

Intercontinental Press

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Mounting Casualties in Laos



Britain:

1,000,000 Strike

**Mass Upsurge
in East Pakistan**

**'Trotskyist' Trial
Opens in Prague**

NIXON: Everything going according to schedule in Indochina with-
drawal (escalation). See page 219.

Aquila and Reggio di Calabria:

Italian Fascists Make Ominous Gains

Shah Gives Britain Persian Gulf Pledge

The shah of Iran, who cultivated a certain "anti-imperialist" image during his recent negotiations with Western oil companies, has assured his trading partners that his unaccustomed pose was just part of the etiquette of polite haggling over prices. In an interview published in the February 20 Teheran daily *Ettelaat* (air edition), the monarch promised to take over the military responsibility for protecting foreign capital in the Persian Gulf after British troops depart.

In particular the shah threatened to use troops to suppress guerrilla activities in several small islands in the Straits of Hormuz at the mouth of the gulf:

"Iran will use force to occupy Abu Musa and Tumb if necessary," he said, adding:

"We are the only country which has the necessary military and economic possibilities to protect and support this region."

The unrest in Abu Musa, Tumb, and Bani Tumb is related to the insurgent movement in the province of Dhofar in the nearby Sultanate of Muscat and Oman.

"These islands belong to us . . ." the shah said. "We will get them back with force, if necessary, because I do not want to see my country auctioned off."

The shah made clear it was not the British he wanted to keep out of "my country."

He referred instead to "the destructive acts by the leftists" in the gulf region, expressing his fear that they might threaten the export of oil to the imperialist centers of Europe and America. "If these Islands fall into their hands, that would be a disastrous danger." □

Our New Address

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No, we haven't moved out of Manhattan; just to a more convenient location. We don't know why it's called a "village."

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Casualties Mount in Indochina War

"It is very tough fighting," General Frederick Weyand, deputy commander of the U. S. forces in Vietnam, told newsmen March 1. "This is the heaviest fighting of the Vietnam war. This is much worse than Tet."

The difficulties encountered by Saigon troops in the Laotian panhandle, and the U. S. aircraft supporting them, required a new escalation to stave off defeat. On February 28, Saigon assembled 10,000 reinforcements, increasing the number of men committed to the operation by 50 percent. At the same time, U. S. tank and armored units were moved to the border, from where they could intervene if necessary to save the battered Saigon units.

Under increasing pressure from the liberation forces, the U. S. command appeared to have been forced into a change of strategy. Hilltop bases north and south of Highway 9, which had been intended to protect traffic on the highway, were abandoned as they came under siege. The evacuation of Hill 31 and Hong Ha Ha meant that the invasion forces had in effect renounced the hope of using Highway 9 for resupply. The operation thus became almost totally dependent on U. S. helicopters and planes, which were already flying more than 1,000 missions a day.

On March 6, helicopters lifted 2,000 troops into the remains of Tchepone, which sits astride Highway 9 approximately 30 miles inside the Laotian border. The liberation forces apparently made no attempt to defend the town, which had been destroyed by repeated bombing raids.

Although hailed as a "victory" by Saigon spokesmen, the capture of Tchepone was a pyrrhic triumph at best.

"The city itself is unimportant, except as a symbol," Alvin Shuster wrote in the March 7 *New York Times*, "but the area around it is vital."

On March 5, the *Times* declared in an editorial that the invasion was already too costly for it ever to be considered a victory:

"... if it succeeds, the expanded operation may give Presidents Nixon and Thieu something more substantial to show for the latest escalation than the paltry results that have been registered so far. But it is doubtful

whether even a total stoppage of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, which must necessarily be only temporary, could justify the heavy price in American and South Vietnamese lives that is already being paid."

The price also included what must be the heaviest U. S. aircraft losses of the war. Iver Peterson reported from Khesanh in the March 7 *New York Times*:

"The United States command is sensitive about the toll of helicopters taken by the North Vietnamese guns. Officially, 38 have been shot down and destroyed in Laos, but the command refuses to disclose how many aircraft have been shot down and later recovered by American rescue teams. An operations officer has disclosed that as of March 1 the number of such planes was 219."

This sort of deception has given Nixon a credibility gap with the American public even larger than the one in which Johnson foundered. A Gallup poll announced March 6 that by a 69 to 21 percent margin, the U. S. public believed Nixon was not telling them the truth about the war. (Ten percent expressed no opinion.) The comparable figures for Johnson four years earlier were 65 and 24 percent.

The U. S.-Saigon losses in Laos were accompanied by further setbacks in Cambodia. Peter Osnos reported in the March 2 *Washington Post* that the 23,000-man Saigon operation just inside Cambodia, which so far has produced little in the way of results, might be scaled down or even ended to supply reinforcements for Laos.

On March 2, liberation forces attacked and destroyed 80 percent of Cambodia's only oil refinery, at Kompong Som. Two days later, the refinery was hit again, and liberation forces seized at least twenty-one miles of Highway 4, the link between Pnompenh and Kompong Som "cleared" at great expense in January.

There were increasingly ominous signs that Nixon was considering an attempt to reverse the deteriorating situation by escalating the war into North Vietnam.

On March 4, the U. S. command in Saigon claimed that missile sites in North Vietnam had fired at U. S.

aircraft over Laos and South Vietnam. "The announcement of the firings," Alvin Shuster wrote in the March 4 *New York Times*, "raised the question of whether the United States command was setting the stage for intensified air strikes against the anti-aircraft missile sites and other targets in North Vietnam."

On March 3, Nguyen Van Thieu made his most explicit threat so far of an invasion of the north. "The North Vietnamese," he said, "should realize that we have the capability to attack them anywhere." And he added:

"I wish that the Communist North Vietnamese would soon awaken to reality, and not put us in a situation which forces us to attack them right in their own territory."

Asked about these threats at his March 4 news conference, Nixon in effect gave them his backing:

"That is his [Thieu's] position and I'm not going to speculate on what position he might take in the future in order to defend himself, the right of self-defense. In view of the fact that he is being attacked, he is not attacking North Vietnam."

Nixon clearly is still searching for a victory in Indochina. As long as he is permitted to continue that search, its logic leads him toward an invasion of North Vietnam—a move that would be almost certain to bring China into the war. The mass anti-war protests scheduled for April 24 could be an important factor in convincing Nixon that he lacks the public support necessary for such a dangerous adventure. □

Czech Union Bans Writers

Approximately 100 of the 170 free-lance authors in the Czech Journalists Union will be blacklisted, according to a March 2 Reuters dispatch.

The union's secretary, Josef Prochazka, was reported to have sent a letter, dated February 19, to newspaper and magazine editors. The letter listed forty free-lance journalists "whom it is possible to publish."

Prochazka wrote that others were being investigated. "As soon as the investigation is completed, we shall send an additional list, this time a complete one. We estimate that the number of free-lance journalists will be around 70 persons."

The 100 blacklisted journalists will presumably be those who have been insufficiently enthusiastic about the suppression of the movement for socialist democracy in Czechoslovakia. Many of them had taken up free-lance writing after being fired from regular jobs with magazines or newspapers.

Cost 'Too High' for 'L.A. Times'

The deepening division in the U. S. ruling class over Nixon's escalation of the Indochina war found one expression in the February 28 issue of the *Los Angeles Times*. This conservative bourgeois paper, which first spoke out against the war last June [see the June 22 *Intercontinental Press*, page 608], replied to Nixon's February 25 "state of the world" speech with an editorial entitled "Indochina: Too High a Price."

Although the editors of the *Times* share Nixon's desire to crush the Indochinese revolution, they believe the cost is too great:

"Grant . . . that Mr. Nixon's ambition for a non-Communist South Vietnam, and a non-Communist Laos and Cambodia is, in itself, a desirable goal. The hard question remains: is the attainment of that goal worth the price the President appears willing to pay and the risks he appears willing to run?"

"We believe it is not."

The *Times* editors are alarmed by Nixon's determination to plunge ahead even at the risk of a confrontation with China. They quote Nixon's argument that an alternative to his policy "would have entailed a greatly increased toll in lives, treasure and diplomatic objectives. It would have heightened the prospects of direct intervention by Hanoi's allies. It would have split apart our own society."

They answer him:

"We believe that, with only a few emendations, those words apply as well to the choice the President evidently has made, and to the road he apparently intends to take us on."

These ruling-class spokesmen urge Nixon to "liquidate" the "American commitment . . . as fast as possible." Otherwise, they foresee nothing but gloom: ". . . we believe, that the President's intentions in Indochina . . . pre-
sage an American commitment . . . in the course of which this country will run unacceptable risks, and incur unacceptable costs." □

The Hong Kong *Far Eastern Economic Review* reports that a new official version of Mao Tsetung's works omits forty-eight pages praising Liu Shao-chi.



Conrad in the Los Angeles Times

4,000 in London Women's March

The largest women's liberation demonstration up to now in Britain took place March 6 in London. Some 4,000 women marched through downtown London in "biting cold" and snow, Bernard Weinraub reported in the March 7 *New York Times*.

"There were factory workers from Bristol demanding equal pay with men, college graduates from Essex asking equal job opportunities, housewives from Birmingham urging free all-day nurseries, and college students from Oxford and London gripping signs that asked for 'free contraception and abortion on demand.'"

The women marched two and a half miles, from Hyde Park to Trafalgar Square. A delegation stopped at the prime minister's residence at 10 Downing Street to present petitions demanding equal pay for women, who now receive only 60

percent of the average wage of men.

The women's liberation movement in Britain has "snowballed" in the last year, Weinraub wrote. He estimated there were 1,000 active members of "workshops," but added: "There are thousands of others, however, who are linked to the drive for equal pay, better working conditions and free nurseries."

One woman, pushing two children in a stroller, told him:

"This is only the beginning. What we want is equality and we're going to get it." □

Can't Wait for Marines?

Ceylon's Prime Minister Bandaranaike mobilized the armed forces March 7 to maintain "law and order" after demonstrators attacked the U. S. embassy.

Trial of 'Trotskyist' Youths Opens in Prague

The trial of nineteen persons, mostly students, charged with "Trotskyism" opened in Prague March 1 but was adjourned after three hours because of a violation of legal procedure by the prosecution. Thirteen of the defendants have been imprisoned since the end of 1969 or the beginning of 1970.

A Reuters dispatch from Prague that appeared in the March 2 issue of the *Washington Post* said that Western newsmen were barred from the trial:

"The only journalist seen entering the room was Lt. Col. Jiri Hecko, a hard-lining editorial writer for the Communist Party newspaper *Rude Pravo*."

The trial was adjourned, Reuters said, "when Sybille [also spelled Sibylle] Plogstedt of West Berlin, one of the two foreigners among the defendants, said that she had not received a German-language copy of the accusation against her. She has a right to read the indictment in her native tongue.

"Sources at the trial said another reason for the adjournment was that Petr Uhl, a 29-year-old professor who is listed first in the indictment, protested that the court would not be 'objective.'"

Reuters gave this account of the indictment against the prisoners:

"The defendants face charges of subverting the republic by organizing the 'Revolutionary Socialist Party' in 1968 and 1969 and by printing leaflets calling for an end to bureaucratic rule.

"The group was as much opposed to the reformist Communism of former Party leader Alexander Dubcek as to the more orthodox variety that now exists here."

The February 28-March 1 issue of the Paris daily *Le Monde* provided a fuller report:

"The principal defendant, believed to be the head of the group, is a former technical high-school teacher, Petr Uhl, twenty-nine years old. The group also includes nine students (one of whom is a young woman); two workers (one of whom is a technician at the Avia plant who was recently released from prison); two scientific researchers who worked respectively at the Research Institute and

at the Institute of Microbiology of the Academy of Sciences; two young clerks (one from the telephone exchange, the other from Cedok, the tourist agency); a former student currently unemployed; and two foreigners, Filip Serano, twenty-five, born in France of Spanish émigré parents (Serano was also recently released from prison), and Miss Sybilla [sic] Plogstedt, twenty-five, from West Berlin, who was studying at the sociology department of Charles University. The oldest in the group is the former technician from the Avia plant, Karel Cambula, forty-seven. The others are between nineteen and twenty-nine years old.

"All are accused, if the reports are accurate, of participating in an organization first called the Revolutionary Youth Movement, later renamed the Revolutionary Socialist party, which conspired against the socialist regime with the support of various French and West German Trotskyist and far left movements.

"They are also accused of having written, copied, and distributed a large number of manifestos, leaflets, and appeals to the youth — including a document entitled 'Bureaucracy, No! Socialism, Yes!' — and of having actively participated in the August 21, 1969, demonstrations in Prague and other cities of Czechoslovakia."

Article 98 of the Czechoslovak penal code, under which the nineteen are being tried, carries a penalty of up to ten years in prison for "subversive activities" if these have been engaged in "in concert with a foreign power or a foreign agent."

Until the trial of former television commentator Vladimir Skutina on February 18, political trials were open to the press. Reporters were excluded from the Skutina session and were only told the verdict afterwards.

Reports continue to come in of demonstrations by revolutionary youth in Western Europe in solidarity with the victims of the Prague witch-hunt. The February 20-21 issue of the Brussels daily *La Cité* reported that on Friday, February 19, "a few dozen members of the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes [Socialist Young Guard], carrying a

placard with the inscription 'Stalinism, no; Leninism, yes,' demonstrated in front of the Czechoslovak embassy on Avenue Adolphe Buyl in Brussels."

The demonstrators delivered a statement to the diplomatic delegation, protesting the imprisonment of the nineteen defendants in Prague.

"In their statement," *La Cité* reported, "the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes declared in particular that the existence of certain rights in a socialist democracy such as freedom of expression and freedom to form workers' political organizations, would strengthen rather than weaken a socialist regime. The statement protested against the impending trial of the nineteen worker militants who were said to belong to the Revolutionary Socialist party. In agitating in favor of a democracy based on workers councils, the statement also said, the activists clearly did not oppose the abolition of capitalism in Czechoslovakia but threatened only a privileged bureaucracy backed by Soviet tanks. In conclusion, the demonstrators demanded the release of these activists." □

Defense Lawyer Quits Portugal Trial

Charging that defense of his clients "has been rendered impossible," a Portuguese lawyer withdrew March 3 from the case of ten persons accused of having links with the Angolan independence movement.

