means of production, even under bureaucratic management. It is unlikely that they take seriously the theories of a "convergence" between "modern" capitalism and socialism popularized by bourgeois-liberal publicists and academics. However, they could only applaud the antidemocratic essence of these reforms.

In the Polish case, at least, the "technocratic" reforms seem only to have increased the inequities and irrationalities of the bureaucratic system. To the low wages and bureaucratic tyranny the workers have already suffered, the reforms have added insecurity of employment and reduced social benefits. Finally, the price rises threatened to subject large sections of the working class to intolerable hardships, for the apparent profit only of the expanding and increasingly affluent managerial layer.

Pointed Out by Kuron and Modzelewski

In early 1965, Polish revolutionary Marxists Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski noted that according to government statistics 42% of working-class families in Poland were forced to exist on a less than adequate diet, and 23% on an absolutely insufficient one.* They also pointed out that in the 1965-70 five-year plan, real wages for the mass of workers would remain constant. The diet of Polish workers may even have deteriorated since Kuron and Modzelewski made their estimates, as a result of setbacks in the agricultural economy over the past two years.

As the ideology of Stalinism has become totally discredited, the bureaucracy has tried to replace the old dogmas with "consumerism." But it is not likely that this conditioning is sufficient to persuade workers to endure semistarvation for the sake of possessing a television set.

Moreover, among those workers above the minimum level of subsistence, demand can be expected to rise first for cheaper consumer goods, such as clothing and household implements. But the prices for these goods were also raised. In its December 28 issue, the West German weekly

* See their "Open Letter to Members of the University of Warsaw Sections of the United Polish Workers Party and the Union of Young Socialists." This has been published in English in *Revolutionary Marxist Students in Poland Speak Out (1964-1968)*, Merit Publishers, 873 Broadway, New York, N. Y. 10003.

Der Spiegel pointed out, moreover, that there has been a severe scarcity of some of the most elementary manufactured goods:

"Two years ago, a letter to the Warsaw paper *Zycie Warszawy* complained: 'Don't tell me that the electrical plants are our pride and joy. I know that and I am proud of them. But I need an electric-light socket and there have been none in the stores for a year!'"

The German magazine noted that "A farmer can get a television set (10,000 zlotys) more easily, if he has the money, than a dung fork (20 zlotys). For housewives it is easier to get an electric sewing machine (6,000 zlotys) than a pack of needles (two zlotys)."

The major market for such items as tape recorders would seem to be the managerial layers whose numbers and standard of living have increased as a result of the post-1956 economic reforms. In 1965 Kuron and Modzelewski described the trend:

"Formerly, government officials loved to wear blue overalls, willingly advertising their working-class origins; they gave medals to the best workers and were embarrassed to pay a manager ten times more than a worker. Today, government officials dress in elegant clothing, and the managers—who sweat the surplus product out of the workers—are the positive heroes of the building of socialism; and their autos and villas are eloquent testimony to their social prestige and civic virtues. Today exploitation is out in the open for all to see; it is no longer carried on by means of propaganda and forced enthusiasm, but openly by means of the whip of economic sanctions, administrative duress, and—if any attempt is made to resist—by police coercion."

The price changes could be considered "rational" from the point of view of "natural economic laws." Most experts agree that agricultural products have been underpriced in terms of industrial goods. Food is scarce in Poland owing to the backwardness of the overwhelmingly private peasant economy and the lack of adequate economic incentives for the individual peasants.

On the other hand, bureaucratic management of industry results in excessive cost prices of manufactured goods and substantial waste production. Moreover, considerable agricultural produce must be diverted from local consumption for sale abroad, since Polish manufactured goods are generally of too poor a quality to compete on the international market.

However, the social effects of "economic rationality" are perilous in a state and economy supposed to belong to the workers, as the Polish bureaucracy has learned. This danger is increased by the fact that the bureaucracy is a purely parasitic growth, not deeply rooted in society like a capitalist class. It has few institutions for containing and diverting discontent once it reaches the explosion point. It could become isolated almost without warning.

"The explosion of violence was all the more abrupt," Bernard Marguerite commented in the December 19 issue of *Le Monde*, "because in a socialist system intermediate powers, which could give expression to and at the same time canalize demands, are reduced to a very secondary role."

Although the price raises undoubtedly fueled and helped to spread the workers' revolt, other factors were also at

work and may even have been more important, in the last analysis.

In the *Christian Science Monitor* of December 30, Paul Wohl wrote: "The strike in the Baltic ports was primarily political. It started, as we now know, 24 hours before the government's new price decree was announced."

According to Wohl, the workers' action panicked the Gomulka government, which sent the then deputy premier, Stanislaw Kociolek, to make a personal appeal to the protesters. Kociolek had served as first secretary of the local party organization and was supposed to be popular with the workers.

"At a workers' mass meeting," Wohl wrote, "Mr. Kociolek was received to the tune of 'down with Gomulka! down with Kociolek!'"

Kociolek's speech, broadcast over the local radio station, was monitored in Sweden. Wohl recounted the highlights:

"Mr. Kociolek started by admonishing the shipyard workers to be conscious of their 'moral responsibility' and 'not to demagogically place responsibility for the state of affairs upon the authorities' . . .

"Appealing to the older workers over the heads of the younger ones who had 'applied violence,' Mr. Kociolek, toward the end of his speech, made the surprising promise of 'considerable wage increases in 1971.' Nothing of the kind was provided in the economic plan. The situation must have been exceptionally tense."

The most profound of the forces at work was apparently the political ripening of the vast and relatively homogeneous working class created by the collectivized economy.

In the *Los Angeles Times* of December 27, *London Observer* staff member Neal Ascherson wrote: "In Poznan in 1956, the savage riots that shook all Eastern Europe and led to the Polish October and, indirectly, to the Hungarian tragedy, were the outbursts of desperate men who yelled for bread.

"Gdansk and Szczecin are different. These are men who have gone out on the streets not to fight for survival, but for a say in their own destinies at work. . . .

"The fantastic price rises were the drop that made a brimming cup of mistrust overflow. One can add to that other factors: the enduring and mutual lack of confidence between the Polish masses and their leaders, the fatal overreaction of Polish militia when faced with spontaneous trouble. But there is something more profound.

"All over Eastern Europe a new class is making itself felt. Hard though that is for traditional Communists to admit, it is the working class. Enfranchised and given security after the war, hymned to the skies (and exploited to the bone) under Stalinism, the people who work in factories, drive trucks and mine coal are beginning to feel that they are on their own."

