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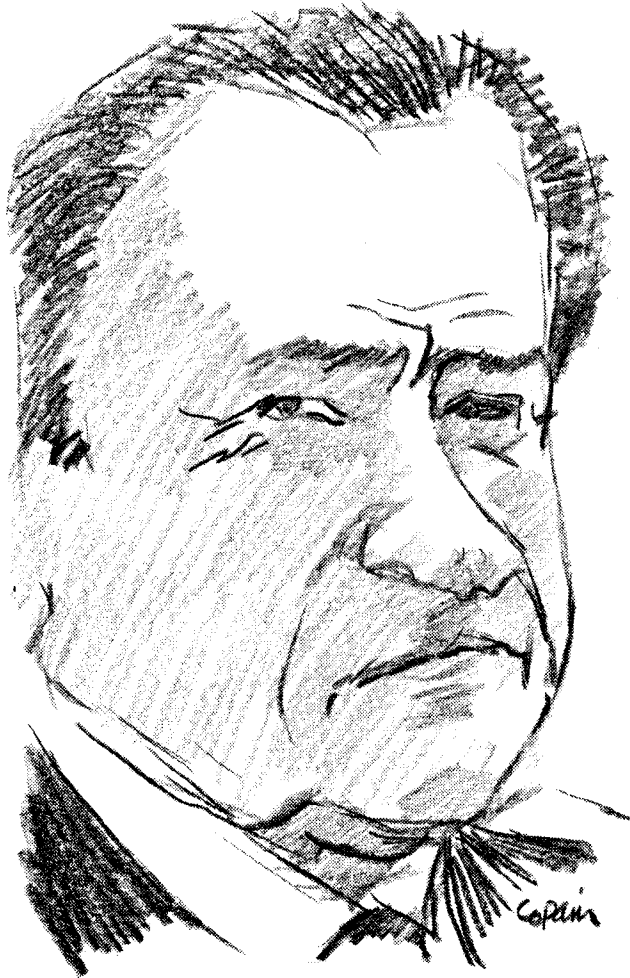
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February 28, 1972

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Bombs Launch Nixon on 'Peace Journey'



**Versailles Conference Calls for
International Antiwar Actions**

**Trotskyist 'Plot'
in Yugoslavia**

Northern Ireland:

**Civil Rights Official
Describes Internment**

NIXON: Confident his hosts in Peking will overlook escalation of air war in Indochina.

Secret Report Published:

Czechoslovak CP Evaluates 'Fraternal' Parties

Chilean CP Calls for Turn to Right

A confidential report by the Chilean Communist party Political Bureau analyzing the reasons for the Unidad Popular [Popular Unity] defeat in the January 16 by-elections was published February 4 in the influential Santiago weekly *El Mercurio*. The CP pundits ascribe the setback to "sectarian extremism" on the part of members of the MIR [Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionario—Movement of the Revolutionary Left]. The MIR, it seems, alienated "middle sectors" of the population who would otherwise have voted for the UP candidates.

The solution, according to the CP, is to attract "progressive" sections of the Christian Democrats, small farmers, and businessmen "who have no common interest with the large landowners and monopolists." Toward this end, the document proposed a dialogue with the Christian Democrats "with a view to searching for points of agreement."

Alfredo Lorca, a Christian Democratic senator, described the report as a "critical study, serious and responsible."

The MIR has blamed the CP for the UP's decline in popular support, charging that the CP had discouraged the "revolutionary mobilization of the masses."

On February 9 the Unidad Popular issued an official statement on the election results that virtually endorsed the CP analysis. The document, which presented the conclusions of a secret meeting between Allende and the leaders of UP's component parties, called for the participation of the Christian Democrats and "independents" in decision making at the factory and local level.

"We call upon the conscience of all people of the left to understand that this is not the moment to raise up false alternatives against the political leadership that the working class has entrusted to Popular Unity," the document said. □

Take a Bow, John

John Mitchell was described February 15 as "the greatest attorney general" in U.S. history. The speaker was his wife, Martha.

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Bombing Raids Launch 'Journey for Peace'

By David Thorstad

It is too early to determine just what will come out of Richard Nixon's China trip. But whatever else might be said about it, it is definitely shaping up as one of the more cynical U. S. election gimmicks in memory.

All stops have been pulled in the American news media to provide total coverage of his every move throughout the eight-day visit, which began February 21 with his arrival in Peking. He was given what is considered a "correct but restrained" welcome by his Chinese hosts.

This appears sufficient to achieve one goal at least—to dominate the news in the United States just prior to the bellwether New Hampshire primary election March 7 and to give Nixon something to coast on throughout the American election campaign. In a sense, even before Nixon's flight reached Peking, his mission was partially accomplished. "He knew that for this flight, no matter what else occurred, he would always be remembered," observed Max Frankel in the February 20 *New York Times*.

The Chinese leaders gave Nixon his "correct" reception despite the fact that his visit is occurring at a time when the U. S. air war in Indochina has been significantly escalated. This escalation demonstrated the U. S. imperialists' evaluation of how much Mao would overlook for the sake of "peaceful coexistence."

The bombing campaign not only included the heaviest air strikes in two years inside South Vietnam and across the borders into Laos and Cambodia, but also more than a week of renewed raids against North Vietnam. These raids, according to Craig Whitney in the February 18 *New York Times*, were "reportedly ordered only recently, with White House approval, to be completed before the President's departure from Washington. The raids ended several hours before Mr. Nixon and his party took off" on February 17.

Despite this assertion, however, an Agence France-Presse dispatch from Hanoi February 19 reported that Hanoi's press director, Ngo Dien, told

reporters that air and artillery attacks on Quangbinh Province continued on February 18. "The Seventh Fleet also bombarded the province of Vinhlinh, he said, adding that these acts showed the falseness of President Nixon's statements on peace and the release of war prisoners." Ngo Dien made his statement before introducing five captured U. S. pilots shot down during bombing raids over Quangbinh Province February 16-17.

Throughout the entire month of January, U. S. officials made dire predictions of a massive offensive by the South Vietnamese liberation forces that was to coincide with the beginning of Tet, the Lunar New Year, on February 14. "The predictions are now being modified," wrote Whitney in the February 16 *Times*. Now, he quotes an "exceptionally well-informed analyst" as saying, "we have discounted a major effort during Tet and think it will come later. . . . We think the final plan has not yet been determined but that in the meantime the enemy is getting his troops in position. They aren't sending these guys down here on a tourist trip." (This last refers to alleged troop buildups in the South by North Vietnam.)

Revision of the earlier predictions has not prevented Washington from escalating its air war. On the contrary, by the time Nixon's China trip began, the much-touted Tet offensive appeared to be more American than Vietnamese. "It is mid-February," editorialized the *Washington Post* February 16, "and it is not the other side which has—so far—launched a Tet offensive on the ground. It is the United States which has launched an offensive of its own—in the air."

In fact, the Nixon administration seems to be taking the approach that the longer there is no NLF offensive, the more likely it becomes. As a result, there is no reason to believe that the current escalated air war will soon subside. Instead, the U. S. government appears bent on keeping up its escalated air war with or without the offensive it has been predicting. Whitney reported from Saigon February

17 that "yesterday there were indications that it will be American policy to keep up the intensified bombing with the reinforced air arm here for months if necessary, as long as it takes for a much publicized country-wide enemy offensive to materialize."

Whitney quotes U. S. military sources as saying, "As long as we assess the enemy threat to be as great as we do today, we can expect the kind of air activity we have now to continue."

According to an Associated Press dispatch from Saigon February 21, intelligence reports had indicated that there would be a "surge of enemy activity to coincide with President Nixon's arrival in China and embarrass the President. But there were fewer incidents than had been expected." Still, it reported sixty-seven attacks by liberation forces over the weekend of the trip and said they "dealt heavy losses to Saigon Government forces."

Intelligence reports do not seem to be much more reliable than the U. S. puppet forces in South Vietnam. Both appear somewhat discredited by the U. S. bombing offensive that began in mid-February. It may not be surprising if intelligence reports of an imminent major offensive turn out to be exaggerated, since, as the *Washington Post* put it in its February 16 editorial, "the daily reporting of imminent trouble in store has become the prudent thing to do in the Vietnam war as a result of intelligence failures in the past." But if the Nixon administration decides to credit its overkill campaign in the air with averting an offensive that could have been embarrassing to Nixon while he was in China, it may discover that its argument actually proves the opposite of what it has been claiming about its Vietnamization program.

What the escalation really shows, says the *Washington Post*, "is that the South Vietnamese, for all the touted success of Vietnamization and for all their newfound self-sufficiency, are still apparently dependent for their security in February, 1972, on a massive, nearly record-breaking exercise of American airpower. Quite apart from whether this wave of new air attacks is the right accompaniment for a Journey for Peace to Peking, it is not likely to be taken in Hanoi as an American vote of confidence in Saigon's capacity to provide for its own defense." □

Versailles Conference Calls for International Antiwar Actions

The Assembly for the Peace and Independence of the Indochinese Peoples, which was held in Versailles February 11-13, called for an extensive program of antiwar activity around the world this spring. The meeting, attended by more than 1,200 delegates from eighty-four countries, was convened by the Stockholm Conference on Vietnam and the World Peace Assembly.

A resolution calling for a World Peace Week in mid-April, culminating in massive demonstrations in all countries on April 22, was introduced by six coordinators of the U.S. National Peace Action Coalition (NPAC), the organization that sponsored the giant April 24, 1971, demonstrations in Washington, D. C., and San Francisco.

This resolution was opposed by representatives of the U.S. People's Coalition for Peace and Justice (PCPJ), who counterposed more diffuse actions, often around issues other than the Indochina war. Delegates of the PCPJ proposed that the conference endorse various actions taking place in the United States between April 1 and May 15, declaring this six-week period to be one of international solidarity with the Indochinese people. But they opposed a call for a specific date for worldwide actions, or a week of mass street demonstrations against the war.

The conference organizers drafted a compromise resolution which listed a series of actions planned for the six-week period, including the April 22 demonstrations.

The rules of the conference did not permit delegates to speak from the floor during the plenary sessions, a rule that prevented a full-scale debate of the issues involved.

But an even more serious denial of democratic procedures was the exclusion from the conference of the French FSI [Front Solidarité Indochine—Indochina Solidarity Front]. The FSI is a coalition of groups that was responsible for organizing the November 6 French antiwar demonstrations, which mobilized more than 30,000 people throughout France.

The exclusion of the FSI was enforced at the behest of the leaders of some French organizations, notably the Communist party. The pretext was that the militant youth organized by the FSI, in which the French Trotskyists play a major role, are "provocateurs," who "divide" the antiwar movement.

Under the conference rules, this decision could not be appealed from the floor of the plenary session. Representatives of NPAC, pointing to the principle of nonexclusion as one of the greatest sources of the strength of the U.S. antiwar movement, protested the FSI's exclusion at several Action Commission meetings. There were other protests from prominent French individuals.

Unfortunately, representatives of the PCPJ failed to join NPAC in this protest. Their abstention was particularly noticeable, since a representative of the PCPJ, Sidney Peck, was given the floor at the opening plenary session as a representative of the U.S. delegation.

Despite their official exclusion, the FSI mobilized a contingent of about 2,500 to march in the demonstration that was held at the conclusion of the conference.

Another source of some friction at the conference was a resolution put forward by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation calling upon "all progressive movements to agitate for the rupture of all state relations held by their Governments with the Lon Nol accomplices of the United States invaders," and to recognize the exiled government of Prince Sihanouk as the legitimate representative of the Cambodian people.

The link between Vietnam and Laos was made with no problem, according to the Paris daily *Le Monde's* account of the conference. But the Russell Foundation resolution on Cambodia met with resistance from the pro-Moscow forces, since the Soviet Union maintains diplomatic relations with the Lon Nol government. The Soviet delegation at first argued that all mention of the Sihanouk govern-

ment be deleted from the conference resolutions on Cambodia. The final resolution said that the Sihanouk government deserved universal recognition, but eliminated the statement that this was "necessary."

After passage of the resolution, the Russell Foundation sent an open letter to Alexei Kosygin, asking that he break relations with Lon Nol and recognize Sihanouk.

While failure to recognize Sihanouk's regime is not difficult to defend, the Soviet delegation apparently found its diplomatic ties with Nixon's Cambodian puppet slightly compromising.

Despite the obstructions of political forces that oppose mass actions on the specific question of the Indochina war, the Versailles conference, one of the largest such gatherings yet held on the international level, did call for simultaneously scheduled mass actions throughout the world on April 22, the next major target date of the U.S. antiwar movement. □

Nixon Resumes Pakistan Aid

In a notification signed February 9 and delivered to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee February 14, Nixon informed Congress that restrictions on U.S. economic and military aid to Pakistan are no longer in force. The statement, according to the February 19 *New York Times*, was sent to Congress without any public announcement.

Nixon claimed that since it had "lost control of its east wing," Pakistan was no longer responsible for events there. Because of this, the reason for the imposition of the ban, which was largely ineffective anyway, has supposedly been removed.

There were also reports in Congress that Nixon is considering replacing the U.S. submarine *Diablo*, which had been lent to Pakistan and lost—there has been no clear explanation of how—during the December war with India. Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr. told the Senate Armed Services Committee February 17 that the United States had decided not to ask Pakistan to pay for the missing submarine.

The *Times* report quoted one "senior official" as saying that "Pakistan is not going to be left defenseless." □

Hunger Strikes Staged in Protest

Shah's Courts Order More Executions

By Javad Sadeeg

Over a hundred Iranian students attending various European universities gathered at the University of Paris campus to begin a hunger strike on February 14, according to a report received on February 19 by *Intercontinental Press*.