The trial in the Lisbon Criminal Court for Political Affairs has brought frequent denunciations by the defense lawyers. When he withdrew, Joaquim Pires de Lima charged the court with "violation of principles of liberty and the rules of evidence."

He was referring to the fact that the prosecution has produced no evidence to back its charges, other than confessions signed by three of the defendants while they were under arrest. They charge that the confessions were obtained by torture.

The accused, nine of whom are from Africa, face sentences of eight to twelve years. One of them, a Catholic priest, has already spent the last ten years in prison or under house arrest.

Conviction is virtually certain since the court is not required to evaluate evidence, but is supposed to take the police report at face value.

General Strike Paralyzes East Pakistan

By Allen Myers

Bengali-speaking East Pakistan teetered on the brink of secession from the Punjabi-dominated national government in the West March 5 as a general strike paralyzed Dacca for the fourth day. Army reinforcements loyal to the military regime of General Yahya Khan were being flown into the Eastern capital as Bengali leaders charged that 300 persons had already been killed by troops in a week of clashes with nationalist demonstrators.

The world press speculated openly that Sheik Mujibur Rahman, the main leader of East Pakistan's dominant bourgeois Awami League, was about to declare the province an independent state under the name of Bengal. At the same time reports suggested that Sheik Mujib was trying to check the popular upsurge that threatens to flare beyond his control in Dacca. A Reuters dispatch in the March 6 *New York Times* said that "Sheik Mujibur Rahman sent 'peace patrols' to bring order to the cities of East Pakistan today [March 5]. . . .

"Sheik Mujib's peace patrols toured the city [Dacca] to help maintain order and to prevent people from being attacked by the [nationalist] demonstrators carrying spears and iron poles."

The general strike began March 2, one day after Yahya postponed the first meeting of the national assembly, elected in December, that is supposed to draw up a constitution returning the country to civilian rule. The assembly had been scheduled to open March 3.

The postponement appeared intended to pressure Mujibur Rahman's Awami League into yielding on some of its demands for regional autonomy. Yahya's move came after negotiations between Sheik Mujib and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, leader of the Pakistan People's party [PPP], were deadlocked.

The Awami League holds an absolute majority, 167 of 313 seats, in the assembly. The PPP, the second largest grouping, has only 88 seats, all of them from West Pakistan. The trump card Bhutto holds, however, is the determination of the Punjabi-dominated

central government to maintain the domination of West Pakistani capitalists over the East.

Yahya reacted to the general strike by attempting to strengthen the martial law that has been in effect since he came to power two years ago. Civilian administrators were replaced by military authorities in East Pakistan and the four provinces of west Pakistan. A new press regulation threatened up to ten years' imprisonment for anyone publishing anything that "directly or indirectly goes against the integrity or sovereignty" of the country.

Whether Yahya would be able to enforce his regulations in East Pakistan remained to be seen. From the first day of the strike, Bengali nationalist youth appeared in control of Dacca. Tillman Durdin reported in the March 3 *New York Times*:

"Youths carrying steel rods, poles and staves roamed through the city shouting independence slogans and seeing that this community of a million and a half residents observed a complete shutdown of business and transportation.

"Occasionally the youths smashed the fronts of buildings known to be owned by West Pakistanis. By afternoon [of March 2] this had developed into widespread destruction of signs not in Bengali, the language of East Pakistan."

The independence slogans mentioned by Durdin already went beyond the position of the Awami League, although it is not impossible that Mujib could adapt to such a demand if necessary to maintain his control.

The same night, Mujib called for the extension of the general strike throughout the province, a call apparently obeyed in most cities.

Simultaneously, Yahya's government announced the imposition of a curfew in Dacca, Rangpur, and Sylhet. But news reports indicated actual control—at least in Dacca—was being exercised by Mujib's supporters.

The Awami League was doing its best to maintain bourgeois order. A dispatch in the March 4 *New York Times* noted:

"Awami League members, carrying staves, were generally able to keep the rioters under control. They chased and beat looters and recovered goods for shopkeepers."

The same report showed Mujib moving toward an independence position under the pressure of the nationalist upsurge:

"Sheik Mujib, who has stressed that he wants to achieve his goal of autonomy through democratic means, said in last night's [March 2] announcement that the Awami League movement would be continued until the people of East Pakistan 'realize their emancipation.'

"However, he did not use the term East Pakistan, referring to it instead by the traditional Bengali name for the region, which is translated as 'Bengali homeland.'"

On March 4, Mujib's supporters took control of the central radio station of East Pakistan. In the March 5 *New York Times*, Durdin described the province as "a territory that has two centers of power—Sheik Mujibur Rahman and the central government's martial law authorities. He reported that Mujib was acting as the virtual ruler of East Pakistan:

"With food supplies becoming increasingly short and workers and shopkeepers suffering from the shutdown, now in its third day, Sheik Mujib said he would authorize banks to open for business tomorrow afternoon and factories to start operating at night.

"He also ordered a partial restoration of telegraph services today [March 4]."

Yahya has called for a meeting of the leaders of twelve parliamentary groups on March 10 to work out a compromise that could put an end to the mass mobilization. Mujib has reportedly refused to attend, either to enhance his bargaining position or because events have already carried him beyond the point where compromise on the basis of the old conditions is possible.

As early as March 2, the Awami League leader demanded the end of military rule in East Pakistan, a popular demand from which it would be difficult for him to retreat.

Then on March 4, Mujib told reporters that he would announce a constitution for East Pakistan on March 7, a step that could amount to a declaration of independence. "We shall have our constitution and they in the west can have theirs," he said. "Then

we can see how we can arrange to cooperate."

The Associated Press reported that Sheikh Mujib had also proposed a settlement that would give the country two premiers — Bhutto in the west and himself in the east. Details on the powers that would be allotted to each were not spelled out.

Whatever plans he has in mind, Mujib is running out of options. Attempts by Yahya to reimpose his control can be defeated only by a continued mass mobilization, but this continually

threatens, in the current situation, to pass beyond the limits acceptable to the Awami League and its bourgeois backers.

Even if West Pakistani capitalists were to acquiesce in the creation of an independent Bengali state with Mujib at its head, the masses would see this — correctly — as a victory won by their collective strength. Once separated from Yahya's army it is dubious that Mujib's "peace patrols" could keep such a movement within bourgeois channels. □

stewards may be liable in action for inducement."

Furthermore, anyone, including the press, found guilty of "inducement" of an "illegal" strike can be forced to pay damages. The *Sunday Times* suggested that this provision "will clearly imperil the news-sheets of militant left-wing groups."

Political strikes, such as the March 1 protest against the bill itself, would be illegal under the definition of "industrial dispute" provided in the legislation.

"Other anomalies will remain to be worked out in practice," the *Sunday Times* said. "Clause 86, for example, makes it an offence to aid and abet an unofficial strike inducer. This could have the effect of making a trade union liable in a situation such as the present Ford strike, where unofficial and unlawful action by the work force, led by the stewards, was subsequently legitimised by the union executives."

If the size and militancy of the March 1 general strike helped isolate the TUC bureaucracy, the capitulation of the postal workers' leaders had a similar effect in that union that may in the long run help prepare the way for a new leadership to emerge from the ranks.

The Union of Postal Workers [UPW] demanded a 13 percent wage increase. The postal authorities refused to budge from an offer of 8 percent (with 1 percent more thrown in if the unions would agree to steps to increase "productivity"—meaning a speedup and possibly layoffs).

Tom Jackson and the other union leaders finally agreed to the formula of binding arbitration without any definite promises to the union at all. The post office is not obliged even to pay the 8 percent it had offered in negotiations. Anthony Lewis, writing from London in the March 4 *New York Times*, said of the settlement, "the terms seem at first glance to be close to total victory for the Post Office Corporation."

This proposal was not well received by the union ranks. A March 4 Reuters dispatch reported:

"Angry postal workers jeered at their leaders today over a plan to end their 44-day-old strike. . . .

"Mr. Jackson, until today the hero of the 220,000 mailmen, was greeted by chants of 'Sell out, stay out!' as he addressed a meeting of London postmen, the most militant in the country."

Until concrete proposals are made by the arbitration committee, the pos-

Postal Workers Out for 47 Days

1,000,000 Strike in Britain

Britain's postal workers appeared in first returns to have voted to return to work March 6, ending the longest strike in that country since the coal miners' walkout in 1926. Although no final settlement has been decided — the workers' demands are to be referred to a three-member panel with powers of binding arbitration — the result looked like the majority felt they had to resume work for the time being.

The forty-seven-day postal strike came in the midst of widespread labor unrest centered on the Tory government's proposed antilabor Industrial Relations Bill. It remains to be seen what effect a conjunctural defeat for the 220,000 postal workers will have on the angry mass of workers in other unions.

The Heath government has been seeking to force back the labor movement on several fronts, and the workers have responded with a mass mobilization. The February 21 London march of 140,000 workers (see story below) was followed March 1 by a general strike of more than 1,000,000 workers against the antilabor bill — the largest political work stoppage since the general strike of 1926.

Especially significant was the fact that this massive labor action was carried out despite opposition from the majority of the official trade-union leadership. The Amalgamated Engineers Union was the major labor organization to build the walkout in face of condemnation by the Trade Union Congress [TUC]. Automobile plants, shipyards, and national newspapers were shut down. The March 2 *New York Times* reported that costs

of the strike to British industry were estimated at \$25,000,000.

On the day of the strike, demonstrations were held in London and other cities, where militant engineers marched, shouting, "What do we want? A general strike!"

A second strike has been called for March 18.

The Tory legislation is designed to authorize punitive suits by employers against union treasuries and union officials for many kinds of legitimate strike action. Under British law a person who persuades someone else to break a contract is liable for damages. Under the 1906 Trade Disputes Act, this provision cannot be applied in a "trades dispute." The current Tory bill, among other provisions, would amend the 1906 act so that the "immunity" from suit would apply only to registered trade unions and their officials acting with the union's authority. The February 21 London *Sunday Times* suggested some of the effects of this change:

"This will mean that if a union refuses to register . . . or is denied registration because of its defective rules, it will not be able to call a strike without exposing its funds to an action for damages by the employer. . . .

"Even for registered unions the position will be tricky. Who, for example, will be accounted an authorized official? Few union rule-books now give formal powers to shop stewards, yet it is shop stewards who initiate most strikes. If a union like the Amalgamated Engineering Workers refuses to recognise its stewards' authority, its

sibility still exists that the postal defeat can be offset. Decisive in this will be the general mobilization of the

working class against the Tory anti-labor offensive. The next crucial test will be the March 18 general strike. □

for nationwide demonstrations in the next two weeks and a lobby on M. P. s on March 17.

Biggest Demonstration Ever Held in London

140,000 March Against Tory Bill

By Ross Dowson

FEBRUARY 24—There is no mistaking where the British working class stand on the Tory government's projected union-busting Industrial Relations Bill. Nearly 140,000—the police concede that there were at least 100,000—registered their opposition on Sunday, February 21, in the biggest organized demonstration ever held in Britain.

Starting from the famed Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park, the massive assembly swelled through the streets of central London to jam vast Trafalgar Square and overflow onto the Victoria Embankment.

Chanting "Heath Must Go," "Tories—Out, Out, Out," miners in pit helmets and overalls, Scottish railwaymen in kilts, striking autoworkers, and women telephone workers surged into the Square to songs by the South Wales Bargoed choir, including "The Red Flag," "We Shall Not Be Moved," and choruses of "We Will Kill the Bill."

Among the banners identifying the various unions and councils were placards expressing solidarity with the striking postal workers, and calling for a general strike.

All the top leadership of the Trade Union Congress [TUC] appeared on the platform but special applause went to Tom Jackson, leader of the post-office workers, and Hugh Scanlon of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers. TUC General Secretary Victor Feather scored the Tories for not tackling rising prices and the mounting problem of unemployment, but trying instead to shackle the unions—"and we have not been shackled for 200 years." He got strong applause when he praised the striking postal workers and identified the TUC with their cause.

Strike leader Jackson declared that the government's assault on the post-office workers was only a foretaste of what the government intends to do to all labor. The scattered heckling—for action and for general strike—

got a partial response from Hugh Scanlon, president of the AUEW. He spoke of the union movement using its "full industrial strength to oppose this bill." He said that he hoped that unions in the engineering industry would consider the question and make their position clear when the TUC meets on March 18. The AUEW has gone on record as favoring one-day general strikes to force the Tories to withdraw the bill.

The Industrial Relations Bill would give Britain its first law governing labor relations. It embodies the basic features of such U. S. antilabor legislation as the Taft-Hartley Act and state right-to-work laws, and various union-busting laws as have been imposed in Canada, particularly in Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia.

On January 12, and before that on December 8, there were countrywide protests. In a series of militant actions, workers closed down the docks in Merseyside, Manchester, and Southampton, delayed the publication of many national and provincial newspapers, shut down the British Leyland plants in Oxford, Birmingham, and Coventry, and, among others, the Massey Fergusson plant in Kilmarnock.

The Heath government's bill comes at a time of mounting dissatisfaction in the ranks of British labor. Some 50,000 Ford workers have now been on strike for four weeks. The 230,000 postal workers' strike is going into its sixth week and has almost completely paralyzed the mails, telegraphs, and telephones both inside and outside the country.

Their ranks may soon be joined by 162,000 railway workers. The National Union of Railwaymen's demand for a 25% increase has so far resulted in only an 8% offer. The National Union of Teachers is seeking a 15% increase. With management sticking to its 8.8% offer, plans are underway

Unemployment stands at the highest level in thirty-one years, but with a brief exception in February 1963. This month it jumped 40,000 in Britain and Northern Ireland to reach the 761,000 mark.

The latest Gallup poll shows the Labour party increasing its popular lead over the Conservative party. Last month Labour led by 4.5%. The survey taken in the second week of February showed a further increase with Labour leading by 7.5%.

But for all this, the top British trade-union brass, like their North American counterparts before them, are attempting to find ways to live with the Tories' bill—in this case until such time as they can aid in a return of Labour to political office.

It is no secret that when the TUC General Council meets on February 24 to discuss the recommendation to be put to affiliated unions later in the week (and which will go before the special congress in Croydon on March 18), they will go no further than to suggest that unions should be strongly advised not to register under the new law. And instead of bolstering up less militant unions to implement such a policy, they will be opening up the door to submitting to the government, since they add the stricture that the union movement should refrain from taking any industrial action against the bill.

