

Intercontinental Press

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Rout in Laos

Biggest U.S. Defeat Since Tet



LANUSSE: Argentine general stages coup in political crisis following workers' upsurge in Cordoba. See page 297.

Behind the Civil War in Pakistan

U.S.A.:

Forecast Huge Antiwar Marches

May Be Noisy

The British Home Office is, as usual, unflappable.

Britain, they believe, will never see a mistake like the recent one in Colorado Springs when a "national emergency" warning of a nuclear attack was sent out, causing panic and confusion throughout North America.

However, it is not at all because they have devised a system that is fail-safe. They merely assume that a nuclear attack will be preceded by international tension.

The British warning system consists of alternative plans:

1. A carrier receiver is installed in 20,000 police and fire stations and hospitals all over Britain. This is linked by a Post-Office line to warning centers. These in turn are plugged into the ballistic missile early warning station at Fylingdales.

The mechanism need not be switched on permanently.

A *Times* reporter found that the one closest to his office—on a shelf in a nearby police station—was switched off.

When it was turned on, it bleeped in a way said by the Home Office to indicate "the system is working."

Had it been on, and had an imminent nuclear attack been detected, the device would have given a shrill warble. Upon hearing this, any policeman in the vicinity would immediately go into action; i.e., operate a siren.

2. The alternative plan is a military central center believed to be at Hemel Hempstead under officials of the Home Office.

If they are absent when a warning comes in, soldiers on the spot are authorized to send out an alert to some 250 police stations on the outskirts of the major cities.

These stations, in turn, operate thousands and thousands—of sirens. □

Our New Address

It's easy to remember: *Intercontinental Press*, P.O. Box 116, Village Post Office Station, New York, N.Y. 10014.

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Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 116, Village Post Office Station, New York, N.Y. 10014.

EDITOR: Joseph Hansen.

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

MANAGING EDITOR: Les Evans.

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

BUSINESS MANAGER: Reba Hansen.

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

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

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In Laos—Biggest U.S. Defeat Since Tet Offensive

By Allen Myers

As the last Saigon units completed their flight from Laos March 23 and 24, the defeat suffered by the U.S. and its colonial army was clearly greater than any since the Tet offensive of 1968.

The large armored force that spearheaded the invasion lost more than half its vehicles, according to a report by *Los Angeles Times* correspondent Jack Foisie printed in the March 24 *Washington Post*:

"More than 150 tanks and some 50 other vehicles crossed the border when operation Lam Son 719 began. The returning column numbered 85 tanks and vehicles."

In the *New York Times* of the same date, Craig R. Whitney described the retreat of the armored units:

"The South Vietnamese armored column that came out yesterday was blocked from using part of the road in Laos and had to detour and ford the Tchepone River. It had been trying to leave Laos for four days.

"As it rolled east inside South Vietnam, with the tops of the armored personnel carriers crowded with paratroops who could not squeeze inside, the column came under mortar and rocket attack.

"One of the vehicles hit a mine and spun around as its track was blown off. The crew and the men riding on top abandoned it, leaving their packs and rifles behind."

Whitney also indicated that the losses suffered by the tank units had not been due to overeagerness to fight Nixon's war:

"The armored equipment did not show signs of intensive use while inside Laos, reports from the scene said. United States military sources have observed privately that the South Vietnamese made little effort to make Route 9 passable in Laos, even for tracked vehicles . . ."

The counterattack by the liberation forces even penetrated the big U.S. base at Khesanh. On March 23 a demolition squad of forty walked unopposed past guards from Saigon army units and into the base, where

they fought U.S. troops for four hours, destroyed or damaged five helicopters, and blew up 2,000 rounds of air-to-ground rockets. The outpost was being shelled daily by artillery, and by the end of the week there were strong indications that the U.S. command was preparing to abandon Khesanh.

On March 24 the Laos invasion was officially declared ended. Attempts to proclaim it a success were hollow indeed. Even according to the statistics put out by the puppet government in Saigon, the invasion force had been decimated. Alvin Shuster reported from Saigon in the March 26 *New York Times*:

"A Saigon spokesman said today [March 26] that South Vietnam casualties in the operation were 1,146 killed, 4,236 wounded and 246 missing in action. This would represent about 25 per cent of the total South Vietnamese force. Some observers here say the official figures are on the low side. Some reports suggest that the South Vietnamese may have suffered casualties of 40 per cent or more."

The U.S. command admitted the loss of 89 helicopters in the invasion, apparently not including those shot down over South Vietnamese territory. The figure also omitted the much larger number damaged or shot down, from which something could be "salvaged." On March 24, an additional five helicopters were reported destroyed by ground fire inside South Vietnam.

An inside picture of the rout of Nixon's colonial army was provided by Gloria Emerson in the March 28 *New York Times*. Emerson talked to survivors of the invasion at Khesanh and reached the conclusion:

"The morale of many soldiers in South Vietnam's finest military units, who fought the North Vietnamese in Laos, is shattered."

The invasion, she added, ". . . was a test, and now most South Vietnamese veterans frankly admit that their

forces failed. They had no chance, these men say."

Emerson quoted a number of the soldiers. An artillery sergeant told her:

"The best units were sent in and the best units got the worst beating in combat. Now you see the North Vietnamese chasing us out. We lost 59 artillery pieces—105-mm. and 155-mm. howitzers—or the equivalent of three artillery battalions."

Said a marine whose unit was driven from Hill 547 on March 22:

"The last attack came at about 8 P.M. They shelled us first and then came the tanks moving up into our positions. The whole brigade ran down the hill like ants. We jumped on each other to get out of that place. No man had time to look for his commanding officer. It was quick, quick, quick or we would die. . . ."

A sergeant who had left Laos on a helicopter skid, and who was still absent without leave from his unit, told the reporter that his 400-man battalion suffered 75 percent casualties during the invasion. And a corporal added the following comment on the claims of victory:

"The papers and the radio in Saigon kept on saying there was a Laos victory, I have learned now, but what a joke. We ran out like wounded dogs."

The defeat made Nixon's position increasingly untenable. Caught between the growing demand at home for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops and the necessity, from the imperialist standpoint, to shore up his battered and demoralized colonial army, Nixon responded with another escalation of the air war.

On March 21 and 22, bombers struck at wide areas of North Vietnam in the largest raids since last November. The bombing was likewise stepped up in the Laotian panhandle. As many as 330 fighter-bomber sorties and thirteen B-52 raids were reported in a single day.

But even such murderous attacks could not erase the Laos defeat or resolve Nixon's dilemma. In a March

24 editorial, the *New York Times*, summarizing the results of the invasion, wrung its hands over Nixon's course:

"... unfortunately, time is not on

our side but on that of the Communists. As Americans withdraw, the still uncertain Saigon forces will be left increasingly on their own to face a foe that remains in firm control of vital

supply routes. . . . the inconclusive [sic] results of this ill-conceived operation have ominous implications for Mr. Nixon's Vietnamization program."

Looks Like April 24 Will Be a Great Day

NPAC Forecasts Huge Antiwar Marches in U.S.

One month before the scheduled April 24 mass demonstrations in Washington and San Francisco, the staff of the National Peace Action Coalition (NPAC) reported that all signs indicate the antiwar actions may be the largest in U. S. history.

"NPAC staff members," said a March 24 press release, "expect that the peaceful, legal Marches will be at least as large as the demonstration of November 15, 1969."

The 1969 action referred to brought more than 1,000,000 protesters into the streets—800,000 in Washington and 250,000 in San Francisco.

On March 26, an NPAC steering committee meeting in Washington heard reports that justified the optimistic predictions for April 24. More than fifty local and regional coalitions across the country have already endorsed the demonstrations and are organizing transportation.

Staff members said that hundreds of campuses, many of which had not participated in past demonstrations in an organized manner, had reserved buses.

In New York City, which sent fewer than 250 buses to the November 15, 1969, demonstration, 400 buses have been booked for April 24, in addition to five trains. One of the trains, capable of carrying 1,200 passengers, has been reserved by District 65 of the Distributive Workers. The New York hospital workers union has also indicated that it will require a train for its members.

The growing labor support for the April 24 demonstrations (see *Intercontinental Press*, March 22, page 251) has been accompanied by a new upsurge of antiwar activity on university campuses and in high schools. At its March 20 steering committee meeting in Philadelphia, the Student Mobilization Committee (SMC), already the country's largest youth antiwar

group with more than 400 chapters, decided on a campaign to add 15,000 new members to the organization.

The SMC also voted to carry out a day of nationwide high school leafletting to build the April 24 actions.

The demonstrations have clearly been given an additional boost by the widespread disillusionment with the Laos invasion. In his column in the March 23 *Washington Post*, Joseph Kraft noted a new phenomenon in the public opinion polls.

In the past, he wrote, any action taken by Nixon or his predecessor in regard to the war—whether an escalation or an ostensible de-escalation—always produced a temporary rise in the president's popularity. But now the situation has changed:

"... reversing the drop in esteem [for Nixon] that set in with the Laos operations is going to be very hard.

"For Laos marks a sea change in public opinion on the war. It is no longer true that every Presidential move automatically entails a rise in public approval."

The reason for the change described by Kraft is simple. A larger and larger percentage of the American peo-

ple no longer believe the promises that *this* escalation, unlike all the others that preceded it, is going to end the war. They have stopped believing Nixon's words. They want action—which means withdrawal of U. S. troops from Indochina.

So strong is this sentiment that liberal members of Congress are climbing aboard the April 24 bandwagon in the hope that they can direct the movement into safe channels while riding it for their own political advantage. The April 24 demonstrations have already been endorsed by four senators and fifteen members of the House of Representatives. Of the senators supporting April 24, Vance Hartke of Indiana is expected to campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination, and George McGovern of South Dakota has already announced his candidacy.

The attempt of these presidential hopefuls to identify themselves with the antiwar movement shows that they recognize that millions of Americans have picked up the demand to bring the troops home. These millions provide an objective basis for truly gigantic demonstrations April 24. □

'I Want to Run for It'

Troop B Says 'No' to the War

"I suppose if I went by the book," said Brigadier General John G. Hill Jr., "we could take them out and shoot them for refusing an order in the face of the enemy, but they're back in the field, doing their duty. I don't think it should be blown out of proportion."

The general was kidding himself if he really thought it would be pos-

sible to shoot the members of two platoons of the Americal Division who on March 21 refused orders to advance along Route 9 toward the Laotian border. But he was right about not blowing the incident "out of proportion," for the GIs' resistance was clearly only a symptom of widespread and growing disaffection

throughout the U. S. military.

The March 21 refusal involved fifty-three men of Troop B, First Squadron, First Cavalry of the Americal Division. The two platoons had made three unsuccessful attempts to dislodge an ambush force along Route 9. When they were ordered to move out a fourth time to recover an armored personnel carrier and a helicopter damaged during the earlier fighting, the soldiers said, "No." An Associated Press dispatch in the March 23 *New York Times* reported:

"General Hill was informed and sent the squadron commander, Lieut. Col. Gene L. Breeding, to talk to them. The colonel spoke with the men of the two platoons, but 53 of them — not including their officers or platoon sergeants — still refused to go forward.

"Colonel Breeding decided not to take further action at that time. . . .

"Troop B later was pulled back and attached to a unit of the Fifth Division. The rest of Colonel Breeding's squadron from the Americal Division was pulled back for refitting to give the colonel a chance to strengthen his control over the unit."

The explanation of the incident offered by one of the soldiers involved was instructive. It showed that American GIs take for granted the right to decide whether their orders are reasonable. Specialist 4 Randy Thompson told the AP reporter the men had disobeyed the order because "the reason given wasn't a very good one."

"It was after a piece of machinery that could have been replaced," he added. "I didn't see any sense in risking any more lives."

That sentiment among the GIs has been reinforced by the rout of Nixon's colonial army in Laos and by the increasing pressure of the liberation forces on the U. S. base at Khesanh. The American command is not above sacrificing GIs in order to present the press with something that looks like a victory, and the GIs know it. In the March 23 *New York Times*, Alvin Shuster provided an example:

"Some 350 American soldiers with tanks and armored personnel carriers are trying to clear a part of Route 9 that begins near the border point of Langvei. The Americans have suffered some casualties in recent days.

"We run down the road, through an ambush, turn around and run back through the ambush," said an American soldier on an armored per-

sonnel carrier. "That's what they call opening the road."

Gloria Emerson talked with troops of the 101st Airborne Division at Khesanh and described their views in the March 26 *New York Times*.

"Oh, they could get us out of here, but they won't," said one private, a member of the platoon that bore the brunt of a March 23 attack during which a National Liberation Front demolition squad had fought for four hours inside the American lines.

"There were 33 men in our platoon," said the platoon sergeant, Terry Stallard of Waco, Tex. "Now we have 18 left."

"Seven of the men, their eyes bloodshot from lack of sleep and their faces gray from fatigue, sat near one of the bunkers.

"We are too damned scared to sleep," said the platoon medic. . . ."

Soviet Union

Appeal from a Psychiatric Prison

Two Soviet opposition figures confined in a mental hospital have charged that the government is using drugs and the threat of electrical shock to force political dissenters to change their views.

Vladimir Borisov and Viktor Fainberg, in a document dated March 13, said that although Soviet law limits forced psychiatric confinement to two years, political prisoners are held "until they repudiate their beliefs." Some prisoners have been held for up to fifteen years.

A report by Theodore Shabad in the *New York Times* of March 19 quotes the document as follows: "Medicine, one of the most humane of the professions, is thus being turned into a servile handmaiden of the regime's correction agencies in their hangman functions.

"With the help of medicine, an attempt is thus being made to make people literally lose their mind by chemical and physical means if they refuse to adapt their mind to the standards set by the regime or refuse to spend their lives wearing the mask of an all-satisfied smiling slave."

Fainberg was arrested in August 1968 in a demonstration in Moscow's

Sergeant Stallard told Emerson, "We don't want to be relieved — we want to get the hell out of here."

Another GI improved on that comment:

"I don't just want to get out of here — I want to run for it."

In August 1969 the first publicly reported combat refusal by U. S. troops occurred when the men of Company A refused to advance in the Songchang valley. Since then, avoidance of combat has become commonplace to the point that bourgeois publications like *Newsweek* and the *New York Times* freely acknowledge it. [See the article "Deepening Radicalization Among U. S. Troops" in the January 25 *Intercontinental Press*, page 58.]

The action of Troop B is likely to be repeated by other units. General Hill has good reason to proceed cautiously. □

Red Square protesting the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Borisov was arrested in September 1969 and charged with distributing anti-Soviet literature at the factory where he worked.

Andrei D. Sakharov, a leading Soviet physicist and founder of the Committee for Human Rights, has sent a telegram to Minister of the Interior Nikolai A. Shchelokov, calling on him to "urgently intervene to save the health and dignity of these people."

"Please help to liquidate this violation of human rights and medical ethics in the work of psychiatric establishments and to correct this procedure," Sakharov said. □

Czechoslovak Books Banned

The Prague Labor Union Council has ordered factory libraries to remove from their shelves books by Alexander Dubcek and other prominent figures of the 1968 democratization movement. The ban applies even to books not concerned with political subjects, such as *On the Theme of Franz Kafka* by Eduard Goldstuecker, former chairman of the writers' union, who has been the object of anti-Semitic attacks since Soviet troops began the "normalization" of the country in August 1968.

East Bengali Masses Fight for Independence

Pakistan exploded into civil war during the night of March 25-26 as federal troops attempted to reimpose President Yahya Khan's control over the eastern section of the country. The fighting began with deliberate attacks on civilian areas considered to be strongholds of independence sentiment.

Negotiations between Yahya and Sheik Mujibur Rahman, leader of the Awami League, which favors autonomy for East Pakistan, broke down on March 25. Yahya flew back to Karachi that afternoon.

About 11 o'clock that night, Sydney H. Schanberg reported in the March 28 *New York Times*, intermittent firing was heard in the provincial capital of Dacca as troops began to attack the university and other areas of the city.

Schanberg, like other foreign reporters in the city, was confined in the International Hotel until the army expelled him from the country on the night of March 26. He wrote:

"From the hotel, which is in North Dacca, huge fires could be seen in various parts of the city, including the university area and the barracks of the East Pakistan Rifles, a paramilitary force made up of Bengalis, the predominant people of East Pakistan. . . .

"On the ride to the airport in a guarded convoy of military trucks, the newsmen saw troops setting fire to the thatched-roof houses of poor Bengalis who live along the road and who are some of the staunchest supporters of the self-rule movement."

Schanberg described West Pakistani troops firing indiscriminately into buildings with machine guns and rockets. Yahya's troops had the advantage of other equipment as well:

"Helicopters wheeled overhead yesterday morning [March 26], apparently on reconnaissance. Four helicopters given to Pakistan by Saudi Arabia for relief work after last November's cyclone and tidal wave in East Pakistan were reported being used for the military operation in the province."

Early on March 26, troops occupied the Dacca radio station, which had previously been under the control of

the Awami League. A few hours later, a clandestine radio, apparently located in the northern part of the province, broadcast a declaration of Bengali independence.

The same station later in the day announced that Bengali forces were fighting back against the army and had surrounded the West's troops in the cities of Sylhet, Jessore, Barisal, Khulna, Chittagong, and Comilla. The broadcast continued:

"Sheik Mujibur Rahman is the only leader of the people of independent Bangla Desh [Bengali Homeland] and his commands should be obeyed by all sections of people to save the country from the ruthless dictatorship of West Pakistanis."

A radio report in West Pakistan later claimed that the Awami League leader had been arrested at 1:30 a.m. March 26, but at 5 p.m. the Bengali radio broadcast a statement by the sheik calling on the people to continue the fight.