The workers in the former German Baltic cities, settled and built up since the war, are perhaps the most confident, most energetic, and most youthful layer of the Polish working class. "The Baltic cities of Gdansk, Sopot and Gdynia are Polish show windows to the world, normally brimming with tourists, industry and international trade," an Associated Press report in the December 17 issue of the *New York Times* pointed out.

"It's one of the best cities in Poland to live [in]," a Gdansk bartender told a visitor just a month ago. "Peo-

ple feel so cozy here. It's developing. There's plenty of industry and port activity."

In the first days of the upheaval, in fact, the bureaucracy tried to blame the insurrection on the arrogance of a privileged sector of the working class. In its December 17 issue, the party Central Committee organ *Trybuna*



GOMULKA: Workers put him down and out.

Ludu argued that the shipyard workers have an average salary of 3,941 zlotys a month, as against 2,348 zlotys for the rest of state industry. Moreover, according to the party mouthpiece, these workers' [money] wages have increased 22.8% over the last five years, in comparison with 17.6% in the rest of nationalized industry.

In March 1968 the Gomulka regime blamed the protests in the universities on "gilded youth" in an attempt to isolate the students from the workers. In the latest outbreaks, the bureaucracy's demagogic attacks on the port workers were not accepted even in foreign Communist party circles. In the Italian party organ *l'Unità*, Giuseppe Boffa admitted that the fact that one of the best-paid sectors of the Polish working class spearheaded the insurrection indicated that the causes of the explosion were not purely economic.

Political Demands Soon Voiced

The workers seem to have put forward political demands at least from a very early stage of the rebellion. In Szczecin, the first demonstrations were called to demand that the

January 11, 1971

party authorities "explain" and not rescind the price increases. Fighting was apparently touched off when the local bureaucrats replied to the workers' call for democratic dialogue with a bloody repression.

A December 29 AP dispatch related the story of a Szczecin worker describing the start of the rebellion in that city: "It was a Thursday [December 17], right after lunch. We had just had a meeting and were going to party headquarters and ask Welascek [the local party boss] for an explanation about the prices."

This eyewitness said that the price increases and reports of police shooting workers had upset the men in the yards.

"We went across the bridge and were marching along the river road toward the castle. We were orderly and did not resemble a mob at all.

"I was somewhere in the middle and could not see what was up ahead. People started saying there were policemen and the word came back to keep going. Then suddenly there were shots and it was as if the whole mass of people had shuddered.

"In front of me people started to rush forward and I went with them. I passed several of our men lying on the ground and over to one side they were beating a policeman. The others had run away.

"I talked later to a man up front and he said they were shooting people like birds, without even counting them.

"We went up the hill and over to the party building. People were already inside and had begun throwing things out of the windows — chairs, tables, filing cabinets, papers, everything."

New Polish Marxist Vanguard

Another factor, of which little is yet known, is the emergence of a new revolutionary Marxist vanguard in Poland. This has occurred since the fading of the post-1956 liberalization and the reformist illusions inspired by the de-Stalinization. The first major sign that a new revolutionary current was developing was the appearance of Kuron and Modzelewski's open letter to the party and Communist youth organizations of the University of Warsaw.

This document was the first rounded Marxist critique of the bureaucracy to appear in a workers state since the extermination of the Soviet Left Opposition in Stalin's purges.

Student Radicalization

In March, 1968, extensive student strikes and demonstrations took place in support of demands for implementation of workers democracy and the principles of Marxism. The protesters at one school issued the following manifesto to the workers:

"We students of the Warsaw Polytechnic Institute inform you that a sit-in is in progress in our school. It is to express our protest against violations of article 71 of the constitution [providing for freedom of speech] which you yourselves established. We protest because only in conditions of complete democracy can solutions be found to put our socialist economy in a healthy condition. In an atmosphere of distrust, suspicion, and denunciations, study of economic problems is impossible. . . .

"Long Live the Working Class!!!

"Long Live Socialism!

"Long Live Democracy!"

The students in Wroclaw demanded "consistent application of the principles of socialism and not empty extolling of its ideals for the sake of protecting positions acquired in the leadership."

The Manifesto of the students of the University of Warsaw ended with the slogans "Long Live Poland!" "Long Live Socialism!" "History Will Absolve Us!"

In 1968 one-half of the Polish population was under twenty years of age. The majority are now under twenty. Under the conditions of bureaucratic dictatorship, it is impossible to judge how widely the influence of the student radicalization spread. But there are grounds for believing that its expansion could have been very rapid. The young workers, the contemporaries of the revolutionary students, could be expected to be hardest hit by the "technocratic" reforms that increased the cost of housing and the extent of unemployment.

In the spring of 1970, apparently,* a new opposition journal appeared in Poland, *Iskra*, the organ of the Grupa Marksistowsko-Rewolucyjna [Revolutionary Marxist Group]. In its first editorial it wrote: "For the first time in Poland since October 1966 an independent Marxist publication will be circulated and read.

"For the first time in several decades this publication will be the production of a revolutionary vanguard, its theoretical organ, the reflection of revolutionary struggles in Poland and throughout the world, the organizer of a movement."

Iskra gave this evaluation of the influence of the March student strikes:

"Despite the climate of police repression promoted by a whole series of already announced trials and those in preparation, there has been a general political awakening in Poland since March. The permanent economic crisis of the 'socialist' countries is galvanizing the discontent of the people."

This issue of *Iskra* also announced the clandestine publication of an article by Leon Trotsky on the social nature of the bureaucracy, "The USSR in the War," as the first of its series Biblioteka Rewolucyjnego Marksizmu (Library of Revolutionary Marxism).

The insurgent workers in the Baltic coast cities raised the same demand for access to honest and complete information that the students raised in 1968. A prerequisite for the workers assuming real control of the state and economy that ostensibly belong to them, this demand arises naturally in working-class struggles against the bureaucracy. Moreover, it represents a point of convergence between intellectual workers, who need freedom of expression to achieve minimum professional dignity, and manual workers trying to comprehend and combat their exploitation.

Sympathy Voiced in News Media

In the Polish uprisings, as in the Czechoslovak de-Stalinization of 1968, sections of the press seem to have gone

* The publication is undated, probably for security reasons, but its contents indicate that it was written in early 1970.

over to the side of the workers. The paper *Glos Szczeciński* is one example. There are also reports that Polish television showed scenes of demonstrating workers that contradicted the propaganda of the bureaucracy.