But the two biggest British unions, the transport workers and the engineers, are on record as favoring industrial action, and the British working class are in a rising mood of militancy. □

'Invasion' of Puerto Rico

Two Puerto Ricans were arrested February 25 for "invading" part of Puerto Rico. Juan Mari Bras, secretary general of the Movimiento pro Independencia de Puerto Rico [MPI—Movement for the Independence of Puerto Rico], and a companion were seized when they landed on Culebra, a small island used by the U. S. navy for target practice in spite of the frequent objections of the island's residents.

A United Press International report in the February 26 *Washington Post* said the landing had interrupted firing by Colombian ship.

The two could be charged with a felony. A third person, who accompanied them, escaped arrest.

Italian Fascists Make Ominous Gains in Civil Strife

By Gerry Foley

New explosions of rebellion in southern Italy during February and March highlighted mounting social unrest on the peninsula.

In the context of these revolts, two developments offered an index of the inability of the bourgeois parliamentary formations and bureaucratic workers organizations, on the one hand, and the numerous ultraleft currents, on the other, to point a way out of the country's prolonged crisis. A symptomatic phenomenon was the rapid resurgence of the fascists, apparently capable of diverting popular protests, as well as of carrying on widespread terrorist activity. Another was sharpening tensions in the unstable ruling coalition revealed by a new governmental crisis, or mini-crisis.

"Violence of a Tornado"

On the same day that the bourgeois-liberal PRI [Partito Repubblicano Italiano — Italian Republican party] officially announced its withdrawal from the government, rebellion flared in Aquila, a small city of about 60,000 inhabitants only fifty miles from Rome.

"The war over the regional capital issue exploded today in Aquila with the violence of a tornado," *Corriere della Sera* reporter Egidio Sterpa telephoned February 27 from the south-central Italian city. "Here in a flash are the results of a day of fury. The offices of the PCI [Partito Comunista Italiano — Italian Communist party], of the DC [Democrazia Cristiana — Christian Democracy], and the PSI [Partito Socialista Italiano — Italian Socialist party, centrist Social Democrats] were burned.

"The offices of the PSDI [Partito Socialista Democratico Italiano — Italian Democratic Socialist party, right-wing Social Democrats], of the PSIUP [Partito Socialista Italiano d'Unità Proletaria — Italian Socialist party of Proletarian Unity, the left-wing Social Democratic party], and in part of the PLI [Partito Liberale Italiano — Itali-

an Liberal party, "free enterprise" rightists] were wrecked. The headquarters of the MSI [Movimento Sociale Italiano — Italian Social Movement, the neofascist party] and the PRI were attacked and suffered minor damage.

"The home of Socialist Deputy Secretary of the Interior Mariani was stormed. The home of Regional Counselor and DC Provincial Secretary Fabiani was broken into and burned. The police station was attacked, streets were blocked, some barricades went up, a number of people were wounded, some of them seriously. Numerous clashes occurred between police and demonstrators.

"This was the reaction of the crowd to the compromise reached last night by the Consiglio Regionale [Regional Council] on the question of locating the regional government offices. . . .

"It was an explosive day in which the city of Aquila was for all practical purposes in the hands of the mob."

PCI Headquarters Stormed

The attack on the local headquarters of the Communist party was particularly violent. "At around 1:00 in the afternoon," Sterpa reported, "a crowd of about two thousand persons stormed the PCI offices, where about a hundred party members had locked themselves in. At 1:10, the mob broke in.

"Three Communists (Aleandri, Iovannitti, and Mascioletti) were wounded. One of those injured, Municipal Counselor Mascioletti, complained of grave damage to his left eye.

"The windows were broken in, the doors torn off their hinges, the furniture was thrown out the window, and the building set on fire. This invasion of the Communist headquarters lasted until 4:00 in the afternoon. In its fury, the mob even ripped off a balcony. The demonstrators used telephone poles as battering rams. At that time there was not a single policeman in the area, although the attack had last-

ed for hours. This is the reason for the PCI leaders' violent protests."

In the March 7 issue of the liberal weekly *L'Espresso*, Giampaolo Bultrini confirmed that the PCI leaders had cause for complaint against the local police officials. The crowd had first attacked the PCI headquarters on the Via Paganica at 11:00 a.m., Bultrini reported, but had failed that time to break in.

"The chief of police Introna was not unaware of what was going on. For three hours employees of the Communist federation had been deluging him with phone calls. But the riot police who were in the Via Paganica had been transferred to another part of the city, and the patrolmen did not even make an attempt to defend the building. You would have to see the Via Paganica to understand the laxity of the authorities. It is a narrow little street that could be completely blocked off by two trucks or a platoon of police."

The PCI reacted to the outbreak in Aquila as it has to the other explosions in southern Italy that have been occurring since last summer. It attributed the clashes to fascist machinations and accused the authorities of winking at this activity.

Police Abet Fascists

In fact, substantial evidence of police toleration of, or sympathy with, fascist goon squads was accumulating before the Aquila incidents. In its February 14 issue, the liberal Rome weekly *L'Espresso* listed a number of such cases. Here are some of them:

"In Verona [in northern Italy, about 100 miles east of Milan] a supporter of the neo-Nazi organization Ordine Nuovo [New Order] was found in possession of a huge arsenal (including 150 machine guns), but he was cleared of all charges when he claimed to be a 'gun collector.' . . .

"In Milan on January 23 of this year, as a result of the outbursts of violence after the meeting held by Franco Servello of the MSI and the

discovery of a valise full of weapons in a compartment of a train on which fascists were traveling from Varese to Milan, a certain Roberto Bravi was arrested. Four months earlier Bravi had stabbed a young student on the Via Larga in Milan. After the stabbing he was captured by other students and turned over to the police. The head of the public security forces, Ferdinando Pomarici, ordered him released, however. Pomarici dismissed the charge that Bravi had attempted to murder the student and had inflicted grave injuries upon him, accusing the victim and the other students of giving false testimony.

"In the same period in Rome, Dr. Giorgio Morpurgo, a professor of genetics and researcher at the Istituto Superiore di Sanità, went to pick up his son Piero at the door of the Giulio Cesare high school. In front of the school a group of fascists were shouting, 'Fascism Will Triumph,' photographing the leftist students and threatening them. Professor Morpurgo went up to Deputy Police Chief Fracassini . . . and asked him to put an end to the uproar. 'Along with a policeman, he literally jumped on me,' the professor said later. 'And after knocking me around, he shoved me into a car, which, with its siren going full blast, took me to the police station.'"

However, the events in Aquila pointed to a much more complex and difficult problem than could be ascribed to the fascists alone, with or without the connivance of local officials. The PCI, it seemed, was not without its share of responsibility for the outbreak. In fact, there were persistent reports that Communist party members and supporters themselves had participated in the attack on the PCI headquarters.

"Yesterday [February 27] the regional secretary of the PCI admitted that there might have been 'disoriented' Communists among the crowd of demonstrators," *Corriere della Sera* reporter Sterpa wrote in the February 28 issue of the Milan daily.

Corrupt Political Parties

Violent protests erupting in April 1970 over the closing of some tobacco factories in Battipaglia, a small city near Naples, indicated that the desperation of the southern Italian population was reaching the point of explosion.

The "regional capital issue" could serve as a focus for this desperation because it involves jobs and money. In an impoverished and economically decaying area, the setting up of a whole series of new governmental offices looms large.

Fierce competition was touched off among the local notables, speculators, strongmen, and politicians, who dominate the backward south of Italy, when fifteen regional governments were established in June 1970.

In the absence of a strong revolutionary challenge to the system that stifles development of the south, broad layers of the popular masses have been infected with this spirit of competition. Moreover, the tradition of "campanilismo," or local rivalry, remains an active force.

The anxieties of the populace were fanned to a white heat by the behind-the-scenes wheeling and dealing of the politicians over locating the new offices. In the context of a tradition of antipolitical radicalism, this exasperation exploded in an outburst of rage against all political parties. To the desperate populace of the southern towns, the PCI seemed to be just another group of "politicians." In this situation, the fascists and the ultrarightists have apparently been able to play a guiding role at times in popular protests.

In the March 3 issue of *Corriere della Sera*, Giovanni Russo, a prominent student of the Italian south, offered an explanation of why Communist party supporters could be drawn into an attack on their own party headquarters:

"Although the Communists proclaimed their unwillingness to get involved in the question of locating the capital, they also maneuvered to play a part in these negotiations. The only thing the people knew was that during the election campaign the politicians of the majority party [the DC], promised that Aquila's 'rights' would be respected. No one explained, however, that the faction headed by the Pescara leader Gaspari was stronger in the DC than the one headed up by the Aquilan leader Natali.

"A confused and alienated public opinion could not appreciate the fact that the pro-Aquila politicians (given the relationship of forces existing in the Christian Democracy as well as in the PSI and PCI) achieved not inconsiderable results. They won rec-

ognition of Aquila's legal status as the capital of Abruzzi and three important offices, general affairs, finances, and public works.

"Outraged because the other departments were assigned to Pescara, the populace responded as if to a deception, irrationally, emotionally, and spontaneously. There was nothing strange then in the fact that among those who stormed the PCI headquarters were Communist voters or party members, even though local ultrarightist elements applauded the attack."

The press reports pointed to the Comitato Cittadino d'Azione [Municipal Action Committee] as the instrument of the right in the Aquila explosion. At least two of its leaders were representatives of the far right. The most outspoken of these, reportedly, was the monarchist Gaetano Belisario.

In his February 27 report from Aquila, Sterpa described the role played by this organization: "Already yesterday afternoon, as rumors spread of the compromise over the capital, popular unrest was perceptible. Two cars of the Comitato Cittadino d'Azione, equipped with loudspeakers, drove through the streets calling on the people to gather at the offices of the Consiglio Regionale [Regional Council]. 'Go to the Consiglio,' the loudspeakers said, 'where our politicians are selling out the city of Aquila.'

"That night there was an invasion of the Consiglio chambers located in the provincial executive building. The invaders insulted the members of the body. The incensed crowd shouted 'clowns,' 'sellout artists,' and other insults, throwing handfuls of coins at their heads. Partitions were broken down. Some couches were torn up. Under the protection of the police, the Consiglio retreated to an adjacent room and accepted the compromise resolution by a vote of thirty-eight in favor out of a total of forty members.

"Meantime, dawn was approaching; the church bells rang continually. The mob became frenzied. Then, this morning, the tornado struck. The demonstrators began by burning the DC headquarters, wrecking everything, throwing the furniture out of the windows."

From the Christian Democratic headquarters, the crowd moved on to attack the headquarters of all the other parties.

The ruling Christian Democrats, es-

pecially Fabiani, who appears to be more closely identified with the national party than most of the local politicians, came in for furious attacks. Gaetano Bultrini reported:

"In the afternoon came the worst. Despite the attempts in the morning to storm the homes of Luciano Fabiani, Brini, and the Christian Democratic Regional Counselor Ricciuti, there was not a single policeman. Fabiani's home was invaded, the furniture was destroyed, chairs, the windows. A sinister omen—his books were thrown into the fire."

Bultrini stressed the wide political spectrum represented by the protesters:

"Who led the assaults on the party headquarters and the local political leaders? Groups of young fascists, of course. But, among others, the list of persons arrested and charged included the names of an ex-Liberal leader, an industrialist, and a Christian Democratic city counselor."

The PCI claimed that the minor attack on the MSI headquarters was a calculated diversion, and the fact that the building was spared major damage proved that the fascists were behind the entire incident. It is possible that the fascists, as probably the best-organized group among the demonstrators, were able to direct the crowd away from their headquarters. However, the neofascist party is relatively small and condemned by all the big parties alike. It is, thus, not the most likely target of an "antiestablishment" outburst.

In Reggio di Calabria

The Aquila rebellion duplicated the pattern of the upheavals recurring in Reggio di Calabria since June 1970, the last of which was put down only three days before the Abruzzese city erupted. In Reggio also, the failure of the PCI to distinguish itself from the political "establishment" seems to have opened the way for fascist maneuvers.

In a feature article in the March 1 issue of the *Christian Science Monitor*, correspondent Thomas Sterling gave a description of the situation in this far southern city that paralleled Russo's analysis of the Aquila revolt.

"In an edition of a Communist weekly published last July a writer said, 'There was a period during which anger directed against the police was the glue that held the revolt together. The preoccupying fact is that even at that moment the forces of the Left

didn't succeed in inserting themselves in a movement which, whatever people may think, was not inevitably destined to be led by the right.'"

Sterling concluded: "The Communists in short have found themselves in the same boat as the central government. They are still in it, apparently by choice, even though some members of the Reggio Communist Party are on the barricades.

"Manifesto, a magazine published by former Communists who have now moved to the left of the party, says flatly that the party's failure in Reggio is due to its determination to enter the establishment. It adds that to believe that for months 'thousands of people have risen up in Reggio simply because of a rightist plot is against all logic.'

"This seems clear to even a casual visitor to Reggio. I marched in one of these rebellious and illegal parades through the city. The police held back in the side streets. Two days before a dentist had been killed by a tear-gas shell, and neither side wanted a rematch. It was obvious that whatever lay behind these demonstrations plots on the right were only a peripheral factor. . . . I could find practically no citizen of Reggio who wasn't in favor of this strange uprising."

The *Christian Science Monitor* writer also pointed to a wave of rebelliousness arising in the area far too extensive to be the work of any political group, much less the result of a "rightist plot."

"But in the past few years, here in Calabria—and again, especially in Reggio—there has been a remarkable change. It is no longer a land of simple submissive peasants. The young people are increasingly opposed to emigration. They want to stay and fight; and they seem to have chosen the technique of urban revolt to do it.

"They are joined in this by immigrants to the city who come from the surrounding countryside where traditional agriculture can no longer compete with the industrialized agriculture in the north and with imports from North Africa."

The hatred of the demonstrators for established authority was pointed up by the visit of the local archbishop February 21 to Sbarre, the bastion of the revolt in Reggio. Despite the traditional influence of the church in southern Italy, press reports indicated that Archbishop Giovanni Ferro

encountered considerable open hostility.

"Some people cheered and some booed," Paul Hofmann wrote in the February 22 issue of the *New York Times*. "A middle-aged man pushed his way toward the Archbishop and put a handful of small coins into his hands screaming, 'Hangman! Hangman!'"