Yahya's attempt to reimpose his control thus finally pushed Mujibur Rahman into a position where he had to declare independence or be swept aside by the nationalist upsurge of the Bengali masses.

It was clear that nothing short of a bloodbath would be able to put West Pakistan in control of Bangla Desh. Press reports estimated that as many as 10,000 persons, mostly unarmed civilians, may have been killed in the first days of fighting.

The March 29 *New York Times* gave the following account of continuing battles:

"Reports from India said that civilians in East Pakistan were fighting with knives, clubs and scimitars, while the East Pakistan Rifles and police forces were using their limited arms, such as rifles and pistols.

"According to one report, the East Pakistani force was using guerrilla tactics to fight the troops. The civilian population was said to have been denying food and other supplies to the troops, as well as obstructing their advance by blowing up bridges and railroads.

"The report said West Pakistani troops were continuing their attacks

with Soviet Tiger tanks, United States Saber jets and Chinese small arms. Air force helicopters were said to be firing on the populous towns of Comilla and Chittagong."

Estimates of the number of West Pakistani troops involved ranged from 30,000 to as high as 70,000.

The clandestine Bengali radio was said to have announced the formation of a provisional government headed by Major Jia Khan, who was called commander in chief of the Bengali forces. The radio said that he would function under the direction of Mujibur Rahman.

The radio also claimed that Yahya's martial-law administrator for the East and four of his officers had been killed. This was denied by the government radio in West Pakistan.

Most accounts agreed that government forces were in control of Dacca, but they appeared to be hampered by strikes and passive resistance. Schanberg reported in the March 29 *Times*:

"On Friday morning [March 26], 15 rigid new regulations were issued, including one aimed at the noncooperation movement. All Government employees were ordered to report to work by 10 A.M. Saturday or face trial in a military court.

"At 12 noon Saturday, radio Pakistan announced that all department heads had to submit the names of absentees to martial-law headquarters. There seemed no reason for this order unless large numbers of Bengalis were still staying away from their Government jobs."

The nationalist radio meanwhile announced that a "liberation army" was marching on Dacca to free it from army control. The radio also said that Bengali forces had captured military barracks in the cities of Khulna, Comilla, and Jessore.

An Indian report that the northern city of Rangpur had been captured by Bengalis after bitter fighting was denied by the government radio, as were nearly all Bengali claims of successes.

Dacca radio, under control of the army, said that several thousand troops had been airlifted into Khulna

and Chittagong to "quell disturbances."

In the short run, it appears unlikely that the Bengalis will be able to defeat the superior firepower of the West Pakistani troops, at least so long as Yahya is able to keep them supplied and to pour in reinforcements. Because he is denied the opportunity to fly over Indian territory, Yahya is sending troops by way of Ceylon. By granting landing and refueling rights to the West Pakistanis, the "United Front" government in Colombo has become an accomplice in the military offensive against Bangla Desh.

But in the longer run, Yahya can

hardly expect to establish more than isolated garrisons in the major cities unless he is able to win the cooperation of some section of the Bengali population.

While the East Pakistani bourgeoisie might be willing to extend such cooperation in order to restore "normal" conditions, such a betrayal would clearly spur the masses into intensifying their struggle and turning to socialism to win national freedom.

Perhaps an even more important factor in the outcome of the struggle will be the response of other oppressed nationalities in the subcontinent. A continuing and determined fight by

the people of Bangla Desh is likely to bring forth a nationalist upsurge among Bengalis in India and destroy the artificial division imposed in 1947 by British imperialism and reactionary religious interests.

Such a process could spark even bigger struggles in India, a fact that has been noted with concern by American imperialism. As the *New York Times* put it in a worried editorial March 28:

"Separatism on the Indian subcontinent threatens to touch off a chain reaction that would render the entire region unstable and insecure in all of its parts." □

Behind the Civil War in Pakistan

The First Spark of the Indian Revolution?

By Javed Hussein

The massive and spectacular explosion in East Pakistan was not completely unexpected. It was obvious that any elected representatives of East Bengal would try to modify the economic and political subjugation of the country by West Pakistani capital and its protectors. It was precisely this oppression that gave the national question in East Bengal a phenomenal importance, for Pakistan has, since its creation in 1947, been a state but never a nation. The naïve belief that the Muslim religion would transcend all other barriers and bridge the political, cultural, and geographical gap dividing both parts of the country has been shown at some cost to be completely absurd.

The constitutional struggle is only a symptom of the general underlying unrest in East Bengal: it merely emphasizes to the Bengali masses the fact that the vested interests in the West (and this includes Bhutto¹) will never give up their power in the East willingly.

Despite the fact that the Awami League cynically called the masses out onto the streets without arming them and thus allowed them to be slaughtered by the armed forces of

the bourgeois state,² the masses have shown as always an amazing degree of militancy. Over 1,000,000 people in Dacca have attended the meetings of the Awami League leader, Sheik Mujibur Rahman, and have demanded in no uncertain terms the independence of their country—a Bengali nation, free from the parasites of the West.

Thus do all the contradictions of the Awami League emerge publicly for the entire nation to behold. The limitations of Mujibur Rahman and his petty-bourgeois leadership are plain and obvious. The truth of the matter is that Rahman would like nothing better than a compromise solution based on acceptance of his six points, which are the charter of the Bengali upper petty bourgeoisie. These are:

1. A federal system of government, parliamentary in nature and based on adult franchise.

2. The federal government's control to be limited to defence and foreign affairs. All other subjects to be dealt with by the federating states.

3. (a) Two separate but freely con-

vertible currencies for the two parts of the country; or (b) one currency for the whole country. In the latter case, effective constitutional measures must be taken to prevent the flight of capital from East to West Pakistan.

4. Power of taxation and revenue collection to be vested in the federating units and not at the centre.

5. Separate accounts for foreign exchange earnings of the two parts of the country under control of the respective governments.

6. The setting up of a militia or paramilitary force for East Pakistan.

The astounding election results, which gave Mujibur Rahman's party, the Awami League, an overall majority throughout the country, were quite correctly interpreted by him as a mandate to implement the six points and establish a federation in Pakistan. This created a furor in the West Pakistani ruling class and the latter used Zulfikar Bhutto as its spokesman: it was his threat to boycott the National Assembly (because he was in a minority) that was used as a pretext by the army to postpone the meeting of the assembly. This in turn sparked the recent uprising.

The six points are essentially an expression of the feelings of the deprived Bengali bourgeoisie, which wants a share of the capitalist cake. It is obvious that a federation of the

1. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, head of the Pakistan People's party (PPP), the largest political organization in West Pakistan. — IP

2. The deaths so far are well over 3,000; the Pakistan government only admits 200, but then its figures of people killed during the great cyclone disaster were not quite accurate either. To these bastards, a few more Bengalis dead or alive doesn't really matter all that much! — J. H.

sort demanded by Mujibur Rahman would seriously curtail the economic and political power of big business in West Pakistan and of the army. The army generals miscalculated if they thought that a show of force could ease the situation. It has done precisely the opposite and in East Bengal today the question of military rule or people's power is posed very clearly.

A continuous successful general strike has forced the Awami League to accept part of its logic, and a strange dual power situation exists today in East Pakistan: it is a situation of bourgeois dual power! The Awami League has been forced to set up committees to take over the administration of key areas in cities and only the army cantonments are at the moment independent of its control.

But the League's committees are merely preserving the existing order in their own way and they clearly have the support of the Bengali elements in the local bureaucracy. The tough Punjabi general from West Pakistan sent to restore order as governor of East Pakistan was confronted with a Bengali chief justice of the High Court, who refused under directions from the Awami League to swear him in!

However, for the Awami League the situation is fraught with dangers. The masses will not take too kindly to any betrayal and the Awami League seems to be well aware of this fact. But on the other hand, total independence is not what the leadership of the Awami League seeks at the present moment for reasons that are very obvious.

A declaration of independence would in all probability lead to a period of limited armed struggle against the occupying army, and Sheik Mujibur Rahman is too old a bourgeois politician to have any illusion regarding his own survival once that process starts.

In addition, the Bengali state apparatus is virtually nonexistent: a crumbling police force, a half-baked army which will disintegrate in no time given a serious struggle, a weak bureaucracy, and most important of all, no established indigenous bourgeoisie to wage a desperate struggle to preserve its property.

An independent East Bengal would therefore be very quickly faced—and much sooner than was the case in Cuba—with the logic of the Perma-

nent Revolution. Despite the fact that there is no strong revolutionary organization, it is clear that the power of the Awami League would be eroded very soon. Mujibur Rahman therefore confronts an awkward choice: the bullets of the Pakistan army or the wrath of the people.

Of course, the real tragedy was the total inability of the East Bengali left to understand the importance of the national question until it was too late. After all, the economic exploitation of East Pakistan began immediately after the establishment of Pakistan in 1947, and by 1956 economists had revealed that 300,000,000 rupees [4.76 rupees equal US\$1] were being extracted annually from the East by West Pakistani investments.

Both politically and economically, East Bengal was treated like a colony; its raw material (jute), which brought in badly needed foreign exchange, was used to develop Karachi and the Punjab in West Pakistan. Development plans were openly biased against East Pakistan and actively prevented its development. Thus the uneven economic development led to an uneven development of consciousness.

The Bengali masses were politically much more advanced than their counterparts in the West, and their discontent overflowed into the streets fairly regularly. A United Front victory in an election in 1954 was taken away from the people by the imposition of direct rule from the centre by the colonizing power. The dictatorship of Ayub further repressed the Bengali people.

The latest attempt by President Yahya was bound to cause an upheaval. One of the reasons for the failure of the left was their refusal to develop their own political practice based on a theoretical survey of the politico-economic conditions of East Bengal.

Instead, a parrot-like repetition of Mao's thoughts and a fetishistic use of the *Red Book* were substituted for real political work. Today the left learns this lesson the hard way.

Whether or not a compromise is reached and the National Assembly meets on March 25 as the army is now proposing, the question, as is plain, will be far from solved. It is therefore vital that the left prepare to organize immediately.

The Awami League has proved that it is not capable of giving any meaningful direction to the masses. Instead of leading the people to face army

bullets, it should have called for an occupation of the countryside, a seizure of the police stations, the expropriation of all the police-station arsenals, and the arming of a people's militia. This would have drawn the army into the countryside where they would have enjoyed no advantage at all as compared to the streets of the main cities and could have been effectively isolated by armed guerrilla actions. That will be the next step if East Bengal is to move forward.

The uprising in East Bengal and a successful declaration of independence could have extremely positive results on the situation in West Bengal. A united national consciousness and a united struggle could make Bengal the first liberated area of the Indian subcontinent and could usher in the dawn of the Indian revolution. This is the spectre haunting American imperialism in the seventies.

Self-determination for East Bengal!

For a united socialist Bengali republic!

For a red subcontinent, a red Asia!

Sorry About That

The U. S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has admitted that it "drastically understated" the findings of its inspectors on the concentration of sodium nitrite in samples of smoked salmon.

Commissioner Charles C. Edwards, in his testimony before a hearing held by the House Government Operations subcommittee, stated that the FDA had found only one sample with a nitrite content over 200 parts per million.

But subcommittee chairman L. H. Fountain, according to the *New York Times* of March 18, discovered an FDA internal memorandum "showing that out of 120 pieces of salmon checked, 25 had from 244 to 3,046 parts per million of nitrite, or up to 15 times the permissible level."

Fountain asked Edwards whether a concentration of 2,844 parts per million (the concentration found in one of the samples) could be fatal. Edwards replied, "Conceivably."

(One FDA report showed that a three-year-old boy had died after eating a raw frankfurter with a nitrite content of between 600 and 1,000 parts per million.)

FDA counsel William W. Goodrich explained that although the FDA was aware of the findings, they were eliminated "in the interests of shortening the statement."

Money Had Nothing to Do with It

An Australian bank has closed a branch in East Malvern, Victoria, because it has been robbed five times since 1967. The bank explained that it was concerned for the safety of its customers.

Political Volcano' Erupts Again in Cordoba

By Gerry Foley

Under the headline "A Political Volcano—Tremors in Buenos Aires, Flames in Córdoba," the Buenos Aires weekly *Panorama* wrote in its March 16-22 issue: "The government of Roberto Marcelo Levingston is passing through decisive days. Acute symptoms of the crisis racking Argentina appeared last week both in Buenos Aires and the interior. These developments revealed that the guides of the revolutionary process [the military regime calls itself revolutionary] have no visible allies in the population. There could be no more dramatic situation than this for a military regime fearful of a political vacuum."

Repression of protests during a one-day general strike in Córdoba March 12 touched off a new explosion in this industrial city, which in May 1969 was the scene of a massive workers uprising. The first Córdoba rebellion was the high point of popular unrest that led ultimately to the removal on June 9, 1970, of General Juan Onganía, who had been designated president by the military.

The second social explosion in this city induced the military to remove Onganía's successor, General Levingston, after only nine months in office.

As the new president, the military chiefs appointed General Alejandro Agustín Lanusse, the grey eminence of the previous regime and the leader of the coup that ousted Onganía. The third military dictator in the space of a year, Lanusse moved quickly to try to conciliate the restive Argentine masses.

On assuming governmental power March 23, the junta headed by Lanusse immediately ended the state of emergency in Córdoba proclaimed by the Levingston regime, under which hundreds of persons were arrested—including scores of union leaders—and threatened with trial by drumhead courts. The final decrees of the ousted government had authorized execution of "rioters."

In the name of the junta, Lanusse called "on all Argentines, without distinction, to participate actively in the

task of finding and consolidating solutions for the problems of the country through an ample and generous accord, rising above the antagonisms of the past."

Reporting from Buenos Aires in the March 24 issue of the *New York Times*, Juan de Onis, the paper's chief Latin American analyst, commented: "This statement was interpreted widely as an invitation to all political sectors, including the followers of the former dictator, Juan D. Perón, to enter into discussions on a political plan leading to elections."

On March 24 the junta abolished the 19 percent wage-increase ceiling set by Levingston.

The ousted regime's attempt to impose wage controls despite a galloping inflation (20% last year and 10% for the first two months of 1971) was apparently one of the primary causes of the Córdoba upsurge. But the political incompetence of the military government seems to have been a strong contributing factor.

"When the name of the new commissioner for Córdoba was learned on the afternoon of Monday March 1, political circles in the province refused to believe it," *Panorama* reported in its March 9-15 issue.

Levingston had appointed a long-time personal friend, José Camilo Uriburu, as his deputy to rule the rebellious province. Other than his friendship with the military dictator, Uriburu seemed to have no qualifications for the difficult post. "The choice of Uriburu to quiet Córdoba's plant-seizing auto workers and bank-robbing Montonero guerrillas was a shock even in bland and self-centered Buenos Aires," *Washington Post* correspondent Lewis H. Diuguid reported from Caracas March 23.

"The capital's papers—usually quick to find something nice to say about government appointees—confined their comment on Uriburu almost exclusively to the fact that he had fathered 14 children."

An interview in the March 9-15 is-

sue of *Panorama* highlighted the vacuousness, as well as the reactionary mentality of the veteran conservative, Catholic politician. In answer to a question on how he would explain the 1969 uprising in Córdoba, Uriburu said: "I would define it as an occurrence which at a certain time acquired an exaggerated importance. That is, as a domestic tragedy occurring in the bosom of a generally well-behaved family, where a series of factors disturbing the tranquility of this family nucleus assumed the drastic aspects of a scandal.

"Then the wife grabbed plates and started throwing them at her husband's head, and the husband broke down the doors of the house. And this home, which was a place of peace, became a 'camp of Agramante' [the chief of a turbulent Saracen host in Ludovico Ariosto's epic poem *Orlando Furioso*]."

"You have fourteen children, don't you?" *Panorama* asked. Uriburu retorted:

"What do my children have to do with it? I have to analyze this, because I think it was a development. To define it from the philosophical point of view, I have a great number of syntheses. Definition is a synthesis which should not include the word 'define.' For me, the Córdoba rebellion, if you want a definition, was a circumstance in which all the instinctive drives of the masses were released, which gave rise to a phenomenon not strictly related to the factors that provoked it."

The omens were against Uriburu. Even his name corresponded unluckily to that of a local insect pest. The population of Córdoba immediately began calling him "Carnival" to indicate that, like the holiday in question, he would last only three days. Others referred to him as "Nero," expecting that he would preside over a fire.

But most importantly, the appointment of this mediocre reactionary as proconsul for Córdoba coincided with the emergence of a militant new vanguard in the industrial center, and a

drastic deepening of the political crisis of the ruling class.

"Since the Córdoba rebellion — a pinnacle of opposition whose specter is invoked in every strike," *Panorama* wrote in its March 9-15 issue, "and following the attrition of the Peronist trade-union leadership and the elimination of many rank-and-file elements arrested in clashes with the police, a new worker-student structure is emerging. Along with the clear class action of the FIAT unions, this new opposition does not exclude the participation of openly organized shock groups in street demonstrations. . . ."

"It is impossible to conceive of active opposition work without the participation of the students.

"What is surprising, on the other hand, is the ever increasing opposition of young professionals, businessmen, and industrialists, who are demanding a revolution.

"Obviously they do not want the same kind of revolution. While the workers' groups are calling for a socialist order, the industrialists and petty bourgeoisie want a certain degree of state management of the economy, which would enable them to resist the pressure of foreign monopolies. . . ."

"The other channel [i.e., parliamentary politics], through which the middle class might have expressed its concerns, has been closed. Lacking a large rank-and-file following, the politicians have attached themselves to the marching columns of workers and students like a tail."

Moreover — increasingly isolated and unable to utilize the flexible instruments of political control — the military regime was showing serious cracks. The faction headed by General Lanusse appeared to be pressing for the restoration of bourgeois democracy and for a turn toward reformism.