A group of twenty students conducted a simultaneous hunger strike in Washington, D. C.; a forty-eight-hour vigil was held in San Francisco; and a protest meeting was held in Chicago.

These actions are part of a worldwide campaign organized by the Confederation of Iranian Students to protest the harsh sentences rapidly being meted out to opponents of the military regime in Iran. The confederation is demanding that the death sentences be rescinded and that the Iranian government permit lawyers and physicians from other countries to visit the prisoners.

The Iranian students in Washington disclosed that a military court has sentenced the following persons to death: Naser Sadeg, Mohammad Bazergani, Masoud Rajavi, and Ali Mihandoust.

The four are part of a group of eleven prisoners whose trial started on February 14 in Teheran. According to the February 15 air edition of the semi-official Teheran daily *Ettelaat*, charges against them include hijacking an airplane, attempting to kidnap the shah's nephew and killing a worker who had come to his aid, producing explosives, and establishing contacts with the Confederation of Iranian Students and the Iraqi regime.

Ettelaat reported that the trial of another group, consisting of four persons, started on February 14 in Teheran. They are charged with attacking a police station in Tabriz, Azerbaijan, and killing a policeman.

A trial involving 143 persons is under way, according to the Paris daily *Le Monde* of February 8. There has been no mention of this in the Iranian press.

The group of twenty-three who appealed their sentences early in Febru-

ary are back in the military courts. Apparently now they are being tried in at least three different military courts. *Ettelaat* reported that Massoud Ahmadzadeh, who was sentenced to death in the first trial, again refused to defend himself in the court of appeals, charging that the military had no jurisdiction over him as a political prisoner.

The Iranian Students Association in New York disclosed on February 14 that the military courts of appeal for the group of twenty-three had confirmed the sentences, issued by the earlier court, of two of the six young revolutionists condemned to death.

The student group also disclosed that parallel to the trial of the first group of twenty revolutionists [see *Intercontinental Press*, February 21, p. 172], there was a second group of oppositionists being tried secretly. No

further information was available.

The trial of the first group of twenty ended on February 8, two days after it had started! Colonel Jafar Vosoug, the presiding officer, told the prisoners that he was happy because the court had examined its conscience and issued a just sentence.

The sentences that made the colonel and his conscience happy included life imprisonment with hard labor for Ali-Reza Shokouhi, Mohammad Ahmadian, Hussein Hashemi and Abdullah Razavi-Emad. Massoud Farah, who was not of legal age at the time of his arrest, was sentenced to three years in a "correctional institution." The following fifteen persons were given from three to ten years: Faraj Sarkouhi, Ali Mehdizadeh, Adel Khamsai, Mir-Latif Gavami, Ali-Akbar Majari, Heibat-Allah Tabibe-Ghafari, Aziz-Allah Tabibe-Ghafari, Murtanza Rahmat-Allahi, Mohammad Farsi, Hadi Ghabrai, Mohammad Gharai, Rahmat Khoshk-Daman, Rahim Ansari-Lari, Hussein Ezzati, and Mahmoud Afshar.

According to the Iranian press the "light sentences" were due to the youth, immaturity, and, in some cases, to the poverty of the defendants. □

Letter From Escaped Prisoner

Torture in Iran's Prisons

[Reza Rezai was one of thirty-seven persons arrested last August in Iran. SAVAK [secret police] agents hoped to use him to capture his brother Ahmed and other members of his "subversive" group. But Rezai escaped, and managed to get a letter about the torture of Iranian political prisoners out of the country.]

[On February 12 the Paris daily *Le Monde* printed excerpts, which we have translated below, of that letter.]

[On February 14, apparently annoyed by the contents of the letter, the Iranian government tried to discredit it by claiming that Rezai had not escaped, but had been released after investigations proved his innocence and after he collaborated with the authorities by giving them the names of opponents of the shah.]

[On February 17 *Le Monde* reported the circumstances of Rezai's escape,

demonstrating that once again the shah's representatives had lied. *Le Monde* noted that if Rezai had indeed been released, one could well wonder why he still lives in hiding, instead of resuming a normal life.]

[According to "well-established information," the story of Rezai's escape is as follows:]

[When he was first captured, Rezai offered the authorities a deal. His jailers gave him five days to reveal the names of his group's members and the locations of their arms. On the fifth day his comrades, who had already spotted their police pursuers, disguised themselves and dispersed through the quarter where Rezai had been active. Ahmed, disguised as a shoe polisher, put the escape plan into action.]

[Rezai told his captors that the proprietor of a public bath near the Teheran bazaar could give him informa-

tion on his brother's whereabouts. But the police, to avoid arousing suspicion, would have to wait outside. Once inside, Rezai went through a hidden door to a different street and disappeared.]

* * *

The torture has two aims. First, to frighten the opponents of the regime in order to make them abandon their sacred struggle. Then, to make the political prisoner talk, reveal the names of active oppositionists. Since the advent of the urban guerrilla in Iran, the intensity of torture has increased. The worst of the brutalities are inflicted on the guerrilla during the first twenty-four hours after arrest. He is lashed with a whip made of electric wire, and given crushing blows by judo and karate experts.

Then he falls into a coma. Usually his hands, feet, or nose is broken.

Then the SAVAK agents come to collect confessions. The prisoner has to sign a statement saying that he was not tortured but was treated well. These confessions go straight to the prosecutor's dossier.

Here are some of the tortures I have witnessed. SAVAK agents made Asghar Badizadegan, an engineer, sit in a sort of electric chair where they burned him for four hours. He fell into a coma. The burns had reached his spinal column and gave off such a stench that nobody could come near our cell. He did not die but has had to undergo three operations. He has to be supported in order to walk.

Mehdi Savalani, a member of the Stahkal group,* can no longer walk: both his legs were broken. Torture with electric prods is the most common. The shocks leave no trace but completely paralyze the body. Injections of medicines, like cardiazol, and tearing out fingernails are likewise common. The prisoner is also subjected to intense light from powerful projectors, to ultrasonic waves, and to blows on the head that cause madness, blindness, or deafness.

I also saw a prisoner who could not urinate because weights had been

suspended from his penis.

The prisons are so dank and dismal—sugar kept there melts and attracts ants—that even guards refuse to work in such places. A cell has an area of 1.20 meters by 2 meters [about 4 feet by 6 1/2 feet] and a height of 2 meters. There is a little window 30 by 40 centimeters [about 12 by 16 inches]. Inside the cell there is no light bulb. The cell is too small even for one person, but we lived three to a cell.

The guards are ordinary *gendarmes*. They are constantly told that we are traitors and assassins, and that they have to be wary of us. In spite of this, they were influenced by our way of acting and our behavior, and they tried to help us in any way possible.

They ask why the regime tortures us, since we are generally engineers, doctors, or ministers of religion. When we say our prayers or read the Koran,

they look at us strangely. One day one of them asked, "Are you really Muslims?"

In the Evine prison nobody is allowed to read, to exercise, or even simply to walk around and breathe air outside the cell. Prisoners who talk aloud or sing softly are beaten.

Our lot would be better if we were prisoners of war, for thanks to international law, we would then benefit from some advantages. Prisoners at Evine do not have the right to be visited by their families. If someone gets sick, the doctor, also a SAVAK agent, comes—not to examine us, but to make us talk.

The regime shows no compassion for the prisoners' relatives. If the police are trying to capture somebody, they will take members of his family, even old people and children, as hostages. □

Czech CP Evaluates 'Fraternal' Parties

A secret report to the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist party was excerpted in the February 12 issue of the Paris daily *Le Monde*. The report was delivered last October 21 by Vasil Bilak, a member of the party presidium and secretariat. The excerpts printed by *Le Monde* dealt with the policies of several Communist parties in other countries.

Bilak, who is responsible for relations with "fraternal" parties, is described by *Le Monde* as a "notorious pro-Soviet." He has played an important role in trying to get the party to admit the correctness of the Soviet-led invasion in August 1968. In criticizing the policies of several Communist parties, Bilak is thought to have voiced the views of the Soviet bureaucracy.

Most of the excerpts in *Le Monde* deal with the Rumanian Communist party. The policies of the Rumanian party, says Bilak, "disturb not only party members, but each and every one of our citizens who cherishes socialism." He blames the Rumanian party for the fact that the two parties no longer "speak the same language."

"The main reason for these differences between Communist and workers' parties, including ours and the leadership of the Rumanian CP, is the latter's tendency to counterpose

the national interests of Rumania to the internationalist obligations incumbent upon it as a member of the socialist community."

Bilak accuses Rumania of shirking its responsibilities as a member of the Warsaw Pact and makes a thinly veiled reference to Rumania's refusal to support the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. "In the face of demands that the unity of the socialist countries be strengthened and the process of socialist integration be deepened, the Rumanian leadership emphasizes principles of noninterference and sovereignty as if they were completely divorced from questions of class."

Rumania's lack of "internationalism" is seen as the logical corollary to its nationalist outlook, for which Bilak has strong words: "In the ideological work of the party, everything that is national is dealt with in the least critical way and is held up to praise, whether it is the history of Rumania or literary creation and the arts in general. There are even references to the extraordinary qualities of the Rumanian people. Even if we were to show the greatest broad-mindedness and grant certain specific cases—though we do not know what they might be—we nevertheless cannot close our eyes to the fact that in mat-

* Stahkal is a village in Gilan province on the Caspian Sea. Last March 17 a group of thirteen alleged members of a guerrilla unit operating in the area were executed after secret trials. On February 2 Savalani was sentenced to life imprisonment at hard labor.

ters of foreign policy the Rumanian leadership is adopting an attitude that is directed against the interests of the socialist community and, in the final analysis, against the very interests of the Rumanian people."

The trip to China last June by party chief Nicolae Ceausescu "evoked great anxiety not only in our party and our republic, but also in other socialist countries and in progressive circles throughout the entire world," says Bilak. "Even the bourgeois press called this trip a demonstration against the USSR and against the Warsaw Pact as a whole."

While Bilak said it was his "duty" to inform the central committee of "these serious problems," he stressed that it was "unthinkable that these questions be publicly mentioned in party organizations or that any polemic relating to them be conducted in the press, radio, or television."

In another section of his speech, Bilak said relations with Yugoslavia had improved, but still all was not well: "There are forces in that country who are interested in neither the socialist perspectives of Yugoslavia nor an improvement in its relations with the countries that make up the essential core of world socialism."

He criticized Yugoslavia's policy of "alleged noninvolvement" in international relations and chided the League of Communists of Yugoslavia for not having "control of the written and spoken press in hand." While Bilak claimed that "we do not want to interfere in Yugoslav affairs," he went on to offer some advice based on the experiences the Czechoslovak party has gone through in the past few years: ". . . we are interested in seeing that socialist principles be strengthened in this country and that its leadership operate in accord with the principles of Marxism-Leninism. On the basis of our experience, we tell the Yugoslav representatives frankly that in a time of sharp class struggle, issuing warnings and appeals to the adversaries of socialism does not work. Inconsistencies and an abandonment of Marxist-Leninist positions are always paid for dearly."

Bilak also noted that "an absolute majority of fraternal parties support the present policy of the Czechoslovak CP" because "our experience in the struggle against opportunism effectively helps them in the struggle against opportunism in their ranks."

This is how Bilak sums up the lessons he sees in the way Communist parties reacted to the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia: "The opinion has been expressed in certain parties that they cannot revise their incorrect stand on the 1968 Czechoslovak events without aiming a blow at their unity and weakening their authority over their population. Yet life shows that exactly the opposite happens. Those fraternal parties that had a clearly internationalist position from the very beginning, or that have revised their original unilateral opinion on the Czechoslovak events have strengthened their own ranks and their links with the working class and all the laborers in their country." The only parties that still "have reservations" about the matter, Bilak said, are those of Australia, Great Britain, Spain, and Italy.

The French Communist party did not appear pleased to see itself omitted from Bilak's list. And so on February 12, while several of its leaders were on a trip to Czechoslovakia, it took the opportunity in its newspaper *l'Humanité* to reiterate its "disagreement" with the invasion of Czechoslovakia and its dedication to "respect for national sovereignty and independence" and "the idea that socialist democracy is afraid of neither criticism nor opposition that remains legal."

Referring to the present wave of repression sweeping Czechoslovakia, it reminded its readers of Gustav Husak's promise that there would be no "prefabricated political trials" of persons associated with the 1968 Prague Spring.

Bilak referred briefly to differences with the Italian Communist party, some of whose "prominent officials" have engaged in "violent attacks on our party and open interference in our internal affairs."

He displayed generosity toward those CPs that "do not yet understand what was going on in our party and our country" and exhorted the Central Committee to be "patient until life and time confirm that truth is on our side."

Finally, Bilak took up the question of the execution of the Communists in the Sudan, pointing out that "there were factors in the Sudan events that it is impossible to speak about publicly." This refers to the "errors" of the party leadership, the "group around Mahjoub," the party's general secretary. Their error was to criticize

the revolutionary democratic regime of the "progressive officers of Nimeiry." "Neither we nor the other fraternal parties knew anything" about the military coup d'état that Mahjoub was preparing, Bilak said. The main thing now, he concluded, is to help the Sudanese Communists recognize their errors and act accordingly. □

Italian CP Magazine Hits Purge in Prague

"The news of interrogations and arrests of intellectuals and journalists in Prague is serious news indeed," writes *Rinascita*, the weekly magazine of the Italian Communist party, according to the February 12 *Le Monde*. "Serious in itself and because of the disturbing questions it raises. In itself, because we know some of the comrades who have been affected . . . and we consider them to be Communists both in training and in their long life as militants. . . ."