The crude slanders churned out by the bureaucratic propaganda machine at the start of the uprising undoubtedly gave an added acuteness to the workers' demands for the facts.

At least before the Czechoslovak "normalization," the Polish press was probably the most openly counterrevolutionary and reactionary in Eastern Europe. The hypocritical character of the Polish journals was increased by the fact that they masqueraded as a real press, instead of being a few sheets of official announcements and exhortations like their Soviet counterparts.

For example, during the May-June 1968 upheaval in France, an article in the literary weekly *Kultura* hinted that the worker-student uprising was the result of a Zionist-CIA plot to bring down General de Gaulle, whom the writer considered a great opponent of Israeli and U.S. imperialism.

As the bureaucratic authorities were forced, under the pressure of a spreading rebellion, to retract their slanders of the insurgent workers, the demand for an honest press seemed to take on an irresistible momentum.

The initial demonstrations in Gdansk were denounced by the bureaucratic-controlled media as hooligan outrages. For two days the demonstrations that began December 14 had been hushed up altogether. In the afternoon of December 16 the official news agency PAP issued a communiqué that "Serious incidents occurred December 14 and 15 in the streets of Gdansk. Adventurers and hooligans having nothing in common with the working class have exploited the atmosphere reigning among the personnel of the Gdansk shipyards. They have destroyed several buildings and looted several dozen shops.

"Some members of the forces of order who tried to intervene were murdered."

The next day the soon-to-be ousted premier Cyrankiewicz went on national radio and television denouncing the demonstrators in still more abusive terms.

"For the last three days Gdansk and the coast have been the scene of street disturbances and violations of authority and public order. During these events many public buildings were demolished and set on fire, many shops looted and ransacked, many cars destroyed.

"During these events militiamen and soldiers—standing guard over order and public and private property and the security of the citizens—have been attacked and shot at.

"Tragic clashes followed in which the forces of order were compelled to use arms. There were casualties, dozens of dead, several hundred wounded—militiamen and civilians.

"Here are the painful consequences of the lack of prudence and sense of responsibility by those who abandoned work and went into the streets, providing an opportunity for scum, adventurers, and enemies, for vandalism, looting and murder. Each of us must realize that these events have not only brought vast material losses to the country, but have also become a feeding ground for the enemies of People's Poland."

Even while he was raising the bugaboo of a "counter-

revolutionary danger" and of playing into the hands of the capitalist enemy, Cyrankiewicz identified, perhaps unconsciously, with the reactionary opponents of social change and independent mass action everywhere in the world: "What would you say? Is Poland the only country in the world that has hostile forces operating within? Life has again proved that street demonstrations—even if their organizers are joined by all kinds of hostile elements—anarchist and criminal elements exploit the demonstrations to bring about looting, arson, and thoughtless destruction."

Sudden Switch to Soft Words

On Friday, December 18, officials read severe warnings to the workers in the Warsaw factories. But at the same time the regime began abruptly changing its tune. At 7:00 p.m. Friday evening Warsaw radio commentator Jan Zakrzewski declared that "it would be too easy a solution for us to throw all the responsibility for the events on anarchists and hooligans." He added that "we can understand the bitterness felt by the most poorly paid workers" facing "insufficiently explained" measures.

Immediately on taking command of the Communist party, Gierek promised: "The iron-clad rule of our economic policy and of our policy in general must be to recognize realities and to consult extensively with the working class and the intelligentsia, and to respect the principle of collective leadership and democracy in the life of the party and the activity of the supreme authorities."

After the governmental shakeup the propaganda apparatus seemed to be extending its self-criticism. The weekly *Polityka* wrote: "Although there are various degrees of responsibility, the party is responsible for the causes that gave rise to the tragic events. Elements of stagnation were growing in the economy. The picture presented by propaganda was far from reality."

The weekly noted the dangers implicit in too great a disparity between propaganda and what people really believe: "Such practices sanctioned the very dangerous social phenomenon of double-thinking—having one standard for show and another for private use and for close friends, uttered at the snack bar during breaks, in public meetings and conferences, and at the family table in a group of close friends."

Polityka specifically took back the slander that the rebellious workers had been misled by "anarchist" and "criminal" elements: "Of course, the street demonstrations were not the correct forum to present political postulates, but we have to admit that conscious activity by the workers did not leave wide room for maneuvering by hostile and antisocial elements."

These self-criticisms and promises of honest reporting in the mass media seem to represent the new government's main concessions to the workers. So far it has promised only token economic reforms—a "price freeze," but not rescinding the increases; and hardship allowances for large families.

The bureaucracy's persistent inability to manage the collectivized economy efficiently make it unlikely that the workers will be offered major economic concessions. In this respect Kuron and Modzelewski's economic analysis seems to have been borne out. They argued in 1965

that the bureaucracy had only been able to grant wage increases in 1956-59 by using up reserves accumulated in the primitive phase of industrialization.

In their open letter, the two young revolutionists wrote: "The bureaucracy will not concede one zloty of its own free will. In any case, given the crisis and the lack of economic reserves, it has nothing more to concede to pressure. Under these circumstances, any large-scale strike action will inevitably turn into a political conflict with the bureaucracy. This is the only way the workers can change their condition. Today, in the epoch of the universal crisis of the system, the workers' interests lie in revolution: in the abolition of the bureaucracy and the production relationships associated with it, in taking control of their own labor and its product—control of production in their own hands, that is, in establishing an economic, social, and political system based on workers democracy."

The new government seems to have no more room to maneuver in the political realm than in the economic. Gomulka did not just make the same promises about "democracy" and "honest information" in 1956 that Gierek is making now. Among other things, his pledge of industrial democracy was backed up by the establishment of workers councils in some plants.

Moreover, Gomulka, one of the few old Communists to survive Stalin's purges, appeared as the defender of Polish sovereignty against Kremlin domination. A victim of the Stalin terror himself in the late 1940s and early 1950s, he presented himself as the victor over the party faction most deeply implicated in the worst crimes of Stalinism.

As against all these advantages enjoyed by the now totally discredited champion of the Polish October, the new party leader Gierek can offer few charms. His sole merit seems to be his reputation as one of the more capable local party bosses under Gomulka. Workers in his Silesian fief are supposed to have enjoyed some marginal economic advantages over workers in other regions.

Gierek, as well as his closest associates in the new government, are deeply implicated in the repression of the 1968 democratic movement. Not one of them has the slightest liberal or reformist luster.