Levingston hinted that elements in the military — led by Lanusse, *Panorama* indicated — were seeking a Peruvian or even Chilean type solution. On March 3, Levingston told his provincial governors: "You know that this second phase of the revolution is designed to open the way for solving our problems. But many adverse factors complicate this task. Some people are talking about a national revolution, adopting national clothing, when in reality, what they are aiming for is Marxist nationalism, which is making headway in other countries, in

other national situations, about which I proffer no judgment."

This split in the military seemed to reflect a difference of opinion in the ruling class over how to deal with the rising unrest. Lanusse has generally been identified as a proimperialist rightist. Nothing in his background or opinions would seem to predispose him to take a reformist course.

In a press conference May 7, 1970, in Rosario, one of the centers of widespread unrest at the time, Lanusse stressed that the repressive forces of the country were, in effect, engaged in a war against the people and that this war had to be conducted in an efficient manner:

"We are facing enemies who are not of the traditional kind, since they presently arise from the population of the country itself. Therefore all forces must be integrated in a common struggle. . . . I think we are at war."

However, Lanusse has appeared to be one of the most astute defenders of the bourgeoisie. The well-informed Paris daily *Le Monde* speculated, at the time of the June 1970 coup, that Lanusse unseated Onganía in order to eliminate the government-supported, rightist terrorist gangs which were complicating the work of the repressive forces and becoming a factor of political instability.

Levingston's faction of the armed forces, it seems clear, insisted on strict arbitrary rule and repression as the means for solving the difficulties of the ruling class. It was to apply such a policy that the ousted president sent his old friend, whose talents and temperament suited him to this role, to govern Córdoba.

"For José Camilo Uriburu, the commissioner who arrived in Córdoba bringing the 'word of the Lord,' last week was crucial," *Panorama* wrote in its March 16-22 issue.

"Giving the closing speech Sunday March 7 at the National Wheat Festival in Leones, Uriburu threw several sticks of dynamite into the fire. He spoke with a certain arrogance of 'containing avarice' [of the workers presumably], of 'inefficiency. . . ,' of 'the materialist plot' and 'the red flag.' That was not all. He prayed, one supposes to the cherubim, for a chance to chop off the head of the Marxist serpent tempting the citizens of Córdoba and upsetting the course

of the [military] revolution.

"Since no one could discern a flaming sword in Uriburu's hands, or even a rusty razor blade, serpents appeared everywhere [placarded on walls] — red ones and white ones, big ones and little ones. And at the same time restlessness grew among the chiefs and officers of the Third Army Corps — the severe guardians of order in the district — in the business community, in the political world, and in the moderate trade unions."

On March 9 the trade unions began preparations for a one-day general strike to protest the appointment of Uriburu, as well as to press demands for general wage increases and to support the struggle of civil-service workers in the province.

The temperature began rising very quickly. On March 10 the Unión Industrial [Manufacturers' Union] sent a telegram to Levingston appealing to the government to "protect private property" and warning that occupations of factories and stores could not be tolerated.

The Centro Comercial [Businessmen's Association] called on its members not to open their stores the day of the strike, warning: "The usurpation of public and private property planned by the trade-union leaders has brought Córdoba to the brink of chaos."

Levingston immediately decreed a 15 percent wage rise for civil-service workers in the province, at the same time issuing a harsh threat: "Regarding the attitude of certain sectors promoting subversive actions and violence, the national government reiterates its firm determination not to permit such situations. To this end, it will use the provincial and national security forces, and if necessary the armed forces will intervene."

"These threats seemed to have no more effect than the vision of the sword of the cherubim invoked by Uriburu. "As was to be expected," *Panorama* reported in its March 16-22 issue, "the threat from the central government did not dissuade the rebellious workers. Thus, at 10:00 in the morning of March 12, while the Córdoba police and federal forces stationed themselves along the central streets . . . more than 130 factories, shops, and big business establishments were occupied by the workers. An unusual development was that public administration employees also

blockaded themselves in their offices. Even the zoo was transformed into a fortress, 'under the protection of the serpents.'

Violence broke out around noon in the suburb of Ferreyra, twelve kilometers from the center of Córdoba, where the FIAT auto assembly complex is located. An eighteen-year-old worker, Adolfo Cepeda, was shot to death when the repressive forces stormed barricades erected by the protesters. Several other workers were wounded.

"The death of the young worker," *Panorama* of March 16-22 reported, angered the leaders of SITRAC and SITRAM [unions with a young, independent, left leadership]. Thus, at 3:30 Friday afternoon, as the workers of the second shift at the Grandes Motores Diesel and Concord factories, belonging to the FIAT complex, hurried to work, the activists of these unions stopped them at the gates to inform them of the death of Cepeda and the police attack. The activists did not have to resort to lengthy arguments to keep the workers from going in. By acclamation, after a brief assembly, the majority of workers decided to continue the strike, while the angriest among them joined the activists who built barricades, burned a diesel locomotive, a railway car, and set fire to a half-wrecked truck and hundreds of trees and posts.

"At dusk, when bonfires lit the Nicolás Avellaneda area, a full-scale clash was feared. The security forces advanced on the rebel positions in a pincer movement. But the insurgents did not make a stand."

On Saturday afternoon, the Córdoba regional council of the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo—General Confederation of Labor] met and voted to issue a call for new general strikes Monday, March 15, and Wednesday, March 17. The Monday strike was to be initiated by assemblies in every plant and culminate in a mass rally in the Plaza Vélez Sarsfield.

"These drastic decisions of the CGT-Córdoba were adopted unanimously by 600 delegates in a climate of extreme tension," *Panorama* of March 16-22 reported. "The stand of the stubborn, nonconformist SITRAC and SITRAM representatives convinced the moderate leaders of SMATA, the heirs of the faded laurels of Elpidio Torres, now in exile from the union, as well as the metal workers led by Alejo

Simo and the electricians loyal to the prudent Agustín Tosco. Several delegates raised the grave accusation that Jaime Giné, a former boxer now a policeman in Córdoba, had tortured arrested students."

Fragmentary reports in the international press indicate that renewed attempts to suppress the workers movement throughout the week beginning Monday, March 15, ignited a massive struggle. An estimated \$4,000,000 worth of property was destroyed in violent clashes between the repressive forces and the protesters. "Sixty persons were wounded, ten of whom were shot, 300 persons were arrested, fifty cars were burned, six banks were attacked with Molotov cocktails, fifty stores were looted," an Agence France-Presse dispatch in *Le Monde* of March 17 reported.

In the face of continuing upheavals, Uriburu resigned March 16, being replaced two days later by Rear Admiral Helvio Gouzen. The appointment of a new proconsul brought another fourteen-hour general strike by the Córdoba unions. The government responded by declaring the region an "emergency zone," under direct military rule.

The following day, the armed forces split. Levingston dismissed Brigadier General Ezequiel Martínez, a supporter of Lanusse, from his post as head of the joint chiefs of staff, accusing him of a "grave infraction of discipline."

Three days later, March 22, Levingston fired Lanusse himself. "Shortly before the announcement, guards closed the entrance to the presidential palace where Levingston had been meeting for three hours with Gen. Lanusse and the heads of the navy and air force," the *Washington Post* wrote March 23 in an article compiled from news dispatches. "Soldiers in battle dress reinforced the palace guard and were stationed at the doors. . . ."

"AP quoted the announcement as saying that Lanusse 'had not acted with sufficient authority' during the strike violence in the industrial city of Córdoba during the last two weeks."

New York Times correspondent H. J. Maidenberg cabled: "President Levingston was believed to have made his move against General Lanusse in the belief that he was about to be ousted by the military high command to placate an increasingly outraged populace."

However, the current represented by

Lanusse triumphed in the armed forces, de Onís cabled March 23. "Col. Osvaldo Ortíz, commander of the Fifth Infantry Regiment stationed three miles outside the city, telephoned to say he would attack the presidential mansion in downtown Buenos Aires if General Lanusse was not released immediately.

"Gen. Alcides López Aufranc, commander of the Third Army in Córdoba, led a wave of protests from army units around the country rejecting the removal of General Lanusse.

"Finally, Adm. Pedro Alberto José Gnavi, the navy commander, and Brig. Gen. Carlos Alberto Rey, commander of the air force, issued statements denying that they had signed the decree to remove General Lanusse, and thereby sealed General Levingston's fate."

Levingston surrendered without a fight, turning power over to a junta of Lanusse, Rey, and Gnavi, which on March 25 appointed Lanusse president.

At the end of March it was not clear whether formation of the new government had halted the fissuring of the armed forces that produced a climate of fantastic rumors of coups and countercoups in the period leading up to the overthrow of Levingston. It seemed likely, however, that after four years of ruling through the military, the bourgeoisie was anxious to return to some kind of parliamentary system where their debates over strategy would not threaten to generate armed conflicts between opposing factions of the repressive forces.

The instability arising out of military rule is indicated by one scenario maliciously rumored about in Buenos Aires early in March. According to the tale, if the army and navy demanded Levingston's resignation, the air force would implement "Operation Mazaruca," named for an island at the mouth of the Plata River.

"Protected by helicopters and Douglas A4B's," as the March 9-15 issue of *Panorama* described it, "Roberto Levingston could hole up in a bunker on Mazaruca and stave off the attacks of military and naval forces, while Canberra bombers held down the attackers. In this position, he could wait for splits to occur in the army and navy." □

A Gallup poll released in March found that one American in eight would rather live in some other country.

Prague Nineteen Given Harsh Sentences

Additional information on the sentences handed down against sixteen "Trotskyists" by a Prague court March 19 has become available since our report last week.

The harshest sentence—four years—was given to technical high-school teacher Petr Uhl, 29, said to be the leader of the group that distributed leaflets calling for socialist democracy in Czechoslovakia.

Sybille Plogstedt, 24, a West German studying in Czechoslovakia; and Jaroslav Basta, 22, were both sentenced to two and a half years in prison. Plogstedt was ordered deported when she completes her sentence.

Terms of two years each were given to Jan Frolík, 23; Petruska Sustrova, 23; Ivan Djemal (also given as Vermal), 24; and Jaroslav Suk, 22.

Pavel Lukacovic, 22, and Pavel Sremer, 24, were given twenty months; Radan Base, 20, eighteen months; Vavrinec Korcis, 23, and Karel Cambula, 47, fifteen months; Tomas Sigmund, 27, and Jan Dostal, 21, fourteen months.

Egon Cierny, 25, and Filip Serrano, 24, a French national, were given suspended sentences.

Matylda Brozovska, 27, was acquitted after testifying that although she had continued to share an apartment with her former husband Petr Uhl because of the housing shortage in Prague, she had not been politically involved with the antibureaucratic group.

The two remaining defendants, Jiri Hoffmann, 20, and Marie Daskova (sometimes given as Taskova), 25, were too ill to be interrogated, and their trials will be held at a later time.

Although supporters of the defendants and Western reporters were barred from the trial—which Czechoslovak officials nevertheless insisted was "public"—some accounts of the proceedings have become available, presumably through the few close relatives of the accused who were permitted to attend.

The March 21-22 Paris daily *Le Monde* gave this account of the conduct of the defense:

"The lawyers, in the course of their defense summaries, were said to have

stressed four main points: the youth of the accused; the long detention to which they had already been subjected [thirteen of the defendants have been in prison since December 1969]; the complete absence of 'hostility to the socialist regime' (contrary to the allegation of the indictment); and the suspicion of provocation raised by the conduct of the main prosecution witness, Josef Cechal, who had denounced the group to the police.

"The attorneys were said to have demanded that their clients be released or that they be tried under article 102 (insulting the leaders of the republic) instead of article 98 (subversion) of the Czechoslovak penal code. The maximum penalty permitted under article 102 is lower (three years in prison).

"The prosecutor, for his part, began his summation with a sharp attack on the Western press, which, he said, had profited from this trial by organizing a big anti-Czechoslovak campaign.

"Nearly all the accused affirmed in their final statements that their activities had been inspired only by the interests of socialism."

The Stalinist court officials refused to allow Western reporters to observe the trial. And on March 19, as the sentences were being handed down, police staged a roundup of journalists and observers who had congregated in the corridors of the court building—which is open to the public.

A March 19 dispatch from Prague in the *Washington Post* reported:

"A trial of 17 young 'New Leftists'

ended on a dramatic note today with 16 convictions and the brief detention by courthouse security police of 10 foreign journalists and about 20 other observers."

In the morning, the *Washington Post* said, friends of the accused gathered in the halls and "gave a clenched-fist salute to the defendants as they filed into the courtroom and sang the opening of the Internationale. . . .

"This afternoon's sweep of courthouse observers came after the verdict. A tall, heavy-set plainclothes official flashed his credentials and ordered spectators to stay where they were. Uniformed police sealed off the exits and began checking names. Among those detained were correspondents for the Associated Press, Reuters, Agence France Presse, The Washington Post, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Kyoto news agency of Tokyo, Ansa of Italy and several West German publications.

"At one point the tall plainclothesman instructed police, 'If they make any objections don't hesitate to clear them out with your billyclub truncheons.'

"One young Czech was taken into custody during the name-taking, apparently for laughing.

"The Japanese correspondent for Kyoto had his notes ripped from his notebook."

Le Monde added that the Czech student had laughed when a police official had announced that what was taking place inside the closed courtroom was a "public trial." □

Against 'Stalinist Slanders'

Sartre in Appeal for Prague Nineteen

[The following appeal on behalf of the defendants accused of "Trotskyism" in the recent Prague trial was published in the March 17 issue of the Paris daily *Le Monde*. The appeal was signed by seventeen well-known French intellectual and artistic figures

whose names follow the text below.]

* * *

The judicial action in Prague against Petr Uhl and his comrades is clear: from the police provocation which led

to the arrest of the group, to the kind of accusations leveled against the defendants, everything shows that despite the occasional official denials this is a case of pure Stalinism run rampant.

We believe that the struggle of the accused nineteen is fundamentally just. It is an integral part of the struggle for the advent of genuine socialism.

We protest against the fact that Trotskyism (as with other revolutionary currents such as anarchism) continues to be subjected to Stalinist slanders and to be presented as an agency of

imperialism. Independent of the political position that each of us may have with regard to Trotsky and to those who claim to follow him, we protest against such assertions, which can only perpetuate the corruption of the workers movement carried out by Stalin.

"It is not possible to destroy an idea by force because that blocks all possible intellectual development." We make these words of Che Guevara our own. The trial of Petr Uhl and his comrades is a clear sign of the

negation of socialism and of the tragic absence of all freedom in Czechoslovakia.

* * *

Signed: Robert Antelme, Jean-Christophe Bailly, Simone de Beauvoir, Claude Courtot, Marguerite Duras, Georges Goldfayn, Daniel Guérin, Jean-Edern Hallier, Gérard Legrand, Dionys Mascolo, Maurice Nadeau, José Pierre, André Puig, Claude Roy, Jean-Paul Sartre, Jean Schuster, and Jean-Claude Silbermann.

Czechoslovak 'Trotskyist' Trial

Lenin in the Prisoners' Dock in Prague!

[One of the principal accusations made against the nineteen defendants in the March 1-19 purge trial in Prague was that one or more of them had contacts with the "dangerous figure" Ernest Mandel. Mandel is the editor of the Belgian revolutionary-socialist weekly *La Gauche*, which published the following editorial on the Czech trial in its March 12 issue under the title, "Lénine sur le banc des accusés à Prague!" The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

The trial now taking place in Prague against nineteen comrades of the Revolutionary Socialist party will go down in the annals of the East European struggle against bureaucracy and for real socialist, soviet democracy. The fact that this case coincides with the upsurge in the fight of the Polish workers is significant in more than one respect.

In their desire to "normalize" the situation in Czechoslovakia, that is, to eliminate all vestiges of the workers' democracy that the Czechoslovak masses had begun to win before and during the entry of Warsaw Pact troops in the country, the Kremlin bureaucrats and their lackeys in Prague and Bratislava have so far balked at no sacrifice. Hundreds of thousands of Communist party members have been expelled from the party. Entire plant cells have been dismantled, notably in the country's biggest factories. Outstanding writers and

practically all those with an international reputation have been condemned to silence, if not totally deprived of their livelihood. Severe drops in production have been accepted without batting an eye. The working masses, who were unquestionably more strongly attached to the Communist party during the Prague spring than any other working class in Europe, were abandoned to apathy or hostility.

But all this was still not enough. The bureaucrats and their lackeys had to strike hard against those who by their activity had threatened to bring the development of soviet democracy in Czechoslovakia to fruition. For any self-respecting Stalinist, "normalization" equals repression. More precisely, there could be "no normalization without new Moscow trials" (excuse us, "Prague trials"). The working class and the revolutionary youth, having been condemned to silence, even this silence worries their new masters. They have to break the "spirit of resistance" by introducing terror. Trials, therefore, are necessary.

The only problem is this: After the voracious process of the Moscow trials and the Stalin-style "purges" (which cost the lives of all Lenin's companions and the majority of those who had formed the cadres of the Soviet CP from 1917 to 1925), after these nightmares were repeated in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary in the years 1949-52 (the Kostov, Slansky, and Rajk trials), after Khrushchev's secret speech in 1956 revealed the

criminal procedures by which confessions were extorted from the defendants in these witch-hunt cases, after all these experiences, mention of "trials" arouses a terrible nervousness in all the Communist parties without exception, and even in the ruling bureaucracy of the USSR and all the East European countries. While the bureaucrats always know who the first victims will be, they never know who will be the last. And experience has taught the bureaucrats that the very ones who set the machine in motion, very rapidly become its victims in their turn.

This is why Husak and Svoboda have been, and no doubt remain, opposed to political trials in Czechoslovakia. They cannot fail to realize that since they were involved in the Prague spring or in the passive resistance to the occupation (excuse us—to the "fraternal aid" the "allied" armies offered against the will of 99 percent of the Czechoslovak Communists and workers!), they might also find themselves in the dock one day.