"In a more general sense, the news is serious because of the various questions it raises. Since the end of the Czechoslovak 'new course,' we have witnessed different phases that have little by little brought about an exclusion of the main leaders of the 'new course' itself from political life, and a deep and radical purge in the ranks of the party, which then spread to the unions, professional organizations, the university, and to organizations of intellectuals and young people. We did not approve—we expressed our disagreement in these very columns—of a method that tended to resolve sharp problems of political opposition by removing militants from society and humiliating them by forcing them to hunt down any kind of work they could find just to live."

The magazine expresses fear that the current wave of arrests may be a prelude to new trials, pointedly wondering "if the path chosen in August 1968 and thereafter has not only not solved any problems, but if it has not actually created new ones, giving rise to new, more acute crises."

The article concludes by noting that "the strength of the working class in power must never be arbitrary," that "coercion must never contaminate the substance and form of real socialist legality," and that "revolutionary discipline must never aim to silence disagreements. . . ." □

A Trotskyist 'Plot' in Yugoslavia

[The following article has been translated from the February 12 issue of *Rouge*, weekly newspaper of the Ligue Communiste, French section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

Borba [newspaper of the Savez Komunistista Jugoslavije— League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY)]:

"Belgrade security agents yesterday arrested M. Nikolic and P. Imsirovic, students in Belgrade, for having organized against the people and the state, and for enemy propaganda (Art. 118). This arrest came as a consequence of the distribution of leaflets and various materials whose contents were hostile to the state. . . . The group was linked to certain groups and organizations abroad" (January 8, 1972).

One looks in vain for evidence of the alleged leaflets. The charges smell like those of the "bad" Stalinist trials of the past. But the wheels are not as well oiled as they were when Big Brother was in charge. Again it is Branko Pridicevic* who, in a meeting of the LCY at the University of Belgrade, is the embarrassed spokesman for the bureaucracy.

But why go after the far left? Does the danger really come from the left? The speaker replies "that the Communists in the LCY at the university never thought so and that the real danger comes from the right." But then why is the LCY undertaking this action? "Because this left-wing extremism was often better organized and more aggressive; because it used slogans that were very close to the official slogans, and because the far left pretended to be in favor of a more strict application of the decisions of the LCY. . . ."

Aside from one very subjective opinion ("pretended"), there is nothing in

all this but compliments for the actions of honest Communist militants!

Could the essence of the matter lie somewhere else? "Through its adventurism and its irresponsible actions, extremism on the left has often opened up a path for extremism on the right and for different kinds of conservative restoration. . . ."

You could say that this sounds like the French CP! Several persons in the hall were stunned. No definite collusion, whether direct or indirect, has been revealed that would link the arrested students or their alleged group to the reactionary forces recently denounced in Croatia.

Well? Someone voices surprise that "the members of the Trotskyist movement should be called to order [sic!] for organizing in underground cells, when not long ago the Student Cultural Center quite legally invited Ernest Mandel, one of the leaders of the Fourth International, to speak."

And the response: "All persons have

a right to their opinions, to believe more in Trotsky than Lenin, more in Proudhon than Marx. In a democratic country, no one can be persecuted for theoretical differences, but must be prosecuted for any illegal activities or for organizing an underground party." And the enlightening conclusion: "Our goal is ideological clarification, the settling of accounts with foreign ideologies and not with individuals."

Thus the formal arguments do not even conceal the objectives that are being pursued—it is definitely a matter of settling accounts with an "ideology." But then why arrest individuals and not let us know about their "ideology"? What has brought about this change in Pridicevic? Could it not be the fact that these "ideologies" are becoming less and less "foreign"? And at a time when capital—very foreign, too, although you do not seem to be afraid of it—is exploiting 1,000,000 *émigré* Yugoslav workers or is trying to challenge the self-management that you defend? Could it not be that what has changed is a social situation that is in danger of giving the *strength of slogans* to the "theoretical" differences that you tolerated yesterday? □

Send Ultimatum to Makarios

Greek Colonels Seek to Take Over Cyprus

On February 11 the Greek military junta delivered a virtual ultimatum to Cypriot President Archbishop Makarios, demanding that he reorganize his government to include reactionary advocates of *enosis*, or union, with Greece. The message, delivered by Greek Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs Constantine Panayotakos, made three basic proposals: that Makarios turn over to the United Nations "peace-keeping" force a \$2,500,000 shipment of arms imported clandestinely from Czechoslovakia; that Makarios agree to the formation of an anti-Communist "national unity government"; and that he recognize the principle that "Athens is the center of Hellenism, of which Cyprus is only a part."

In a press conference held in Nicosia, the Cypriot capital, on February

12, Panayotakos said that bloodshed would be inevitable in Cyprus if Makarios did not heed the junta's demand to keep arms out of the hands of "irresponsible elements."

On February 14 Panayotakos said that if Makarios rejected the proposals, "Greece cannot accept any responsibility for any actions by elements other than itself, whether in the national or international sphere." The statement was a veiled threat that if Makarios did not yield, the underground forces of General George Grivas would be unleashed against the Cypriot government.

Grivas, a reactionary former general in the national guard, returned to Cyprus from Greece last September. Since then he has been organizing, with the covert support of the Greek government, bands of armed

* Secretary of the League of Yugoslav Communists at the university. In the January 22 issue of *Rouge*, we reported Pridicevic's demand that measures be taken to repress a "very well organized and skillful" far-left group.

men supporting *enosis*. In an apparent attempt to combat Grivas's plan, Makarios reportedly purchased the Czechoslovak arms. Pro-Grivas sources claim that 3,350 cases of arms and 7,500 cases of ammunition have been stored in the Nicosia chancery, Makarios's headquarters. Previously, Cyprus had been almost completely dependent on Greece for arms.

The aim of the Greek government is to bring down the Makarios regime. A transitional step would be to gain representation of Grivas's forces in the cabinet. In March, talks between Greece and Turkey on the future of Cyprus are scheduled to begin. It is rumored that Greece has obtained Turkish agreement on the rough outlines of a plan to join Cyprus to Greece, with certain territorial concessions to Turkey. (The population of the nominally independent island is about four-fifths Greek and one-fifth Turkish.) Such a plan is opposed by Makarios.

On February 12 unofficial reports from Nicosia said that Makarios had rejected the Greek ultimatum as "completely unacceptable and humiliating." But so far there has been no formal Cypriot response. The February 16 *New York Times* quoted a Cypriot official, who refused to be identified, as saying, "We are going to take our time about replying; we will defuse the situation. Then we will reject the demands."

On the morning of February 15 a crowd of several thousand Greek Cypriots gathered in front of Makarios's residence to urge him to reject the ultimatum. Makarios came out to address the crowd. He said that "there is no power able to bend the resistance of the Greek Cypriot people."

By February 16 it appeared that Makarios had at least temporarily thwarted the junta's plans. On that day, school principals, normally partial to *enosis*, let pupils leave school to demonstrate in favor of Makarios's rejection of the ultimatum. (As of that date, pro-*enosis* forces had been able to mobilize only several hundred demonstrators.)

The February 17 *Christian Science Monitor* reported that "trustworthy" sources in Athens said that Soviet Ambassador Kliment Levitchine had "warned" Greek alternate Foreign Minister Christian Xanthopoulos-Palamas against taking any action to depose Makarios or to partition Cyprus be-

tween Greeks and Turks. The Cypriot Communist party has been a key supporter of Makarios.

The intervention of the Greek junta represents a change in the usual imperialist and proimperialist operating procedure in Cyprus. In the past the imperialists have deliberately fostered intercommunal rioting between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, using the violence as an excuse to maintain a large military presence. This time, the Greek regime seems to have opted for a vigorous push to prepare the way for, if not *enosis*, at least the establishment of a Greek puppet regime, using the Grivasite armed threat as a battering ram.

Underlying the conflict is the issue of the imperialist military bases on the island, whose presence was guar-

anteed by the Zurich-London accords of 1959. These accords also established a communal governmental system on Cyprus designed to keep the country in constant turmoil.

There is widespread opposition to the bases in Cyprus, and under the present regime it is doubtful that new NATO encampments could be created. *Enosis*, or the establishment of a pro-Greek government, would prepare the way for the building of new bases. The U.S. and Greek governments are presently discussing the establishment of a U.S. naval base near Piraeus, Greece. Those negotiations, and perhaps the latest Greek moves in Cyprus as well, are part of a U.S. plan for expanding the facilities of the Sixth Fleet, which is based in the eastern Mediterranean. □

Rahman Forced to Intervene

Mukti Bahini, Regular Army Clash

Soldiers of the East Bengal Regiment (EBR, the new regular army of Bangladesh) fought with Mukti Bahini militiamen February 16 in a two-and-a-half-hour battle that was ended only through the personal intervention of Prime Minister Mujibur Rahman.

According to an Associated Press dispatch, the confrontation began when the militiamen went to the headquarters of the EBR to complain about wages, food, and facilities. A scuffle broke out, and the two sides took up defensive positions and opened fire. About a thousand men were said to have been involved, and thousands of rounds were exchanged.

Rahman rushed to the scene when he was informed of the fighting and exhorted the militia to "seek the good of the nation rather than their own comfort." Rahman's prestige was apparently able to carry the day. The militiamen ceased firing and shouted, "Long live Mujib!"

The clash was the first between the regular army and the rank-and-file freedom fighters to be reported in the Western press.

It underlies one of the major problems confronting the Rahman government: how to prevent the economic demands raised during the national

liberation struggle from being realized through the armed mass action of the vanguard of that struggle. Rahman's proclaimed adherence to British-style "socialism" will clearly block the radical solution of the vast economic and social crisis facing the country. That he showed up personally to deal with the confrontation indicates that he is keenly aware of the potential explosiveness of such clashes.

So far Rahman has been aided in his efforts to foster an artificial "national unity" by the opportunism of his "leftist" opposition. The popular peasant leader Maulana Bhashani (head of the formerly pro-Peking section of the National Awami party) has, according to the February 16 *Le Monde*, returned to Bangladesh from India and is urging all parties of the left to cooperate with the regime to aid national construction.

Muzaffar Ahmed's generally pro-Soviet National Awami party has said that "all the fruits of independence should be distributed among all classes." Neither of these accommodating political formations, it should be noted, has been offered positions in Rahman's exclusively Awami League regime, despite the fact that Bhashani returned to Bangladesh at the behest of Rahman. □

Jury Chosen in Kissinger 'Kidnap' Case

Twelve jurors were selected February 8 in the trial of the Reverend Philip Berrigan and six other antiwar activists in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Testimony is expected to begin February 21.

The defendants are accused of conspiring to kidnap presidential adviser Henry Kissinger and hold him hostage in exchange for an end to the Vietnam war; to blow up heating tunnels in Washington, D. C.; and to raid government offices. The "plot" was first announced by FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover in November 1970.

The defendants are three Roman Catholic priests and a nun, a former priest, a former nun, and a Pakistani scholar. All face possible five-year sentences.

An eighth defendant, Theodore Glick, who has requested permission to serve as his own counsel, will be tried separately.

On January 26 it was announced that the Reverend Daniel Berrigan would be paroled February 24 from the federal prison in Danbury, Connecticut, where he is serving a three-year prison term for burning draft records in Catonsville, Maryland, in 1968. Poor health was the reason the United States Parole Board gave for the decision to release him.

Daniel Berrigan was named as a co-conspirator in the Harrisburg case, but was not indicted. He is a brother of Philip Berrigan, who is currently serving a six-year term for the same burning of draft records.

The jury, composed of nine women and three men, is predominantly white, Protestant, and from a rural, small-town area that has not seen a great deal of antiwar activity. One of the defendants, Sister Elizabeth McAlister, accused the government of "judicial gerrymandering" by choosing Harrisburg as the site for the trial.

It is not easy to find people in the United States who have no opinion on the war in Vietnam, but this is evidently what U. S. District Judge R. Dixon Herman has attempted to do. All but two of the jurors, according to Homer Bigart in the February 9 *New York Times*, have "flexible opin-

ions or none at all" on the war. Only one said he had done much reading on the war.

Another juror said she thought that "possibly it was bad manners" for the Pakistani defendant, Eqbal Ahmad, to have condemned American policy in Indochina. She explained that she had spent two years in Thailand as the wife of a civil engineer "without meeting an agent of the Central In-



PHILIP BERRIGAN

telligence Agency and without uttering a critical word about the host country." She was informed by the court that aliens in the United States still have the right to express opinions.

On February 17, Ahmad's attorney, Leonard Boudin, filed a motion to sever Ahmad's trial from that of the other defendants and move it to some other part of the country on the grounds that a nonwhite alien could not receive a fair trial in that part of Pennsylvania. The other defendants joined his motion for severance, Bigart reported in the February 18 *Times*, explaining that "the 'special prejudice' against Dr. Ahmad was so great that they could not obtain a fair trial in

Harrisburg if they were tried jointly with him."

Ahmad, who is not an "ideological pacifist" like the others, said he thinks the government may be trying him with the pacifists in "an attempt to water down the commitment of the others to nonviolence."

Further evidence that the jury might be prejudiced came when a former prospective juror for the trial charged that "six or seven women among the prospective jurors openly discussed the guilt or innocence of the defendants," although this was a violation of the judge's instructions. Robert Baltimore, a Black state welfare official, said that one woman subsequently chosen as a juror had stated in a loud voice that "priests and nuns shouldn't be involved in politics."

"I'd hate to face this jury if I were one of the defendants," he added.