"Bystanders said later that the man who accosted the Archbishop had also shouted the names of four persons who have died during riots in Reggio Calabria since last July and explained that the coins were meant to symbolize the 30 pieces of silver for which Judas betrayed Jesus."

Around the church where the archbishop celebrated mass and admonished his "flock," the rebels shouted their slogans, ". . . shouts of 'Come outside!' and 'Reggio, capital!' were almost continually heard from the crowd surrounding the church."

Fascists to the Fore

In Reggio also, according to the press, fascist and ultraright elements were able to gain the leadership of the rebellion, at least to some extent. One important local speculator reportedly played a major role, utilizing fascist-type demagoguery. "Twenty-four hours after the arrest of four young neofascists suspected of committing the crime in Catanzaro [army practice grenades were thrown into an antifascist march in that city February 4, killing one demonstrator], and who were to be released promptly, one of the principal personalities in the high society of Reggio di Calabria was arrested Monday [February 8] in a hotel," Jacques Nobécourt wrote in *Le Monde* of February 11.

"Amadeo Maticena, a shipowner, chairman of a building company, owner of shipping concerns operating in the Sicilian straits, was charged with eight by no means minor offenses: incitement to crime, incitement to armed insurrection, justifying murder, threats likely to disrupt the functioning of government offices, spreading false rumors, implication in sedition, attacking the police forces, and disrupting public services."

Maticena, whom Nobécourt described as a typical "commendatore," or local strongman, enriched himself in the postwar boom. Apparently government influence was involved. In 1960, he obtained a license to build

a luxury hotel in Reggio and later authorization to parcel out land along the Calabrian coast for tourist businesses. "The ferry boat concession in the Messina straits was granted to two of his companies," Nobécourt noted. "One imagines that this was a very fruitful endeavor. Its profits must have totaled billions of lira."

Matacena, who ran in the local elections last summer, unsuccessfully, on the PRI ticket, has openly financed propaganda promoting the outbreaks in Reggio. "He never tires of denouncing the tutelage of the 'red barons' over Calabria," Nobécourt continued. "He applies this term not only to the Communist leaders but also to the general secretary of the Socialist party, Mancini, and the present minister of public education Misasi."

The French writer's conclusion was: "Today Matacena seems to have been the direct instigator and principal financier of the Reggio di Calabria revolt, either working with extreme rightist groups or utilizing them for the sake of his personal ambitions."

Ultralefts Help Pave the Way

In recent years, as the crisis has developed in Italy, a great many new formations have arisen to combat the reformism of the bureaucratic workers parties, which is now, among other things, opening the way for rightist demagogy and fascist diversions. However, most of these groups, because of their ultraleftism and abstract revolutionism, have been unable to give a focus to mass discontent. In fact, in their own way, the ultraleft and spontanéist groups seem to be facilitating fascist intervention in popular struggles.

An example of this was described in the December 15 issue of *Bandiera Rossa*, the organ of the GCR [Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari — Revolutionary Communist Groups, the Italian section of the Fourth International]. The article "Antipolitical Demagogic Elements and Fascists Try to Gain a Foothold" said:

"A new characteristic of the recent phase of student struggles in the high schools has been the organized intervention of the fascists, who have made a concerted attempt to take the lead of some sectors of the movement and have followed an apparently preestablished tactic. They have tried to infiltrate the movement, and, if possible, assume a guiding role. If the move-

ment remained under the hegemony of the left despite this, they have made various attempts to discredit it by staging incidents of vandalism and wrecking.

"The results of this tactic have been mixed. In the north the operation has not been completely successful anywhere, although it has scored some limited gains in some schools in Trieste. In Latium (Rome, Tivoli, Civitavecchia) such activity has led to a depoliticalization of the movement, to a drift toward dangerous *qualunquista* [antipolitical] positions. In the south the fascists have achieved more appreciable results.

"In Bari the campaign of the right began with slogans that at first glance did not differ from the general student slogans, such as 'There Are No Classrooms' and 'The Government Is Responsible.' These slogans were so broad that they could be shouted by both the left and the right. The nature of the operation became clearer when slogans began appearing on signs like 'Classrooms Yes, Regional Governments No!' and 'Stop the Communists.'

"The orientation of some ultraleft groups favoring 'struggle for struggle's sake' in practice promoted the depoliticalization of the movement and facilitated infiltration by rightist elements."

The article concluded: "The maneuvers of the right in general and the fascists in particular are to some degree successful only when a radicalization develops without political content or concrete objectives. In this connection, the responsibility of many extraparliamentary groups is very grave and should give these comrades cause for reflection."

Crisis of Bourgeois Rule

It is not yet clear how far the leading circles of the capitalist class are prepared to go in encouraging fascist activity. The attitude of the police is not conclusive evidence of the intentions of the capitalists. A certain sympathy with fascist principles and methods has been endemic in the repressive apparatuses of most capitalist countries for decades. But the ruling class has generally curbed these tendencies when they threatened to become too disruptive.

It seems unlikely in the present European context that the decisive sec-

tors of the capitalist class are contemplating installing a fascist regime. But the fact that elements openly proclaiming themselves the heirs of Mussolini are now playing a prominent part in Italian politics can only indicate a very grave crisis of bourgeois rule in the country.

Persistent unrest and increasing combativeness on the part of the workers, forcing even the bureaucratized organizations to make militant gestures, seem to be worrying the top capitalists more and more. The West German weekly *Der Spiegel* took note of this in its March 1 issue. "These eternal strikes,' FIAT boss Giovanni Agnelli stormed, 'are causing the ground to gradually sink under our feet.' In the last year alone Agnelli's FIAT concern has lost 33,000,000 man hours."

Agnelli resorted to a lockout to "restore order" in his plants, and was answered with a mass protest march of workers through Turin. The German magazine commented: "Agnelli's chances of pressuring the unions with repressive measures are slight."

The article continued: "With partial strikes, the unions have already thrown the delivery plans of FIAT, Pirelli, and Olivetti into chaos. Moreover, West German businessmen, who set up branch factories in this country to take advantage of lower wage rates, have also been hard hit. Thus the factory of the German radio and television manufacturer Max Gruning in Rovereto near Trento has had to cut the hours of 685 workers. In Chieti in Abruzzi, men and women workers closed down the German shirt factory of Marvin Gelber Stoffe und Scheren.

"No economy in the world,' the chairman of the Italian employers' association Renato Lombardi raged, 'can tolerate these breakdowns in production over an extended period. Every day we are losing new markets forever.'"

The capitalists may find the fascists useful on three counts at least—as a means of creating provocations that can be exploited to justify repression, as a weapon for intimidating the left and trade-union movement, and as a mechanism for diverting and dissipating popular unrest in some areas, particularly the south.

Although the authoritative capitalist daily *Le Monde* argued in a front-page editorial February 25 that the

Reggio di Calabria outbursts were "strictly localized," revolts have now occurred in three widely separated areas in southern Italy. This region alone cannot determine the political course of the nation, but it is by no means unimportant.

It is not unlikely, moreover, that the seemingly hopeless crisis of the traditional bourgeois parties is encouraging the ruling class to cast about for other political instruments, if not to replace the parliamentary parties then at least to supplement them until a better solution can be found.

The revolts in Reggio di Calabria and Aquila have shown that the bourgeois parties are less and less able to control their supporters and are becoming increasingly isolated. The government shakeup that came simultaneously with the Aquila rebellion revealed that, under the pressure of rising unrest, tensions are continuing to grow in the unstable ruling coalition.

The force of this pressure is indicated by the fact that, although all the government parties acknowledge that they have no alternative to the present coalition and are clinging desperately to the formula of the "center-left," they seem more and more unable to maintain their unity.

On February 26, the PRI formally announced that it was withdrawing its representatives from the cabinet. The ranking Republican in the government, Oronzo Reale, had submitted his resignation privately February 24. It may be significant that Reale held the portfolio for justice. Along with the Ministry of the Interior, which commands the police and other repressive forces, this department responsible for the courts, can be expected to become more and more of a storm center if the rebellions continue and fascist terrorism remains an issue.

The Republicans indicated that they wanted to maintain the coalition but to dissociate themselves from its failures, thus gaining an advantage in the June local elections in Rome and Sicily, as well as more options if the political situation continues to degenerate.

In an interview printed in *L'Espresso* of March 7, the PRI secretary Ugo La Malfa explained the Republican strategy: "The experience of the past leads Republicans to be very careful

with regard to reforms. The introduction of planning was to be one of the fundamental reforms of the center-left coalition, it was to constitute the fundamental reform on which reforms in the various sectors would be based. In order to get approval of the 1966-70 five-year plan we had to face a long parliamentary battle. Great hopes were aroused. Then the plan failed miserably. . . .

"The reforms will be approved without delay. But . . . our withdrawal from the government has enabled the PRI to express its dissent without embarrassing its representatives on the Council of Ministers and without opening a political crisis."

The Republican operation was complicated by the maneuvers of this party's most direct rival in the coalition, the right-wing Social Democratic PSDI, which forced Premier Emilio Colombo to accept a debate on the cabinet shakeup and a new vote of confidence.

Telesio Malaspina wrote in the March 7 issue of *L'Espresso* that "Colombo and Forlani wanted to carry out the cabinet realignment directly and replace Reale without complications. But the constitutional scruples of Saragat [the president of the republic and most prominent right-wing Social Democrat leader] and the political and electoral preoccupations of the PSDI forced them to proceed differently. In reality the internal situation in the DC and the two socialist parties is anything but peaceful. In all three parties temptations are growing to utilize La Malfa's maneuver in some way."

In this case, the will of all the center-left parties to prevent a new crisis prevailed over the resentments and jockeying produced by the Republican gambit.

In Fear of the Future

Colombo received a vote of confidence March 4 as expected. Voting for the motion were the 344 deputies of the center-left parties and two representatives of the South Tyrolean autonomists; 235 opposition deputies voted against it, including the delegations of the PCI, the PLI, the MSI, the PSIUP, and independent leftists.

"Colombo won the confidence of the House," Luigi Bianchi wrote in the March 5 issue of *Corriere della Sera*. He is now waiting for the vote of the Senate to reshuffle the government and

thus close the episode of the Republican 'disengagement' without any damage having been done. At this point there should be no more difficulties, although there remains the problem of naming a successor to Reale—which is by no means simple. Despite the harmless outcome, the debate in the chamber showed that the four parties that continue to support the government are more in fear of provoking a crisis—which would involve risks and uncertainties—than in real agreement on what to do."

The outcome of the minicrisis was foreshadowed by a vote that occurred early in the game, before the Republicans had even formally announced their "disengagement" from the government.

In the February 27 issue of *Corriere della Sera*, Alberto Sensini wrote: "Although it may seem paradoxical, the government, which is facing the loss of the full collaboration of one of its component formations, won two official confirmations this morning [February 26] in the space of a few hours, of the political determination of all groups comprising the center-left, including the Republicans, to avoid opening a crisis. In the Senate, Socialist resistance to approving the majority bill against neofascist *squadristo* [goon squads] but also against the violence of far-left revolutionism were overcome and the four parties (plus the Liberals) voted for the agenda."

It seemed, moreover, that not even the main opposition party really wanted to see the Colombo government fall. Thus Sensini pointed out: "The respectfulness of the PCI these days, almost comparable to that of the [British] House of Commons, should teach us something, after all the verbal violence it directed at Colombo for his trip to America."

However, the charges of the other government parties that the PRI was "irresponsibly" endangering the stability of the regime at a time of peril may not have been entirely electoral propaganda.

Even an authoritative voice of Italian capitalism like *Corriere della Sera* at times revealed concern. Commenting on the infighting February 28, it wrote: "Let us only hope that the reality of the country and above all the economic reality does not hold a too unfortunate or painful awakening in store for any of the protagonists." □

Maoris Stage Protest on Waitangi Day

Every year on February 6 New Zealand celebrates Waitangi Day. The holiday commemorates the Treaty of Waitangi (1840), under which the Maori people lost sovereignty over the islands now known as New Zealand. In return for the granting of sovereignty to Great Britain, the Maoris were promised undisturbed possession of their lands, so long as they wished to retain them.

Like most agreements made by imperialists with colonized peoples, the treaty was soon abrogated, the British taking complete control of the islands. The signing of the treaty is still celebrated by the New Zealand ruling class as the birth of their nationhood.

But this year the Waitangi Day celebrations were different from ever before. The February 19 issue of *Socialist Action*, a New Zealand revolutionary-socialist fortnightly newspaper reported: "A significant number of Maoris present at the ceremony held at Waitangi, in the Bay of Islands, were dressed in black garments, indicating that the signing of the Treaty was something to mourn, not celebrate. Earlier in the day, a group of

young Maoris attempted to burn the naval ensign on the Waitangi flagpole, symbol of 131 years of broken promises and exploitation."

A broad section of Maori society expressed support for the Waitangi protest, which had been initiated by the Tamatoa Council, a recently formed Maori youth organization.

Socialist Action reported that this support "prompted the Secretary for Maori and Island Affairs, Mr J. McEwen, to admit that he was 'frightened' by the 'new language' spoken by the elders at the Waitangi marae [a square before a Maori tribal meetinghouse used for ceremonial occasions]. Throughout his speech at the marae, Mr MacIntyre, Minister of

Maori and Island Affairs, was constantly heckled while trying to tell the elders what their attitude toward the protest should be. When he claimed that the 'insult' to the flag was not the work of 'true Maoris' . . . Mrs Hana Jackson retorted: 'In our Maori way we are fighting for our people!'"

The decision to regard Waitangi Day as a day of mourning was made with full support of the elders present at the meeting—held at the Te Rapa marae. The proposal was made by the Tamatoa Council.

Socialist Action quotes J. Hippolite, chairman of the Nelson Maori Committee, as saying: "Every week there are cases of Maoris losing their rights to ownership of land . . . and they have no redress." He characterized the treaty as a meaningless document.

In face of the rising Maori militancy, the governor general could merely "mumble on in his usual fashion about New Zealand race relations being 'without equal in the world.'" □

Turkey

Demirel Seeks to Repress Students

Turkey's premier Suleyman Demirel is attempting to suppress a growing student radicalization with police attacks, repressive legislation, and the threat of martial law.