But the Bilaks, Indras, Pillers, and other incorrigible Stalinists want to fill the prisons, terrorize the youth, make the workers tremble with fear. They must have trials, if not blood. "No trials, no normalization." This is the theme they are repeating incessantly in Prague. Their masters in Moscow smile on this approvingly. It would be such an advantage if they could once again use the "Muscovite" methods to get rid of some

troublesome types in Moscow too. So, tired of fighting, Husak and company thought that there was nothing like "Trotskyists" for scapegoats.

The Czechoslovak working class could not fail to see itself represented in these "dogmatic extremists." The international workers movement would coldly abandon these "isolated" elements to their fate. There would be no scandal or regrettable diplomatic complications. At the same time, the intimidating effect in the country would be considerable. Everyone would say that Husak had to be accepted and supported, or else the bloody period of trials would begin again. This is why Petr Uhl and his companions stand in the dock today in Prague.

But every, or almost every point is false in this calculation. Clearly, the bureaucracy, like every social layer with its back to the wall, is no longer even capable of forming a realistic judgment on its own political situation.

In the first place, "exemplary" trials only serve the purpose of intimidation and terror if the accused are broken men, without political perspectives, without hope, without combativity. Stalin understood this well. The only victims he dragged across the stage of the Moscow trials were Communists demoralized by numerous capitulations to the bureaucracy. Take Arthur London,* for example. All through his book *The Confession* and the film based on it, he reveals that he did not comprehend what was happening to him. Since he did not understand the phenomenon of bureaucracy, since he understood nothing about Stalinism, since he had no revolutionary perspective, he was broken before the trial started, ready to make any recantation.

But Petr Uhl and his young companions are of another mold, because they belong to another age. They are the children of the Vietnamese and Cuban revolutions, the children of May 1968 in France and June 1968 in Yugoslavia. They are anxious to seize every opportunity to proclaim their faith in revolutionary Marxism. Far from having the respect, the fear, even the admiration for Stalin of a Kostov, a Rajk, or a Slansky, they have for the mediocrities that rule in Prague only the contempt felt by the

broad working masses. They know that the wind of history has shifted, that it is now only a question of time until the government of workers councils they hoped for is established in their country, in the Soviet Union, and in all the countries of Eastern Europe.



PETR UHL

Facing these militant and fearless defendants, the petty functionaries of the terror are disconcerted and no longer know which way to turn. From the first day of the trial, Petr Uhl took the offensive and demonstrated the unconstitutionality of the tribunal. The judges were supposed to be impartial. They had had frequent contacts with the secret police before the trial. Some of them in the early 1950s had already sent to prison innocent persons, who had to be rehabilitated subsequently. The presiding judge, who had been given no instructions about how to respond to such an impertinence, had to interrupt the trial for several days in order to ask his superiors what to do.

As soon as the sessions resumed, on March 5, there were new surprises. The second chief defendant, Jan Frolik, denounced the indictment (which had been read in abridged form!): "How dare you say we are antisocialists, when we take our inspiration from Marx, Engels, and Lenin?" he exclaimed. The judge was upset and let the point pass.

When Frolik denounced the fact that, contrary to the provisions of the constitution which guarantees freedom of thought, the nineteen defendants were being tried purely and simply for their opinions, the judge snorted: "You are not on trial for your ideas but for your acts!" But Frolik did not let go of this point. "We committed no acts except to advocate our views." What could the judge say to young revolutionists proud of their convictions which they know to be right?

On the third day of the trial, there was a new sensation. The defendant Lukacavic exposed the machinations of an agent provocateur sent into the Revolutionary Socialist party by the secret police. This agent had tried to win the group over to the idea of "executing informers." Too intelligent not to sense a trap, these comrades obviously rejected this preposterous proposal. Frustrated, the agent provocateur denounced Petr Uhl for his "antisocialist intrigues." The advocates of revolutionary socialist ideas find themselves in the dock. But the man who advocated murder goes free. . . .

Seeing the combativity and courage of the accused, the people of Prague have been struck with admiration. Hundreds of Communist activists, workers, students, and well-known intellectuals have flocked to the court. The trial is supposed to be "public," isn't it? But at the door to the courtroom, the police have turned them back. Only close relatives of the defendants are admitted. Why? Isn't the trial public? Yes, of course, but there are no more seats in the courtroom (not even for foreign journalists, it goes without saying). However, it has been learned that every day there are twenty empty seats. In their own way, these twenty seats testify to the bureaucracy's fear of seeing the people identify with Petr Uhl's ideas.

Since they could not be made to appear as criminals, as was the first intention, the defendants have in fact been prosecuted solely for their convictions and their political acts.

The indictment seeks to "demonstrate" that the members of the Revolutionary Socialist party carried on propaganda "hostile to the political and social institutions of the republic," "hostile to socialism." But on the very first page, it states that Petr Uhl and his comrades "attacked the institutions of the socialist state from the standpoint of 'genuine' socialism." The indictment really sounds like something out of

* One of the many victims of the Slansky trials in the early 1950s.

Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi** when it reproaches the accused for wanting to replace "our state and party apparatus by the self-rule of the whole people." It is immediately obvious that this accusation is false and comes from the pen of an ignoramus. But the famous formula "the state of the whole people" is found . . . in the official program of the CP of the Soviet Union adopted at the Twenty-Second Congress. If we understand the accusers in Prague correctly, wanting to put the program of the CPSU into practice in Czechoslovakia is a crime.

But Petr Uhl and his comrades are not Khrushchevites; they are Leninists. So, far from calling for some kind of "state of the whole people," the program of the Revolutionary Socialist party called for a state and an economy *governed by workers councils (soviets) freely elected by all the workers*. And who is the author of such a "criminal project" if not Lenin himself? Isn't this Lenin's program, as anyone can verify by consulting his key work *State and Revolution*? The Ubuesque accusers in Prague want to prove their party's Marxist-Leninist character by putting Lenin in the dock. They want to prove that Petr Uhl and his comrades are "hostile to socialism" by accusing them of being faithful to Lenin's teaching . . .

The Ubuesque character of the indictment does not stop there, moreover. Among the other "crimes" charged against the defendants, the following gems should be noted:

1. Distributing Kuron and Modzelewski's *Open Letter to the United Workers Party of Poland*. Thus, circulating a clearly Marxist, although oppositionist, document has once again become a crime in Czechoslovakia. Where does the penal code say this is illegal?

2. Distributing far-left literature from West Germany and West Berlin. This clearly refers to literature of the SDS [Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund — German Socialist Student League]. You will remember the telegrams of sympathy that the East Berlin chiefs sent the SDS leader Rudi Dutschke when he was the victim of a fascist attack. Today, it is cynically claimed that distributing the revolu-

tionary documents of the German far left is a crime in Czechoslovakia . . .

3. Studying various "Trotskyist and revisionist" texts. A new Ubuesque crime. Studying is an offense against the state . . .

4. Our editor-in-chief Ernest Mandel is cited twice in the indictment as a dangerous figure. Among the crimes supposedly committed by one or several of the accused (it is not clear which from the text we have), is having "met" Ernest Mandel. Another crime, still graver, no doubt, is translating Ernest Mandel's article "On Bureaucracy." Mandel is banned from the United States for "disseminating the economic doctrine of communism." But meeting this "dangerous agitator" (dangerous both for American and French imperialism, since both Washington and Paris have banned him from their territories) is also a crime in the eyes of the "Communists" in power in Prague!

The last calculation of the bureaucrats in Prague (and Moscow) has proved false like the others. The international workers movement no longer remains silent when revolutionists are accused of being Trotskyists . . .

From the moment the trial was announced, the judges in Prague were flooded with protests. First there was an "open letter" from universally respected left intellectuals — Jean-Paul Sartre, Professor Ernest Bloch, Laurent Schwartz, and François Maspéro. Protests came from the Italian members of parliament belonging to the *Il Manifesto* group, from the former French CP leader Charles Tillon (commander in chief of the partisan forces in the resistance), and from the former Austrian CP leader Franz Marek. There was a massive protest by West German left professors and trade unions.

Then, on two occasions, our French comrades of the Ligue Communiste [Communist League, the French section of the Fourth International], occupied the Czechoslovak diplomatic buildings in Paris in order to make possible free expression of Petr Uhl's ideas on Czechoslovak territory. Our comrades of the Ligue Marxiste Révolutionnaire [Revolutionary Marxist League] did the same at the Czechoslovak embassy in Berne. A picket line by our British comrades in front of the Czechoslovak embassy in London drew the attention of public opin-

ion in that country to the witch-hunt trial going on in Prague.

In several Belgian cities (Ghent, Antwerp, Mons, Liège, Hasselt, Louvain, Brussels), the JGS [Jeunes Gardes Socialistes — Socialist Young Guards] held demonstrations to protest the Prague trials. Protest actions have been scheduled in Ottawa, Tokyo, Chile, and Ceylon. The Ligue Belge des Droits de l'Homme [Belgian Human Rights League] is preparing to take a hand in the case. Every day new protests arrive in Prague. Those who framed the accusations must be thinking that they very badly misjudged the international situation. And the accused, to whom we express our fraternal solidarity for their courage and combativity, must be thinking that in these times revolutionary Marxists are no longer alone, no matter where they are in the world.

We are waiting for the protests of the FGTB [Fédération Générale des Travailleurs de Belgique — General Workers Federation of Belgium], whose program [which calls for workers control] is on trial in Prague. Most of all, we are waiting for the protests of the Belgian CP. Since it condemned the military intervention in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, it should condemn the Prague trial all the more vigorously, if it does not want to lose the little credibility it has left . . . □

God a Subversive?

If the diocesan synod of Bolzano-Bressanone, Italy, is correct, revolutionists can sit back, relax, and let the revolution take care of itself.

We'd always known that the historical laws of capitalist development were on our side, but the synod on March 8 declared that Marxism has another ally: God. The overwhelming majority of the eighty priests and seventy-five laymen voted in favor of a resolution that said in part:

"The society in which we live commits a grave sin against the plan of God by placing capital at the center of everything and subjecting man to the law of profit."

The church body contrasted this with the social system advocated by Marxists, "in which exploitation of man by man is impossible or at least very difficult," and concluded that socialism "appears more attuned to God's plan than capitalist society."

It is perhaps fortunate the declaration on God's plans was made in Italy. If he revealed such intentions in the United States, they'd indict him on conspiracy charges. □

*A satirical fantasy about a cruel but cowardly potentate.

Shooting of Three British Soldiers Still a Mystery

The imperialist and proimperialist forces dominating the Northern Irish enclave—who seem to have closed their ranks during the attacks of February 3-9 on the Catholic ghettos—were again at loggerheads following the mysterious shooting March 10 of three members of the British occupation forces.

Coming in the midst of a propaganda offensive by British and Belfast authorities, aimed at rousing world public opinion against Catholic "terrorism," the three deaths caused a furor. To the right wing of the pro-imperialist Unionist party, they undoubtedly appeared to be a perfect occasion for launching the long awaited all-out repression against the nationalist, Catholic minority.

In their impatience, however, the Unionist hawks and their fanaticized followers outdistanced the dominant partners in the antinationalist bloc—British imperialism and the moderate, leading sector of the Protestant ruling class.

The resulting tugs and tensions toppled the second moderate Unionist prime minister in Belfast since the upsurge in the struggle of the oppressed nationalist minority began more than two and one-half years ago. On March 20, Major James Dawson Chichester-Clark, a descendant of Sir Arthur Chichester, the English conqueror of northeast Ireland, resigned his post, retiring to his estate of Castledawson.

On March 23, the Unionist parliamentary party selected the first "commoner" to preside over the government of the imperialist fortress state since its creation in 1920—Arthur Brian Deane Faulkner, a representative of the Presbyterian business class.

Faulkner won his spurs, not in the Irish Guards like his aristocratic, Anglican predecessors, but in running his father's shirt factories, i.e., in sweating notoriously underpaid and largely female labor. His main military experience came in organizing the repression of an abortive nationalist guerrilla campaign carried on from 1956 to 1962, during his term as Home Minister of the Belfast government. From the political standpoint, Faulkner differs little from the

two preceding prime ministers, although he has a reputation for greater shrewdness and flexibility.

Moreover, since the arrival of large contingents of British troops in August 1969, effective control of the Unionist statelet has been in the hands of London's military commanders. And the crisis opened by the deaths of the three young soldiers has shown that the Westminster government is not yet prepared to accept the consequences of the repressive measures demanded by the Unionist right wing.

When the bodies of John McCaig, aged seventeen; his brother Joseph McCaig, aged eighteen; and Dougal McCaughy, aged twenty-three, were discovered on White Brae road outside Belfast on the morning of March 10, British and Unionist right-wingers were quick to attribute the killings to a breakaway from the Irish Republican Army (IRA) known as the Provisionals. This grouping has made extravagant threats of shooting British soldiers in reprisal for nationalists killed in clashes with the occupation forces.

The Provisional command, however, denied responsibility for the shootings, and no evidence has yet been reported to link them to this case.

The response of Edward Heath's Conservative government in London was cautious. "He [Reginald Maudling, British Home Secretary] declared that the security forces would not be provoked into reprisals by Wednesday night's murder near Belfast of three off-duty soldiers," the *Irish Times* of March 12 reported.

When a Conservative MP raised the possibility in debate March 11 that IRA men "from the South" had done the shootings, Maudling replied that "there are operating in Ireland a number of organisations of a terrorist character," indicating that the Heath government was not prepared to discount the possibility that the shootings were a provocation by a right-wing Unionist gang.

On March 12, it was clear that the Unionist right wing was mounting a campaign for internment, that is, mass jailings without charge or trial of all

suspected militant nationalists.

"There was speculation in Belfast last night that the Cabinet meeting [of the Belfast government] had been called specifically to discuss internment, and even that it had already been introduced," the *Irish Times* reported March 13.

"It was felt that the murders on Wednesday night of the three young Scottish soldiers had provided the final piece of evidence needed to convince the Government of the necessity of such drastic measures.

"The uncompromising speeches of even moderate Unionists in the House of Commons on Thursday, and yesterday's mass march by 4,000 shipyard workers, had suggested that there was now so considerable a public demand for the internment of I. R. A. leaders that the Government would have to relent."

The workers demonstrating for internment March 12 were from Harland and Wolff's shipyards, where very few Catholics are employed. The caste attitude instilled into the Protestant workers has historically made them the pawns of the Unionist ruling class. During the Irish war of independence, Protestants in the Belfast shipyards called on their employers to fire all "traitors to the crown."

Under heavy rightist pressure, Chichester-Clark went to London to appeal for heavy troop reinforcements and the introduction of new repressive measures. Some 1,300 extra troops were sent to Northern Ireland, but this reportedly failed to satisfy the Unionist right.

"From reliable sources in Belfast and London last night it was made abundantly clear that neither Mr. Maudling nor Mr. Heath will concede the Right-wing Unionist demands for internment, for tougher methods or for a Unionist-ruled armed force," *Irish Times* correspondent Michael McInerney reported in the March 17 issue of the Dublin paper.

Chichester-Clark's resignation statement March 20 indicated that after two years of serving as an interim diary between the Unionist interests and the British government, he felt his position had become untenable

and that a fresher political personality was needed to fill the role.

"I have decided to resign because I see no other way of bringing home to all concerned the realities of the present constitutional, political and security situation. . . .

"The situation . . . is simply this: it is apparent that public and parliamen-

tary opinion in Northern Ireland looks to the Northern Ireland Government for measures which can bring the current I. R. A. campaign swiftly to an end. I have expressed to British Ministers the full force of this opinion and have pressed upon them my view that some further initiative is required." □

TUC Opposes Further Action

Second General Strike Hits Tory Bill

Major British industries were shut down again March 18 by a second general strike protesting the Tory government's union-busting Industrial Relations Bill. Writing in the March 20 *Christian Science Monitor*, Robert Nelson put the number of strikers at 1,500,000.

The cost of the strike to the British economy was estimated at \$170,000,000 by the Engineering Employers Federation.

As was also the case with the first strike, on March 1, the March 18 walkout was spearheaded by the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers [AUEW], the country's second largest union. The second strike was also backed by the Transport and General Workers Union [TGWU], which with 1,531,000 members is the biggest union in Britain.

Stephen V. Armstrong described the effect of the walkout in the March 19 *Washington Post*:

"Today's [March 18] strike, the second in three weeks, shut down or crippled most engineering plants, docks and automobile and aircraft factories. All national papers failed to appear after their engineers walked off the job yesterday afternoon."

The movement against the Industrial Relations Bill received a setback the same day, however, at a special meeting of the Trades Union Congress [TUC] held in Croydon.

Delegates to the TUC, the federation to which some 350 unions are affiliated, voted to back General Secretary Vic Feather's opposition to strike action against the bill. The vote was 5,366,000 to 3,992,000.

Feather and other conservative union chiefs have argued that strikes only alienate the public and cannot

defeat the proposed legislation.

"Nobody can think that a one-day stoppage, or a series of one-day stoppages, would get rid of this bill," Feather told the meeting. "It could well arouse hostility toward the proper and legitimate use of the strike weapon . . ."

The TUC instead voted to advise its members not to register under the provisions of the bill when it becomes

law. Under the terms of the act, unions that failed to register could be subject to severe penalties if they engaged in strikes. Nelson reported that the TUC resolution "left the way open for them [unions] to be registered if to refuse would jeopardize union well-being."

It remains to be seen whether or not the TUC's conservative position will be able to prevent further strikes against the bill. Nelson wrote:

"The TGWU's general secretary, Jack Jones, said immediately that his union would abide by the TUC mandate. The AEU's [AUEW] Hugh Scanlon said only that his council would decide in a few weeks.