Despite these indications of possible prejudice among the jurors, a local attorney for the defendants, J. Thomas Menaker, said that he is satisfied that the jury is "fair."

The U. S. government hopes to use the Berrigan trial to intimidate the massive antiwar opposition within the United States. This would not be an easy task even if the government had a sound case, which, suggests an article in the February 14 issue of *Newsweek*, it does not.

According to the article, the case against the Harrisburg defendants is built largely on the evidence of an FBI informer with "shaky credibility." The informer, Boyd Douglas Jr., has spent seven of his thirty-one years behind prison bars for various run-ins with the law, such as passing bad checks. *Newsweek* called Douglas the government's "flawed star witness," and said the defense was expected to attempt to discredit his testimony by exposing him as a "seasoned criminal and pathological liar."

Douglas was a prisoner in the Lewisburg penitentiary when Father Philip Berrigan began serving his six-year sentence in May 1970. He is said to have served as a courier between Berrigan and peace activists on the outside. He was able to do this because, while still a prisoner, he was enrolled as a student at nearby Bucknell University on a daytime study-release program.

Some of the questions *Newsweek* expects Douglas to be asked during cross-examination are: Did he "delib-

erately abet the unwary defendants as an agent provocateur? Did he fabricate his complex tale to win favors and finally parole? And, in a large context, can the government's massive effort to convict the Harrisburg Seven succeed if it indeed turns on the dubious if sworn word of a Boyd Douglas?"

U.S.A.

Conference Sets 'Abortion Action Week'

Boston

More than 1,300 women from across the country gathered at Boston University February 11-13 for the second national conference of the Women's National Abortion Action Coalition (WONAAC). The conference represented an important step forward in the national campaign to repeal all anti-abortion laws and demonstrated WONAAC's position in the forefront of this struggle.

By an overwhelming majority, the delegates accepted a proposal to make May 1-6 Abortion Action Week. Activities will include debates, teach-ins, and other educational actions, and will culminate in demonstrations May 6 for WONAAC's three demands: repeal of all anti-abortion laws, repeal of restrictive contraception laws, and an end to forced sterilization.

The conference also endorsed the proposed Abortion Rights Act of 1972, which is to be introduced in Congress by Congresswoman Bella Abzug of New York. The bill states: "Neither the United States nor any State shall enact or enforce any law . . . which infringes the right of any woman to terminate a pregnancy that she does not wish to continue, or which deprives any woman of adequate medical assistance in the exercise of such right."

Workshops during the conference discussed various proposals for WONAAC strategy and orientation, as well as specific projects, constituencies, and organizational questions. In the workshops and plenary sessions, different perspectives toward the abortion struggle were presented, and those projected at the founding conference in July 1971 were reaffirmed.

Proposals to change the principal

A kind of "countertrial" is being held outside the walls of the Federal Building in Harrisburg, where the trial is taking place. "There are nightly meetings in churches," Bigart reported in the February 6 *New York Times*, "where speakers charge that the Government's real purpose is to suppress dissent." □

demand of the organization to "Free Abortion on Demand" were discussed fully but rejected by the delegates. While no one opposed free abortion

Interview With Prins Gunasekera

The Fight for Civil Liberties in Ceylon

[The following interview with Prins Gunasekera was conducted by an American visitor in Colombo on January 17. Gunasekera is a member of parliament from Habaraduwa electoral district in the southern province. Elected in May 1970 as a candidate of the Sri Lanka Freedom party (SLFP), he broke with the government and the SLFP because of the repression. He is presently general secretary of the Human and Democratic Rights Organization.]

Q. When and why did you break from the government? What sort of repression is taking place?

A. The government, since the declaration of emergency in March 1971, has been following a policy of repression and denial of ordinary human and democratic rights, the right of organization, the right of public meetings, the right of association, all of which we have enjoyed in a democratic setup in this country.

The outbreak of insurgency in April last year gave occasion for the government to take very drastic steps against the youth.

They never for a moment attempted to seek a political solution to the un-

rest that was sweeping the country. Their only answer to the insurrection was massive armed retaliation against unarmed youth. They called out the police and the three armed services; although the incidents in the April insurrection were confined to two or three days, action by the army continued for months. Even today, the country is living in fear of the police and the armed forces.

The curfew and the unlimited powers of the police and army, the restrictions on the newspapers about publication of news, censorship, absolute denial of the right of association, all these things have contributed to the fear that seems to pervade the country today.

Nobody wants to criticize the government openly. The 16,000 youths arrested at various stages since the insurrection are being kept in camps throughout the country. Of the four universities, two have in fact been transformed into prison camps. During the last ten months, these youths have been kept in custody without charges being preferred, without the right to have lawyers interview them, without knowing when they are going to be charged in a court of law.

In the meantime, the ministers have

indicated on one or two occasions in parliament that new laws are being enacted to deal with the situation, particularly to charge these young men in courts of law and to conduct trials.

In our country, under existing laws, a confession made to a police officer is not admissible in court. Apparently the government is unable to bring these young men and women before a court of law and place any evidence against them, because there is no evidence against them. A good many of them, perhaps as many as 15,000 out of the 16,000, would have to be set free according to the existing law.

There are maybe a few hundred cases where young men have been arrested on some charge, like attempted arson, attacking a police station, attacking an individual. But most have been taken in on the basis of a denunciation by an enemy or for political purposes.

According to existing law, they cannot be charged before a court of law. Presumably the intention of the government is to enact a new law so that a statement recorded by a police officer while the detainee was in custody could be used against him as evidence. This is going to be fought very hard by me, even if it has to be a single-handed fight in Parliament.

That is the situation the government faces today as regards the 16,000 prisoners. As far as development, the economic activities of the country are almost at a standstill. The financial situation has deteriorated very badly; we have been living almost from hand to mouth from loans given to us by the IMF [International Monetary Fund] and the World Bank, and in fact I understand Mr. McNamara is due here on the 22nd [of January] perhaps to negotiate another loan on their own conditions.

My theory is that one of the conditions will be that a pro-American politician should be given a place in the cabinet: Mr. Junius Richard Jayewardene, who was the pro-American politician in the United National party government, which was defeated in the 1970 elections. He is a notoriously pro-American politician. We call him Yankee Dicky.

Q. Do you think there is any particular reason why at this time the United States might want to impose such conditions?

A. They would be very happy to have their man in the cabinet. Particularly after the insurrection, the government is moving to the right, more to the right than they were. If American aid is forthcoming, the American government would be very happy to have their representative in the cabinet, just as in a private company, when a bank gives a loan, they would be very happy to have their representative on the board of directors of the company.

Q. Do you think the recent events in Bangladesh and what is widely considered to be an increase in Soviet power in the Indian Ocean area is a factor in American decision-making in this regard?

A. Yes. Because of the widespread public opinion in America that America should get out of Vietnam — and I believe that in a couple of months the last American soldier will leave the soil of Vietnam — the influence of America in this region will be almost nothing if they have to leave the entirety of Vietnam, withdraw their Seventh Fleet and go back home.

So if they can have their foothold in Ceylon in this government through their representative in the cabinet, I'm sure America would pay considerably for that.

Q. Do you think that the U.S. had any role in the declaration of the emergency and the initial events several months back?

A. In your country you would be surprised to know that the emergency was declared within two or three days after the first IMF loan was granted to Ceylon, of \$24,000,000, if I remember correctly, in March 1971.

Within two or three days of that loan being granted, they declared an emergency here, and there was some incident near the American embassy, which was used by this government as a provocation to declare the state of emergency. I really see some sinister association between these incidents and the American interests in this country — the loans to this country and the simultaneous or connected political developments in this country.

Mr. Jayewardene, since the time I went over to the opposition, has been hinting that he is willing to cooperate with the government. The role he has

been playing in the opposition has really not been that of opposition. He had one foot in the government all the time; I kept telling him, "For god's sake, go." And I'm sure that at the moment he is packing his bags, so to say, to walk over after McNamara finalizes his political conditions for the loan.

Q. When did you decide to break with the government and with the SLFP?

A. My decision was in early October, soon after the visit of Lord Avebury to Ceylon. He was designated by Amnesty International in London to visit Ceylon and report to them on the conditions in these camps, the possibility of giving the prisoners legal assistance, and the possibility of winning the release of anybody who could have been released without taking them before courts.

My association with Lord Avebury was prevented by the government. I was still in the government when I tried to help Lord Avebury find out the truth. The government, on the other hand, did not cooperate with him. They refused to be of any assistance, whereas I assisted him considerably to unearth a good many of the atrocities that were alleged to have been committed by the police and the armed services. Wide publicity was given to that fact by the newspapers, and the government did not like it very much. They tried to suspend me from participating as a member of the parliamentary group.

The government, as a retaliation for my cooperation with Lord Avebury, withdrew the right of parliamentarians to visit prison camps. I protested against this, and wrote to every member of parliament asking that the prohibition be withdrawn. Before I could meet with my colleagues, I was suspended from the parliamentary group.

I protested, the parliamentarians protested, and the order was withdrawn. Subsequently I pointed out that my suspension itself was irregular. They withdrew it, but nevertheless the issue was one concerning the right of members of parliament and the general and ordinary human right of a person to have access to a lawyer. The issues were so important that I said I'm breaking away from this government.

Q. Then you eventually formed the Human and Democratic Rights Organization?

A. The emergency that was declared in March continued unabated. The democratic way of life was almost disappearing. So a few of us lawyers decided to meet in the law library.

There is an association of advocates called Council of Advocates. I gave notice of a resolution to the Council of Advocates, signed by eighty-seven other members, that the state of emergency should be withdrawn forthwith. That resolution was passed early in November. Immediately after the passing of that resolution, active members formed a group in order to implement it.

It is that group that ultimately formed the Human and Democratic Rights Organization.

The Communist party's representatives in the Council of Advocates supported the move by the United National party and the progovernment members who sought to defeat the resolution. That was the new alignment of forces: the UNP (extreme right-wing conservative party), the SLFP (the government party), and the Communist party, which is part of the coalition. They all got together and could muster only nineteen votes against the forty-odd votes that we received at the meeting.

Q. So then the Human and Democratic Rights Organization was formed in November. What does this organization stand for?

A. Primarily, to have the state of emergency discontinued forthwith, to restore all human and democratic rights that have been taken away in the state of emergency, and to provide some compensation to those victims of atrocities and terrorist activities by the police and armed forces.

Q. What activities does this organization carry out?

A. At the moment we have received a large number of representatives from detainees who are being held in the camps. Their parents, their relatives, their brothers and sisters, all have made representations to us to move in the matter and get them released.

We are now negotiating with the

government, representing detainees officially, asking for information; in fact several have already been released.

Q. Have many people come to talk to you about things that happened?

A. Yes, even before the formation of the organization, I, as a member of parliament, advertised in the newspapers to set up an organization called Lost Persons Bureau. Since the insurrection, the police and armed forces have been very arbitrary, arresting persons, taking them away, and some of them are not alive today.

They were taken to the nearest cemetery and shot, sometimes buried half-dead. The parents and the relatives of such missing persons have written to us in the thousands. I have not been able to handle the correspondence personally; I am handing it over to the Human and Democratic Rights Organization to take up their cases.

Q. What sort of conditions exist in the prisons to your knowledge?

A. The information that comes to me is that the prison conditions are not very satisfactory. In fact, Mr. Rohan Wijeweera [the leader of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna] has written to me from the prison, through his brother, that his physical health has deteriorated, that he's unable to stand, that he has boils on his tongue, which are signs of malnutrition. I have brought this matter to the attention of the authorities.

Q. Is this kind of treatment common?

A. If that is how the leader of the movement is treated, I dare not think of how the ordinary nondescript follower, the ordinary simple young man arrested in a distant village, is being treated; maybe much worse.

Q. Are arrests still going on?

A. In certain areas, yes.

Q. What sort of aid could you use from people in other countries?

A. Particularly for those destitute families who have been reduced to pauperism by their breadwinners being taken into custody, by the atro-

cities of the police. Sometimes the police just walk into a house, ask the people to get out, collect all the furniture and belongings and set fire to them inside the house. The poor family is reduced to begging.

In such cases, the need is for human sympathy and some kind of assistance so that they can at least keep their body and soul together until their breadwinner comes out of prison.

Q. Is there a way to send money?

A. Yes. In fact our organization has just received assistance from a Ceylon committee that was formed in London, and we are appealing to international organizations to send any kind of assistance that can be given to the families reduced to pauperism.

Q. What address should any such money be sent to?

A. The general secretary of the Human and Democratic Rights Organization. The official address at the moment is care of me: Prins Gunasekera, Member of Parliament and General Secretary of the Human and Democratic Rights Organization, Nawele Ragegiriye, Ceylon.

Q. What about publicity in newspapers abroad?

A. This can be of very great assistance to us so that human sympathy will be aroused on behalf of those who are suffering.

Q. Does any publicity given abroad reach Ceylon and have any effect here?

A. Yes. I believe one of the main purposes of forming the Ceylon committee in London was to stir up international public opinion in regard to what is happening in this country.

That will be a very salutary check on the repressive measures that the government is likely to take. Because even though the government is moving to the right very fast, they are very sensitive at the moment to world public opinion. In my view, it would be a very good thing if world public opinion can tell this government that what they have done to the youth of this country is an atrocious thing and that they should be released. □

The Kremlin Leaves Sadat Out on a Limb

On January 31, two days before he left Egypt for a visit to Moscow, Anwar el-Sadat told an assembly of soldiers in Aswan that there was no longer any such thing as a political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Military action to recover the Sinai peninsula was imminent: "I am delaying the zero hour until I have discussed the international situation with the Soviet leaders," he said.