If Gierek's technocratic "realism" and "pragmatism" have won the praise of bourgeois commentators in the West, these qualities are unlikely to recommend him to the Polish workers who have just mounted a victorious rebellion against major planks in the technocratic program.

A New Step Forward

Facing this totally uninspiring regime, the Polish workers are the first working class in Eastern Europe to act so clearly against the bureaucracy as a whole. They did not fight in support of a bureaucratic faction as the Hungarian workers did in 1956 or as the Czechoslovak workers did in 1968. They moved against the bureaucracy as a whole. Having thus demonstrated their power in independent action, they are not likely to accept the leadership of a bureaucratic hack like Gierek, especially after their disillusionment with Gomulka.

Moreover, the Polish workers' rebellion is the first anti-bureaucratic upheaval in direct opposition to the techno-

cratic reform that has been the bureaucracy's only solution to its ever more obvious bankruptcy in the field of economic management.

By their insurrection, the Polish workers appear to have inaugurated a whole new higher stage of antibureaucratic struggle in Eastern Europe—only months after the bureaucracy had seemingly totally pacified Czechoslovakia.

After repeated blows—Yugoslavia, the Berlin uprising, Poznan and the Polish October, the Hungarian revolution, the splitting away of China, Albania, and Rumania, the increasing independence of the Western Communist parties, the Prague Spring, and now the uprisings in the Polish coastal cities—the Soviet bureaucracy's political position seems on the point of being decisively undermined.

The first antibureaucratic rebellions in the 1950s occurred at a low ebb of revolutionary struggle in the rest of the world. Today the democratic fighters in Eastern Europe can find examples and potential allies all over the world.

In the 1950s it was relatively easy for the capitalist and Stalinist press to distort the nature of these revolts. Today a new generation of revolutionists has appeared all around the globe prepared to understand and support the struggle for workers democracy in the bureaucratized workers states.

In the 1950s there could still be illusions that these revolts were directed at the collectivist system as such. It was still possible for some to defend the idea that peaceful evolution could remove the threat to capitalism represented by the bureaucratic regimes, or reduce the antagonism between the capitalist and noncapitalist systems. Today the fundamental drive of the antibureaucratic rebellions, the revolutionary future they portend, is apparent even from the reports in the capitalist press.

In the *Los Angeles Times* of December 27, for example, Neal Ascherson wrote: "This was not a 'revolt against communism,' a national outbreak like the mighty risings which toll through the history of Poland. It is reported that the crowds who stormed the party headquarters at Gdansk were singing the 'Internationale,' and that is the key."

And so, the most astute bourgeois observers found little that was encouraging in the Polish revolt.

'They Bode Little Good'

The *New York Times* put this headline on a story about the uprisings in its December 18 issue: "Blow to Efforts to Ease East-West Tension Seen." The author of the article, David Binder, wrote: "The political shock waves of the violence in Gdansk rolled across Eastern and Western Europe today and in the view of knowledgeable Europeans of both East and West they bode little good."

In the following issue of the *New York Times*, columnist Anthony Lewis wrote: "We can take no comfort from what is happening in Poland. The Communists' troubles are not going to make ours any easier."

Lewis was disheartened that the upheaval challenged his perspective of "convergence" between the Soviet and capitalist system. "We have had to put our faith on gradual change in the East. The hope has been that contacts with the West and the demands of a modern economy

would slowly bring enlightenment and relax the totalitarian grip."

In short, at this point in history it is obvious that the antibureaucratic struggle in East Europe threatens the status quo in both the capitalist and noncapitalist countries.

In face of the latest blow to the prestige of the East European bureaucracies, even a mainstay of Stalinist orthodoxy like the French Communist party leadership was quick to dissociate itself from its Polish colleagues.

Etienne Fajon, editor of the party organ *l'Humanité*, wrote in his paper: "The French Communist party does not propose to copy Poland's experience but to proceed to socialism by applying general principles and taking account of French conditions. . . ."

More importantly the CP leadership of the Confédération Générale du Travail (General Confederation of Labor), France's largest union federation, felt compelled to support the struggle of the Polish workers, although it has not yet done so completely.

In a statement December 21, the National Bureau of the CGT declared that "it recognizes that economic measures reducing the workers' buying power have brought on reactions whose nature reveals a deterioration in relations between the popular masses and the political authority."

The bureau said that it "deplores that in these circumstances . . . repressive methods have caused numerous victims among the workers."

This change of heart in the Stalinist leadership of the CGT offers the hope that in the next stage of their revolutionary struggle, the Polish workers will be able to count on the active solidarity of millions of Communist workers in the capitalist countries and every honest militant anywhere in the world who dares call himself a communist.

But to be consistent, the CGT leaders must now call for the release of revolutionary Marxists like Kuron and Modzelewski, who have been sentenced to long imprisonment for declaring the truths that the Polish bureaucrats have been forced to admit by tens of thousands of insurgent workers. □

Polish Workers Hailed in Stockholm

The day Gomulka fell, December 20, the young revolutionary organizations in Sweden, Bolsjevikgruppen [the Bolshevik Group] and Revolutionara Marxister [Revolutionary Marxists], demonstrated at the Warsaw government's embassy in Stockholm in solidarity with the insurgent Polish workers.

"A revolutionary communist demonstration against the Polish Communist bureaucracy," the conservative daily *Svenska Dagbladet* wrote. "That is just about the basis given for the illegal demonstration against the Polish embassy. . . ."

The Social Democratic evening paper *Aftonbladet* gave more details: "The demonstrators carried torches and sang the 'Internationale' . . . They demonstrated in support of the Polish working class under the slogan 'Workers Power Against Bureaucracy.'"

The Social Democratic paper noted that an overwhelming array of police surrounded the embassy and that some of the demonstrators were attacked and beaten.

Moscow Hijacking Trial Aimed at All Minorities

Harsh sentences meted out to eleven Soviet citizens — nine of them Jews — accused of plotting to hijack an airplane, have aroused fears of a new anti-Semitic campaign in the Soviet Union. Worldwide protest resulted in the two death sentences being commuted to fifteen years' imprisonment December 31, but this fact in itself will do little to relieve those fears.

The eleven were accused of "treason," which in Soviet law includes attempting to emigrate without the permission of the ruling bureaucrats. They were arrested June 15 at a Leningrad airport along with a military officer, who is expected to be tried later by court-martial.

In the next two days, an additional forty-seven persons were arrested in Leningrad and other parts of the country. Forty-four of them were Jews. The *Washington Post* reported December 25 that three more trials are expected — in Leningrad, Riga, and Kishinev.