"With union discipline an extremely weak point in the movement here, not even powerful union leaders can guarantee membership obedience. On this issue, with feelings running extremely high among the more leftist organizations such as TGWU and AEU, the no-more-strikes-for-political-reasons ruling may be even harder to enforce." □

In Beirut Interview

Hawatmeh Fears Sellout of Palestinians



NAYEF HAWATMEH

Nayef Hawatmeh, leader of the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DPF], believes that an at-

tempt will soon be made to force the Palestinian people to accept an imperialist "political solution" and give up their struggle for freedom. He expressed this view in an interview given in Beirut, Lebanon, and reported in the March 19 issue of the Boston daily *Christian Science Monitor*.

"A political solution is coming in the Middle East, of that you can be sure," Hawatmeh said. "Our people must keep out of all these negotiations because they will end by completely liquidating the Palestine question."

Explaining the basis of his opposition to the projected peace plans, he said: "We are drawing closer to a point in the international and Arab-Israeli situations where Israel will be recognized within 'secure and recognized' boundaries.

"This is a historic concession. It means abandonment of a part of Palestinian soil in the interests of Israel and the recognition of its government. This can only be a temporary solution because there will still be a racist, expansionist state linked to imperialism."

The DPF, Hawatmeh said, is struggling for a Palestine "linked to a larger Arab anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist pan-Arab state which must be nonchauvinist.

Hawatmeh indicated that the DPF sought contacts with anti-imperialist or-

ganizations in other countries, including inside Israel:

"We will work with all those progressive forces which are anti-Zionist and anti-imperialist. We already have relations with Matzpen [*The Compass*, publication of the Israeli Socialist Organization], the Rakah [the predominantly Arab faction

of the Israeli Communist party], and leftists in Israel, including professors and students at the Hebrew University."

Hawatmeh said that since the Jordanian civil war of September 1970, "every possible attempt has been taking place to push the Palestinians, both inside and outside the resistance movement, to take

part in the present or future political solution" by agreeing to the formation of a Palestinian state in the Israeli-occupied West Bank area. Hawatmeh said that he thought these pressures would continue, in order to convince the Palestinians to abandon their struggle to liberate all of Palestine. □

Widespread Solidarity for SWP

Rightist Bombing Stirs Up Hornet's Nest in Houston

On March 12 the Socialist Workers party campaign headquarters in Houston, Texas, was bombed. The headquarters is located at the Pathfinder Bookstore, which sells socialist, Afro-American, feminist, and other radical literature.

The fragmentation bomb was thrown through a window sometime between 2:00 a.m. and dawn. Shrapnel from the explosion was found imbedded in the bookshelves and filing cabinets.

Numerous instances of right-wing terrorism have occurred in Houston during the past several years. Fred Brode, one of the leaders of the Houston Committee to End the War in Vietnam, has had his house shot into several times, and set on fire once.

Since January 1, 1971, there have been four bombings similar to the attack on the SWP headquarters. An architecture studio, a motorcycle shop that sold Czechoslovakian equipment, the *Forward Times* (a Black newspaper), and a local hippie store have been the targets.

The bombing touched off an immediate and angry response. Debbie Leonard, SWP candidate for mayor of Houston, said that the attack was related to the recent announcement of the SWP election campaign. "These attacks are an attempt to silence the movement for social change, but you can't stop our ideas with bombs," she said.

On March 15 a news conference was held at which all the SWP candidates and more than a dozen other individuals and organizations issued statements denouncing the bombing and demanding a full investigation.

The March 26 issue of *The Militant* reported that statements were presented from a professor at Rice University, seven members of the University of

Houston political science department; the American Civil Liberties Union; the University of Houston student government president; Houston Mayor Louie Welch; the chairman of the Harris County Republican party; the Student Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam; the National Peace Action Coalition [NPAC], and its local affiliate, the Houston PAC; the president of the University of Houston Young Democrats; Houston Area National Organization for Women; the University of Houston Women's Liberation Front; the Houston Young Socialist Alliance; the University of Houston Young Socialist Campaigners; and the Houston Committee to End the War in Vietnam. A lead editorial in the *Houston Chronicle* also condemned the attack.

Mayor Welch claimed that "the police department is doing everything possible to put the people who did it [the bombing] out of business." But the SWP election candidates and others in the radical movement disagreed. The Houston police are well known for their cordial relations with the racist Ku Klux Klan.

Police Chief Herman Short denied that his department has "direct jurisdiction" in bombing cases. *The Militant* of March 26 quotes him as saying: "I don't care what this party [the SWP] thinks, we're not going to tell them what we're doing. They can read about it after we do it in the newspapers."

Leonard and SWP city council candidates Jeanette Tracy, Mareen Jasin, and Paul McKnight condemned the police for "their inadequate, sloppy and irresponsible handling of this and previous bombings. If the Houston police were nearly so dedicated to identifying the right-wing terrorists responsible for these acts of violence as they

are to repressing the Black, Brown, and student communities in Houston, it is probable that our campaign headquarters would not have been bombed."

On March 19 a public meeting was held to organize a united community response to the attack. The meeting heard a panel discussion on the history of political attacks in Houston. Panelists included representatives from the National Organization for Women, the Welfare Rights Organization, *Voice of Hope* newspaper, Pacifica Radio, the Houston SWP, the Houston PAC, the underground newspaper *Space City*, and the Houston Committee to End the War in Vietnam.

The April 2 issue of *The Militant* reported that the meeting came to agreement on three demands: "1) the immediate removal of Police Chief Herman Short; 2) the opening of the files and records of the Houston Police Department and the arson files of the Houston Fire Department—full public scrutiny to allow citizens to see what has been done towards the solution of these crimes; 3) the holding of an open public hearing on the recent bombings."

The meeting unanimously endorsed a letter to the Houston City Council signed by the SWP candidates listing sixteen political attacks on leftist or liberal organizations during the past year, and calling on the council to meet the three demands of the meeting. Not a single person has been arrested in connection with any of the sixteen attacks.

The meeting voted to establish the Committee to Defend Democratic Rights in Houston, which will attempt to focus national attention on the situation in Houston as a means of forcing the police and city government to take action against the right-wing terrorists. □

Ceylon Coalition Regime Calls Out the Troops

Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike declared a state of emergency in Ceylon March 16. The move came in face of growing unrest among students and workers.

Earlier, on March 7, Mrs. Bandaranaike had called out the military forces to maintain "public order." The pretext for this action was a March 6 demonstration during which approximately 150 Maoist students attacked the American embassy in Colombo.

It was abundantly clear, however, that the coalition government was concerned with more than 150 students. The measure, which gave police powers to the military, was applied throughout the island. The prime minister told the House of Representatives on March 8:

"... I have called out the members of the Ceylon Army, Royal Ceylon Navy and the Royal Ceylon Air Force in every administrative district of Ceylon.

"I do hereby communicate to the House that the reason for issuing the Order is for the maintenance of public order in the areas referred to."

The March 16 state of emergency gave practically unlimited powers to the government. These were described in the March 25 issue of the weekly *Ceylon News*, published in Colombo:

"Powers of requisitioning of vehicles, dealing with persons making false statements, power of obtaining information or examining articles, declaring of curfews in areas within Ceylon, prohibition of processions and meetings, maintenance of essential services and dealing with obstruction to such maintenance, requisitioning of personal services, prevention of disaffection, and dealing with sedition and incitement are some of the matters that can be dealt with under the Regulations promulgated.

"The Regulations also deal with control of publications, supervising of suspected persons, explosives, offensive weapons and offensive substances, restricted places, detention of persons, requisition and acquisition of property, obstruction of or damage to roads, ways and railways, prevention of in-

timidation, guns and explosives, throwing of missiles, pointing of guns, interference with railway postal and road transport services, resistance to or obstruction of persons in authority, attempt to commit offences and assisting offenders."

In a March 17 radio broadcast, Mrs. Bandaranaike attempted to justify the state of emergency imposed by her "United Front" [UF] government, a coalition that includes the bourgeois Sri Lanka Freedom party [SLFP] and two reformist working-class parties—the Communists and the Lanka Sama Samaja party [LSSP]. Her explanation sounded like an imitation of Nixon describing the Vietnamese National Liberation Front:

". . . a small minority of our population have banded themselves together, in secret cells, and are making preparations to cause bloodshed and chaos in this country.

"We are also aware that in several village areas where these secret cells have been formed the local population have been terrorised and terrified into passive acquiescence of the preparations for violence. The Government is also aware that those belonging to this Movement have been manufacturing as well as collecting arms, ammunition, and other deadly weapons such as hand-bombs in order to create chaos and confusion in the country and to try and capture power, if possible in the ensuing situation." [From the text printed in the March 25 *Ceylon News*.]

The real reason for the state of emergency was explained to David Baird by an unnamed "senior minister" in the government. Baird quoted the minister's remarks in the March 20 issue of the Hong Kong weekly *Far Eastern Economic Review*:

"There's a lot of disillusion in the country. The public were fed up with the former Government; now they are quietly getting fed up with this one. The danger is they may get fed up with parliamentary rule. There are signs of politics moving towards new dimensions—towards anarchy or dictatorship."

The only organization mentioned by

name in Mrs. Bandaranaike's sensational charges was the "Che Guevara Movement." This is the name commonly given by the press to the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna [JVP—People's Liberation Front], a radical Sinhalese youth group.

The JVP originally supported the UF, but later became disillusioned with the coalition government's failure to live up to its promises. The leader of the JVP, Rohan Wijeweera, is in jail, and the police have been busily discovering guns and bombs allegedly belonging to the group. Members have been arrested for such crimes as possessing literature by Fidel Castro and Mao Tsetung.

A March 22 United Press International dispatch from Colombo reported the arrest of another twenty-five "Che Guevarists." The news agency quoted a government official as saying there had been a total of 150 arrests since the state of emergency was invoked.

The JVP has grown along with the public disenchantment with the UF. As Baird put it in his article:

"Anyone who wants to sow disruption can find fertile ground at the moment. All sectors of the public are weary of rising prices and shortages of consumer goods as the country wrestles with balance of payment problems. Restless youngsters, unable to find jobs, want quick answers which have not been forthcoming. More than 500,000 people were idle last year, 12,000 of them graduates."

A witch-hunt campaign against the JVP and similar left-wing groups must seem just what the UF needs to distract public attention away from the sagging economy. □

Defeatists?

Civil Defense officials in Miami, Florida, have been ordered to destroy a prepared radio broadcast intended for use in a nuclear war. The tape says the "enemy" attacked first, and adds:

"Our Strategic Air Command and naval units have devastated many of his major cities and industrial centers. Our defense forces have retaliated with tremendous effectiveness and probability of victory is good."

Arana's Reign of Terror in Guatemala

"You could call Guatemala the Greece of the Western Hemisphere," said a staff member of the U. S. Senate, "but that wouldn't be accurate, for it's worse."

Since Carlos Arana Osorio became president of Guatemala on July 1, 1970, more than 700 persons have been murdered, Joseph C. Goulden reported in the March 22 issue of the U. S. liberal weekly the *Nation*. Goulden based the figure on his conversations with a "ranking opposition leader"—referred to only by the pseudonym "Señor Domingo" in order to protect his life.

Domingo visited Washington in early February in a predictably vain attempt to persuade the U. S. Senate to end American backing of Arana. The closest he came to success was the sympathetic comment quoted above. As in the case of Greece, a few politicians may express mild criticism, but the U. S. government is fully backing the reign of terror.

Goulden gave the following figures on U. S. assistance to Arana's repressive organizations:

"Although the United States spends only a relatively meager \$4 million annually for AID [Agency for International Development] in Guatemala, about half of that goes to the police. Of the thirty-seven persons in the AID mission in Guatemala City, six are identified as 'public safety advisers' on the State Department's Foreign Service List. Military advisers spend an unrevealed amount equipping and training Arana's 12,000-man army."

(The amount of U. S. backing looks considerably less meager when it is recalled that the entire Guatemalan national budget is only \$200,000,000.)

Arana personally has a fairly extensive experience in the methods of political terrorism. Between 1966 and 1968, as an army colonel in charge of operations against guerrillas in the Zacapa district, he became notorious for the brutal extermination of peasants.

During the elections last March, Arana found the same methods useful. Domingo told Goulden:

"... the elections were held in an atmosphere of terror and violence.

Many politicians were killed, including more than five candidates for representative and candidates for mayor in several districts. In towns where 'pacification' had taken place, only the MLN [Movimiento de Liberación Nacional—National Liberation Movement, the right-wing party that nominated Arana] candidates participated, due to threats and fears."

During the first four and a half months of Arana's reign, the generally subservient press reported 107 political assassinations. The terrorist group La Mano Blanca (The White Hand) was joined by another, Ojo por Ojo (An Eye for an Eye), which announced that it would specialize in murdering intellectuals. Other groups were even more active, Domingo reported:

"These murders were done by anonymous groups without name or acronym, and not for the purpose of influencing public opinion. The perpetrators simply kidnapped, tortured and killed in the greatest silence."

Although the terror was directed by the government, Arana apparently felt that it had to be institutionalized. On November 13, the MLN delegates to the chamber of deputies, who held 36 of the 55 seats, although they had won only 43 percent of the vote, approved a thirty-day state of siege that is still in effect. The measure made Arana absolute dictator, turned police functions over to the army, suspended personal liberties, outlawed political activity, and prevented the press from publishing anything but official government statements.

According to a United Press International dispatch at the time, Arana, in a nationwide radio broadcast, explained that the measure had been made necessary by "manifest abuse of personal guarantees established in the Constitution and the wave of violence."

The murder of every suspected or potential opponent of the dictatorship could now be carried out by the police or army, and the fact of the assassination could be kept out of the press—unless the government decided the information would be a useful

warning to others. A month and a half after the state of siege was declared, *New York Times* correspondent Juan de Onís reported some graphic facts. From what de Onís said, Domingo's figure of 700 murders may be far too low:

"With hundreds of persons arrested... the courts have been filled with relatives and with lawyers presenting requests for orders that missing persons be publicly presented by the police. In a three-week period, the courts issued 135 such orders and the police produced 40 persons. The authorities said the others were not in jail."

Aside from the murder of obvious targets such as left politicians, labor leaders, and in one case an opposition member of the chamber of deputies, the terror is not particularly selective, but directed at virtually the entire population.

Guatemala City, for example, is under a permanent 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. curfew that applies even to fire brigades. De Onís reported that during those hours "women about to give birth must have a military pass and escort to go to hospitals."

Goulden described another measure that is typical of Arana's government:

"In early January... the army completely sealed off Guatemala City in the middle of Saturday afternoon and permitted no one to enter or leave the capital for seventy-two hours. Troops made a house-to-house search of the entire city."

Goulden indicated that the terror is intended to be a permanent feature of Guatemalan life—at least as long as U. S. support continues:

"How institutionalized is Arana's terror regime? Señor Domingo says that the violence is directed by a four-man committee consisting of three cabinet ministers and the president of the Guatemalan congress, Mario Sandoval Alarcon, leader of the MLN. Sandoval is one of the more unsavory characters in Guatemalan politics. In 1954 he was a key collaborator in the CIA-sponsored invasion that overthrew the government of President Arbenz Guz-

mán . . . Señor Domingo says that Sandoval has told his MLN followers that they 'cannot let power be seized from them again,' and that they must govern the country 'for at least ten years' to fulfill their goal of 'pacification.'"

It is hardly surprising that Arana should find favor in Washington. He is only carrying out the policy in Guatemala that Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon have followed for years in Vietnam, and he has the same goals in mind. Goulden wrote:

"One faction [sic] in official Washington contends that Arana, when all is said and done, will 'turn out to be a pretty good President.' This col-

lective opinion is that he is carrying out messy but necessary housecleaning, and that elimination of the 'supportive infrastructure' is essential to complete eradication of the FAR [Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes—Rebel Armed Forces] and MR-13 [Movimiento Revolucionaria 13 de Noviembre—November 13 Revolutionary Movement]. That the victims include ostensibly respectable politicians is dismissed as an operational necessity, and this segment of Washington does not share Señor Domingo's assertion that many of the dead were innocent bystanders."

In Guatemala as in Indochina, there are no innocent bystanders. The population is the enemy. □

Indochina War

To the Victor Belongs the Oil

Oil? Off the shores of South Vietnam? U. S. Secretary of State William Rogers knows nothing about it. Despite the fact that oil companies are spending millions in Southeast Asia and dickering with Thieu over royalty rates, a March 11 letter from the State Department to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee innocently observed:

"It is not certain at this time whether there are any petroleum deposits in the country [Vietnam] or in offshore areas."

The letter was accurate only in the sense that there are as yet no producing wells off South Vietnam. But the area, as Rogers well knows, is part of the continental shelf believed to hold oil reserves surpassing any yet discovered in the capitalist world. (See "The Mad Scramble for Oil in Asia," *Intercontinental Press*, February 8, 1971, page 108.)

Questioned on the subject at a March 16 press conference, Rogers asserted that the potential oil fields have "absolutely no effect on United States policy" in Indochina. The March 17 *New York Times* reported:

"Mr. Rogers declared at the news conference that 'we didn't even know about these rumors' of oil wealth until recently."

Rogers' reply was again less than ingenuous. In the March 6 issue of the Hong Kong weekly *Far Eastern*

Economic Review, Phi Bang wrote from Saigon that surveys begun as far back as 1966 ". . . indicated that the South Vietnam continental shelf was an extension of the geological structure of oil-rich North Borneo."

And two years ago, according to Gabriel Kolko writing in the March 13 issue of the liberal weekly *New Republic*, ". . . the US Navy's experts announced that the vast shallow areas running from Korea to Thailand might contain 'potentially one of the most prolific oil reserves in the world.'"