A February 10 London *Times* dispatch printed in the *New York Times* reported that bills introduced by Demirel would provide prison terms "for such offenses as 'interfering with commercial activity, occupying factories, making bombs, insulting or resisting officers of the law, interfering with public services or road transport, and defacing official posters.'"

In the February 24 Boston *Christian Science Monitor*, Sam Cohen wrote from Istanbul that another bill "would restrict people's rights to hold marches and demonstrations and provide sentences of up to nine years for unauthorized demonstrations."

The government apparently intends to censor radio and television as well, according to the *Times* report:

"Mr. Demirel reported that the Government was dissatisfied with the state radio and television administration, which he said had taken increasingly to 'editorializing' and to initiating attacks on the Government. Their duty is to be impartial, he said, adding that the board controlling them would soon be expanded and would be expected to be more sensitive to its responsibilities to the state."

"We have to make the choice," Demirel declared in an interview. "Either we have violence and anarchy or we take the necessary measures to prevent them."

On February 19, Demirel initiated the violence by sending police to invade the dormitories of Hacettepe Medical University in Ankara. The invasion touched off a battle with students that lasted through the next day. At least 220 students were reportedly arrested.

Demirel has reportedly used police agents to commit "terrorist" acts that could be blamed on the students.

According to Cohen, Ertugrul Kurkcun, the leader of the leftist student group Dev-Genc, ". . . alleges Turkish secret police were behind many of the recent dynamite explosions which have occurred around the country. He claims that they wanted to justify their stern measures against progressive elements.

"The Turkish police have a reputation for being capable and efficient, and thus many Turks are wondering why they have failed to catch the suspects."

And to put still stronger pressure on the parliament to pass his legislation, Demirel has now suggested that he might call in the army if the police fail to control the students. This might involve, Cohen wrote, "even proclaiming martial law."

Disarmament Progress

The Vatican on February 25 signed the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, committing itself not to develop atomic or hydrogen bombs. It was not immediately clear if the Pope was acting only for himself or if his signature also bound God.



DEMIREL: "Terrorism" can be useful.

Takaragi Toppled by Growing Union Militancy

By Susumu Okatani

Fall of a Union Leader

The gulf between traditional union leaders and rank-and-file activists was highlighted in a dramatic form at the central committee meeting of the 223,000-member Postmen's Union held in Tokyo February 18-19. The meeting was to decide the concrete demands and schedule for the "spring offensive."

President Fumihiko Takaragi and his national executive were sharply attacked because of their arbitrary handling of the negotiations during the struggles at the end of 1970. The meeting rejected Takaragi's leadership and resolved to defer the appointment of a special national executive for the spring offensive. Instead, selection of the national executive will take place at the national conference scheduled for immediately after the offensive.

Because Takaragi has been a prominent figure in Sohyo, the largest national federation of trade unions, his fall came as a big shock. He has been one of the most influential Sohyo leaders involved in attempts to organize a new federation of trade unions, and his downfall will cause confusion, particularly among the union leaders who are seeking unification along the lines Takaragi had proposed.

In judging the factors leading to Takaragi's forced resignation, we should not underestimate the influence in the Postmen's Union of Sohyo leaders who opposed Takaragi's idea of unification. But his fall can also be attributed in part to internal factional struggles within the union.

The majority of the Sohyo leadership, who were critical of the postal union leader's proposal, have been on the defensive since the publication in 1967 of Takaragi's article, "A Proposal to Reorganize the Workers Movement on the Basis of Anti-Communism," in which he argued that Sohyo was too involved in political problems and too much under Communist influence.

He proposed that a new federation be set up, a right-wing alliance of unions from Sohyo and Domei (the

second largest national federation). The new federation would concentrate its energies on higher wages and better working conditions while maintaining contacts with the workers parties — except the Communist party. At present, Sohyo is under the influence of the Socialist and Communist parties while Domei is led by the Democratic Socialist party.

Takaragi's proposal was welcomed by right-wing leaders such as Minoru Takita, president of the National Federation of Textile Industry Workers (570,000 members), who also resigned at his union's national conference February 20. Takita had held the post for nearly twenty-three years.

Rank-and-file militants have been equally concerned with Takaragi's maneuver, and have been seeking a new union leadership that can fight the proposal and the trend of a number of unions toward affiliation with Domei. The fall of Takaragi is objectively a counterattack by the main faction of Sohyo leaders.

From this point of view, there is a striking parallel between the attack on Takaragi at the meeting of the Postmen's Union and the criticism only the day before of Saburo Eda, former secretary general of the Socialist party, at the party's conference. Eda hopes to organize a new opposition party composed of right-wing Socialists, members of the Democratic Socialist party, and the Komei party [the "Clean Government" party founded by the rightist Sokagakkai Buddhist sect].

In his opening address to the conference on February 17, Tomomi Narita, the party chairman, discussed the growing movement for a new progressive party and indirectly blamed Eda for his deviation from the party line. Narita stressed the importance of the party's struggle for social renovation based on socialist ideology and philosophy, which could be interpreted as a suggestion of a coalition with left-wing elements of the Democratic Socialist party and persons in or under the influence of the

Communist party and the "new left" groups.

But whatever the maneuvers of the leadership factions, we cannot neglect the role of the young militants in the overthrow of the Postmen's Union leadership.

The initiative at the central committee meeting was taken by representatives of the Kanto (Tokyo), Tohoku (Sendai), Tokai (Nagoya), and Kansai (Osaka) branches, who had resolved at their meetings to reject Takaragi's leadership because of his betrayal of the struggle at the end of 1970. This decision drew enthusiastic support from branch unionists, whose dissatisfaction with the national executive had been intensified during the struggle.

The 1970 Offensive

The day after the resignation of Takaragi and his national executive, February 20, the Ministry of Postal Services announced the punishment of 8,568 members of the union for their part in the year-end offensive. This was by far the largest number of workers ever punished at one time by the postal authorities.

Of those victimized, three were discharged, 216 were suspended, 4,944 had their pay cut, and 3,405 were reprimanded in varying degrees. People suddenly became aware of how big and militant the campaign had been.

The year-end offensive was announced by the Postmen's Union central committee on October 29. Nine demands were put forward: larger year-end bonuses, shorter hours, better working conditions, etc.

The union members first staged rallies in work places throughout the country on November 9. Collective bargaining between the national executive and the postal authorities took place from November 16 to December 4. The union finally resorted to walk-outs at sixty-seven key offices December 7-9.

While still pursuing collective bargaining, on December 12 the national

executive ordered walkouts at ninety-seven key offices, to take place December 14-17. But on December 14 the authorities capitulated and reached an agreement with the national executive, which then ordered an end to the struggle.

Union gains from the agreement were promises by the minister to change labor policies in personnel administration, some improvement in working conditions, and larger bonuses.

On December 15, the national executive called a central committee meeting to endorse the agreement. Many activists attended to make sure the central committee members would really express the opinions of the ranks.

The central committee rejected the terms of the agreement and accused the executive of having concluded it without prior consultation of the committee. It had been decided at the autumn meeting that any agreement between the executive and the postal authorities would require the prior approval of the central committee.

A settlement of the exact relationship between the executive and the central committee was postponed to the February 18-19 meeting at which Takaragi was forced to resign.

Contradictions in Postal Service

One reason that the central committee refused to approve the agreement between the national executive and the postal authorities was that the latter have sometimes failed to keep pledges and agreements. For example, after the union's struggle against discriminatory personnel administration last spring, the Minister of Postal Services promised on April 19 that postal authorities would not carry out any labor practices hostile to the union.

But in fact, the authorities' attitude and practices did not change, and this touched off a protest by the union's Tokai branch during the summer. During the year-end offensive, the authorities' attacks on the union were the focal point in the struggle of the Kansai branch, which filed a complaint with the Labor Standards Office in addition to staging its own protests.

The authorities' attitude toward the union is rooted in the development of the Japanese economy, which has resulted in a tremendous increase of mail. Postmen's bags are now filled to capacity. Although computers have

been introduced at main offices to sort mail by destination, delivery is still dependent on human labor. Thus there is a limit to the reduction in costs that can be achieved by mechanization.

The exodus from villages into the towns means that rural communities are more scattered, and this increases the costs of service. The growing number of multistory buildings in the towns increases the postmen's work. The complicated road networks around rapidly expanding cities have also swelled the amount of work. And the young workers whom the postal authorities must employ, especially in the cities, are more and more anxious to protect their interests.

The reduction in labor costs that the authorities consider the best way to decrease the costs of postal service as a whole conflicts with the demands and the *raison d'être* of the union. The struggles of postal workers are therefore destined to grow as attempts are made to decrease the economy's expenses.

Pollution Is in the Eye of the Beholder

At a roast-beef luncheon held recently in a State Department reception room in Washington, 200 U. S. industrialists were assured by the administration that pollution is nothing to get excited about. The luncheon was organized by Nixon's National Industrial Pollution Control Council [NIPCC], an "advisory" body of sixty-three industrialists created last April.

There was major agreement on two points at the NIPCC meeting, according to a report by Peter C. Stuart in the February 13 Boston Daily *Christian Science Monitor*: First, as put by commerce secretary Maurice H. Stans: "It's essential that our country be cleaned up. But this has become an emotional issue to a great extent." And second, that U. S. industry is guilty of failing to adequately inform the public of its own antipollution efforts.

Stuart reports that "One goal, as Mr. Stans put it, should be to "sell" the public, through the press and other means."

Council members do not oppose government environmental standards, so long as they do not restrict the profit making abilities of the corporations. For example, forcing companies to demonstrate that a pesticide is not harmful before it is introduced into the market is objected to by NIPCC. It would run the risk, NIPCC said in a report to Nixon, of "preventing innovation and severely limiting the workings of the competitive aspects of the enterprise system."

Addressing the group, Nixon expressed solidarity with the polluters, stating that "American industry is not the enemy of

Only the Beginning

On the day the authorities announced the punishment of postal workers, the union issued a statement condemning the action and ordered a three-day refusal of overtime work in protest. The rage of unionists will add fuel to their activities in the spring offensive.

Whatever the new leadership may be, it is certain that there will be little elbow room left in the space traditionally occupied by the leaders—wedged between the authorities and the workers. The leaders will be squeezed from both sides from now on.

The success of the rank-and-file activists in overthrowing Takaragi will encourage the young militants—in the Postmen's Union and in other unions as well—to expand their efforts to radicalize the workers movement. The problems of postal employees do not differ fundamentally from those of other workers. Thus a new period of crisis for the traditional union leaders has only just opened. □

the good life. The government, this administration, I can assure you, is not here to beat industry over the head." That fear laid to rest, the council proceeded to congratulate itself on its past work and future plans.

Bert S. Cross, the council chairman, was quoted as saying: "We care about the environment as much as anyone else. We all have children, or, like myself, grandchildren. And I'm a fisherman and a hunter."

Newsmen were somewhat less impressed with Mr. Cross when it became known that the Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company, which he heads, faces state charges in Wisconsin as well as a federal lawsuit for allegedly polluting public waters.

The council has a staff of ten and an annual budget of \$300,000, nearly one-third the yearly allotment for Nixon's entire Council on Environmental Quality. Up to the time of the meeting, the NIPCC's total contribution to the antipollution fight consisted of three thin, presumably non-emotional, pamphlets. The total is now up to fourteen.

In addition, the council takes credit for stimulating 150 "remedial actions" on the part of its affiliates. It promises 160 future actions and many new pamphlets by the time of its next luncheon. The menu has yet to be announced for that occasion, but informed sources suggest that poultry will be a featured item. As reporter Stuart commented, the council is "still called upon to defend itself against the charge that it is 'a fox guarding the chicken coop.'"

Worried by Growth of Trotskyism

Kerala Stalinists Warm Up Old Slanders

Chalakkudi, Kerala

The *Kerala Kaumudi*, one of the three leading dailies in Kerala, recently published a two-page political biography of Leon Trotsky along with pictures of Trotsky and his companion, Natalia. The article was written by M.N. Subramanyam, a member of the Language Institute of Kerala and editor of *Shastragathi*, a scientific journal.

Increased interest in the ideas of Trotsky and the Trotskyists has been reflected also in another form—a revival of slanders in the Stalinist press. All the Malayalam journals of the CPI [Communist party of India] published an article by Alexander Titov attacking Trotskyism.

The Stalinist slanders have changed somewhat since Stalin's lifetime. Then, Trotskyists were hounded as alleged agents of British-American imperialism and counterrevolution. Now, Titov charges that Trotskyists are ultra-left adventurers. One uncomfortable

fact did creep into Titov's article: He had to admit that the Trotskyist movement is gaining ground.

M. Rashid, the editor of *Chenkathir*, the Malayalam journal of the SWP [Socialist Workers party—Indian section of the Fourth International], wrote to the CPI papers challenging the statements in Titov's article. The Stalinist editors naturally could not find room to print this letter.

Rashid also answered Titov in a full-length article in *Chenkathir* entitled "Stalinist Propagation of Lies."

Let Them Eat Lettuce

Pentagon Scabs on Farm Workers' Strike

There's no accounting for tastes, according to the old saying, but the United States Department of Defense is an exception to the rule.

Back in 1969, when the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee [UFWOC] led by Cesar Chavez was conducting a very successful boycott of grapes in order to force growers to sign contracts with the union, the Pentagon developed a veritable craving for grapes.

In fiscal year 1969, for example, the Defense Department suddenly more than doubled its grape purchases, buying some 16,000,000 pounds. One-fourth of the total was sent to GIs in South Vietnam, averaging out to eight pounds of grapes per man.

Despite this federal aid, the growers were forced to sign UFWOC contracts and GIs are presumably no longer required to eat eight pounds of grapes before being ordered to invade Cambodia or Laos.

But now the farm workers have launched a boycott against lettuce growers, and Nixon's war department has been afflicted with an insatiable hunger for lettuce.

This time, however, the craving is a little more selective. In fact, Defense Department lettuce purchases from one company, Interharvest, have declined dramatically since last August 30. August 30, Chavez points out, just happened to be the day on which Interharvest signed a contract with his union.

A Defense Department spokesman quoted in the February 21 *New York Times* nevertheless insisted that the government is "completely neutral" in the strike. This "neutrality" has been demonstrated by a marked increase in purchases from Bud

Rashid suggested that the Stalinists read what Jack Lindsay, the British Communist party intellectual, wrote in the July 1970 issue of *Marxism Today*, the theoretical magazine of the British CP. Lindsay had to admit that one of Lenin's last acts was to form a bloc with Trotsky against Stalin and the rising bureaucracy. He further stated that, by concealing this fact, the leaders of the Soviet Communist party were insulting the memory of Lenin.