Four days later a joint communiqué was issued by the Soviet leaders and Sadat stating that the United Nations "peace" mission, headed by Gunnar Jarring, "should immediately resume" its work.

"Diplomacy," wrote the February 6 *New York Times*, "was given priority over public threats of war, even if that meant leaving President Sadat out on a rhetorical limb."

Since Sadat's permanent residence is out on a rhetorical limb, that fact alone would not be of great import. But on arms shipments, which is a question of substance, the Soviet bureaucracy similarly left Sadat sitting far out.

The United States and Israel had just signed a new "defense" agreement, according to which the Zionist state is to be supplied with about forty new Phantom fighter-bombers and eighty new Skyhawks, delivery to begin in April 1972 and stretch through to the end of 1973. Sadat told his troops at Aswan that the new planes would give the Israeli air force the capacity to make 1,000 to 1,200 air strikes per day against Egypt. The public announcement of the deal was expected to result in fresh military aid commitments to Egypt on the part of the Soviet bureaucracy.

But the February 4 communiqué said only that the two sides had "considered measures" to strengthen Egyptian defense capabilities "and outlined a number of concrete steps in this direction." There was no mention of specific steps to be taken, and unlike similar statements in the past, the communiqué did not say that the Egyptians and the Kremlin had "agreed" on any course of action.

Sadat's Kremlin talks were, to say the least, intensive. He arrived in Mos-

cow on February 2. On February 3 he spent eleven hours in nonstop discussion with a group of Kremlin leaders that reportedly included both Kosygin and Brezhnev. An officially scheduled luncheon was even canceled. The next day he spent several hours continuing the talks, before leaving



SADAT: "Zero hour" delayed again.

that afternoon for a two-day trip to Yugoslavia. Sadat did not leave the Kremlin at all during his stay in the Soviet Union.

It is doubtful that so much time was taken up merely haggling about military aid. The day before Sadat's arrival, the Israeli government announced that it had changed its position and agreed to meet with Egypt under U.S. auspices to discuss a partial settlement involving the opening of the Suez Canal. Last year Egypt had accepted this proposal, but Israel, holding out for more U.S. aid, had rejected it. Now that Meir has her planes, she has changed her mind. The announcement of the switch was clearly timed to coincide with Sadat's Moscow visit, and it is likely that the Soviet bureaucrats spent some time trying to convince Sadat to join such talks.

On his part, Sadat has placed him-

self in an extremely difficult position in this regard. The only serious concession he made to the student rebellion of January was to state unequivocally that U.S.-sponsored talks with Israel were impossible.

Contrary to Sadat's expectations, the student ferment did not cease on January 24, when universities were shut down for a three-week holiday. The February 3 *Le Monde* reported that two leading Egyptian journalists, one from *el-Ahram* and one from *el-Gumhuriya* (two of the country's leading newspapers), had come out in support of the students' demands. On January 28 the Cairo branch of the Arab Socialist Union, the country's sole legal political party, asked that Sadat release thirty students scheduled to be tried on charges relating to the student actions. A large number of Egyptian journalists have called for a meeting to discuss the question of press censorship, the lifting of which was a key demand of the students.

Support for the students has by no means been unanimous, but the slightest break in the strictly government-controlled press is significant. That Sadat is feeling the pinch is indicated by his February 1 speech at the presidential palace, in which he claimed that student rebels had been in contact with the North Korean ambassador in Cairo. The man is clearly grasping at straws, and it is not likely that Egyptian workers and students will be cowed into submission by the specter of Kim Il Sung. Any new "peace" moves by Sadat and the Soviet Union threaten to touch off another round of protest—this time perhaps involving more active participation by the trade-union movement. □

Next Week: Leon Trotsky

The next issue of *Intercontinental Press* will contain, for the first time in English, an article by Leon Trotsky analyzing the situation that confronted the Austrian working class after Hitler's rise to power in Germany.

Writing in the summer of 1936, Trotsky demonstrated how only a policy of revolutionary defeatism could defend the interests of the Austrian proletariat. Don't miss "How the Workers in Austria Should Fight Hitler" in the next issue of *Intercontinental Press*.

Why We Had to Seek Exile

By Gonzalo Revollo Z.

[The following account has been excerpted from a letter written by a Bolivian Trotskyist in exile in Ecuador.]

* * *

I am a student. Since high school, I have been active in student and workers' struggles. I was studying political economy at the University of San Andrés when I was arrested in 1970 by the regime of General Ovando and charged with having been associated with the guerrilla movement for nine months.

On October 7, 1970, the day General Torres came to power, I was freed when the masses seized the prison and released all of the political prisoners.

After that I was active in the flour workers' union and in the university student leadership. Our aim was to strengthen the People's Assembly and to win workers' power. This lasted until General Banzer's fascist coup.*

Upon learning of the events in Santa Cruz, the students and workers in La Paz mobilized via the Central Obrera Boliviana [the Bolivian trade-union federation] and staged demonstrations against the coup of the "gorillas."

The main problem was to obtain arms with which to defend the rights of the proletariat.

When the day came of direct confrontation with the enemy, the people went out to fight against heavy odds, since the reactionary army was well armed and free to act with the greatest savagery and brutality. There were more than 1,000 killed and wounded.

*Virtually the entire left in Bolivia is using the epithet "fascist" to describe the Banzer regime. The designation is not scientifically accurate, although one of the tendencies supporting the government is avowedly fascist. The Banzer regime lacks any mass basis of support that could give it a degree of stability such as that enjoyed by Mussolini, Hitler, and Franco when they seized power. Like various other army regimes in Latin America, the Banzer dictatorship will most likely prove to be ephemeral despite the way it resorts to terror. — IP

Following this, the army displayed its fascist nature by attacking the university in full force, using tanks, armored cars, and bazookas in reply to the students, who only demanded that the troops get off the campus.

Various compañeros were killed, and more than 700 were taken prisoner and hauled off to army barracks.

A ferocious repression was leveled against all the revolutionary militants, many of them being murdered. Hundreds of prisoners in different parts of the country were sent to the prison camps of Madidi, Viacha, and Aochalla.

In La Paz, raids were carried out all over the city, homes being broken into without any regard for the women and children, many of whom were

arrested when husbands and fathers were not to be found.

After a month of such events, I and a comrade of mine sought exile in the Ecuadorian embassy. Two days later, as we were preparing to leave for Quito, we were told that the government of Ecuador would not grant us entry, limiting us to diplomatic asylum until some other country would grant us entry.

A number of countries turned us down, including Venezuela, Uruguay, and Argentina. After living for three months in the embassy, we were finally granted permission to go to Ecuador.

While we were in the embassy, we were able to follow events in La Paz and see what it is like to live under fascism.

The people live in terror, under constant threat from the repressive bodies, practically under siege by the Green Berets. Arrests and raids on homes go on continuously. The repressive measures taken against the trade-union leaders have blocked practically all action. □

Ecuador

Generals Hasten Velasco's Retirement

"Give me a balcony, and I can win any election, no matter where," was a long-standing boast of Ecuador's president José María Velasco Ibarra. On the night of February 15, the army took away his balcony. The seventy-nine-year-old president was in the capital city, Quito, when the military made its move. He reportedly tried to flee the country—but Quito's airport is not equipped for night operations.

The military, led by General Guillermo Rodríguez Lara, arrested the members of Velasco's cabinet, and early February 16 a new ruling cabinet was announced. It is composed of six military officers and one civilian. Three other ministers will be named shortly.

Velasco had been president of Ecuador five times: 1934-35, 1944-47, 1952-56, 1960-61, and from 1968 until the most recent coup. The February 15 coup marked Velasco's fourth

ouster by the military before the expiration of his term.

On June 22, 1970, President Velasco, with the support of the armed forces, proclaimed himself dictator. Extensive arrests of his political opponents followed. Since then his only base of support has been the army. The latest coup was apparently precipitated by his defiance of the wishes of military leaders.

Velasco had announced that he would retire as president in August. The election of his successor was to have taken place June 4. Assad Bucaram Elmalim, former mayor of Guayaquil, Ecuador's largest city, was considered "a certain winner," according to the February 16 *New York Times*. Bucaram heads the Popular Forces Alliance, a popular front formation.

The army had urged Velasco to cancel the election and extend his rule for two more years. Velasco refused.

When Rodríguez seized power he im-

mediately announced cancellation of the election. The new junta promised that there would be no political arrests "as a show of our desire to retain national unity, which is one of the objectives that we have proposed." But Bucaram and the other leaders of the Popular Forces Alliance have reportedly gone into hiding.

Initial reports have not suggested direct U.S. involvement in the coup, but Washington presumably is not displeased by the turn of events. The Velasco regime had claimed a 200-mile limit of its territorial waters, and during the past several years had seized a number of U.S. tuna boats that had violated that limit. Efforts by the U.S. government to force Velasco to reconsider this policy came to nothing.

More importantly from the point of view of U.S. imperialism, the Texaco and Gulf Oil companies expect to make Ecuador the second largest oil-exporting country in Latin America (next to Venezuela). A pipeline running from oil deposits in the Amazon basin through the Andes Mountains down to the Pacific has been constructed by these corporations. It is scheduled to begin operations later this year.

The new policies of the junta have not yet been clarified, although Rodriguez issued a proclamation that used rhetoric similar to the reformist Peruvian junta. The 1945 constitution was declared to be in force, and a 9:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m. curfew was ordered. □

inspiration of the Cuban revolution and the theories of Régis Debray, which argue for the peasantry as the main revolutionary force and the guerrilla *foco* as an alternative to the Leninist party on the grounds that the cities were only areas where the working class is confronted by reformism.

This armed group carried out the most hazardous and spectacular actions, showing that it has begun to revive after being considered a dead force. The actions involved more than 200 guerrillas under the command of Father Domingo Lain, Ricardo Lara Parada, and Fabio Vásquez, who captured the town of San Pablo in the department of Magdalena Medio in the north of the country. They gave speeches to the people, stocked up on weapons and food supplies, and also took several hostages for whom they are demanding large sums of money. This occurred on January 2.

Later the ELN showed up in the department of Antioquia, 200 kilometers from Medellín. There it carried out raids in the villages of Remedios, Santa Isabel, El Tigre, and Otu, where it killed the vice president of the Banco Industrial Colombiana [Colombian Industrial Bank]. The official press reports large-scale movements by counter guerrilla forces of the regular army.

The Maoist-oriented EPL, for its part, made an appearance in the town of Santa Rita in the western part of Antioquia. According to the pro-government press, the guerrillas were driven back by a group of police and townspeople. This was on January 14.

All this occurred during the discussion and debate over the April elections for the departmental assemblies and city councils. These elections are important because the "dismantling" of the National Front is scheduled to take place at the end of the current presidential term in 1974. The National Front is a system of rotating the office of president between the two traditional parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives.

The relationship of forces appears favorable to the ANAPO [Alianza Nacional Popular—People's National Alliance], a third party led by ex-general Rojas Pinilla and his daughter María Eugenia. This is a populist-type party that came onto the scene as a result of the bankruptcy of the

Colombia

3 Guerrilla Groups Engage in Skirmishes

Bogotá

Guerrilla activity in Colombia has resumed since the beginning of the year. Three guerrilla groups engaged in skirmishes in villages in the zone where they have been operating.

The FARC [Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia—Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia], which is under the control of the pro-Moscow Communist party, mounted a small attack January 11 in the town of Cimitarra in the department of Santander del Sur. The CP, it should be noted, has reduced the activity of the FARC to what is called "self-defense," letting it go into action only when attacked by the regular army, and cutting off aid to it whether for operations in its zone or for its members who are taken prisoner.

More ambitious engagements were carried out by the EPL [Ejército Popular de Liberación—People's Liberation Army] and the ELN [Ejército de Liberación Nacional—National Liberation Army]. This suggests that the difficult situation they are in is driving them to carry out actions in order to maintain themselves. A possible alliance between the FARC and the ELN, which was rumored, appears very improbable, since the ide-



ROJAS PINILLA: Hoping to stage comeback with aid of Communist party.

ologies of the two groups are totally different.

The ELN was formed under the

two traditional bourgeois parties, including the reformism of former president Carlos Lleras Restrepo, and the absence of a revolutionary leadership that could direct the spontaneous mass movement toward the taking of power by the proletariat.

The absence of revolutionary organization and leadership is ascribable to the disintegration and dismemberment of Stalinism and the immaturity of the new socialist groups that are in the process of gaining recognition.

And so the pro-Moscow Communist party, copying some of the features of the Chilean Popular Unity, is forming a front in hope of gaining unity with the ANAPO. The proposed basic program calls for nationalization of the key sectors of the economy, land to the peasants, measures to eliminate unemployment, improvements in social services, and a lowering of the price of basic necessities. Its aim is to attract the broadest possible sectors of the population to this movement, that is, to a democratic front. It is not concerned with the proletariat and the most exploited classes except as an appendage to a movement led by the petty bourgeoisie behind a democratic reformist program.

This Allende approach appears to be making inroads among the Stalinist organizations in Colombia. The Maoist-oriented MOIR [Movimiento Obrero Independiente y Revolucionario—Independent Revolutionary Workers' Movement], for instance, is dropping its aggressive talk and is looking to the "progressive wing of the national bourgeoisie" to inaugurate the era of "new democracy." It has plunged into the electoral arena in alliance with none other than the right-wing ANAPO dissident Alberto Zalamea.

Zalamea supported Colombia's armed intervention in Korea, and to-

gether with ANAPO councilmen voted against a proposed family-planning program in deference to the Archbishop of Bogotá.