Kolko is concerned that Vietnamese oil may prove to be a political blessing for Richard Nixon. He argues that a major handicap for Nixon in trying to conquer Indochina has been the fact that hitherto no significant section of the U. S. ruling class has had a direct economic interest in the continuation of the war. (" . . . even napalm producers," he writes, "had no special interest in their deadly merchandise being employed in Indochina as opposed to some other hapless nation.")

Kolko's argument is overstated. The U. S. arms industry certainly profits from any going war. At some point, even napalm, like any other commodity, must be "consumed."

Nevertheless, it is true that the primary reason for U. S. intervention in Indochina was not economic but political—the necessity for American im-

perialism to prevent revolution anywhere in the underdeveloped world. And it is also true, as Kolko points out, that Vietnam's oil potential provides a powerful sector of the U. S. bourgeoisie with a new motive for continuing the war. At the end of February, Kolko notes, ". . . the Provisional Revolutionary Government announced that it would not recognize Saigon's oil concession."

This means that for the U. S. oil companies there is no alternative to Thieu or someone indistinguishable from him:

"Since the process of oil development in new areas, from exploration to commercial production, usually takes a decade or longer, in the past US firms have not invested heavily in any region unless Washington has first assured them that their often large investments will ultimately be rewarded. This understanding is almost always explicit, and it is a better measure of the US's long-term intentions than any speech or platitude."

The fact that at least twenty-two companies, most of them American, are bidding for oil rights would seem to indicate that Nixon has already informed the petroleum firms that he intends to keep a firm grip on South Vietnam for a long time to come. □

Women Doctors

Resuming Practice

The South West Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board is seeking to bring British women doctors who have withdrawn from activity back into the practice of medicine. Its efforts have met with some success.

According to Dr. Essex-Lopresti, a member of the board, those responding to the appeal have proved to be more interested in using their talents than in raising their income.

"What they want is anything to get them away from the kitchen sink," he said.

Don't Fret, It's Only Cancer

A medical researcher told a U. S. congressional subcommittee March 16 that nitrites used to treat meat, fish, alcoholic beverages, and cereals may be a cause of cancer. In 90 to 95 percent of its uses, the chemical's only function is to improve the appearance of the product and increase potential sales. The commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration responded that there was nothing to get excited about: "So far it [cancer caused by the chemical] is only a possibility."

Workers' Spring Offensive Begins

By Susumu Okatani

Osaka

The national convention of Sohyo [General Council of Trade Unions of Japan], meeting in Tokyo March 3-4, voted to call nationwide unified actions including strikes on March 26 and April 13 as the first and second waves of the workers' spring offensive. The main demands of the strikes will be an average wage increase of 15,000-20,000 yen per month [360 yen equal US\$1].

Member unions of Sohyo were urged to coordinate their actions with the national plan. Zenkoku Kinzoku [the National Trade Union of Metal and Engineering Workers] has demanded that the managers institute a 35,000 yen per month minimum wage beginning March 10. A one-hour walkout on March 26 is planned as an initial action. If the demands are not met by the managers, the metal and engineering workers will launch national actions on April 2. A protest campaign against a government proposal to revise the Health Insurance Act has also been projected.

Kokuro [the National Railway Workers Union], which is expected to be a leader of the spring actions, decided at its national convention February 24-25 to strike for three days as its contribution to the offensive.

The struggle to achieve the objectives set for the offensive is likely to be a difficult one, since the workers are demanding higher wages during a mini-recession in the Japanese economy.

The spring offensive has been waged every year for more than fifteen years. The present leadership of the union movement, "Mindō" [the democratization group of union leaders], has become the driving force behind it. Mindō leaders have tried to use the offensive as a means of consolidating their positions in their respective unions, as well as their positions in the labor movement as a whole. Young workers critical of the traditional leadership look on the offensive as merely an automatic process of wage adjustments to meet rising prices generated by economic expansion.

The economic situation has been unfavorable to the traditional leaders, whose problems have steadily increased. Their gravest crisis to date was marked by the forced resignation of Fumihiko Takaragi as president of the Postmen's Union February 19.

Local and national elections, which occur during the spring offensive, give a political aspect to the offensive. While the national union leadership is busy preparing for the Upper House [of the national Diet (parliament)] elections to be held in June, local leaders are attempting to enlist the support of activists for the local campaigns.

The prospect of an overwhelming defeat for the Socialist party, which has been suffering from stagnation for years, has turned the attention of the union leadership away from the offensive and towards the electoral campaigns. The fact that the leadership is more concerned with reinvigorating the Socialist party than with fighting for the workers' demands has sharpened the criticism directed at the leadership by younger workers.

Business Slump

At the Sohyo national convention, Chairman Makoto Ichikawa said that this year's offensive would be more difficult than last year's because of the current business slump. Noting the hardships suffered by workers because of inflation as well as the attempts of the capitalists to bring government pressure to bear against the workers (including nationalization of unprofitable industries), the Sohyo delegates decided to struggle for large-scale wage increases by various means including strikes.

The economic decline, which began during the second quarter of last year, has continued without abating. There has been a considerable decline in the output of capital goods and durable consumer goods; shipments have fallen off; stocks of unsold products have piled up, and orders for ma-

chinery and construction equipment have declined. Compared with the previous year, there were increases in the number of bankruptcies in the metal, electrical appliances, construction material, construction, and real estate industries. Under these conditions, the capitalists will try especially hard to prevent the workers from obtaining wage increases even equivalent to last year's. Achieving the demands put forward by the Cooperative Committee for the spring offensive will be even more difficult.

There are, however, two indications that an economic upturn may be in the offing. This would be just what the Mindō leaders need, inasmuch as they hope to make some gains in the offensive but are not prepared to organize a serious struggle to do it.

According to a report published recently by the Economic Planning Agency and the Bank of Japan, the current mini-recession, even if it continues, is not likely to get worse. This estimate is based on the fact that commercial bank lendings have increased. The Economic Planning Agency also says that there was a significant increase in orders for machinery during January, with big orders coming from electric power companies.

The second factor is that because of the elections, the government will be under strong pressure to take measures to improve the economic situation—albeit temporarily. This has been a regular feature of election maneuvers in the past.

Trade Unions Veer Left

Whatever the magnitude of the business slump, the most important factor in a labor offensive is the situation in the workers' organizations. There are now signs that trade unions, under pressure from militant young activists, are shifting slightly to the left.

Although the situation is still confused, the downfall of Takaragi clearly weakened Sohyo's right wing. The

moderates in Sohyo, who were seeking unification with the more conservative Domei union federation—a unification that would exclude Communist-led unions—have lost a powerful voice. Before February the union movement was polarized between a right wing led by Korokyo (Sohyo's Council of Public Corporation Workers Unions, which includes Takaragi's Postmen's Union), and a left wing represented by Kokuro. Now the right wing has lost much of its attraction and the unions in Sohyo and Korokyo are moving leftward.

One immediate effect of this realignment was the failure to set up a joint Sohyo-Domei committee to promote the proposed unification. The committee was to have been established February 25 but Domei's representatives balked at the last minute when Sohyo appointed Zenkoku Kinzoku, a prominent critic of the unification, as one of its representatives. Takaragi would never have permitted the selection of a leftist such as Kinzoku.

The rank-and-file unrest that forced out Takaragi and his national executive committee is by no means exceptional. At the Zenkoren [National Federation of Miners Unions] convention, Haraguchi was accused of adhering to Takaragi's line. Even leaders of the National Railway Workers Union came under fire.

The ability of young activists to force the union leaderships to support their struggles against government labor policies is now much enhanced. Fear of suffering Takaragi's fate is all too real to the union leaderships. Because of the pressure from rank-and-file militants of its member unions, Sohyo is now adopting a new campaign image, emphasizing "complete establishment of a mass course" and placing "young workers in the forefront of the struggle."

Increasingly, action committees are springing up at work places, seeking to establish united action groups at the union and interunion level.

One of the most significant is the united action organization of young unionists at Osaka. Young postmen, telecommunication workers, and regional government workers have called a mass meeting for the end of March, and will fight side by side with young unionists of the National Trade Union of Metal and Engineering Workers as well as with workers from other factories. □

'Freedom to Hear . . . Vital Ingredient of Free Assembly'

'N.Y. Times' Hails End of Ban on Mandel

[On March 18 a three-judge U. S. federal court meeting in Brooklyn, New York, ruled unconstitutional the Justice Department's ban on a visit to the United States by the internationally known Belgian Marxist scholar Ernest Mandel. The following editorial supporting the court's decision appeared in the March 22 issue of the influential *New York Times*.]

* * *

The federal court ruling that Dr. Ernest E. Mandel, a noted Belgian Marxist scholar, could not be barred from delivering lectures or attending conferences in the United States upsets a repressive edict by Attorney General John N. Mitchell. In denying an entry visa to Dr. Mandel, the Justice Department embarrassed the United States rather than the applicant—a fact evidently understood by Secretary of State William P. Rogers, who had urged Mr. Mitchell to admit the scholar.

The case involved far more than the right of an individual who holds ideas abhorrent to Mr. Mitchell and proba-

bly to the majority of Americans. Fortress America was an image, long since abandoned, built on the mistaken ideology of military isolationism. Equally unacceptable in a free society is an intellectual fortress soundproofed against unpopular and even dangerous ideas, domestic or foreign.

The 2-1 ruling may, of course, be appealed to the Supreme Court. But for the moment the extraordinary significance of the opinion, written by District Court Judge John F. Dooling, lies in the fact that it holds unconstitutional important sections of the McCarran Act of 1952, that shameful legislation sired by cold war hysteria and passed over President Truman's veto.

The majority opinion, rejecting the counsel of fear, held that freedom of speech is abridged whenever unwarranted restrictions are placed on "open and wide-ranging debate." Freedom to hear thus is recognized as a vital ingredient of free assembly and free speech itself. This reaffirmation of a nation unafraid of free traffic in ideas, even beyond national boundaries, ought to set the scene for the too-long delayed elimination of the McCarran Act in its entirety. □

Demand Higher Agricultural Prices

100,000 Farmers March in Brussels

Thousands of farmers from the six Common Market countries demonstrated in Brussels March 23, demanding higher prices for farm products. Police used tear gas and water cannons to disperse the giant throng, estimated at 80,000 to 100,000 persons. One demonstrator was killed and some 150 were injured.

The March 25 issue of the Paris daily *Le Monde* gave the following description of the huge procession:

"Taking the main street from the Gare du Nord to the Gare du Midi that cuts Brussels in two, passing by the Place de Brouckère and later the Stock Market, the demonstrators advanced slowly in tight ranks, in the

midst of a din of firecrackers and shouts. With their weather-beaten faces, their big vests and suspenders, their caps, or those little black, leather-bordered berets so common in Belgium, the demonstrators could be easily distinguished from the many on-lookers who at that time showed curiosity, amusement, but not yet hostility."

The demonstration was called to coincide with a meeting of the agriculture ministers of the Common Market. Farmers from France, West Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, and Luxembourg came to Brussels to participate in the protest. The March 24 *New York Times* described the con-

frontation between the angry farmers and the police assigned to prevent any disturbance of the ministers' deliberations:

"Some 3,000 policemen had been alerted to control the demonstration, in which the farmers swept 20-abreast down Boulevard Anspach toward the center of the city.

"Several automobiles were set afire as the farmers neared the downtown area. They tore up street signs, protective railings and cobblestones, and hurled them onto the streets and into underpasses. Many of the demonstrators carried heavy wooden pitchforks and used them to break windows.

"After they had passed, there was not a telephone booth or newsstand left intact along the length of Boulevard Anspach."

The farmers are demanding 10 to 15 percent increases in prices of agricultural products, which have been frozen in the Common Market countries for the past three years.

The price freeze is part of a policy designed to "modernize" agriculture by driving farmers from their land. In the March 25 *Christian Science Monitor*, Carlyle Morgan described the agriculture plan worked out by Sicco Mansholt, the Common Market's chief farm official:

". . . as vice-president of the Common Market's Executive Commission he [Mansholt] has signed a report which foresees that out of every six European farmers at work on the land today, two will disappear within 15 years.

"The Mansholt plan aims at modernizing farming. It involves the disappearance of small, uneconomic farms in favor of large ones operated very much like corporate industries."

At one point in the Brussels demonstration, the farmers hanged an effigy of Mansholt.

In the aftermath of the protest, most observers predicted that the Common Market ministers would grant small increases in agricultural prices. But such rises will not even compensate farmers for what they have lost during the past three years of inflation. As prices of industrial products continue to climb, the price squeeze on farmers can be expected to produce further protests.

This situation does not bode well for the stability of capitalist Europe. *Le Monde* commented in an editorial March 25:

"Three years ago, some 3,000 farmers from the Common Market countries marched through the streets of Brussels to demand an increase in the price of milk. At the time, the positive aspect of the development made the greatest impression. Didn't this prove that the European Community had definitively emerged from the sphere of the experts? Becoming conscious of their common destiny, even if they expressed this in a noisy and disorderly way, the European peasants testified to the birth of a European pub-

After Secret Trial

Thirteen Political Prisoners Shot in Iran

At dawn on March 17, thirteen Iranian political prisoners were executed by a firing squad. A brief communiqué issued by the Teheran government disclosed neither the names nor the ages of the prisoners, who had been secretly tried by a military court. The victims were accused of setting up a "subversive network with the aim of overthrowing the political regime in Iran."

The thirteen were said to have taken part in a guerrilla attack on a police station February 8 at the village of Siahkal in Gilan province on the shore of the Caspian Sea.

According to an Agence France-Presse dispatch that appeared in the March 19 Paris daily *Le Monde*, the raid on the police post "was said to have taken place following the arrest of one of the members of the network. Other members of the network were said to have then launched an operation with the aim of freeing their comrade."

According to the government communiqué, one policeman and a civilian were killed in the fighting, and the police station was captured by the rebels. The charges against the thirteen in their secret trial were murder, armed assault, forgery, and use of false state documents.

Le Monde's Teheran correspondent, Javad Alamir, writing in the March 21-22 issue, said the executed prisoners were believed to belong to "a group of 150 pro-Chinese Communists who were operating in the mountains of

lic opinion, without which it would be vain to envisage a political union.

"By its breadth and its violence, Tuesday's demonstration gives rise to less optimistic reflections. Is Europe about to blow up when 100,000 peasants, some of whom came from the wine-growing areas in the south of France or from Calabria, no longer conscious of national frontiers, gather en masse to put pressure on the Common Market council cautiously deliberating on the sixth floor of the Charlemagne building?" □

Gilan province." According to Alamir, the group was composed mainly of students and some young people from the Gilan area. Troops were reportedly called out the day after the attack on the police station. "Units of the Iranian army then attacked the mountainous region where the rebels were said to be operating and the fighting, which was reportedly heavy, lasted a week. According to the government's communiqué, only two guerrillas were said to have been killed, and not thirty as some rumors have asserted. Arms of Chinese manufacture—in particular submachine guns and grenades—were found on the rebels."

The shah's government has published no information beyond the announcement of the executions, but Alamir reports that according to some sources, "a dozen other guerrillas will soon be tried." The prisoners reportedly include two Arabs.

This is the first time since 1966 that the Iranian regime has announced executions for political crimes. Official figures list forty-eight persons as having been put to death for political reasons by the shah's dictatorship between 1955 and 1966. Opposition sources charge that many more have died under torture, which has been used as a means of avoiding embarrassing trials. In the case of the thirteen, the government did not even announce that the trial was pending until the executions had been carried out. □

Coogan's History of the Irish Republican Army

By Gerry Foley

The IRA by Tim Pat Coogan. Pall Mall Press, London. 373 pp. £2.25 [\$5.44]. 1970. Includes photographs, index.

Tim Pat Coogan's book, *The IRA*, was published in the spring of 1970, that is, about as fast after the 1969 strife as a full-length book with the decent appurtenances of scholarship, such as footnotes and a bibliography, could be gotten on the market.

A year and a half has passed since the outbreak of civil war in Northern Ireland, with its side effect of making Coogan's work a hot literary commodity. The current news of the fighting in Belfast February 3-8 gives the book fresh topicality. The report of women in Catholic, nationalist areas banging their garbage-can lids to rally their neighborhoods against the British troops, brings this passage to mind, for example:

"... the 'Murder Gang' . . . flourished in Belfast during the period [the early 1920s], carrying out assassinations and reprisal raids on Catholic strongholds. The gang was composed of former British soldiers, members of the U.V.F. [Ulster Volunteer Force], and some sprinkling of R. I. C. [Royal Irish Constabulary] men and B-Specials [the counterrevolutionary antinationalist militia]. Its members would set out from their cars and tenders in stockinged feet, with blacking on their faces to raid Catholic areas after dark. In the poor Belfast street lighting these marauders created terror among Catholics, as they loomed up out of the darkness to shoot a passer-by dead on the street or to hurl a hand grenade through a window . . . Their tactics were eventually met by a simple strategy worked out between the civilian population and the I. R. A.

"A custom known as the 'murder yell' sprang up. Anyone seeing a member of the gang gave a long, drawn-out, high-pitched, keening yell of 'M-u-r-derr-eh' which was taken up by the entire district. Colonel Roger McCorley told me that this sound, with the banging of dustbin lids, pots and pans, was the most eerie he had ever heard."

Those days are still remembered in a street ballad, Coogan writes:

*"Oh she got up and rattled her bin,
For the Specials were a-coming in,
Tiddy-fal-la, Tiddy-fal-la."*

Since August 1969, the British army has taken over the task of keeping the oppressed nationalist population in "its place," using carefully calculated mass intimidation instead of primitive gang terror. And so, the latest news indicates, the people of the nationalist ghettos are using their weapons of self-defense against the core of the imperial army, now including a representative of the royal family itself, the Duke of Kent, who is serving as a major in the British forces.