All the defendants in the trial, which opened December 15 in Leningrad, were reported to have pleaded guilty. Bernard Gwertzman said in the December 28 *New York Times*: "The Jews in the group had sought without success to get permission to emigrate to Israel and in their final statements most of them reaffirmed their desire to leave."

If these reports are correct, then of course it is accurate to describe the nine as Zionists in the sense that they believe in the Zionist utopia of establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine. This is quite different, however, from being hired agents of imperialism, which is how some sources have pictured them.

The *New York Daily World*, which reflects the views of the U. S. Communist party, said in a December 29 editorial that the hijacking plan was part of "a widespread plot whose direction came from outside the Soviet Union." Without citing any source for its "information," the paper went on to give details of the alleged plot:

"It began in 1969, months before

the arrests in June 1970. The operating center was undoubtedly Tel Aviv, with the main plans 'Made in U. S. A.' and financed out of the CIA's \$3 billion budget.

"The 11 were recruited by Tel Aviv and the CIA not to fulfill their alleged yearnings for Israel, but as cannon fodder in the war against the Soviet Union and socialism."

As "proof" of its charges, the *Daily World* cited the fact that in Washington, D. C., demonstrators protesting the trial had burned a Soviet flag!

This sort of crude amalgam is nothing new coming from the Stalinized American Communist party. Had it gone no further than the pages of the *Daily World*, there would be little reason to comment upon it. But TASS, the Soviet news agency, saw fit to reprint the substance of the editorial, thus warning all Soviet Jews who might express a desire to emigrate that they risk being accused of working for American imperialism. The warning, moreover, applies not only to those Jews who might be termed Zionists in the strict sense mentioned above, but to those who merely want to preserve their national rights and culture.

Why, fifty-three years after the triumph of the October revolution, should the Soviet government find it necessary to place legal obstacles in the way of an entire nation emigrating unless that nation feels that its autonomous development has been made impossible within the borders of the Soviet Union? The Leningrad trial thus points to past anti-Semitism on the part of the Soviet bureaucrats as well as providing one more example of their current anti-Semitic policies.

Anti-Semitism is not practiced by the bureaucracy for its own sake, but for definite political ends. Moscow's hard line in regard to the Soviet Jews is part of a general attitude toward all minority nationalities. The Crimean Tartars, still fighting to return to their homes twenty-five years after Stalin ordered their exile, were, in ef-

fect, being told to pay special attention to the trial in Leningrad.

The national oppression implicit in the prosecution of the eleven was tacitly recognized by physicist Andrei D. Sakharov in an open letter addressed to Richard Nixon and Soviet President Nikolai Podgorny.

Sakharov, one of the founders of the Committee for Human Rights [see *Intercontinental Press*, November 30, 1970, page 1030], appealed for clemency for the Leningrad defendants and for Black militant Angela Davis, who faces a murder trial in the United States. The coupling of the Jewish defendants in the Soviet Union with a Black who is fighting national oppression in the United States can hardly have been accidental.

In appealing for the lives of the two condemned men, Sakharov pointed out that their actions had been occasioned by "restrictions placed on the legal right of tens of thousands of Jews to leave the country." It would have been even more appropriate to mention the right of Jews and other nationalities to live as they choose inside the Soviet Union. □

MEMO to:

Intercontinental Press
P.O. Box 635, Madison Sq. Station
New York, N.Y., 10010

from:

Name
Street
City
State Zip
Country

| | \$15 enclosed for one year.
| | \$7.50 enclosed for six months.
| | Send information on first-class and airmail rates.

Mendel Rivers—the Pentagon's Man in the House

Representative Lucius Mendel Rivers died of heart failure December 28. He had served as chairman of the House Armed Services Committee since January, 1965, shortly before President Johnson made the fateful decision to send U. S. troops on a massive scale into Vietnam.

In most countries, a member of the lower house of parliament might not seem capable of exercising much influence. The South Carolina Democrat, however, must be rated as an exception to the rule. His was the responsibility of raising and overseeing the expenditure of the \$70 billion a year required to keep the Pentagon going in its customary style. That's more than the current total annual expenditures of all the consumers in a country the size of France.

President Nixon at once read a statement expressing the grief of his administration:

"For 30 years Mendel Rivers served the state of South Carolina and the nation with dignity, with distinction and with high integrity in the Congress of the United States.

"No shifting national opinion, no amount of hostile criticism, deterred him from the course he deemed right for America. In his death, I have lost a friend upon whom I could rely in times of great difficulty; South Carolina has lost one of the most distinguished men in her history and America has lost a patriot."

In short, from the viewpoint of the White House, Rivers was just about an ideal figure in the American political arena of today.

An obituary in the December 29 *New York Times* written by Walter Rugaber, painted a portrait of the congressman in clearer lines:

"He considered tanks and ships and planes essential for the country's survival. And he thought the power should be used readily and unsparringly against the nation's enemies.

"He was unmoved and unabashed by the antimilitary and antiwar sentiments that gained increasing currency during his last years and, indeed, was confident that events would sustain his more aggressive views."



RIVERS: "I say, 'Bomb!'"

His "work habits," according to Rugaber, "were those of a successful plantation master," and he handled himself "with the unwavering and almost imperious assurance of a blooded grandee. . ."

Being a blooded grandee also includes, it seems, a certain sangfroid about spilling the blood of others.

"Mr. Rivers," declares Rugaber, "was thought to have been instrumental in the Nixon Administration's decision not to proceed against the Green Beret soldiers charged with killing a suspected Vietnamese double agent.

"And he aggressively opposed the Army's prosecution of those implicated in the slayings at Sonmy, contending he saw no evidence that the troops involved had massacred any civilians in the hamlet.

"I just don't believe any American boy went into any hamlet and murdered any 109 civilians—I just don't believe that," he once said. "Of course, I've never been in a hamlet with a child throwing hand grenades at me.

"These men have already been lynched by the news media, but we got jurisdiction over this, and I don't know how guilty they are, but we

gonna find out how innocent they are too, if we can."

Concerning the war in Vietnam, Rivers once said, according to Rugaber: "Words are fruitless, diplomatic notes are useless. There can be only one answer for America: retaliation, retaliation, retaliation. They say, 'Quit the bombing.' I say, 'Bomb!'"

The obituary in the *Times* mentions two other things about Rivers that ought to be remembered—the large amount of military spending he managed to direct to his own district, which returned him to office sixteen times, and his "problem with alcohol. . ."