Not to be outdone by the CPI, the Malayalam journals of the CPI(M) [Communist party of India (Marxist)] have begun slandering Trotskyists. In addition, they are attempting to rehabilitate the reputation of Stalin. □



CHAVEZ: Pentagon shows poor taste.

March 15, 1971

Antle, Inc., a major target of the UFWOC boycott.

In the three months ending September 30, 1970, nearly 30 percent of the lettuce bought by the Pentagon came from Antle. During the same period of 1969, the figure was 15.8 percent.

Not Limited to Tuna

Scientists at a two-day international symposium held in Ottawa February 15-16 on "Mercury and Man's Environment" have suggested that air could be the medium through which much of the mercury that appears in fish and animals is transmitted.

Dr. A. Hanson of the Swedish Environment Protection Board said that Sweden has been able to trace only 60 to 70% of its mercury contamination to waterborne discharges from factories and towns.

Dr. Donald Selig, chairman of the heavy metals task force of the Center for the Biology of Natural Systems at Washington University in St. Louis, said that the center found high concentrations of mercury in the air over the smokestacks of power plants and municipal incinerators.

Dr. Selig said that the mercury probably is released from sulfur compounds when coal or oil is burned.

Dr. Bruce McDuffie, a chemist at the State University of New York at Binghamton, estimates that at least 15,000 to 20,000 tons of mercury per year are released into the air by the burning of coal and oil.

'Strikes Will Retard...Progress'

"Think more of what you can give the country not what you can take from it, Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike told union delegates attending the sixth annual sessions of the Public Service Trade Union Federation at the New Town Hall yesterday [January 31]."— *Ceylon News*, February 11.

* * *

Ceylon's bourgeois United Front government has begun to clarify the meaning of its "austerity" program. Until now the thrust of the Bandaranaike regime has been toward imposing "voluntary" wage restraints and higher taxes on the working class to make the workers pay for the insolvency of Ceylon's capitalist enterprises as well as the debt to foreign creditors inherited from the previous government. These measures are evidently proving insufficient in face of the rising expectations among union members that have touched off a number of strikes and strike threats since the so-called United Front came to office in the May 27, 1970, elections.

The government's latest ploy is to attempt to enlist the trade-union leaders in what amounts to a no-strike pledge. No such sacrifices are being asked of bourgeois companies. On the contrary, the latter are being given tax holidays and other lucrative concessions in hope of making them more profitable.

Bandaranaike in her address to the union delegates cited above spelled out what she expected from those union bureaucrats who would go along with her game. The *Ceylon News* reported:

"The Prime Minister asked trade unions to be as mindful of their duties by the country and the nation as they were of their rights.

"If such co-operation was forthcoming and if workers, particularly in the public sector, did eight hours of honest work (and volunteered to do even more if the need arose) then the Government, she was sure, could meet all its commitments within the next five years."

The prime minister admitted her dependency on the union organizations to keep the working class in check:

"Mrs. Bandaranaike reminded the delegates that theirs was even a greater responsibility than the responsibility thrust on Ministers and Parliamentarians to pull the country out of its economic ills. . . .

"Socialism,' Mrs. Bandaranaike said, 'cannot be chanted like a mantram. Only work and more work can usher in true socialism.'"

Putting her case crudely, if accurately, the prime minister declared:

"This Government has been formed on the sweat and blood of the people. Everybody is a part of the state machinery and has to make a contribution towards the greater glory of the nation."

She did not state what happens to those who feel disinclined to make contributions to the greater glory of a nation still ruled by a wealthy few.

Even the specific proposal of a no-strike pledge was not alluded to by Bandaranaike. Perhaps this was owing to embarrassment at the recent date of her conversion to the "socialism" in whose name she had already asked so much. As the *Ceylon News* paraphrased her comments: "During her previous term of office there had been little or no assistance from trade unions and the working class."

Having remedied the deficiency, the prime minister delegated to her "working-class" assistants the job of selling the strike ban. The chief salesman turned out to be Finance Minister N. M. Perera, who is also the leader of the reformist Lanka Sama Samaja party [LSSP], which in its revolutionary days, prior to 1964, helped to found many of Ceylon's unions. Now sporting ministerial portfolios, the LSSP leaders are trying to shackle the union movement to the capitalist state apparatus. The February 11 *Ceylon News* reported:

"Strikes will retard the progress of the People's government's plan to achieve socialism. So, help the government by rendering your services and assistance, appealed Dr. N. M.

Perera, Minister of Finance, yesterday [January 30]."

Perera, speaking at a meeting at Jayanta Weerasekera Mawata, Panchikawatta, assured his audience that strikes would not be made illegal. "However," the *Ceylon News* said in summary, "strike action at a time the government was gearing itself to a new socialist era would snarl the programs undertaken by the People's government.

"Dr. Perera warned workers that the socialist program enunciated by the government had to surmount capitalist intrigue." He did not indicate under what heading the Bandaranaike-Perera offensive against the right to strike should be put.

To demonstrate that the workers will not have to bear the burden of the construction of "true socialism" alone, the government has also prepared an austerity program for state functionaries.

The *Ceylon News* describes this program as "stringent austerity" and reports the following belt-tightening proposals:

- All cabinet ministers except the prime minister to drop the titular prefix "Honorable."

- No cabinet minister, Member of Parliament, or government official to attend any embassy party except on National Day.

- All imports of foreign liquor, except to embassies on reasonable consumption quotas per person, to be banned.

- All private functions to be limited to a maximum of fifty invitees.

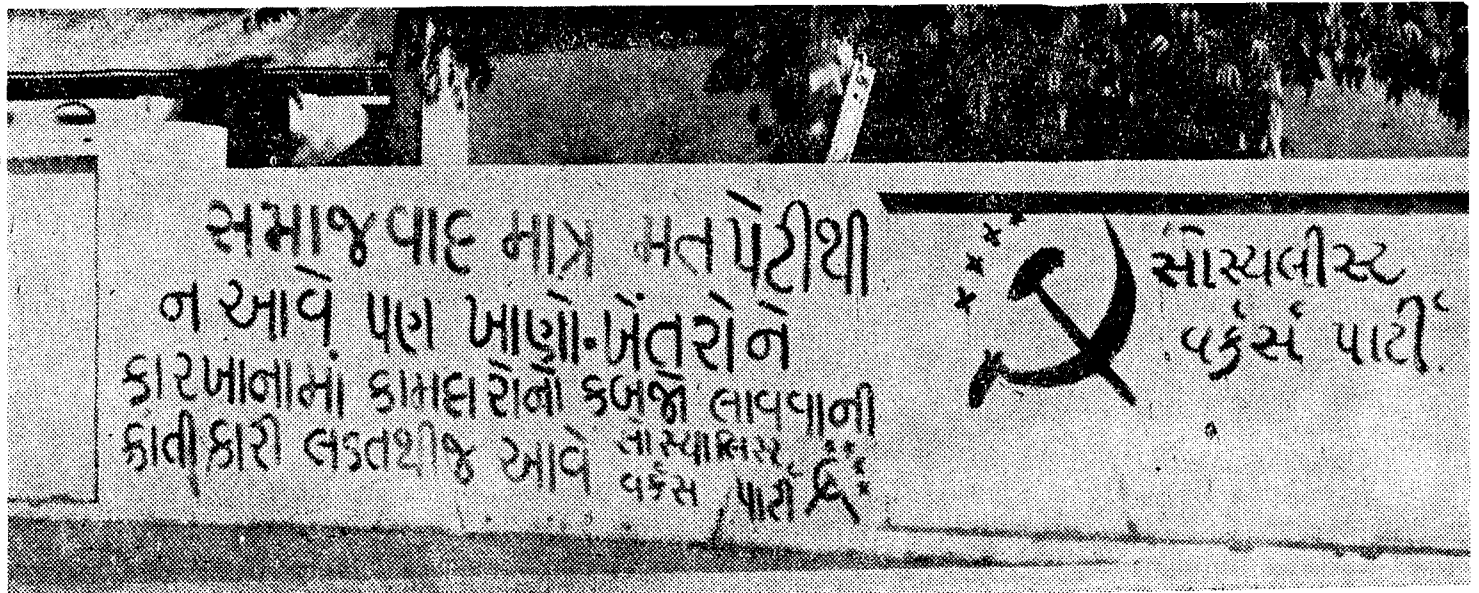
Imported cigarettes, luxury food imports, and other such items also to be banned.

Thus in a true spirit of socialist equalitarianism the workers are asked to surrender their only means of self-defense against the capitalist employers, while government officials, stoutly shouldering their share of the burden, will refrain from smoking foreign cigarettes. □

Bolivia Court Backs Press Magnate

On October 7 the La Paz newspaper *El Diario* was seized by workers and students who turned the paper's editorial policy to the left.

On March 2 civil court judge Nestor Vega Hermosa issued an order demanding that the students and workers return the paper to its former owners and pay damages. The workers and students said they intended to appeal the order.



WALL IN BARODA. Photograph taken from January 21 issue of the Gujarati daily "Sandesh." Slogan at left, one of many put up in the ancient city, reads: "Socialism can be achieved only

through revolutionary struggles of the workers to take over factories, land, and mines; not by merely battling for votes at the ballot box.— Socialist Workers Party."

Intensify Election Activities

Baroda Trotskyists Answer Hooligan Attack

Baroda, Gujarat

Supporters of capitalist parties in the current election campaign assaulted members of the Socialist Workers party [SWP—Indian section of the Fourth International] who were peacefully selling literature here January 16.

The incident followed a campaign speech by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi during her lightning tour of Gujarat. The Baroda city committee of the SWP organized a Marxist literature booth at the rally in the Polo Ground. The booth was set up under a big banner inscribed with the slogan:

"Socialism can be achieved only through the revolutionary struggle of the workers to seize the factories, land, and mines, and not through the mere struggle of the ballot box."

The booth created a stir, and many persons came forward to look in and purchase.

Among the public returning from the rally were some rowdy supporters of the Jan Sangh [a Hindu communalist party] and the Syndicate Congress [the anti-Gandhi faction of the Congress; it controls the government of Gujarat]. These "super-patriots" be-

gan heckling and obstructing the persons selling literature, who remained calm. The hooligans then shouted slogans such as: "We want Jan Sangh literature! Down with Moscow-Peking agents!"

Magan Desai, the national secretary of the SWP, who was present at the encounter, tried to politely dissuade the obstructors from disturbing those who were interested in buying literature. But this did not suit the pro-capitalist "democrats."

They began abusing the sellers in filthy language and making threats. They tried to snatch the red banners and books from the SWP workers, who resisted and pushed the rowdies back from the literature booth.

The latter then threw stones and succeeded in overpowering the defenders. Banners and books were stolen and several SWP workers were beaten. Magan Desai and Siraz Sheikh were badly hurt by stones thrown by the goonda [hired thug] "patriots."

During the attack, the police were nowhere in sight, being preoccupied with protecting the officers of the ruling class. It was only natural that

these guardians of "law and order" would shun the place where law and order were being violated.

Rather than accomplishing its aim of creating panic among the rank and file of the SWP, the attack has imbued them with a sense of self-confidence and determination to continue revolutionary activities wherever possible. The city unit of the party issued a press statement calling on all the left and democratic parties to condemn the hooliganism of the ruling-class parties and to fight back against the reactionaries.

Unfortunately, not a single left or democratic party saw fit to condemn the attack. The assault was reported in only one Gujarati daily, the *Gujarat Samachar*, which printed the following account in its January 17 issue:

"The Socialist Workers Party in a press statement declares that when the leaders and student workers of the party were selling the literature of scientific socialism peacefully near the Kirti Sambh and citizens were purchasing it according to their liking, hired goondas backed by the Syndicate Congress and Jan Sangh came and threatened them, telling them to

stop selling communist literature. These elements tried to snatch away the party banners and books. The party workers resisted peacefully and fearlessly. The goondas of political parties that claim to be the saviours of democracy went further and abused student comrades in filthy language. When the hoodlums started shouting and harassing them, the workers were forced to take shelter in a nearby house."

The party also made clear that the attack would not interfere with its revolutionary propaganda in the current

election campaign. On the night of January 19, the Baroda city committee painted on the walls of prominent public and private buildings the party symbol and the slogan that had so annoyed the Syndicate and Jan Sangh thugs at the January 16 rally.

The Syndicate-backed mass circulation Gujarati daily *Sandesh* in its January 21 issue prominently displayed a photograph of one of the painted walls.

This activity has given publicity to the SWP in the election and has created a stir in political circles in Gujarat. □

this was that the IWW attempted to play two different roles simultaneously: that of an industrial union and of a revolutionary party. Disdainful of theory, the IWW's leaders dismissed the distinction between unionist and revolutionary consciousness — or at best assumed an automatic transition from the one to the other. The result was a peculiar hybrid that was neither union nor party and that was unable to develop a strategy to accomplish the revolution for which Wobblies fought so heroically.

Their error was understandable, if fatal, in a period when the U. S. working class had barely begun to organize. That Dubofsky should fail to understand it today is more surprising. This central contradiction of the IWW is treated only occasionally, in passing, and never more directly than in the trivial form: ". . . if the IWW made revolutionists, it gained few recruits and less power in industry; if it gained members and industrial power, it lost its revolutionary fervor."

Although it is clear that Dubofsky is sympathetic to the Wobblies, he doesn't quite take them — or their revolutionary goal — seriously. Consequently, his other attempts to generalize also often either miss the mark or even contradict the facts he has presented. It is more than a little jarring, for example, when Dubofsky pauses in his narration of the Wilson administration's witch-hunt against the Wobblies to proclaim: "Waging a war abroad to defeat military autocracy, President Wilson refused to allow mine owners to rape democracy at home."

Fortunately, Dubofsky seldom intrudes his opinions in this manner; he is usually content to present the facts and allow readers to draw their own conclusions. In this respect, *We Shall Be All* is an invaluable source book on the IWW.

— David Burton

How to Increase Productivity

Unions faced with a demand by employers for greater labor productivity would do well to imitate the example of a Karachi textile union.