It is significant that in the past year, two books were

published on the history of the Irish Republican Army.* It is more than fifty years since this organization dealt modern British imperialism its first major defeat, forcing it to relinquish its claim to sovereignty over four-fifths of England's oldest colony. But until the recent resurgence of the national struggle in Ireland, with the rise of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement, no scholar or publicist anywhere in the world made a systematic study of this organization's history. On the history of the IRA since the Irish civil war, there has been virtually no scholarly work.

The lack of attention paid to this area of Irish history is especially surprising in the formally independent Irish state. All the major political parties in the country, save one, have represented minorities that split away from the IRA at one time or another in the organization's history. All were rejected by the core of the IRA leadership as opportunist. Only the small Labour party had a different origin. As late as 1946, breakaways from the IRA formed a party which for a time played a major role on the Irish political scene—Clann na Poblachta (the Republican party).

Coogan would seem an unlikely choice to write the first general history of the IRA. The son of an antirepublican politician, he is the editor of the *Irish Press*, the paper that supports the ruling Fianna Fáil party.

Coogan's previous book, *Ireland Since the Rising*, which was published just in time to cash in on the interest in modern Irish history stimulated by the fiftieth anniversary of the 1916 revolt, was a flashy compendium of political folklore designed for a foreign market. His present book is somewhat more serious, but it belongs to the same genre.

Two things make Coogan's book worth reviewing. It includes information and materials not available to the general reader before. But most importantly, as the first book to offer a rounded history of the contemporary phase of Irish revolutionary nationalism—and especially appearing at this time—it is something of a political event.

One of the things, in fact, that makes the book most interesting for Marxists is also its chief weakness as historical interpretation—the way it reflects the reality of republicanism from the vantage point of the modern bourgeoisie in Ireland. This is the layer most alien to revolutionary republicanism and most clearly threatened by it.

As a representative of this morally vacant, imitative, and sterile stratum, Coogan could hardly be excelled—a professional moderate putting slick journalist packaging on Irish revolutionary history for sale to the British-American market.

Before the nationalist minority in Northern Ireland mobilized, the Irish bourgeoisie was moving very rapidly

* Dr. J. Bowyer Bell's book *Secret Army* was published at the end of 1970.

toward removing the last trappings of nationalism. As Coogan, one of the spokesmen of this class, sees it, the Dublin government was coming to a gentlemanly understanding with imperialism that would permit eliminating the "ancient antagonisms" standing in the way of "good business."

In this context, Coogan's reaction to the 1969 explosion is significant and serves to put his view of republicanism in perspective. "The feeling in the South of solidarity with the Catholics in Derry and Belfast in the days following Lynch's speech [the Dublin prime minister made an ambiguous statement during the crisis indicating that the Irish army might go to the aid of the embattled ghettos] was unprecedented in my experience. The most pacific of men were prepared to mobilise. With such latent emotion on both sides of the border a policy of restraint is obviously essential."

Coogan describes the confrontation in Northern Ireland as "a torch that very nearly lit a powder keg in all Ireland." Evidently, in addition to its desirable effect of increasing the market for "current history" books on Ireland, the crisis in the North gave Coogan, and the class he represents, a very nasty shock.

For an Irish audience, Coogan's book is filled with obvious errors that discredit its reliability. In particular, misspelling of Irish words and names abound. On page 12, the Fenian leader Luby appears in the guise of "Looby." On page 16, the theoretician of Irish agrarian radicalism James Fintan Lalor, appears as "Lawlor." The most bellicose of the Young Ireland leaders, John Mitchel has his name improved with a second "l."

Gaelic words are rather consistently misspelled. The name of the most famous modern Gaelic writer Mairtín Ó Cadhain (the French paper *Le Monde* spelled his name right when it devoted the better part of a page to his obituary) is consistently rendered O'Caidhin (a hybrid form as well as incorrect). The title of the play *Isogan* by Patrick Pearse, the leader of the 1916 rising, is written as *Isogain*.

Worse: The word "Clann" in Clann na Gael (the republican organization in America) is translated as family ("family of the Gael"). This word is a collective noun meaning "children" or "family," but by extension, reflecting the Irish tribal system, it has the meaning of faction. From this it has taken on the meaning of political party. In this context, translating the word as "family" is either ignorant or deliberately cute.

Furthermore, Coogan's bibliography does not include a single book, periodical, or article in Irish. It may flatter the English or American reader to think that Irish history can be studied without the labor of learning another language. But that is not true, and especially not in researching the history of the nationalist movement. For example, one of the books most revealing about the mentality and development of the 1956-62 IRA guerrilla fighters is Mainchín Seoighe's *Maraidh Seán Sabhat Aréir*.

Irish reviewers pointed to numerous inaccuracies of fact in Coogan's account. For example, in the November 1970 issue of the Irish-language magazine *Comhar*, Pádraig Ó Snodaigh wrote: "It is not true from the historical standpoint that the Fenians depended on the Catholics in Ireland (Bell, Class, Mac Knight, Darragh, Underwood, etc.); Sinn Féin was not founded in 1905; Devoy did not get a state burial in 1927 (he died in 1928 and

was buried here in 1929). The number of Thompson guns ordered was not 500 but 600. John Mitchel did not fight on the Southern side in the U. S. Civil War; he did not fight in it at all. And the arsenal of the IRA was not 'running dangerously short' when the truce came in 1920."

Nor are Coogan's more recent statistics reliable, Ó Snodaigh pointed out: "The number of students taking the higher certificate did not rise from 6,000 in 1954 to 70,000 in 1969 (21,000 took the exam in 1969). And *Investment in Education* does not say that 50 percent of the pupils in Ireland left school at twelve (it says that more than 25 percent left at the age of thirteen)."

In his bibliography Coogan asserts that the primary source for his book was "500 interviews." Many conversations with ex-IRA men are quoted. They are interesting and provocative in many respects. But the dangers of judging the history of a revolutionary movement by the opinions of men who have left it are obvious.

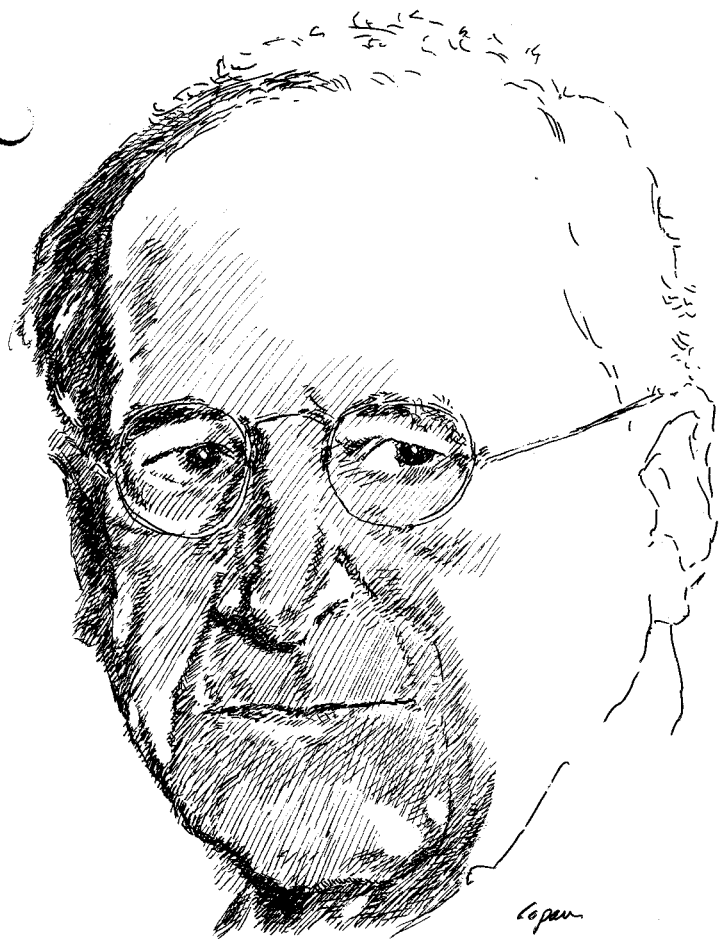
Furthermore, Coogan has a tendency to throw every juicy bit of gossip available into his potpourri. For example, he repeats the tale of Civil Rights Association money being diverted to the IRA. In 1969 a British journalist wrote a vague and contradictory article claiming that Bernadette Devlin suspected that some of the money she raised in America went to the IRA. There is no more foundation to the story than that.

As an analyst of recent political developments in the republican movement, of its move toward an explicitly socialist program, Coogan is worthless. It is not just that he has a bourgeois viewpoint, seeing the rise of reactionary movements always as a response to aggressive revolutionary movements. For example, he describes the left-wing program of the republican movement as "to the left of Albania," meaning apparently that it is shockingly left from where he stands. But otherwise the definition is totally meaningless.

In his approach to the republican movement, Coogan is "fair," in the bourgeois sense. That is, there is, of course, never any doubt about the conclusion to be drawn: "I would not willingly write a line which would induce any young man to spend five minutes in the I. R. A. . . ." But the account is balanced with sufficient material favorable to the republican point of view to make it sound objective. And in doing this, Coogan provides interesting evidence of what goes to make up a republican.

For example, Coogan quotes a speech by Cathal Brugha, minister of war under the Irish revolutionary government, against accepting the compromise treaty with British imperialism in 1922: "If instead of being so strong, our last cartridge had been fired, our last shilling had been spent and our last man were lying on the ground and his enemies howling round him and their bayonets raised, ready to plunge them into his body, that man should say—true to the traditions handed down—if they said to him: 'Now will you come into the Empire?'—he should say, and he would say: 'No, I will not.' That is the spirit which has lasted all through the centuries and you people in favour of the Treaty know that the British Government and the British Empire will have gone down before that spirit dies out in Ireland."

Even a slick paragraph like the following indicates a great deal about the political context in Belfast, where



DE VALERA: Expert at playing both sides against middle.

a nationalist funeral procession was attacked and stoned by proimperialist Orange mobs after the early February 1971 outbreak.

Coogan describes the hanging of a teen-age IRA volunteer in Belfast during the second world war: "Williams' hanging was a frightful business that could have occurred only in Belfast. On the night before his death, Catholics kept vigil outside the jail saying the Rosary, while an Orange mob jeered them, shouting obscenities about Williams and singing Orange ballads."

Coogan gives the text of Williams' last letter to the then chief of staff of the IRA, Hugh McAteer. It is probably introduced to show the naïveté of young IRA men. It shows that but something more besides:

"My God, can we tell you and our comrades who will carry on the fight, can we tell you of the gladness and the joy that is in our hearts. To know that the Irish people are again united . . . After 20 yrs of slumber our nation will once again strike, Please God, at the despoilers who have infringed the nation's liberty, freedom and murdered her sons, her daughters, who have given us a foreign tongue; shall please God, strike and strike hard and make the tyrants go on their knees for mercy and forgiveness.

"But shall we make the mistake of '21, no, no, tis men like you and your staff will see to it. That no farcical so-called Treaty shall in anyway be signed by a bunch of weak-kneed and willed Irishmen. Better that the waves

of the mighty oceans sweep over Erin than take and divide our nation, murder her true sons again. Better would be that heavens would open and send fire to destroy Erin, than accept another Treaty like it."

Another republican youth, Conor Lynch, who was sentenced in 1969 to seven years in prison for allegedly participating in an arms raid in Britain, showed the same kind of spirit. Coogan quotes what he wrote his mother after the British court passed sentence: "Cheer up mother, it might have been seven years and a month."

What explanation does Coogan offer for this revolutionary tradition persisting in the age of consumer credit?

"To understand the post-war I. R. A. it is vital to understand also the intellectual and religious atmosphere in Ireland at the time and to look at the educational system under which young I. R. A. men had been raised . . . If one examines the teaching of three subjects—history, English and Irish—one sees how the effect was to send young people out into the world generally unenlightened about the division of their country, with a strong anti-British bias but a paradoxically strong English bent toward literature, poetry and mode of expression."

In other words, the persistence of revolutionary idealism represented by the survival of the IRA is supposed to be due, at least in part, to Irish education imparting an unrealistic, "literary" view of the world.

This type of education developed, Coogan explains, as a result of certain moral problems faced by the dominant forces. In more accurate language than he uses, these involved the Catholic church and the bourgeois political establishment. The church had difficulty in explaining its "statesmanlike" policy of collaborating with British rule. The bourgeois political forces were allergic to discussion of the circumstances in which the Irish state was founded—the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1922 and the civil war, which was won by the right wing of the independence front with British support.

Even Fianna Fáil, which represents itself as the political heir of the anti-Treaty side in the civil war, could not stand too much inquiry into the ideas of radical republicans like Liam Mellows, executed by the Treatyites.

It is true that the moral weakness of the conservative forces in the Irish state—along with the bourgeoisie's inability to solve the country's major problems—meant that Irish schools preached an otherworldly philosophy and a mythologized version of Irish history. This indoctrination served to confuse the thinking of generations of Irish men and women but it could not justify the sordid reality of the Free State.

Furthermore, that mythology celebrated the nobility of valor and the wisdom of discretion, much as Coogan does in fact. For the clerical managers of Irish schools, obedience to established authority in this world and "the next" was the highest virtue. In any case, most of the support for the IRA has come from small farmers and workers who left school at ages twelve to fourteen. They could not have learned much but the "fear of the Almighty" and the feel of the pedagogical ruler.

It is to be expected that a reactionary clericalist state appropriating the mantle of a revolution, of the longest revolutionary tradition in Europe, of nationalist fighters, who in some important cases were revolutionary Marx-

ists, will have certain problems in the ideological sphere. It is part of Coogan's modern journalistic fairness that he points this out. Older-style Irish bourgeois writers would have been more colorful but less informative.

But Coogan stands this important reality on its head. The question is not why the IRA survived so long. That is obvious. The bourgeoisie could not satisfy the centuries-old aspirations of the Irish people; it failed either to revive the national culture—dealt a mortal blow by the great famine—or to offer any material perspectives to the people living on Irish soil.

The new middle class produced by the boom of the sixties thought that a modest niche could be found within the framework of British-American neocapitalism sufficient to pension off a diminishing or stagnant Irish population, to give the Irish nation a comfortable old age that would make it forget the follies of its youth.

The economic development was at least enough to create an urban middle class and a modern ideological apparatus for the first time in Ireland, producing a late flowering of pragmatism. This is probably why Coogan thinks it convenient to blame the survival of revolutionary nationalism on the literary-linguistic educational system of rural Ireland.

The real question is why generations of revolutionary fighters in Ireland did not draw the logical conclusions of their fight against the status quo—why they did not become Marxists and develop revolutionary instruments superior to the purely conspiratorial forms bequeathed to them by history.

In particular, why did fighters, prepared to make any sacrifice in fighting the system that blocked their country's hopes, remain under the influence of a reactionary institution consistently supporting this system—the Catholic church? Why did they remain isolated from the international revolutionary movement fighting British imperialism and the world capitalist system of which it was a part?

The answer must be sought in two areas—(1) in the objective conditions and (2) in the political failings of the leaderships that developed. In the second area, Coogan is no help. He lacks the most minimal understanding of such problems. In the first, he does provide some indications. And in doing this, he also helps us to understand why no serious work on the IRA or republicanism was written before this.

Since the Irish state was based on a partial counter-revolution, its political and intellectual life was pervaded with unreality. In this obscurantist atmosphere, the political consciousness of the nationalist fighters themselves was low and prey to contradictions.

As a result, the postcivil-war IRA did not add much to the theory and literature of republicanism. It simply carried on the tradition that reached its highest expression in the writings of the 1916 leaders—but in an increasingly debased form.

In the repressive climate of a regime without self-confidence, it was difficult for Marxist groups to develop and maintain continuity. Emigration removed generation after generation of energetic young workers who would normally be the best revolutionary material. In a small, largely rural country, it was relatively easy to pinpoint "agitators."

Furthermore, the IRA, representing a long insurrectionary tradition and a particularly intransigent brand of small-nation particularism, was left isolated by the recession of the postwar revolutionary wave in the 1920s.

The Stalinist degeneration of the world Communist movement must have helped to confuse and divert republicans who might otherwise have developed toward a more consistently revolutionary viewpoint.

The prime example of the effect of Stalinism is the flip-flop of the Irish Communist party over the question of imperialism in the second world war. Before the invasion of Russia, the Irish Stalinists lauded the neutralist de Valera government as the most progressive in Europe. Once Hitler attacked the USSR, they joined with the repressive pro-British regime in Belfast in going all out for the war effort.

A highly capable Marxist party would have been needed to chart a revolutionary course through the political complexities that developed in Ireland with the approach of the war. The role of the de Valera government was a particularly difficult problem for revolutionists.

In many ways, de Valera was a prototype of the bonapartist petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders that emerged in many neocolonial countries in the postwar period, except that he was subjected to far greater direct pressure from imperialism than a Bourguiba, or a Nasser.

In the revolutionary government established in 1918 and the anti-Treaty section of it that went underground during the civil war, de Valera's role was largely formal and diplomatic. His attitude toward the treaty itself, in contrast to men like Brugha, was an ambiguous one. But he had the prestige of having been an officer in the insurgent forces during the 1916 uprising. This gave him something of the charisma of a de Gaulle, and de Valera was a far slier politician than "mon Général."

In pushing through the 1937 constitution, with its recognition of the special rights of the Roman Catholic church, de Valera in fact accepted the partition of the country as permanent and with it the perpetuation of the Catholic-Protestant communal division that is one of the principal obstacles to national and social progress in Ireland. In interning and even executing republican activists during the second world war, he accepted de facto the political logic of the pro-Treaty forces in the civil war—that an excess of patriotism was a "danger to the state."