Because of Rivers' propensity to tilt the bottle, the late columnist Drew Pearson denounced him as a "security risk."

In face of this attack, the House of Representatives rallied as one man in defense of their fellow statesman and *pay*triot.

In the December 30 issue of the liberal *New York Post*, Antony Prisen-dorf provides some enlightening material on the redoubtable capacity of war hawk Rivers to feather the nests of birds of his kind:

"Although Rivers served as chairman of the Armed Services Committee for only about five years, his impact on the economy of Charleston was profound.

"Within the city and its suburbs, there is the Charleston Naval Shipyard, a Polaris submarine base, a naval weapons station, an Air Force base, the Parris Island Marine Corps recruit depot, a Marine Corps air station, an Army supply depot and two Navy hospitals.

"Just beyond the perimeter of Rivers' district lies an Atomic Energy Commission plant, operated by the DuPont Co., described as a manufacturer of hydrogen bombs and other nuclear weaponry.

"Furthermore, according to military specialists here, after Rivers became chairman of the committee, McDonnell, Douglas, Lockheed, J.P. Stevens, Avco and General Electric established plants in his district.

"According to one report, Rivers used to boast that he single-handedly

has brought Charleston nearly 90 per cent of its industry."

In the same issue of the *New York Post*, columnist Pete Hamill tells more about this model capitalist politician: "The truth was that Rivers was a common drunk and a nasty, willful, power-dazed man who obtained great power in Washington because of the vile anachronism of the seniority system. As chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, he knelt before the admirals, generals and defense contractors for more than five years."

In Hamill's opinion the worst thing about Rivers was his sense of personal mission. "He once told his fellow Representatives that his committee was 'the only voice, the official voice, that the military has in the House of Representatives.'"

This, of course, was a bit of exaggeration. The Pentagon has other powerful spokesmen in Congress, not to mention the other sectors of the U. S. government.

"Rivers gained personal rewards from his position," Hamill notes, "although most were ceremonial rather than financial. There were hundreds of foreign junkets paid for by us. And the Air Force would fly him home to Charleston, at taxpayers' expense, whenever he cared to go. But the best of all was for Rivers to sit around with his cronies, belting down the sauce, saying things like: 'I've made a lot of millionaires in my time and I'm going to make a lot more.'"

Pete Hamill entitled his column "No Sad Songs." Hamill certainly did not mourn the passing of the chairman loved by the "sleek generals and admirals." But it ought to be added that the *Post's* columnist is not exactly joyful over his probable successor.

"Rivers," Hamill reports, "is now supposed to be succeeded by Rep. F. Edward Hebert (D-La.), at 69 another aging hero; he says that we would have won in Vietnam five years ago if those damn civilians had only let the military do what Hebert and Rivers had suggested: Kill everybody."□

Soviet Statistics Unreliable

Economic statistics in the Soviet Union during Stalin's lifetime were notorious for their inflated claims. "After Stalin's passing economic reporting improved noticeably," Paul Wohl wrote in the November 7 *Christian Science Monitor*. "Now after a decade of striving for statistical honesty, the old methods of dissimulation are back again. A definite deterioration has set in this year."

January 11, 1971

REVIEWS

Trotsky on Marxism in the United States

Marxism in Our Time by Leon Trotsky. Pathfinder Press, New York, N. Y. 47 pp. \$.65. 1970.

Trotsky's essay was originally published, in somewhat shortened form, in 1939 as an introduction to *The Living Thoughts of Karl Marx*. Writing during the depths of the worldwide economic crisis, Trotsky demonstrated that Marxism was an indispensable tool for understanding that crisis as well as the changes capitalism had undergone since the first publication of *Capital*.

Marx based his analysis of capitalist society primarily on Britain, in his day the most highly developed capitalist country. To illustrate the continued relevance of Marxism, Trotsky in this essay applied Marx's method to the new dominant power of world capitalism, the United States.

The replacement of the depression of the 1930s by the warfare economy of the 1960s has destroyed none of the timeliness of this pamphlet. Many of Trotsky's observations sound as though they were written specifically in response to arguments raised by opponents of Marxism today. On the growth of the "new middle class," for example, he wrote:

"... the development of capitalism has considerably stimulated an increase in the army of technicians, managers, servicemen, clerks, attorneys, physicians — in a word, of the so-called 'new middle classes.' But that stratum, the growth of which was already no mystery even to Marx, has little in common with the old middle class, who in the ownership of its own means of production had a tangible guarantee of economic independence. The 'new middle class' is more directly dependent on the capitalists than are the workers. . . ."

Similarly, though the precise statistics have changed, Trotsky's explanations of such phenomena as chronic unemployment, concentration of wealth, and the deliberate hobbling of production remain as compelling in 1970 as they were in 1939.

Trotsky even took the trouble to devote a few paragraphs to those guardians of the public order who be-

lieve that it is possible to impose import quotas on ideas. (The survival of this species, often in high places, is demonstrated by, among other things, the Nixon administration's banning of Ernest Mandel.)

"In certain American circles," Trotsky wrote, "there is a tendency to repudiate this or that radical theory without the slightest scientific criticism, by simply dismissing it as 'un-American.' But where can you find the differentiating criterion of that?"

"Christianity was imported into the United States along with logarithms, Shakespeare's poetry, notions on the rights of man and the citizen, and certain other not unimportant products of human thought. Today Marxism stands in the same category."

Trotsky always remained convinced that Marxism would become "Americanized" through adoption by the American working class. As the current radicalization deepens, that adoption may well be hastened by Trotsky's demonstration in this pamphlet of the applicability of the Marxist method to current problems.

In addition to *Marxism in Our Time*, the pamphlet contains a short article written by Trotsky in 1939, *Once Again on the "Crisis of Marxism"*, and an introduction by George Breitman.

— Allen Myers

Tax Protection

In a leaflet asking for donations to the church, the archbishop of Cologne recently told of a German businessman who had been ordered to pay a 1,000-mark fine because of lateness in paying his taxes.

"Hoping against hope, he . . . went to the finance office, after placing a picture of the archangel Michael in his pocket." Sure enough, a miracle! The fine was rescinded.

The grateful businessman donated the 1,000 marks to the church—a clear case of rendering unto God that which is Caesar's.

Best Brand of Fertilizer

"A bountiful harvest of wheat has visited the vast expanse of the Paekdu Plateau thanks to the 'Theses on the Socialist Rural Question in Our Country' set forth by Comrade Kim Il Sung, the great Leader of revolution."—*Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, No. 167, 1970.