The MOIR, quoting from Lenin's *"Left-Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder*, justifies its tactic by arguing that parliamentarism is still a valid approach inasmuch as people still believe in it, and that parliament must be used as a platform for agitation and for denouncing the policies of the bourgeoisie. But by basing its entire approach on parliament and electoral campaigning, the MOIR is "using" the democratic institutions without raising the need to destroy the state and its institutions, including parliament.

As for the traditional parties, the situation is not very promising. They are attacking the ANAPO because of its ties to the Rojas Pinilla dictatorship as well as the conduct of its senators in the present special session of Congress, which consists of sabotaging every initiative of the government

so long as the ANAPO senators are not included on the Electoral Council that supervises the tabulation of the votes for president and parliament.

It should be pointed out that the Congress is discussing reforms presented by the administration that are designed to rationalize the educational system so it better reflects the needs of a neocolonial country like Colombia, to obtain from international credit agencies the means for moving ahead with the government's programs, and to tax certain residences in the luxury level.

The parliament is also discussing changing the agrarian reform presented by Lleras Restrepo in 1968, so as to bring it into even greater harmony with the interests of the large estates. It is supported by the Conservative government and the minister of agriculture, author of the proposed changes. There is little opposition because of the political weakness of the Llerista group. □

Great Britain

Heath Forced to Retreat in Miners' Strike

Leaders of the British National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) reached agreement on a new contract with the National Coal Board February 19 and urged miners to end their forty-one-day-old strike. The three-man court of inquiry set up by Secretary for Employment Robert Carr on February 15 offered the miners weekly increases of £5 to surface workers, £6 to underground workers, and £4.50 to face workers, against the miners' demands of £8, £9, and £5 respectively. The terms were initially rejected by NUM negotiators, who held out for an extra £1 for the lowest-paid workers, but they soon reversed their position. Rank-and-file voting on the pact is expected to last about one week.

The settlement was widely regarded by the British press as a victory for the miners against the Heath Tory government's incomes policy. Heath has insisted that no wage increase exceed 8 percent. The miners' increase is approximately 20 percent.

Heath called representatives of the NUM to his Downing Street headquarters on February 18. This was

considered a capitulation on his part, since he has steadfastly maintained that he would not indulge the miners with a Wilson-style beer party.

But the power of the British miners was on the verge of bringing the entire British industrial system to a total halt. NUM pickets at power stations throughout the country prevented the use of coal reserves, which the government counted on to starve out the strikers. The power crisis resulted in an extensive program of temporary blackouts, both of residential and industrial areas.

Britain depends on coal for about 75 percent of its electric power, and it was estimated that if the strike had continued, the point of complete breakdown would have been reached in about two weeks.

The government counted on public

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Correction

An error appeared in "Arrests, Secret Trials Continue in Czechoslovakia" in our February 21 issue. The first paragraph on page 177 contains a sentence that reads: "According to *Le Monde*, Rude Pravo claims that Pelikan and 'the persons arrested in connection with him' have admitted to playing this role." The sentence should read: "... Ochetto and 'the persons arrested in connection with him'..."

opinion becoming disgusted with the inconvenience (blackouts, etc.) created by the strike. But the militant action of the miners, combined with the clear justice of their case, produced no such reaction. Other unions honored the miners' pickets, and the British population blamed Heath, not the miners, for the blackouts. The solidarity with the strikers shown by the rest of the population prevented Heath from calling out troops to break the strike.

By February 18, approximately 1,600,000 workers had been laid off because of plant closings due to lack of power or coal. With the "normal" unemployment figures added in, more than 2,500,000 British workers were idle by that date. The British capitalists were especially upset by that development. The London *Observer*, for example, noted in a February 20 editorial: "It could conceivably become

common practice for postmen or teachers or any other group of aggrieved people to press their claims by applying a stranglehold on what, in this technological age, is its most vulnerable point [that is, the power stations]."

Despite the miners' temporary overturning of the Tory government's attempt to make the workers pay for the crisis of British capitalism, that plan, under the guise of "the war against inflation," will continue. Under the headline "Losing the battle but not the war," Alan Day wrote in the February 20 *Business Observer*: "The best bet I can make in a very unhappy and uncertain situation is that the miners' victory is something like the German advance in the Ardennes in the final months of the last war—namely, a near-catastrophe which delays, but does not prevent, some kind of victory." □

of the state of Northern Ireland.

I wasn't interrogated any further during the time that I was held, and when I was released after about five weeks, I was simply told that I could leave, to get my things together, and with Seamas O Tuathail, the ex-editor of the *United Irishman*; Michael Farrell of the People's Democracy; John D. Murphy of People's Democracy; and John McGuffin of the People's Democracy—we were told we could just go. No reason was given for our release, as indeed no specific allegations were made for our detention in the first place.

Q. What about the charges of brutalities by the troops? Did the prisoners attempt any sort of resistance?

A. When I arrived in prison and was brought to C Wing, the first thing I was told about were the allegations that a number of the prisoners had received brutal treatment at the hands of the military. C Wing, where the prisoners were being held, was already organized, and a committee had been elected: a camp committee representative of the Provisional Alliance Republicans, the Republican Movement, and the People's Democracy, the three main groups who were interned at that time.

There is a long history of struggle on the part of political prisoners in Northern Ireland. One of the first educational features we had in the prison was a symposium the prisoners organized on the question of internment.

There was one man there, seventy-six-year-old Liam Mulholland, a republican of long standing who had been lifted [arrested] in every internment swoop since 1929. He explained to the other detainees just how bitter and prolonged the struggle had been for the improvement of rights and the recognition of the status of a political prisoner.

The prison authorities were immediately approached by the new committee when it was elected.

Unlike the previous occasions in 1956, the early 1950s and the 1940s, the authorities very quickly recognized the camp committee. When the committee had established their position with the authorities, they then began to itemize the grievances of the prisoners. The main grievance, of course, was with regard to the brutalities which had taken place during the first forty-eight hours of the detention roundups.

The brutalities which were itemized by the camp committee consisted of what was quite clearly a systematic torture of prisoners, making them run gauntlets through army batons, making them do fatigue courses, making them run in their bare feet. All prisoners when they were taken from their homes, the first thing that happened to them was that their shoes and socks were taken from them. Any movements they made from that time on were in their bare feet so that, for example, when they had to run from Girdwood Barracks to Crumlin Road through the glass and the muck that the soldiers had designed for them, they had to do all this

Interview With Kevin McCorry

Internment and the Fight for Civil Rights

[The following interview was given to *Intercontinental Press* at the end of October in Belfast. Kevin McCorry is a member of the executive of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA), which has organized such protests as the massive February 6 march in Newry. The interview has been shortened for reasons of space.]

* * *

Question. You were among the political prisoners interned under the Special Powers Act. Would you describe your experiences?

Answer. Well, I was picked up on the Wednesday after the initial roundup for internment. I was picked up outside the civil rights office. I was on my way with a member of the executive and a journalist friend of mine to organize a meeting in the Lower Falls area, which is just up the road from where we are sitting now.

I was stopped by a military patrol, and when it was learned who I was, I was told by a man whom I subsequently discovered to be a Captain Campbell, a British Army Intelligence officer, to accompany them to Hastings Street police station as the RUC [Royal Ulster Constabulary] Special Branch wanted to interrogate me.

I was taken to Hastings Street and then from there to Girdwood Military Barracks on the Antrim Road in Belfast.

In Girdwood I was interrogated twice by the RUC Special Branch. The interrogation was of a very general nature. In fact, it moved from Vietnam to Bangladesh in scope. There were no specific allegations made against me except that I was alleged to be a member of the Six County executive of Republican Clubs, which I denied, but I explained that this was because I hadn't been elected to the regional executive of Republican Clubs but I would be prepared to accept the position if I had been elected.

They were also interested in the Civil Rights Association. Some questions were asked me about the association, about the executive, what went on and so on. When I explained that any decisions taken by the executive were usually released to the press shortly afterward, they didn't press the matter any further.

The overall impression I got with my interrogation, with my treatment in Girdwood, was that they were simply holding me until the detention papers were served on me. These were served on Friday night, and I was taken through the famous hole in the wall from Girdwood Barracks to the Crumlin Road Jail and kept in the basement on Friday night. Then I was brought into the C Wing of Crumlin Road on Saturday at one o'clock.

I was held there for five weeks under Regulation 11 of the Special Powers Act, which says that I have acted, am acting, m about to act against the interests

in their bare feet.

So the first and most crucial demand that the prisoners' committee made was for an inquiry and some sort of official investigation which would be impartial and public.

We hadn't at this time heard of or met the people who had been picked up on the first Monday of the swoop and who were at this time being systematically tortured in Holywood Barracks. People like Pat Cheevers, P.J. Mac Clean, Michael Montgomery from Derry, Peter Donnelly from Derry, and a number of others.

The other main issues included the question of overcrowding. There were somewhere in the neighborhood of 240 prisoners in C Wing. The food was bad, to say the least. The conditions in which the prisoners were expected to eat their meals were very bad.

For example, the prisoners had to eat their meals beside the toilets and the slop house. On one occasion I went into the slop house to empty a dish and the smell was so bad it literally made me vomit. The prisoners were expected to eat beside this slop house.

Prisoners were kept two-to-a-cell in cells designed for one prisoner. The resulting cramped conditions were sometimes well-nigh intolerable.

The other question was that of visits. For example, my wife, who was four months pregnant the first time she came to visit me, had to undergo a most humiliating search despite the fact that the prisoners' committee had stated quite clearly to the authorities that the prisoners were willing to allow themselves to be searched if their relatives did not have to undergo searches.

All letters that were sent out were delayed, sometimes for two weeks because the RUC Special Branch had to read every letter that went out, and similarly with letters sent in to prisoners.

Q. What about the reaction on the outside? How did the nationalist population respond to internment?

A. The immediate response of the people to internment was magnificent. In all areas where raids were made, the people were on the streets in a matter of minutes. In a number of areas, the troops were beaten out and were forced to leave without the people they sought to take to detention.

What we've seen over the last six or eight weeks is the result of the general politicization that has been taking place since the start of the civil rights struggle. Vast areas of the Six Counties have been involved either directly or indirectly in civil rights activities and over the last two years have experienced army harassment and terror tactics. In all these areas, the various branches of the republican movement and the political parties have been at work on the question of creating organizations and on general political education.

The political groups that on Sunday had been operating as openly as possible in an increasingly repressive situation were driven completely underground

on Monday. There was an organizational problem of adjusting to the new circumstances.

The people themselves took over quite spontaneously and operated for the first four or five days. On the first Monday of internment, we were under the impression that the entire executive of NICRA with two exceptions—myself and another member—had been interned. This was the situation throughout the North.

Local NICRA branches throughout Northern Ireland lost their leadership. But when the issues began to clarify, it was quite clear that the civil disobedience campaign, through the rent and rates strike, was to be the main element of struggle to break internment.

Objectively what happened was that the policies of the last two years, and particularly internment, had led the whole Roman Catholic population to opt out of the repressive system of Unionism. But opting out was not sufficient. NICRA and the groups involved in NICRA felt it was necessary to organize that spontaneity into a clearer political movement and to spell out what the demands of the civil disobedience campaign should be, and to create the structure and organization to sustain the rent and rates strike when the inevitable counteroffensive was launched by the British Tories and the Unionist party.

On the rates and rent strike, we didn't want simply to take the money out of the pockets of the Unionist junta as a punishment for internment, important as that is, but we also wanted to create the structures at the most basic level of politicization on the civil rights question. This explains the importance we attach to building up and strengthening street committees, estate committees, and local civil rights branches. We want to build up an organization that can sustain the civil disobedience campaign and explain and clarify all the nuances of the campaign, all the moves the British imperialists might make.

Q. There was quite a remarkable job done in gathering evidence of brutalities against the internees. How was this accomplished?

A. The documentation of British army brutalities took place under very difficult circumstances. Outside the Crumlin Road and the *Maidstone* [a British prison-ship], a group that cooperates with NICRA, the Association for Legal Justice, took statements from people who had been released, who had undergone brutality during the first forty-eight hours, and who had not received detention papers. We got a fair degree of publicity from this. All the information was sent to support groups in Britain like the National Council of Civil Liberties.

In some of the worst cases of brutality, you had the difficulty of collecting and documenting the statements of people like P.J. Mac Clean, Pat Cheevers, who had been taken to Holywood and been kept for a week and systematically tortured. This was where the Crumlin Road Jail branch of NICRA came in handy, be-

cause the civil rights branch that we formed on the Monday following internment managed to get statements from a number of prisoners. We managed to get the statements smuggled out, and when P.J. Mac Clean and Pat Cheevers arrived in C Wing on the Tuesday following our formation, we got statements from these people and smuggled them out.

This process of documentation is continuing. In the last few days this office has been inundated with people making statements about detention, brutalities, the harassment of areas.

The documentary evidence is being built up, and when we get documentation we send it to support groups in Britain and any groups that would be sympathetic and prepared to consider our evidence fairly.

Q. What has been the response to the official inquiries?

A. As a result of the campaign outside and the evidence and statements we were collecting in Crumlin Road, the government was forced to concede that there was a possibility people had been tortured during the first forty-eight hours of their detention.

About three or four weeks after the detention roundups, the government here announced the formation of an inquiry under Sir Edward Compton to investigate allegations of brutality.

We had pressed for an impartial public inquiry with judicial powers to get evidence, to get statements, to bring army and RUC personnel before it. We also demanded that the detainees who would be appearing before this inquiry would be adequately represented legally in order to cross-examine army witnesses. We also demanded that the inquiry be public and be chaired by someone of international standing. Otherwise it would simply be a whitewash operation.