Even after his acceptance of "Free Statism" de Valera was able to maintain enough of a republican aura to retain the support of large sectors of militant nationalists. In fact, despite his capitulation on the key issues, the imperialists brought strong pressure to bear on him to surrender Irish independence completely.

If anything, the pressure from Washington seems to have been more intense (it was certainly cruder) than from London. In one of the most interesting sections of his book, Coogan quotes American ambassador David Gray's report of a discussion he had with the Irish prime minister: "He began to talk about his rights. I told him that . . . the only right that he and myself enjoyed was to believe in our religion and to be burned for it if need be. [The pious reference was no doubt thought well designed to impress a superstitious Irish Catholic.] Every other right depended on force to maintain it and that

he was steering a very dangerous course if he thinks otherwise."

Later on Coogan quotes Gray as saying: "He [de Valera] must be made to realize that it is possible that a situation is approaching in which if it be essential to survival his ports will be seized with the approval of the liberal sentiment of the world . . ."

In this whole context, it is not surprising that some elements in the IRA tended toward religious mysticism as an alternative to Anglo-Saxon, or modern bourgeois, society to which they were profoundly antagonistic. It is not surprising that Seán South thought the enemy was "an nua-phágánacht" (new paganism) instead of capitalism.

Nor should it be surprising that a wing of the IRA leadership, like many small-nation nationalist movements whose claims were ignored or scorned by the large, bureaucratized, sectarian, socialist organizations of the time, tended to look to the Axis powers as an ally against the status quo.

Coogan quotes a topical poem written in 1938 expressing the republican attitude to the war.

*"Who is Ireland's enemy?
Not Germany, nor Spain,
Not Russia, France nor Austria;
They forged for her no chain,
Nor quenched her hearths,
Nor razed her homes,
Nor laid her altars low,
Nor sent her sons to tramp the hills
Amid the winter snow! . . .
Who shot down Clarke and Connolly
And Pearse at dawn of day,
And Plunkett and MacDiarmada
And all who died as they? . . .
Not Germany nor Austria,
Not Russia, France nor Spain
That robbed and reaved this land of ours,
That forged her rusty chain;
But England of the wily words—
A crafty, treacherous foe—"*

In the postwar period, this situation has been changing. The colonial revolutionary movements, and the minority-group nationalisms that have developed under their impact in the imperialist countries, have more and more shown that national independence and emancipation can be achieved only by abolishing capitalism. Furthermore, although many of these movements have retained some of the ideological ballast of Stalinism, they have tended to escape from its directly counterrevolutionary influence and have challenged the status quo in a radical way.

Parallel to this development, European small-nation nationalism has also tended to evolve toward revolutionary socialism. Irish republicanism and Basque nationalism are the salient examples.

It is possible that the development of Irish republicanism will serve as the prototype for the evolution of other small-nation nationalist formations, especially since there are a whole series of countries whose history, ethnic background, and geography are similar in certain respects

to those of Ireland—Scotland, Wales, and Brittany.

Nationalist currents in these and other small nations may very well produce contingents of fighters that will play a significant role in the European socialist revolution. Marxists will have to understand the development of these currents and the forces they reflect, combating both Stalinist-encouraged petty-bourgeois, reformist autonomism and its mirror image, the sectarianism that condemns all forms of nationalism as "unproletarian."

As an introduction to modern Irish nationalism, Coogan's book may prove useful. Its price, fortunately, is as moderate as its politics. □

Chromosome Damage Discovered

New Danger from Pesticides

Even if the chemical companies don't get you, they may get your children, or your grandchildren.

In addition to such unpleasant side effects as causing cancer, hemorrhaging, etc., it now appears that many chemicals used in industry or as insecticides may damage chromosomes and thus produce mutational changes in human beings, animals, and plants.

Chemicals that can cause such genetic damage are called mutagens. The harm they cause may remain concealed for generations, as Anthony Tucker explained recently in the British daily *Guardian*:

"Chemical damage to genetic material can, in sex-paired systems such as animals and plants, be masked by the undamaged chromosome in a pair, and can therefore accumulate in the genetic pool for many generations without expressing itself."

Mutagenic chemicals are not the only danger. Other chemicals not classified as mutagens can interfere with a cell's repair processes so that naturally caused mutations are not corrected. In both cases, the result is the same: the accumulation of damaged chromosomes.

Tucker reported that Captan, an agricultural chemical widely used in Britain, has been found to be a "very active" mutagen. Other agricultural chemicals, while less active, are also mutagenic. Dichlorvos, an insecticide, is both a mutagen and a carcinogen.

The dangers from mutagenic chemicals are of little concern to the companies producing them or to the governments concerned, Tucker wrote: "Mutagenicity studies, which look to be positive, have been carried out not at the request of the regulatory agencies but by independent and worried biologists."

Tucker also pointed out that chemical mutagens have to be considered in relation with other causes of chromosome damage, such as radiation. The currently accepted safety level of radiation is twice the amount occurring naturally.

"What then of the situation where there are additional hazards from chemical mutagens? The two must be considered as additive, which, in turn, means that the international radiation agreements—made without the knowledge of chemical mutagens—will have to be modified." □

Program of Uruguay's Popular Front

[The first meeting of the Frente Amplio (broad front) was held February 5 in the anteroom of the Uruguayan senate. The initiating group was a coalition of liberal bourgeois elements, prominent leftists, and some trade-union leaders, which issued an appeal last October 7 for the formation of the front. The victory of the popular-front formation Unidad Popular (People's Unity) in the September 4 elections in Chile inspired the proposal.]

[At the February 5 meeting, the following document was adopted. We have translated the text from the February 12 issue of the Montevideo weekly *Marcha*.]

* * *

At the invitation of the Frente del Pueblo [People's Front] the following groups, which issued the call sent out in October 1970, met and agreed on this political statement, which represents the primary document of the Frente Amplio: the Movimiento por el Gobierno del Pueblo, lista 99, el Partido Demócrata Cristiano [Movement for a People's Government, list 99, the Christian Democratic party]; el Movimiento Blanco,¹ Popular y Progresista [the Progressive Popular "Blanco" Movement]; the Frente Izquierda de Liberación [the Left Liberation Front]; el Partido Comunista [the Communist party]; el Partido Socialista [Socialist party]; el Partido Socialista (Movimiento Socialista) [the Socialist party (Socialist Movement)]; el Movimiento Herrerista, lista 59 [The Herrera² Movement, list 59]; los Grupos de Acción Unificadora [United Action groups]; el Partido Obrero Re-

volucionario (Trotskyistas) [Revolutionary Workers party (Trotskyists)]; el Movimiento Revolucionario Oriental [Uruguayan Revolutionary Movement], and the Comité Ejecutivo Provisorio de los Ciudadanos [Citizens Provisional Executive Committee].

The profound structural crisis the country has been suffering for decades, foreign control, and the rule of an oligarchy directly collaborating with imperialism have given rise both to deep social tensions and to a climate of common concern for the fate of the Uruguayan nation itself. When economic decline culminated in an inflationary spiral that blocked every possibility for development, the oligarchy found in the present government a faithful interpreter of its answer to the crisis. Both the oligarchy and the government sought to establish an order based on despotism. They trampled on civil liberties and trade-union rights. They attacked the universities and the high schools physically and undermined them materially. They impoverished the workers by actually freezing wages while only nominally freezing prices. They cut the buying power of government functionaries and clerks, as well as those living on pensions and vast sectors of the intermediate strata. They strangled the small and middle industrialists, tradesmen, and rural producers. They paralyzed the productive forces and demoralized labor. They dismantled important instruments of the national economy, such as the state banks, the Frigorífico Nacional [National Meat-Packing Enterprise], the utilities, and transport services. Through submission to the dictates of the Monetary Fund, external debt, by contracting harmful types of loans, and by complicity in the criminal flight of currency out of the country, they progressively alienated the sovereignty of the country.

All this the government and the oligarchy did to keep intact the privileges of a parasitic and unpatriotic minority allied with the reactionary forces of the imperialist power. The republic has been moving toward the ignominious status of an American colony.

The clear-sighted Uruguayan people, the working class and student youth, the creators and disseminators of culture, and the progressive political parties opposed this antinational and antipopular behavior, defending the existence of the nation. For this, they suffered harassment, deprivation of freedom, loss of jobs, confiscations, banishment, tortures and outrages, restrictions on freedom of the press and bans on some publications—a whole gamut of abuses that had seemed relegated to the dim past. The Uruguayan people's love of freedom, sense of dignity and decency, and their growing understanding of the deeper causes of this abuse of power compelled them to respond to the government's attacks. Because they responded and were not cowed by the repressive onslaught, the blood of youths and workers has flowed in the streets. The bitter experience of struggle has been forging the bases of popular unity.

The historical conjuncture is leading to a polarization between the people and the oligarchy. This would have occurred in any case, because the workers, students, and all progressive sectors resisted these antinational usurpations. But the retrograde attitude and violence of the government's police, unprecedented in this century, accelerated the process of confrontation and stimulated the collective understanding of the need for urgent and profound changes. They speeded realization of the need for developing a political apparatus capable of uniting the genuinely national and popular forces to exhaust all democratic avenues, so that by struggling and mobilizing, the people could achieve the great transformations for which the entire country is clamoring.

The political unification of the progressive currents that culminated in the formation of the Frente Amplio—concluding one period in the country's history and opening a new one of hope and faith in the future—was born in the people's struggle against the fascistic philosophy of force. By its essence, by its origins, and because the people were the moving force in it, this unification has been able to embrace fraternally Colorados and

1. The Blancos [Whites] and Colorados [Reds] are the historical parties of the bourgeoisie. In the civil wars of the nineteenth century, they represented respectively and in general the conservative and liberal tendencies, as well as rural and urban coalitions. Today these traditional groupings are not well defined politically. For a description of the forces included in the Frente Amplio, see "Popular Front Formed in Uruguay," *Intercontinental Press*, March 1, 1971, page 180. — *IP*

2. Julio Herrera y Obes, Colorado president of Uruguay from 1890 to 1894. — *IP*

Blancos; Christian Democrats and Marxists; men and women of different philosophies, religious conceptions, and ideologies; workers; students; professors; priests; Protestant ministers; small and middle producers; industrialists and businessmen; civilians and members of the armed forces; intellectuals and artists; in a word, all representatives of labor and culture, the legitimate spokesmen of the vital forces of the nation. Because this movement has a profound character rooted in the country's best traditions, preserves and cherishes the forms passed on by history, and at the same time has clear objectives leading to a benevolent future, it feels that its deepest source is the enlightened, incorruptible, and combative example of the Artigas epic.³

In this dramatic situation, conscious of our responsibility and convinced that no isolated political force could offer a clear governmental alternative to the organized people, we have understood that we are required by the times to combine our forces. We have seen that we must join together, on the basis of a political agreement, to establish a program designed to overcome the structural crisis, restore to the country its future as an independent nation, and regain for the people the full exercise of their liberties and their individual, political, and trade-union rights. This program must have a democratic and anti-imperialist content, calling for control and planned, nationalized management of the key points of the economic system in order to rescue the country from its stagnation; achieve an equitable redistribution of income; end the dominance of the oligarchy of middlemen, bankers, and big landowners; and implement a policy of promoting real liberty and the common good, based on the productive effort of all the inhabitants of the republic.

We express our deep conviction that building a just society, in a national and progressive sense, is impossible within the framework of a system dominated by big capital. Breaking from this system is an essential prerequisite for the process of changing its decrepit structures and winning real national independence. This break, in turn, will require modifying the juridical and institutional

3. Jose Gervasio Artigas (1764-1850), the father of Uruguayan independence. — IP

framework so as to facilitate the crucial changes sought.

We conceive this national effort as part of the struggle of the peoples of the third world in general for liberation and development. We stand in solidarity with this struggle and especially that phase of it taking place in Latin America, where, after a century and a half of insurgency by the peoples of this continent, this struggle must culminate in a second and definitive emancipation.

For the reasons expressed, we have resolved:

1. To form a political united front—the Frente Amplio—by means of the combination of political forces and independent citizens signing this document. The objective of this front is to plan an immediate struggle within all fields, both in opposition to the present tyranny and to those who seek to continue it, as well as from within the government. The Frente Amplio is open to all other political forces that support its progressive, nationalist, and advanced democratic conceptions.

2. To commit ourselves formally by this act of combining our forces to establish a common program and to adhere to it in struggle, collaborating fraternally and in an attitude of

solidarity, as well as to operate in accordance with the principle that the democratically organized people are the active force in the historical process.

3. To establish the principle that this coalition of forces—which is not a fusion and in which all the participants retain their individual identity—must possess an organizational structure with rank-and-file nuclei, leading bodies, clear mandates, and other instruments of discipline capable of assuring real implementation of such commitments and principles as it may be desirable to adopt.

4. To state that the fundamental objective of the Frente Amplio is permanent political activity and not an election campaign. At the same time the Frente Amplio will present a united front in the elections, offering clear and honest solutions that can once again give the voters a real chance to determine their fate and prevent the government from falsely speaking in their name, as is the case now.

Pursuant to these principles and objectives, we call on the people to join the Frente Amplio and take part actively in the struggle and the work we are undertaking.

Montevideo, February 5, 1971.

Documents

Solidarity with the Bengali People!

[The following statement was issued March 21 by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, the World party of Socialist Revolution founded by Leon Trotsky.]

* * *

The massive explosion of popular discontent in East Pakistan, which has claimed the lives of many Bengali workers, peasants, and students, has highlighted once again the political and economic subjugation which has been the lot of the citizens of East Pakistan ever since the partition of the subcontinent in 1947.

It shows very clearly the total inability of the West Pakistan ruling class to solve any of the problems of the 70,000,000 East Pakistani people who represent a majority of the

total population of the country. The last desperate resort of the West Pakistani bourgeoisie was to use the army to maintain its privileges in the East, but the magnificent resistance of the East Bengali nation has retarded this process. The continuous general strike has shown the depth of feeling on the national question which has determined the politics of virtually all the political organizations of East Pakistan.

Bengal has a great historic past: it was in the vanguard of the struggle against British imperialism, a struggle which gave birth to a strong and vigorous revolutionary nationalist tradition. It is this which has made Bengal the best indicator of the future of the entire Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. The uprising in East Bengal is

therefore only the first spark of a struggle which will ultimately transcend the political boundaries of both East and West Bengal and have revolutionary repercussions throughout India.

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International declares its complete solidarity with the heroic struggle of the

Bengali people in their fight against national oppression.

Self-determination for East Pakistan!
For an independent, socialist East Bengal!

Self-determination for the whole Bengali people!

For a united socialist Bengali republic! □

Program of New Turkish Premier

'National Unity' Against Students, Workers

One week after a military ultimatum deposed Premier Suleyman Demirel, President Cevdet Sunay appointed a successor from the ranks of the opposition Republican People's party.

The selection March 19 of Nihat Erim was greeted with surprise and some displeasure by the bourgeois politicians who had been negotiating with Sunay for the privilege of forming the government "above politics" demanded by the military chiefs. Erim resigned from the Republicans in the morning and was designated premier the same afternoon.

Erim's attempts to form a "national coalition" received a setback from his own party March 21, when the Republicans' secretary general and entire central committee resigned to protest his appointment. The party is ruled by a "left-of-center" faction while Erim belongs to the right wing.

The Republican action served to underline the fact that the professions of national unity being mouthed by parliamentary leaders are intended solely as a cover for united attacks on radicalizing sections of the population, particularly the students and the Kurdish minority. In a radio broadcast March 15, Sunay declared:

"We have reached a stage in which it is no longer possible to tolerate differences of belief, policy or behavior among citizens or organizations whose duty it is to enforce the constitution."

An additional indication of the politicians' willingness to meet the military demand for the suppression of dissent was provided in the two days immediately following Demirel's resignation. Twenty-three leaders of the small, reformist Labor party were arrested on charges of conducting "Com-

munist propaganda activities harmful to the Army."

The maneuvering among the parliamentary figureheads was accompanied by conflicts within the armed forces. On March 16, a minor purge was carried out by the top military chiefs in which seven generals, one admiral, and ten colonels were forced to retire and some fifty high officers were transferred to different posts.

The purge appeared to be intended to relieve pressure from lower-ranking officers for direct military rule. In the March 19 *Christian Science Monitor*, Sam Cohen, writing from Istanbul, described the differences within the armed forces.

The ultimatum to Demirel, Cohen said, began with a planned military coup by the heads of the three military branches: General Faruk Gurler of the army, General Muhsin Batur of the air force, and Admiral Celal Yiceoglu of the navy. The three in-

volved a number of other top officers in the projected coup, which was set for March 11.

Cohen wrote that the chief of the general staff, Memduh Tagmac, opposed the coup. On March 11, "... General Tagmac called the three commanders and told them bluntly he knew all about their plans. He asked them to abandon take-over plans because, he said, this would cause a dangerous split in the armed forces and provoke a disastrous civil war."

According to Cohen, Tagmac then won the three commanders to the plan for dumping Demirel that was carried out the next day. It then became necessary for the four to purge the co-conspirators whom they had double-crossed.

From the standpoint of the generals, Tagmac's methods must seem greatly superior to direct military rule. With their ability to veto governments and impose policy, the de facto junta has all the substance of power. At the same time, for the sake of the shadow of that power, the parliamentary parties are willing and eager to provide a democratic cover for the junta. And both sides are happy to collaborate in a campaign of "national unity" against radical students, the Kurds, and dissatisfied layers of the working class. □

Caesar Gets What's Coming Unto Him

The National Federation of Priests' Councils, which represents most Catholic priests in the U. S., on March 17 passed resolutions condemning U. S. participation in the Indochina war and FBI director J. Edgar Hoover's conspiracy charges against the Reverend Philip Berrigan and his five codefendants.

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