Demonstrate Solidarity with Polish Workers

[The following statement was issued December 18, 1970, by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. The translation from the French is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

The Polish shipyard workers who struck against speedup threats and savage boosts in food prices have been subjected to a brutal repression by a bureaucracy with its back to the wall. Gomulka has forgotten all about his solemn promises at the Ninth Plenum of the Polish Communist party Central Committee in November 1956, where he affirmed the right to strike and refuted the slanders about "hooligans" being to blame for the "interruptions in work" and "riots." Now he is making the same sort of accusations against the Polish workers that he previously denounced.

By talking this line, Gomulka is implicitly admitting the falseness of the reactionary argument advanced in 1968 that the only ones unhappy

with his regime were a small handful of students and "Zionists." It is the toiling masses, above all the working class and the young workers, who are in the forefront of the struggle to establish a democratic socialist system on the foundation of the socialized economy, a system in which the workers themselves would be the masters of the economy and the state and would eliminate the pilfering and waste engendered by an inept, privileged, and narrow-minded bureaucracy.

The fact that the demonstrators in Gdansk, Gdynia, and Szczecin sang the "Internationale" and that the police and army repressed such a demonstration with the greatest brutality is eloquent testimony to the gap that has opened up between the Polish working masses and the bureaucratic dictatorship.

The Fourth International declares its complete solidarity with the Polish intellectuals, students, and workers, who are struggling to achieve an anti-bureaucratic political revolution that

would consolidate the foundations of socialism in Poland, the foundations being increasingly undermined by the bureaucracy.

The Fourth International denounces the ignoble repression against the workers, and the bankruptcy of a regime that dares call itself "Communist" and orders its forces to fire on strikers and demonstrating workers and students. In this way, the Warsaw government is offering the best service to the murderer Franco, who can now use the crimes of the Polish bureaucracy as a cover for his own.

The Fourth International calls on all communists to struggle for a return to soviet democracy, to the democracy of workers' councils in the USSR and East Europe, as the sole means of overcoming the way Stalin and his successors have so terribly discredited communism.

The Fourth International calls on all revolutionary activists throughout the world to demonstrate their solidarity with the struggling Polish workers—but without mixing up their banners with those of the anti-Communists and capitalists, with those of the justifiers of the aggression against the Vietnamese people and repression against all the victims of imperialism. □

Tenth Congress Scheduled by Fourth International

[The following press release was issued by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

* * *

A plenum of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International, held at the beginning of December, was attended by about forty members, alternates, representatives of the leaderships of sections, and observers.

Comrade Gerard Vergeat reported on the status and perspectives of the Arab revolution. Comrade Livio Maitan reported on the current stage of the Latin-American revolution. Various comrades gave reports on the situations in Ceylon, India, Pakistan, and Japan.

Comrade Martine Knoeller reported on the Brussels conference for a Red

Europe. Comrade Pierre Frank reported on the preparations for the Tenth World Congress (the Fourth World Congress since Reunification).

The International Executive Committee called on the workers and students of Europe to express their solidarity with the Spanish masses in their current struggle against the Franco dictatorship, and to organize massive actions in solidarity with the Vietnamese revolution and the antiwar movement in the United States next April 24, the day selected by the American movement for marches on Washington and San Francisco in their struggle for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the American troops from Vietnam.

The International Executive Committee formally opened the preparatory internal discussion for the Tenth World Congress of the Fourth Inter-

national, listing the following topics:

- The situation in Latin America and our tasks.
- Balance sheet and perspectives of the Arab revolution.
- The rise of working-class struggles in Europe and our tasks.
- The struggle for women's liberation.
- The worldwide radicalization of the youth.
- The balance sheet of the Chinese cultural revolution.
- The statutes of the Fourth International.

A future plenum of the International Executive Committee will decide on the final agenda for the world congress, taking into account the status of the internal discussion and new developments in the world revolutionary movement. □

'Everyone in the Streets April 24!'

[The International Executive Committee of the Fourth International, which met in the early part of December, has issued the following statement.]

* * *

The antiwar movement in the United States has decided to organize marches on Washington and San Francisco on April 24 by way of denouncing the hypocritical attitude of the Nixon government, which, under guise of a "progressive withdrawal" of the American troops and "Vietnamization" of the war, has again intensified its aggressive actions against the Vietnamese people, resuming bombings and commando raids against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

In face of the obvious incapacity of American imperialism to reduce the heroic resistance of the Vietnamese people against the aggression, and to undermine their resolution to win their national and social liberation, the high command in Washington is cooking up new adventures and barbarous acts to "resolve" the war in Vietnam in accordance with their own schemes.

Within this framework, the mobilization of the largest possible masses in the United States to compel the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the American troops from Vietnam constitutes precious aid to the Vietnamese revolution. The fact that more and more trade-union organizations are joining the antiwar movement exposes the lies of the Nixon administration and the venal press about a "silent majority" of the American people allegedly supporting the aggression in Vietnam while only a minority of students and intellectuals oppose it. The increased hostility of the Black masses and the Chicanos to the war is another indication of the growing cohesion among all the exploited layers in the United States in the struggle against the dirty imperialist war in Vietnam.

Under these conditions, it is the duty of all the revolutionary organizations throughout the world to mount the broadest and most active aid possible to the antiwar movement in the United States, in this way aiding the Vietnamese revolution with concrete acts of solidarity.

The Fourth International appeals to the workers, the students, poor farmers, and progressive intellectuals of all countries throughout the world to organize powerful demonstrations April 24 in solidarity with the Vietnamese revolution and with the antiwar movement in the United States, through effective anti-imperialist united fronts commensurate to the needs in each country.

Nigeria

Plan to Seek Imperialist Investment

By Armona Woka

Lagos

The federal military government of Nigeria has finally launched its nine-point program, based on a four-year development plan. The plan covers the period 1970-74, concluding two years before the promised return to civilian rule in 1976.

Five "national objectives" are listed in the plan. The probability of any one of them being achieved is at best doubtful. The objectives are: (1) a united, strong, and self-reliant nation; (2) a great and dynamic economy; (3) a just and egalitarian society; (4) a land of full and equal opportunities for all its citizens; (5) a free and democratic society.

The plan projects a total government expenditure of Nigerian £1,025,000,000. [Nigerian £0.357 equal US\$1.] The federal government will provide £555,000,000. The eleven state governments will spend a combined total of about £470,000,000.