We made these demands quite specifically and clearly before the announcement of the Compton inquiry. Yet when the Compton inquiry was set up, it had no judicial standing; it could only call on the security forces to cooperate with it. Detainees had no legal representation or rights. The inquiry was in private; it was a Star Chamber operation. It only dealt with the first forty-eight hours of detention and interrogation. It didn't deal with cases like that of P.J. Mac Clean and Pat Cheevers, people who were tortured not only for the first forty-eight hours, but were tortured for a week.

So we did not accept the tribunal and we declared that it was a whitewash operation. It was simply a publicity stunt to kill the bad publicity which we had been giving the whole internment exercise.

When the Compton inquiry came to Crumlin Road, we had issued a letter, which was signed by all the detainees, explaining why we would not cooperate with it. Similarly the prisoners in H. M. S. *Maidstone* spelled out their objections as well.

The Compton inquiry has now had its terms of reference extended to investigate

allegations of brutality that we have substantiated in Holywood Barracks. The objections we raised to the inquiry initially apply to its investigation of Holywood Barracks.

Under the Special Powers Act detainees and internees have the right of appeal to a tribunal that's established by the government, they claim, to discover the terrorists whom they have interned and to "ensure" that justice is done to internees. This tribunal has been set up under a county court judge who has a reputation in the Six Counties for having a smooth tongue and for giving vicious sentences. There's also an English Roman Catholic ex-administrator of several islands that Britain controls in the Pacific and a man whose only claim to fame is that he has some prominent connection with Welsh football.

The tribunal is, like the Compton inquiry, a whitewash exercise designed to put a better face on the whole internment exercise.

A number of people have been released after appearing before the tribunal, but this doesn't make it any more acceptable or credible, because a condition of release of these people was that they had to sign a document which suggested that in the past they had been involved in some kind of subversive activity. In signing this document, they promised to be good boys if they were released. Even some people who have indicated their willingness to sign this obnoxious document have not been released.

The basis of the tribunal is that you go in and explain why you should be released. No specific allegations are made, as indeed, no specific allegations are made against any internee.

Quite clearly, such a tribunal, meeting in secret, with no judicial powers to establish the truth or falseness of accusations, is unacceptable to the majority of internees, and they want nothing to do with it. Therefore the internees have said they will not appear before it and that their hope of release lies not with the tribunal but with the continuation and intensification of the civil disobedience campaign, which we in NICRA will try to ensure.

Q. Are there additional goals of this campaign?

A. The three principal demands which we make are first of all for the release of the internees. But it's becoming increasingly clear that the mere release of the internees would mean simply a return to the *status quo* if there is not at the same time a repeal of the repressive legislation that made internment possible, that made torture chambers in Holywood Barracks and the whole situation here possible. Thirdly, at the present time the main instrument of repression is not Ian Paisley or even the Faulkner regime, which has no standing with any section of the population in the Six Counties, be they Catholic or Protestant. The main obstacle to progress and reform and democracy in the Six Counties is the British

army and the policies of which they are the military arm.

The civil rights movement includes organizations that are working for the complete elimination of imperialism from Ireland. This would include the withdrawal of British troops from the Six Counties. We are also forced to make short-term demands which will mobilize the maximum number of people on the present role of the British army. That is why the demand for a bill of rights is such an important one.

Specifically what the bill of rights demands is that if the British government is to have any justification from the British point of view for involvement in Northern Ireland, then it must be to eliminate the twin obstacles in the way of progress: repression and sectarianism. Therefore the bill of rights demands that the powers to contravene *habeas corpus* and pass special powers legislation be taken away from Stormont.

This would mean that the British government would have to justify repressive measures to the British people, rather than what they are doing at the present time; saying that they are simply here to aid the existing government of Northern Ireland in its security measures.

On the question of sectarianism, we demand that some sort of legislation with teeth be extended to the Six Counties to cover incitement to religious hatred.

We challenge the role of the British army, which has been to provide a repressive framework in which Brian Faulkner can maneuver with his right wing or other elements of the Unionist power structure while he does a wee dance with regard to reform and then clomps down heavily on the democratic movement. If the British army is to have a justification, it must be to sustain a program of democratic reforms along the line of a bill of rights.

In concrete terms, this would mean a drastic change in the political role of the British army. In terms of the people in the beleaguered areas of Derry and Belfast, it would mean immediate withdrawal and cessation of harassment of these areas by the British army.

It is essential to recognize the politics of the British army's role, to challenge them in Britain, and try to mobilize as large a section as possible of the British labor movement on these issues, to challenge the policies of the Tories and the last Labour government.

Q. Has the response of the nationalist population had any effect in forcing the British government to reconsider the policy of internment?

A. The whole internment exercise started off literally with a bang the first weeks. It has been a dying exercise, as we see it, since then.

I believe the politics of internment were broken in the first week. The massive reaction of the Roman Catholic population has made the credibility of the Faulkner government practically nonexistent and created far more problems for the British government than internment could

ever have solved.

I think we will see more things like the Compton inquiry—administrative attempts to sort out what is impossible to sustain politically, namely internment.

On the other hand, I'm not so naïve as to believe that pressure must not be sustained by the rent and rates strike, which has now taken well over £750,000 out of the pocket of the Unionist regime. I'm not so naïve as to believe we should slacken in this. Neither am I so naïve as to think we should begin dismantling the organization and the broad unity that has been built up in the last nine weeks.

The internees are sufficiently astute politically to realize that the only long-term hope they have for release is in continuation of the rates and rent strike.

Another point is that we are undoubtedly going to see, as well as the attempted phasing out of internment, the British government putting forward a so-called political solution.

One that is likely to emerge over the next few months is what they call community government. This was first proposed by the Northern Ireland Labour party. It works along the line that since the population is 60 percent Protestant and 40 percent Catholic, there should be a 60-40 balance in government.

This of course would not be coupled with a program of repeal of repressive legislation, of democratic reform, and of assault on sectarianism. It would be an attempt by the British government to impose this sort of thing on top of the existing repressive and sectarian situation. It would be unacceptable to the civil rights movement even in a situation where the British had repealed repressive legislation and extended the Race Relations Act to the Six Counties. To attempt to impose it on top of the present situation would perpetuate sectarian division and make it impossible for any group to cross sectarian barriers and win support from the whole community on a class basis rather than a religious basis.

So-called political solutions based on the 60-40 syndrome are totally unacceptable to the civil rights movement and would not hoodwink the people involved sufficiently to make them abandon the civil disobedience campaign. □

Coming Soon

Intercontinental Press will soon begin serialization of Pierre Frank's book, "The Fourth International: A Contribution to the History of the Trotskyist Movement."

First published in French in 1969, the book has been brought up to date by the author for this exclusive translation. If you don't yet subscribe to Intercontinental Press, now is the time: Don't miss a single chapter of this important work!

Why Psychiatric Congress Failed Soviet Prisoners

"The cold war was long used to gag dissenters on both sides," I. F. Stone wrote in the February 10 *New York Review of Books*. "It would be shameful if it now became an excuse for intellectuals on our side to gag themselves. The crime of silence about what goes on inside the Soviet Union is inexcusable, especially when abatement of the cold war has in fact been accompanied by a tightening of the screws on dissent in the USSR and the Soviet bloc generally."

Stone, the independent-minded journalist who recently discontinued his magazine *I. F. Stone's Weekly*, has a long history of defense of civil liberties and a well-deserved reputation for exposing the lies of governments. In two articles published in the February 10 and February 24 *New York Review of Books*, he turns his attention to the Soviet dissident movement and the bureaucracy's practice of confining political opponents in psychiatric prison-hospitals.

The "crime of silence" mentioned above refers primarily to the congress of the World Psychiatric Association, which met in Mexico City last November 28-December 4. The congress received two messages from the Soviet Union.

One, from the "Committee for Human Rights" led by physicist Andrei D. Sakharov, asked the congress to take up "the complex of questions concerning the rights of people ruled to be mentally ill."

The other message was an appeal from Vladimir Bukovsky, who has since been sentenced to seven years' imprisonment and five years' exile. (For a description of Bukovsky's trial, see the January 24 *Intercontinental Press*, p. 72.) Bukovsky had sent to Western psychiatrists 150 pages of documentation on the cases of six dissidents confined in Soviet hospitals. The material included copies of diagnostic reports allegedly providing the justification for the prisoners' confinement. Bukovsky's letter accompanying the material said, in part:

"I realize that at a distance and

without the essential clinical information it is very difficult to determine the mental condition of a person, and either to diagnose an illness or assert the absence of any illness. Therefore I ask you to express your opinion on only this point: do the above-mentioned diagnoses contain enough scientifically based evidence not only to indicate the mental illnesses described in the diagnoses but also to indicate the necessity of isolating these people completely from society?"

Bukovsky asked the Mexico City congress to take a stand on the question of the abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, it did not, despite the fact that individuals and psychiatric groups in a number of countries have opposed the practices revealed in the Bukovsky documents.

Last September, for example, forty-four British psychiatrists wrote to the *London Times* that the six diagnostic reports appeared to have been "made purely in consequence of actions in which they were exercising fundamental freedoms—as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and guaranteed by the Soviet Constitution." Protests were also made by the board of directors of the Canadian Psychiatric Association and the executive board of the World Federation of Mental Health.

The congress could have had an effect, Stone writes. He mentions the example provided by the case of biologist Jaurès Medvedev, who was released from a psychiatric hospital in June 1970 under the pressure of protests by Soviet and foreign scientists:

"Roy Medvedev was even told by an informant he identifies only as 'R' that inside the Ministry of Health the chief psychiatrist, Dr. Andrei V. Snezhnevsky, angrily told the doctor in charge of Jaurès's commitment, 'In a year's time there is going to be an international psychiatric congress in Mexico City. How do you think this is going to make our delegation look?'"

"Medvedev had been set free," Stone writes, "by the time the congress convened. But the other dissidents—and, of course, Bukovsky—were still being held. Yet the congress took no action on these appeals, though Dr. Ramon de la Fuente, president of the congress and president-elect of the Mexican Academy of Medicine, in his opening address said numerous documents had been received about 'some places in the world' where political oppositionists were treated as mentally ill. 'To keep silent about such an ignominious situation,' Dr. de la Fuente said, 'would weigh heavily upon our conscience.'"

Snezhnevsky was a member of the Soviet delegation to the congress and was instrumental in persuading it not to take up the appeals, which he characterized in a newspaper interview as "a maneuver of the cold war, carried out at the hands of experts." When speakers demanded that the congress take a position, Snezhnevsky and the Soviet delegation walked out. According to Stone, "They said that they could not discuss the matter because the congress lacked official interpretation into Russian." Language difficulties do not appear to have hampered the delegation's participation in other aspects of the congress, however.

The fear of a boycott by the Soviet representatives appears to have persuaded the congress organizers to shelve the whole question:

"The fact is that at Mexico City the undemocratic practices customary in dealing with public complaint in the Soviet Union spread to the psychiatric congress. The bureaucracy of the world organization and of the American Psychiatric Association in effect helped the Soviet bureaucracy to shelve and hush protest. They claimed that the world congress had no procedural basis on which to act.

"It would be more honest to phrase this in the obverse. Those who went to Mexico City to raise the question

found that the procedural setup was beautifully designed to make effective protest by rank-and-file psychiatrists impossible. . . .

"They were told that the General Assembly [of the congress] was open only to the official delegates of the sixty-seven nations participating. . . . The doors were also closed to the press. The whole procedure, including just how successive delegations to these congresses are chosen, is enveloped in a thick bureaucratic fog. The world congress seems to be run by self-perpetuating cliques."

One sequel to the psychiatric congress, Stone notes, was the sentencing of Bukovsky for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda." Another sequel—perhaps consequence would be a better word—was reported by Reuters in a dispatch printed in the January 30 *Le Monde*. According to Reuters, a committee of Soviet psychiatrists had extended by another six months the confinement of Major General Pyotr Grigorenko, who has been held in psychiatric prisons since 1969. Grigorenko's case was one of the six covered in Bukovsky's documents.

Stone's articles are a valuable contribution to the defense of civil liberties in the Soviet Union. However, when he turns to the question of why civil liberties are suppressed, his contribution is less than it might be.

Stone notes correctly the reasons for the half-hearted character of "de-Stalinization":

"What the bureaucracy would like is enough law and enough freedom to protect it from a recurrence of the cruel, arbitrary, and capricious terror it suffered under Stalin, but not enough law and freedom to endanger its own privileges and power. Its power rests, as Stalin's did, on fear, and its privileges depend as in his time on the suppression of criticism. The little Stalins fear a new big one, but they fear as well that the rule of law and free speech would undermine them too."

But inconsistently with this analysis, Stone then tries to derive Stalinism from Leninism rather than from the material bases he has just cited. Apologists for Stalinism have for decades misrepresented Lenin's views in order to defend the abuses of the bureaucracy. Stone accepts this counterfeit as good coin and so condemns both Stalinism and Leninism.

He sees no essential difference between the emergency measures of the civil-war period and Stalin's repression of all working-class dissent. For Stone, the latter is an inevitable consequence of the former.

(So far as I know, Stone has not applied the same logic to United States history, blaming the Nixon administration's contempt for civil liberties on Abraham Lincoln's suspension of *habeas corpus* during the second American revolution.)

Stone displays a similar confusion between superficial forms and content when he says that the Medvedevs represent "a kind of neo-Kadet movement." He identifies them with the right-wing bourgeois party on the basis that the Kadets were constitution-

al monarchists while the Medvedevs support "the new communist czarism" but favor an expansion of individual civil liberties!