On February 13, workers at the Valika Textile and Woolen Mills, who had been engaged in a dispute with the owners, decided to settle the matter abruptly. Some 2,000 of them, reportedly armed, seized all of the company's mills and factories. After driving out the owners and managers, the workers ran the plant and increased its normal output.

REVIEWS

Fascinating Story of the 'One Big Union'

We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World by Melvyn Dubofsky. Quadrangle Books, Chicago, Ill. 557 pp. \$12.50. 1969.

Melvyn Dubofsky has made a commendable effort to provide "a detailed, documented, and objective history" of one of the most controversial and contradictory movements in the history of the American working class. The "Wobblies" of the IWW were legendary even before the organization was smashed by the federal government during and after the first world war. Romantically portrayed in such works of literature as John Dos Passos' *U.S.A.*, they have become almost mythological figures for succeeding generations of revolutionary-minded youth.

In its time, everyone in the labor movement was defined at least in part by his or her attitude toward the IWW: Eugene Debs, the revolutionary leader of the Socialist party; James P. Cannon, later a founder of the Communist party and of American Trotskyism, who spent years as a Wobbly organizer; Daniel DeLeon, the "Red Pope" of the Socialist Labor party, who split from the Wobblies and established his own "IWW"; William Z. Foster, later chief of the Stalinized CP, who urged the IWW to dissolve and "bore from within" the American Federation of Labor; Samuel Gompers, president of the AFL, who fought the IWW with no holds — including strike-breaking — barred; Elizabeth

Gurley Flynn, the "Rebel Girl" who decades later became a leader of the Communist party.

With such a varied assortment of political activists as his subject, it is not surprising that Dubofsky sometimes falls short of his goal. Nevertheless, his book is, so far as I know, the most comprehensive history of the IWW that has appeared.

Although he has clearly scoured all the documentary material available, Dubofsky never allows the marshaling of evidence to get in the way of a dynamic tale and a lively presentation of such figures as Big Bill Haywood and the legendary song writer Joe Hill. It is impossible not to be caught up by his narration of the Wobblies' role in the 1912 Lawrence, Massachusetts, textile strike, their free speech fights, or the spirit of Haywood's declaration to the 1905 founding convention:

"We are here to confederate the workers of this country into a working class movement that shall have for its purpose the emancipation of the working class from the slave bondage of capitalism. . . . this organization will be formed, based and founded on the class struggle, having in view no compromise and no surrender, and but one object and one purpose and that is to bring the workers of this country into the possession of the full value of the product of their toil."

But hidden by the revolutionary spirit of the Wobblies was a contradiction that the IWW as an organization was never able to solve. Put briefly,

The Kremlin's Attack on the Australian CP

[The following documents, which we are reprinting for the information of our readers, are part of a polemic between the Soviet Communist party and the Communist party of Australia (CPA), a dispute occasioned by the latter's opposition to the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

[The first item originally appeared in the January 1 issue of the Moscow weekly *New Times* and was reprinted in the

CPA's weekly *Tribune* of January 27, from which we have taken it. The editorial note with which it begins is by the *New Times* editor.

[The second document is the CPA's reply, which appeared in the February 3 *Tribune*.

[Unless otherwise noted, parenthetical and bracketed comments are by the *New Times* or *Tribune* editors.]

'New Times': 'The Path of...Anti-Sovietism'

Editor's Note: Following the publication in *New Times* (No. 36, September 9, 1970) of an abridged translation of the article by Pavel Nejedly in the Czechoslovak Communist Party organ *Rude Pravo*, concerning the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of Australia, we received a number of letters from readers asking for more details about the situation in the Australian Party. "From the speech delivered by the head of the Australian delegation at the international Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1969, which was published in our press, we know that the leadership of the CPA took a dissentient position, which was criticised by a number of other delegations," reader N. Glazunov of Novosibirsk writes. "I would like to know more about the latest developments in that Party."

The author of the above letter to *New Times* rightly recalls the stand taken at the 1969 Meeting by representatives of the Australian Communist Party. That stand did not emerge overnight. Developments in the Australian Communist Party in recent years cannot but cause concern to those who follow with sympathy the struggle of the working class and all working people of Australia against the domestic and foreign policy of the ruling element, for the socialist future of their country.

The Australian Communist Party, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1970, has inscribed many a glorious page in the history of the Australian and the international working class movement. The communists, as the ideological vanguard of the working class of Australia, gave the working people a clear perspective of struggle against capitalist exploitation and consistently defended the interests of the masses. The names of Australian communists and true internationalists like the CPA leaders G. B. Miles and Lawrence Sharkey, the prominent trade unionist James Healy, and the renowned novelist Katharine Susannah Prichard are known throughout the world. The party has long-standing internationalist traditions. Its close ties with the international working

class and communist movement have always been a source of strength for the party, helping it to overcome the difficulties arising in the course of the class struggles.

All the more regrettable is it to observe the turn developments have taken in the CPA in the recent period. In 1967 the 21st Congress of the party, on the recommendation of its new leadership, annulled the program "Australia's Way Forward" adopted at the previous Congress (in 1964). At the same time, the principle of democratic centralism—the fundamental principle in the building of any truly revolutionary party—was to all intents and purposes deleted from the rules.

The leaders of the CPA, specifically Laurie Aarons, Eric Aarons and Bernie Taft, began to come out with unfriendly and even hostile statements about the socialist countries and their policies. They took an ambiguous stand with regard to the events in the Middle East, evading condemnation of the Israeli aggression against the Arab peoples. They gradually ceased to criticise the splitting, adventurist policy of the Peking leaders. Instead of combating the subversive activities of the latter, from which the Australian Communist Party itself suffered, the CPA leaders began demonstratively to stress their interest in the Chinese "experiment", particularly the so-called "cultural revolution".

In the past two years many political leaders who at first were disoriented by the events in Czechoslovakia have been able to see the situation in proper perspective and have supported the efforts of the sound forces in the Czechoslovak Communist Party to normalise the situation in the country and defend their socialist gains. The CPA leaders, on the contrary, continue with a stubbornness worthy of better application to uphold the Right-opportunist "Dubcek line", although that line has been fully exposed and rejected by the Czechoslovak communists.

As we know, the CPA delegation at the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1969 refused to sign the collectively drafted document

"Tasks at the Present Stage of the Struggle Against Imperialism and United Action of the Communist and Workers' Parties and all Anti-Imperialist Forces." The *Tribune*, weekly organ of the Australian Communist Party, confined itself merely to publishing a brief report of Section III of that document, while the contents of Section I, II and IV did not appear in the party press in any form. Moreover, on returning to Australia, the delegation did its utmost to minimise the significance of the Meeting, to vilify its results, not stopping at down-right falsification. Taft, for example, on returning from the Meeting, declared that in Moscow "deliberate efforts were made to prevent free and comradely discussion." Yet the head of the Australian delegation, L. Aarons, while in Moscow, spoke highly of the atmosphere prevailing at the Meeting. "Every party," he said, "can state its views freely," and he stressed that "everyone is heard in a comradely atmosphere." (See interview in *Tribune*, June 18, 1969.)

After the 1969 Meeting the opportunistic coloring of the party's position became more marked and the tendency to depart from opinions shared by the communist movement as a whole more pronounced. This was particularly evident during the preparations for the 22nd Congress of the Australian Communist Party, held in March 1970. The columns of the *Tribune* were given over to the most unfriendly and biased criticism of the USSR and the CPSU, their past and present. The *Tribune* misrepresented the motives of Soviet policy and many facts pertaining to Soviet life, it attacked the leadership of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and its policy of strengthening socialism in Czechoslovakia. At times it was hard to escape the impression that the organ of the CPA was trying to outdo the bourgeois press in denying the successes of socialist construction and smearing socialist democracy.

The unfriendly attitude of the CPA leadership towards the countries of the socialist community was reflected in the documents of the 22nd Congress. In the main document of the Congress, "Aims, Methods and Organisation of the CPA", these countries were even denied the right to be called socialist; they were referred to as "socialist-based countries" (!). The authors of this "discovery" are trailing in the wake of bourgeois propaganda which has long since gone out of its way to avoid calling the socialist countries socialist. Add to this that the entire section of the new program dedicated to the socialist system ("the socialist-based countries") literally bristles with inimical remarks and unfounded accusations. The authors of the document invented a long list of "sins" committed by socialism, echoing the usual assertions of its bourgeois opponents.

The CPA leaders are endeavoring in this

way to blame others for the difficulties experienced by their party, for their own failings and weaknesses, and to attribute them to "mistakes" of the socialist countries. The groundlessness of such manoeuvres is obvious. This was pointed out by many of the participants in the 1969 Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties. Rodney Arismendi, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Uruguayan Communist Party, for example, said: "We cannot agree with those who evaluate the relations between the CPSU and the revolutionaries of the capitalist world according to a special measure: they take credit for the successes derived from the historic transformations in the socialist countries, while the inevitable consequences of the class struggle in the world arena and the needs linked up with the defence of the socialist system, which are also prerequisites of the development of the world revolutionary process, they regard as an obstacle to their own successes . . ."

The stand taken by the CPA leadership offers a striking example of the consequences of inability to resist the pressure of bourgeois ideology and direct blackmail on the part of reactionaries who for purposes of provocation demand of the communist leaders in the capitalist countries that they prove their "independence" by making anti-Soviet statements and attacking the socialist states. The same thing, incidentally, is being demanded also by the vociferous blackmailers "from the Left", the diverse anarchist, Trotskyite and other anti-Marxist groups, for whom anti-Sovietism is practically the hallmark of "revolutionariness." The CPA leadership has clearly been unable to withstand pressure of this kind.

In the international section of the new CPA program the principles of proletarian internationalism, the internationalist duty of parties are interpreted in a very narrow sense. Even the necessity to fight for an end to the Vietnam war is motivated by considerations of abstract humanism rather than the desire to rebuff imperialism. The world-wide fight for peace is barely touched upon. No mention is made of the acute situation in the Middle East, where the Arab nations have fallen victim to an imperialist conspiracy. Apart from the problems of the Vietnam war, the international horizon of CPA activity is essentially limited to support for the national liberation struggle of the people of New Guinea and the other Pacific islands, and also the liberation movement of the Australian Aborigines. These, of course, are important issues, but it is clear that such regionalism is very remote from internationalism in the broad sense as it has always been understood by communists.

This singular interpretation of the internationalist obligations of the parties is closely tied up with the general evolution of the program principles of the CPA leadership which found expression in the "Aims, Methods and Organisation," a document, in which the departure from the principled positions of the international communist movement under the flag of struggle against "theoretical conformism" is clearly evident. The very fact that the decisions of the 22nd Congress make no mention whatever of Marxism-Lenin-

ism as the theoretical foundation of the communist movement is in itself indicative. The concept of a "future society" is treated in the vaguest and most general terms, the main emphasis being placed on drawing a line of distinction between the Australian "variant of socialism" and that which already exists.

The authors of the new program reject also the Leninist principles of party building. "We reject the idea of so-called 'monolithic' organisation," says the program, and further: "it [the party] aims to subject all theories and forms of organisation to critical analysis. The Communist Party, in seeking to add to its members and influence, welcomes into its ranks all socialists who share its basic ideas, even though they may differ on some points . . ." A party based on such principles is liable to become a debating society rather than a militant organisation of like-minded revolutionaries.

The idea is advanced of a "coalition of the Left" for the purpose of effecting "revolutionary social change" in Australia. This amorphous coalition is conceived as a very broad and free union of "Communists, the growing Left within the Labor Party, union militants, students, intellectuals, anarchists, libertarians [i.e. proponents of unrestricted liberty. — Ed.], etc." From the whole context it is evident that the idea of such a motley coalition with vaguely defined common ideals and objectives is counterposed to the Marxist principle of the leading role of the working class in the struggle to overthrow capitalism and build a socialist society. Although the authors of the new program do speak of drawing on working class support, this is not backed up either by the new organisational principles of the party or by the plans for the establishment of a new "coalition of the Left".

Of course, rapprochement and united action of the Left is an important thing and an imperative of our time. This is set forth clearly in the final document of the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties. But struggle for the unity of the Left forces does not mean that the communist parties should lose their identity, their class character, by merging in broad coalitions. The entire experience of the communist movement militates against such a step. Yet the "liberal" leanings of some Australian communists who preach "tolerance" of views inimical to communism lead to erasing the distinction between the Communist Party and its "coalition" partners.

Such in general outline is the situation that has emerged of late in the Communist Party of Australia. It cannot but cause concern to many members of that party. The pre-congress party conferences at district and city level were marked by sharp struggle against the leadership's "new course".

To avoid a split, the communists opposed to this course proposed that the Congress refrain from adopting new program documents and that "unity committees" be set up at the level of district and State party organisations to work out a strategic line and tactics acceptable to the party as a whole. They pointed out that the draft program submitted by the leadership does not reflect the opinion of a

substantial section of the membership, that it is basically unacceptable and impels the party onto the path of sectarianism, anti-Sovietism and isolation from the international communist movement.

Eight members of the National Committee of the CPA who spoke at the Congress against the "new course" and the new program were dropped from the leadership. Pat Clancy, member of the National Committee, leader of the militant Building Workers' Industrial Union and a member of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, sent a letter to the party leadership announcing his decision to resign from the National Committee because he could not accept the present policy and methods of the leadership. The party leadership has to all intents and purposes broken with the communists in the trade unions who have traditionally been the proletarian mainstay of the CPA, the source of its influence.

At the same time elements patently hostile to communism are coming into the party. The door has been opened to Trotskyites and members of other trends inimical to Marxism-Leninism. They were even invited to attend the Congress and they used its platform to demand, almost in the form of an ultimatum, that the CPA dissociate itself completely from the CPSU. The leader of one of the two Trotskyite groups in Australia (at loggerheads with each other), D. Freney,* praised the program as the "final step in the qualitative turn in the Communist Party." Now this headman of the Sydney Trotskyites has been included in the editorial board of the Tribune. At the same time the decision on "unity of the party" adopted by the Congress is full of undisguised threats against communists who reject the anti-Soviet course. That these are not empty threats is seen by the expulsion from the party for that reason of two of its veteran members, Edgar Ross and Alf Watt, and also the recent decision of the Sydney Committee to disband a militant party organisation which is the Marxist-Leninist core of the seamen's, dockers' and shipbuilders' unions.