Federal projects envisaged under the plan include development of a second petroleum refinery and salt refinery, passenger car assembly, a chemical complex, fertilizer, liquified petroleum gas, pulp and paper, sugar estates and factories, iron and steel, and fish and shrimp trawling.

In spite of its criticism of the former civilian government's four-year development plan, which failed to achieve its objectives before the military took power, the new plan is equally dependent on attracting foreign capital. The government expects investments of

Let's make April 24, 1971, a day of active world solidarity with the heroic Vietnamese revolution!

Let's demonstrate everywhere April 24, 1971, showing our solidarity with the courageous antiwar movement in the United States!

For the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the American troops from Vietnam!

For the victory of the Vietnamese revolution — everyone in the streets April 24, 1971! □

more than £800,000,000 from the private sector. This can come only from foreign investment, since private indigenous capital formation is virtually nil. At this point the average aspiring capitalist in Nigeria is a com-pradore of foreign monopoly capital.

In the vacillatory manner typical of petty-bourgeois regimes, the federal military government has announced new concessions in the surtax. These limit the amount payable by new industries, whether established by foreign or domestic capital, to two shillings in the pound. Beginning January 1, 1971, the maximum total of tax and surtax is limited to 50 percent instead of the former 65 percent.

The government further promised total exemption from the surtax after ten years. Loans not exceeding ten years will be taxed at half the standard rate.

This program, which avoids the burning question of nationalization, cannot achieve the egalitarian society of which it speaks, but it will make great progress in achieving a society free for foreign exploitation.

Although the success of the Central Bank has shown that Nigeria has the personnel to manage such institutions, the government is reluctant to nationalize foreign banks.

Nationalization had been expected of the Standard Bank, Barclays Bank, and the Bank of America — all of which support the apartheid regime in

South Africa and are helping to finance the Cabora Bassa dam in Angola's Tete province. The failure of the government to act calls into question its sincerity in proclaiming support for the national liberation forces in Africa and all peoples struggling for total liberation from the yoke of colonialism.

The government is also being criticized for its refusal to nationalize insurance and retail trade. More impor-

tant still is nationalization of the oil industry, which could relieve Nigeria's dependence on foreign capital.

The consciousness of the exploited working class and the downtrodden peasantry, although not openly expressed, is growing in the face of government functionaries who use their positions to become wealthy. These bureaucrats are busy accumulating the funds to finance the election campaign scheduled for 1976.

Rather than liberating Nigerians, the four-year development plan will lead the people deeper into the quagmire of social and economic penury. Unless structural changes are effected with the aim of improving the situation of the masses, the plan will not succeed in laying the infrastructure necessary for economic take-off, but will create "full and equal opportunities"—for the imperialists to exploit the working class and the peasantry. □

Prominent Signers of Open Letter to Czech Government

Demand Release of Socialists Held in Prague Prison

[The following open letter to the government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, dated December 14, 1970, has been released to the press by the signers. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

A year ago sixteen young comrades were arrested in your country, including Petr Uhl and the West Berlin student Sibylle Plogstedt. They have been kept in prison since that time. The official press in your country has accused them of being members of the "Revolutionary Socialist Party" and of undermining the collectivist social order by their activity.

An attempt was made in the Czechoslovak press at the time to impute a criminal character to the activity of these comrades, to blame them for acts of sabotage, and create the impression that they were working for "foreign services." For example, in an article in *Rudé Právo* of January 17, 1970, the attempt was made, among other things, to besmirch these comrades' earnest efforts to discuss social problems and contradictions on the basis of Marxist and Leninist theory.

We believe that the deepgoing crisis in which Czechoslovakia found itself at the time of these arrests made it urgently necessary to overcome these difficulties by means of a broad mobilization of the working masses and not least of all the youth. In such a process, errors are inevitable. However, the working class has the right to learn from its own errors and this

is a basic precondition for its emancipation.

By this we are not appealing for any unlimited freedom. Naturally, under socialism there can be no freedom for those who seek to restore capitalism.

We have read the publications of the Revolutionary Socialist party. According to all we have been able to find out about this group, it is slanderous to accuse these young comrades of counterrevolutionary activity. Even though we do not fully agree with their views, we believe that these views must be open to public discussion in a socialist country.

In our opinion these young Czechoslovak comrades express a correct point of view in two aspects important for all communists:

1. In their program they propagandized for an organization of the working people and above all the proletariat at the base, that is, at the point of immediate production. And they were ready to struggle to give a centralized expression to these bodies. In this, they took a position in the best traditions of the great October socialist revolution.

2. Of no less importance for all anti-imperialist forces in our countries is the unstinting solidarity of these young Czechoslovak comrades with the anti-imperialist movements in the third world and the capitalist centers.

In the meantime a year has passed since the first arrests. Nobody discussed anything with these comrades. Rather, they were kept in prison and are to face trial. Not only this. These young comrades, some of whom have

spent their twentieth birthday in prison, are paying the price for the Czechoslovak leadership's inability to decide whether or not it should stage political trials. Moreover, the already repeatedly announced trial is being postponed from month to month, which can also have the effect of breaking down the physical and moral resistance of the prisoners.

Furthermore, some signs indicate that new and still more absurd accusations are to be fabricated at the hearings in order to justify the long pre-trial detention of the prisoners.

Neither progressive public opinion in West Europe nor any honest communist or socialist can fail to speak out on this matter.

We demand that you release the imprisoned young comrades immediately and let a public political discussion be held on their activities and views.

Signed: Ernest Bloch, Tübingen; Margherita von Brentano, Berlin; Ken Coates, Nottingham; Lucio Coletti, Rome; Chris Farley, London; Pino Ferraris, Turin; Vittorio Foa, Rome; Erich Fried, London; Ekkehart Kripendorff, Bologna; Alain Krivine, Paris; Ernest Mandel, Brussels; Lucio Magri, Rome; François Maspéro, Paris; Klaus Meschkat, Medellin, Colombia; Aldo Natoli, Rome; Oskar Negt, Frankfurt am Main; Bahman Nirumand, Berlin; Luigi Nono, Venice; Luigi Pintor, Rome; Claudie Pozzoli, Frankfurt am Main; Bernard Rabebl, Berlin; Rossana Rossanda, Rome; Jean-Paul Sartre, Paris; Bala Tampoe, Colombo, Ceylon; Jakob Taubes, Berlin; Klaus Wagenbach, Berlin. □

Intercontinental Press