Such a tortured analogy would be merely ludicrous were it not for the habit of the Stalinist press to quote out of context. It is not difficult to imagine Soviet propagandists triumphantly announcing that in the view of Western "anti-Soviet" journalists, the dissidents are "neo-Kadets."

This unwitting disservice to the fighters for socialist democracy provides one more illustration of the dangers that lie in wait for those who try to fit the complex Soviet reality into the worn-out formulas of liberalism.

— David Burton

Catching Up With 'Ancient Society'

Ninety-five years after its initial publication in the United States, Lewis Henry Morgan's *Ancient Society* has been translated and published in France for the first time. (*La Société Archaïque*, Editions Anthropos.)

The occasion was marked by a lengthy review in the February 4 issue of the Paris daily *Le Monde*. Much of the review, by Jean-Michel Palmier, is devoted to explaining why Morgan, the founder of scientific anthropology, has been so ignored, so "shrouded in silence and scorn," by European anthropology.

Morgan was the first anthropologist to investigate scientifically the structure of primitive society and to reject the notion that the modern patriarchal, monogamous family sprang from human nature and was therefore eternal. After field investigations of the North American Iroquois tribes, he reached the conclusion that the ancient system of consanguinity was based on the prevailing level and forms of economic activity. The rise of new economic structures removed the basis for the old system, which gradually fell into disuse and finally disappeared.

Morgan's work was interpreted by Engels, notably in his *Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, which became the foundation of the Marxist analysis of the rise of class society. This fact, according

to Palmier, in large part explains the "silence and scorn" to which Morgan's work has been subjected. Morgan, writes Palmier, had the "misfortune" to be read, commented on, and admired by Marx and Engels. . . .

"This upright, bourgeois American, who died in 1881, had been completely ignorant of Marxism. But his detractors never forgave him for having borne out, through his work, Marx and Engels' theses on historical evolution. For many, attacking Morgan was a means of attacking Marxism and its founders."

While this is no doubt true, it seems to miss the most crucial point. Marx's approval did not consign Darwin's work to oblivion, although a vigorous campaign for such consignment was waged by the defenders of the scientific, or rather mythological, *status quo*.

Like Darwin, Morgan challenged a part of the mystifying armor of ruling-class ideology. But Morgan's attack was against an even more basic plate of this armor than was Darwin's—and in a field where hard data is more difficult to obtain. If Engels had never heard of Morgan, the latter's critique of the fetish of the bourgeois family would have been no less slandered. Or perhaps French publishers would have waited only seventy-five years to translate *Ancient Society*.

— Jon Rothschild

Argentine Guerrillas Interviewed by Prensa Latina

By Jose C. Carrasco

[The following article, written for the Cuban news agency, Prensa Latina, is reprinted from the January 15 issue of *Direct From Cuba.*]

* * *

Tucuman, Argentina

The People's Revolutionary Army (ERP), the armed vanguard of the Workers' Revolutionary Party (PRT), is among those who follow Ernesto Che Guevara's thesis and his example.

The ERP fully supports unity among the armed revolutionary groups to confront the common enemy: U. S. imperialism and its domestic oligarchic allies.

Leaders of the ERP (their *noms de guerre* are Miguel and Ricardo) affirm that an outburst of rural guerrilla warfare is likely to occur in Argentina before long.

Miguel and Ricardo belong to a committee of eleven members which represents the top leadership of the PRT, and to the military committee in command of the ERP.

It is to talk to them that we have come to Tucuman, the capital of a province once called the "Garden of the Republic" which has gradually become impoverished due to the crisis of the sugar industry, its major economic activity.

The position of the PRT-ERP is explained in Miguel and Ricardo's answers to Prensa Latina.

— *What is the Movement's ideology, its structure and its present political objectives?*

The ERP is an armed organization, created and headed by the PRT, a workers' party of Marxist-Leninist ideology.

Since the ERP must carry out a revolutionary war, a popular war, it must unite the country's exploited masses under the leadership of the working class.

Therefore, it has a broad program whose main points are national independence from U. S. imperialism, that is, Argentina's national liberation, and many other democratic demands. There are other demands of a socialist nature which aim not only at the country's liberation from imperialist domination, but also at its economic and social transformation, the elimination of capitalism, which we consider an unfair, doomed system and, after the triumph of the revolution and the working class in this revolutionary war, the installation of a socialist society.

count of the beginnings of the Movement and its development, and also explain the relationship between the PRT and the ERP?

The PRT was founded in 1964 and has since participated in the struggle of the Argentine masses. Confronted with Ongania's military dictatorship since 1967, the party faced the question of armed struggle and came to the conclusion that there was no other way out in our country.

After a costly and rather slow period of preparation, the party was able to define its objectives clearly and develop methods of armed struggle. During its fifth congress, which ended on July 28, 1970, it founded the ERP and began an organized armed struggle and military intervention in the revolutionary war started by the Argentine masses against the military dictatorship.

In our opinion, the revolutionary war began in our country with the big 1969 mass mobilizations in the major cities.

As for the relationship between the party and its army, our organization has applied the classical Marxist principle in connection with the organizations needed by the people and the working class to carry out effectively its revolutionary war, that is, a military force, a people's army to lead large sectors, all the exploited sectors, to take arms, to organize themselves and confront enemy forces, the military forces of the bourgeoisie, the bourgeois army which supports capitalist regimes and imperialist domination.

We say that this is a broad mass organization whose membership requirements are also broad. That is, one must be ready, one must realize the need to end the military dictatorship through armed struggle.

But a popular army needs a well-defined political leadership, because the most important thing in revolutionary warfare is politics. A clear-cut political line is decisive for the triumph of the people, who must face a powerful enemy from a relatively inferior material position and whose key force resides, precisely, in the correctness of its political line.

That's why we are aware that the people's army must have the leadership of a Marxist-Leninist party which, employing the political science of the working class, knows how to solve all the difficult problems posed by revolutionary warfare.

That's why our military force, the ERP, is under the leadership of the PRT which, as we said before, is a workers' party of Marxist-Leninist ideology.

— *Ideologically you have defined the party, the Movement, as Marxist-Leninist. Why, then, have you been called Guevarist or Trotskyist?*

The ERP is an organization for the masses, to achieve the national and social liberation of our country. It calls upon the masses to carry out with perseverance the second independence war, following the writings and actions of General San Martin and Major Guevara.

The PRT, which leads the ERP, defines itself ideologically as Marxist-Leninist, and it assimilates the teachings of revolutionaries from other countries, among them those of Major Che Guevara, Trotsky, Kim Il Sung, Mao Tse Tung, Ho Chi Minh, General Giap, etc.

We think that labelling a given organization as Trotskyist is an insufficient definition. We consider that Trotsky was a revolutionary and the majority of our militants have read his revolutionary works, especially those dealing with criticism of bureaucracy and with permanent revolution.

— *In connection with Argentina's present situation, what does the Movement think of the country's political, economic and social panorama?*

Argentina is undergoing a revolutionary war and, as we have just said, it started in 1969. Since 1966 our country has been ruled by the Army, a military dictatorship which in a coup ousted Illia's bourgeois parliamentary Government, and tried to reorganize the country on a capitalist basis, increasing its dependency on imperialism and looking for a new development based on the super-exploitation of the masses.

The military dictatorship achieved a certain social stability in the country during 1967-68 through police and civil-war tactics. Violently crushing any mobilization attempt, they succeeded in undermining the significance of the social struggles of the working class, of the students, of the whole people.

But the mass movement has reacted since 1969 and started the process we're living today.

Together with the vigorous reappearance of the mass movement, the armed vanguard made its entrance on the country's political scene. There are different groups that since 1966, when Ongania's dictatorship started violent repression, have begun organizing themselves to confront a powerful enemy in the military field with guerrilla tactics, both rural and

urban, and with a revolutionary war strategy. Our organization is one of them.

The military dictatorship in power, whose current President is Lanusse, is on the defensive at the moment. In the five years they have governed, they have failed to achieve economic development or a reorganization of capitalism in Argentina, and right now they are on the defensive, trying to solve the serious problems which ail them.

They are trying to do it now with the much-publicized National Agreement Plan; they have promised to hold elections; they are trying to incorporate into the plan sectors with certain popular roots, the bourgeois parties, the radical party and other populist parties such as the Peronist which still exerts a certain influence on the people. And in an effort to curb the development of revolutionary warfare, they try to isolate the guerrillas and the vanguards of both workers and students, which are the ones who have been leading and carrying the weight of the mass struggle.

But those plans are doomed because in recent years the Argentine people have become aware that they cannot trust or expect anything from the bourgeois Army, or from the different populist and bourgeois parties or trends which have also failed to solve our country's dependency and social problems, which increasingly point towards a socialist solution, towards the solution through armed struggle.

Briefly, in our opinion the "National Agreement", which is the current line of Lanusse's military dictatorship, is doomed and we think that our country's immediate possibility is a fuller development of revolutionary war, a fuller development of mass struggle headed by the sector which is aware of the class struggle, a fuller development of the military activity of guerrilla units, both in the cities and in the interior of the country.

United, they will corner the military dictatorship and weaken enemy forces by increasing the participation of new popular sectors, accelerating the development of a popular revolutionary war.

—*What you have said means that the ERP has adopted armed struggle as the fundamental line for Argentina's liberation. Could you mention some experiences along these lines?*

Well, with the foundation of the ERP, a military plan was drawn up whose main purpose was to make the organization, its program and objectives known to the masses. It was principally a period of armed propaganda.

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The major actions carried out were weapon-taking, propaganda actions closely linked to the masses such as distribution of goods, seizures of factory guards, etc.

Apart from propaganda purposes, this first military plan had the objective of training all militants in small actions which prepared them for others of a larger scope. The plan was completed six or seven months after it had started.

Through this military activity and that of the other organizations in Argentina, we achieved a change in the repressive forces. For example, you no longer see single policemen on the streets, repression began acting differently and concentrating; this gave us the guidelines for the second operational plan.

As far as military operations are concerned, now we are principally carrying out harassment actions in which the largest possible number of people participate. An example of this type of operation would be to surround a police station where repressive elements concentrate, ask them to surrender and, if they refuse, shoot at them, try to seize their weapons, and retreat quickly. There are also ambush actions against patrol cars.

From the military viewpoint, the principal thing, which would mean a qualitative jump forward in the development of the revolutionary civil war being lived in Argentina, would be the beginning of rural actions—which includes the second military plan of the ERP—that is, the launching of rural guerrillas which we think is likely to occur in a brief period of time.

All the operations we have carried out and those to come must be closely linked to the masses, they must follow a mass line and they must be mass-oriented.

I think it would be appropriate to explain the food distributions we carry out continually, almost daily, their characteristics and why we do them.

From the viewpoint of political penetration, they have yielded extraordinary results because the masses immediately identify the war with their own needs and they allow us to politically penetrate quickly in the different areas where they are carried out.

We carry out operations preferably in quarters where we already have organized teams which, after the actions, explain their meaning to the people as well as the necessity to become organized, and to develop the war to achieve the liberation of our country.

There are several neighborhoods where we have been able to organize residents to collaborate in the development of revolutionary warfare. For instance, we have organized committees to receive and deliver the food. As I said before, the effect on the people of this political work is very favorable, and those areas gradually become true ERP supporters although they are still in the initial stage.

—*The ERP has started its armed actions in the cities and is considering creating a rural war; it can be assumed that from the military viewpoint the strat-*

egy is to begin organizing the people's army at guerrilla levels until it becomes a regular army. It is a fact however that there are other armed groups in Argentina and that the unity of these groups would be fundamental to carry out armed struggle successfully. What do you think of this problem?

Yes, it's a fact that there are several groups carrying out military actions in Argentina, but there exist friendly relations between the different organizations and we're convinced that the future of the armed vanguard is one of unity. We constantly try to make our ties with other armed organizations closer, discussing fundamental problems, working out conflictive questions and setting the bases for a future unity of principles which we believe feasible.

Following the example and the orientation of Major Guevara, we understand that to confront the common enemy of all Latin American peoples, U. S. imperialism, the unity of the different revolutionary organizations which lead their people's struggle in each country, is essential. So we have also established friendly relations with the different organizations of other Latin American countries and we are making an effort to group our forces in this continental revolutionary war of the Latin American peoples against U. S. imperialism.

We are also aware that the leadership of all Latin American revolutionaries rests in the Communist Party of Cuba.

—*In connection with the Chilean political process, certain U. S. news agencies have published alleged negative opinions held by the ERP about Allende's Government and the Chilean process with apparently altered statements.*

Yes, they have undoubtedly been changed because all we did in the press conference held in Buenos Aires last July, was to repeat what Allende himself has said many times: that he has the Government, but not the power.

Regarding actions, the execution of Perez Zujovic, we said that he undoubtedly deserved it because he was responsible for Puerto Montt's massacre,* but that it was also clear that when the action was carried out, it favored the right, that it was untimely, whoever did it.

That's what we said at the press conference and not as the U. S. agencies have tried to make it appear.

Our modest opinion about the present Chilean situation is that the proper line and activity for the triumph of the revolution in Chile is that of the Revolutionary Leftist Movement (MIR). □

* On March 10, 1969, Chilean police attacked 1,000 slum dwellers who had set up shanties on municipally owned land in the city of Puerto Montt. Five persons were killed and thirty-seven wounded. Edmundo Perez Zukovic, a leader of the right wing of the Christian Democratic party, was killed on June 8, 1971, allegedly by two members of the Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionario (MIR — Movement of the Revolutionary Left) who were later killed by police. — IP