In the present world situation in which the class struggle continues with unabated force, when the imperialists are stepping up machinations against the socialist countries, and ideological subversion against the international communist movement is mounting, the struggle for the purity of the creative teachings of Marxism-Leninism assumes a special significance. In its message of greeting to the Communist Party of Australia on the occasion of its 50th anniversary, the CC [central committee — IP] of the CPSU expressed the hope that the Australian communists, "on the basis of a principled Marxist-Leninist approach, will be able to overcome the difficulties that have arisen in the Australian communist movement and will follow the revolutionary traditions of their party."

* Dennis Freney split from the group in Australia that adheres to the international tendency led by Michel Pablo, a tendency that claims to be Trotskyist. Freney justified his move with the argument that rather than merely moving to the left, the Australian Communist party had reformed itself and become genuinely revolutionary. He was warmly received and given an editorial post. — IP

'Tribune': 'Rejects the Stalinist...Concept'

For the second time in four months the Soviet Weekly magazine New Times has printed an article concerning the Communist Party of Australia. In more than 50 years of its existence the Communist Party of Australia has not received such attention before.

The first article (reprinted from the Czechoslovakian Communist Party's official organ Rude Pravo) was, in the view of the CPA, full of distortions and absurd misrepresentations of CPA policies. The latest article also, in our view, distorts and misrepresents, but not quite so crudely.

It is no secret that the CPA disagrees fundamentally with the CPSU on certain questions and that it has sought to debate differences of view about issues of principle in the international communist movement.

The present article can be welcomed because it, at least, provides a basis for rational discussion. In the spirit of developing such a discussion, we hope that New Times will publish this reply. We regretted the fact that New Times did not agree to publish our reply to the Rude Pravo article. We seek open discussion and an informed party membership; Tribune has published both the Rude Pravo article and the latest article from New Times in full. Because Tribune is only a 12-page weekly, this sometimes creates difficulties but through it and other publications, and the freest possible distribution of materials printed abroad, our members have access to the views of all communist parties.

We believe that it is helpful to have the views of the CPSU on "The Situation in the Communist Party of Australia" stated in an article. Many of its points have already been made in letters from the CPSU addressed to our National Committee, which we have answered, raising views similar to those which follow here.

CPA criticisms of CPA policy may be summarised as "opportunistic . . . unable to resist the pressure of bourgeois ideology . . . merging the party in a broad coalition . . . opposed to the Marxist principle of the leading role of the working class . . . the leadership has broken with the communists in the trade unions . . . it rejects the Leninist principles of party building and democratic centralism . . . regionalism has replaced internationalism."

We understand opportunism to mean adapting the working class struggle to capitalism, sacrificing its long-range interests for immediate gains. The whole spirit of the CPA's 22nd Congress decisions goes contrary to this. Its Statement of Aims, and the document Modern Unionism and the Workers' Movement, advocate a bolder challenge to bourgeois ideology, to reformism and conservatism. The Congress called for development of more radical demands, for more militant confrontation of arbitration and the capitalist state, for an attack on all the "sacred rights" of capital, for workers' control, for struggle against the imperialist war in Vietnam, against Australian colo-

onialism in New Guinea and racist oppression of the Aborigines.

The Australian bourgeoisie and the most reactionary political groupings quickly saw that this was a dangerous threat. Their mass media condemned the Congress decisions, and singled out for attack those communist union leaders like Laurie Carmichael and Jack Munday who actively developed and defended these ideas.

The 22nd Congress decisions were based upon a marxist analysis of Australian monopoly-capitalist society at the beginning of the scientific and technological revolution. This analysis tried to uncover new forms of capitalist contradiction, and the social forces which could challenge the system.

CPA policy is firmly based upon the working class, which is "*the decisive force for revolutionary change*" (Modern Unionism and the Workers' Movement, p.4). A long way from opposing the marxist "principle of the leading role of the working class" as alleged by New Times! Indeed, some party members who oppose the Congress decisions condemn its industrial policy as "Left-adventurist"; they reduce the Party's leading role to tailing behind reformism in an opportunistic concept of the united front.

Far from the party losing its "identity . . . (and) class character by merging in broad coalitions" (New Times), the coalition of the Left is seen as a search for unity in action of all anti-capitalist forces. In this action, the concepts of every political trend are subject to testing, in practice and in theoretical debate.

Party discussions of worker activists on these questions have decisively supported Congress decisions. This makes nonsense of the New Times claim that "The party leadership has . . . broken with the communists in the trade unions . . . traditionally . . . the proletarian base of the CPA." This proletarian base, the overwhelming majority of the party, decided policy at the 1970 conferences and Congress.

The Communist Party's organisational principles are those of a revolutionary party. The principles of democratic centralism were not deleted from its 1967 or its 1970 constitution. They remain Leninist in its true sense; the party is a union of like-minded people, in which all have the right of free discussion; discussion leads to policy decisions which are decided democratically; the minority accepts majority decisions, with the right to continue to discuss their views within the party.

You are caught by your double standards of party organisational principles. Speaking of those in the minority, (the CPA Congress voted 118 to 12 to adopt the main decisions) New Times says they "proposed that the Congress refrain from adopting new program documents and that 'unity committees' be set up at the level of state and district party organisations to work out a strategic line and tactics acceptable to the party as a whole. They pointed out that the draft program submitted by the leadership does not re-

flect the opinions of a substantial section of the membership . . ."

Since the Communist Party is a union of like-minded people, whose decisions are decided by discussion and democratic vote and are then party policy, how can quite opposite concepts of strategic line and tactics be combined in an eclectic mish-mash? This is the characteristic of a reformist, not a revolutionary party.

New Times support for this suggestion is the more surprising since the two lines in the CPA were debated out in party organisations around Australia, from Townsville to Perth. The party leadership initiated publication of an alternative draft statement issued in the name of Edgar Ross. Seven hundred delegates discussed and voted on the two strategies at district and State conferences; the result was four to one in favor of the line adopted by Congress. The proposition which has the approval of New Times was put to Congress and rejected overwhelmingly. Perhaps New Times also gives its blessing to the minority excuse for these results: that these 700 delegates were sheep manipulated by 'the leadership.'

Edgar Ross and Alf Watt were not expelled for "rejecting the anti-Soviet course," nor for any political views. They were free to fight for their views in party meetings and journals. They rejected this course, as they had foreshadowed when they said they would not accept the Congress decision if it went against them. Instead, they chose to set up an exclusive separate group within the party, with its own platform, loyalty and discipline.

The CPA believes in Leninist principles of revolutionary organisation; it rejects the stalinist "monolithic" concept. Stalinism stifled free discussion of major issues; centralism could grow so as to suffocate democracy; party democracy could be replaced by the authoritarian rule of a small group or one man. That was the CPSU's own estimate, at its 20th, 21st and 22nd Congresses.

New Times has made the remarkable discovery that the CPA's fight to end the Vietnam war is "motivated by abstract humanism rather than the desire to rebuff imperialism!"

We make no apology for condemning the Vietnam war as the most inhuman of the many inhuman wars waged by imperialism, nor for exposing US imperialism's barbaric genocide.

Our consistent opposition to the Vietnam war is motivated by its decisive role in the world anti-imperialist struggle. In the present world context, we regard the Vietnamese people as the vanguard of the anti-imperialist fight. We have always stated openly that their fight makes the greatest external contribution to revolutionary struggle in Australia, the United States and other countries whose rulers are waging this criminal aggression.

Internationalism means first of all to oppose one's "own" imperialism—or so Lenin taught. Therefore, we give first priority to opposing Australian monopoly capitalism, satellite of the United States in its Vietnam aggression, colonialist ruler of New Guinea, racist oppressor of the Aboriginal people.

If this be "regionalism," we accept the label. In our view, it is genuine interna-

tionalism, our first responsibility and the main contribution we can make to the world anti-imperialist struggle. Nor is this merely a lofty contribution to the peoples attacked and oppressed by imperialism; it is an indispensable part of the struggle for the Australian socialist revolution.

The CPA does not confine itself to these issues, though they are our first priority. Our 21st Congress met just after the so-called "Six-Day War"; it strongly condemned the military aggression by Israel and supported the Arab peoples. The 22nd Congress also adopted—unanimously—a statement calling for return of all occupied territory, justice for the Palestine Arabs expelled by Israel, for recognition of Israel's right to national existence with equality of Jews and Arabs.

Singling out three "leaders of the CPA" with Jewish names, the latest New Times article accuses the CPA of "an ambiguous stand with regard to the events in the Middle East, evading condemnation of the Israeli aggression . . ." At least it retreats a bit from the Rude Pravo article which flatly accused: "they were not sparing of plaudits for Israel's aggression . . ." But both are equally false, as the record clearly shows.

Internationalism requires support for all anti-imperialist struggles, without exception. This is the CPA position, applying equally to all. We support every action of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries against US imperialism; we oppose the US hostility and efforts at containment of all socialist countries, including the People's Republic of China. We proposed an amendment to Section III of the Moscow Meeting's document stating support of the People's Republic of China, which was accepted in part; we are for unity of all anti-imperialists.

We also see internationalism as the co-ordination and mutual support of the struggles of all communist parties, for anti-imperialist struggles and world revolution.

This cannot mean unconditional support of every action of every socialist country, or Communist party, whether this be the USSR, the PRC or any other (including the CPA). This becomes important when serious differences in policy and revolutionary strategy arise between socialist countries and communist parties. In such cases, each policy and action must be studied for its effect upon the world revolutionary struggle, and an independent judgment made and tested in comradely debate. We took this stand on the Sino-Soviet border dispute and military clashes, for example.

We believe that this method of independently judging issues is the major reason why the CPA has been charged with "nationalism," "revisionism" and other alleged sins, by both the Communist Party of China and the CPSU.

New Times equates criticisms of policies and discussion of problems in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries with betrayal of internationalism. The magic words "anti-Soviet" are used to evade discussion of real problems of socialist development, which are moreover problems which should concern every revolutionary.

Lenin had a different idea. At a time when the Soviet Union was immeasurably

weaker and imperialism stronger, when there was a real danger of actual destruction of the USSR, Lenin was merciless in his criticism of problems of the economy, the socialist state and democracy, of the party and bureaucracy. It was only after Stalin assumed leadership and grasped autocratic power that criticism was muted and finally suppressed.

We are criticised for trying to define the problems of socialist society in the term "socialist-based." But Lenin once described the Soviet state in much harsher terms: "What we actually have is a workers' state, with this peculiarity, firstly, that it is not the working class but the peasant population that predominates . . . Secondly, that it is a workers' state with bureaucratic distortions" (The Party Crisis).

He was defining a problem, so it could be understood and consciously resolved.

Such a method is necessary today, though the problems are different. However, the general approach of the CPSU leadership remains more stalinist than leninist, so issues are not frankly and publicly discussed.

When comrade Brezhnev delivered the keynote speech on the 50th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, he correctly outlined the great achievements of the Soviet people, but experience of stalinism was not analysed, though he was leader of the government and party for 29 years. It still remains for analysis; this is vital for the USSR and for the cause of world socialism. It can best be done by the CPSU; until this is tackled there, communists everywhere will have to make their own analysis.

You object to ours; we repeat publicly the offer we have twice made privately to the CPSU. We are prepared to publish any CPSU criticism of our views on problems of socialist development, in the USSR or anywhere else. We would be glad to have our views proved incorrect; but this cannot be done by sweeping assertions, generalisations or accusations of "anti-Sovietism."

In our "Statement of Aims," we said: "In some countries these problems and their various manifestations are leading to the build-up of social pressures and tensions which will eventually lead to crises and upheavals while present policies remain."

One such crisis has happened recently, in Poland. We expressed such views precisely because we are communists, concerned with the great socialist cause and sincere friends of the peoples of socialist countries. We are convinced of the iniquities and crimes of imperialism, certain that only socialist revolution can liberate mankind. We recognise the great potentialities of socialist liberation, which have not yet been fully released, and believe that only a great advance of socialist democracy can release them.

The Czechoslovakian issue, raised by New Times, remains unsolved. You speak of "political leaders at first disoriented by the events in Czechoslovakia who have been able to see the situation in proper perspective . . .". Since you mention no names, we can only conjecture who these may be. It is true we do not see it this way.

You speak of the "Right-opportunist

'Dubcek line'," and the present Czechoslovakian Party's "defence of socialist gains." In Dubcek's period, the factories were being placed under management of the Workers' Councils. Was this "Right-opportunist"?

After the 1968 intervention, these Councils were dissolved from on top. Is this "defending socialist gains"? Is it defending socialist gains to remove nearly half the Central Committee, expel many members of parliament and replace them without elections, remove 400,000 members from the party, replace elected leaders of the trade unions by appointment—all this without a Party Congress promised for last year and still not even announced?

The tragedy is that even those who defend it know well that the real problems remain just below the surface. They know full well that from January to August 1968, popular support for the Communist Party was at its highest point, that it is very different today.

* * *

Our reply has not traversed every minor issue you raised, including attacks upon individuals. These are scarcely worthy of serious attention, except for the effort to scare people susceptible to bogey-words like "trotskyite." Do you mean to evoke by this word reactions like the following:

"In 1937, new facts came to light regarding the fiendish crimes of the Bukharin-Trotsky gang. The trial of Pyatakov, Radek and others, the trial of Tukhachevsky, Yakir . . . Bukharin, Rykov, Krestinsky and others . . . showed that these dregs of humanity . . . had been in conspiracy against Lenin, the Party and the Soviet Union ever since the early days of the October Socialist Revolution . . . The Soviet court sentenced the Trotsky-Bukharin fiends to be shot. The People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs carried out the sentence. The Soviet people approved the annihilation of the Bukharin-Trotsky gang and passed on to next business." (Short History of CPSU, pp. 427-28).

The bogey-word "trotskyite" was then used to annihilate revolutionaries subsequently to be posthumously "rehabilitated" as communists.

We cannot accept this method of political argument even when it is only limited to character assassination. Every revolutionary is judged by his actions, every theory and policy is open for debate. A member of the CPA is one who accepts its program, abides by its rules, and is a revolutionary activist.

The CPSU message to the CPA for its 50th anniversary contains some good advice, as you quote. Australian communists, through their activity in workers struggles against imperialism, upholding genuinely Leninist principles of party life, deciding their own policy democratically, will "overcome the difficulties . . . and will follow the revolutionary traditions of their party."

That is the path already decided at the CPA 22nd Congress. □