

# Intercontinental Press

Africa

Asia

Europe

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## **Hugo Blanco Jailed in Argentina**

*Three-Month Total:*

**5,000 Air Raids Against North Vietnam**

**Behind the New 'Popular Front' of French CP, SP**

**Role of Socialists in the Australian Labor Party**

**Dubcek Supporters Sentenced in Prague Trials**

## Brazil

# Sao Paulo Prisoners Appeal to Pope

Thirty-six political prisoners in São Paulo entered the thirty-third day of their hunger strike, reported *Le Monde* July 14. They are protesting plans to transfer them to prisons for common prisoners. "Some of the political prisoners, whom witnesses claim to be 'on the verge of death,' have been moved to an infirmary, but they are being kept there in secret."

Three of these political prisoners are Dominican brothers. They recently managed to get a letter to Pope Paul, in which they pointed out: "Political prisoners in Brazil have already suffered greatly. To speak of the tortures to which they have been subjected would be to repeat what is now only too well known. But now the situation is even more serious. Opponents of the regime are arrested, a number of them are killed when they are arrested, and a greater number die as a result of terrible tortures. Up to now, this has happened to more than 200. Prison conditions are very bad. . . . They can be transferred to penitentiaries for common criminals. Recently, a peasant arrested for political reasons was killed in Recife by a common prisoner in uncertain circumstances. . . ."

According to the Dominicans, the director of prisons, Dr. Werner Rodrigues, promised at the end of May that the political prisoners would all be placed in a special, reserved section of one prison. A few days later, two prisoners were savagely tortured.

According to an article in the July 3 issue of the Stockholm daily *Dagens Nyheter*, three São Paulo bishops had an open letter they wrote to the military authorities read at the end of June in almost all churches in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. □

## Summer Schedule

This is the last issue of Intercontinental Press before our summer break. No issues will be published in August.

Our regular weekly schedule will resume in September.

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## Hugo Blanco Jailed Without Charge in Argentina

By David Thorstad

**JULY 24**—On July 12, exactly one month after he arrived in Buenos Aires, the Peruvian revolutionist Hugo Blanco was arrested and imprisoned. No charges were made, but he was held under the general jurisdiction of the government. Both his lawyer, Enrique Broquen, and a friend were able to visit Blanco in prison. They report that he was not maltreated.

A decree of deportation was served on Blanco on July 19. He expected to be deported either July 24 or 25. Blanco stated that he preferred to remain in Argentina, but that if that was not possible, he chose to go to Chile. So far no obstacle to this has been raised by the Chilean authorities.

A large defense effort on behalf of the Peruvian peasant leader was initiated by the Partido Socialista Argentina (PSA—Argentine Socialist party) and other groups. Posters protesting the arrest of Blanco have been put up around Buenos Aires. A news conference resulted in articles being published in four major dailies, *La Nación*, *La Prensa*, *La Razón*, and *Clarín*. A number of prominent figures have protested his arrest to the Lanusse dictatorship.

Blanco entered Argentina from Mexico, his former place of exile, on June 12. His exile in Mexico City had lasted nine months, beginning with his deportation from Peru by the military regime of Juan Velasco Alvarado on September 14, 1971. The deportation was carried out with as much stealth and secrecy as appears to surround the current incident in Buenos Aires.

It began the day before, September 13, when two policemen took him to the headquarters of the state security police in Lima. There he was questioned for several hours about his political position with regard to the Velasco government and why he remained in opposition to it.

The following evening, he was taken to the airport and, without any explanation, placed on board a Braniff plane headed for Panama City. In

Panama he was placed on a Pan American plane bound for Mexico. Even after arriving in Mexico City, however, Blanco did not know whether it was to be his ultimate destination. Then, on September 18, he was informed that the Mexican government had decided to grant him the status of a "visitante" (visitor) and to give him a work permit.

The Peruvian peasant leader had been released from jail on December 22, 1970, in an amnesty—seven and a half years after his arrest in May 1963. He was serving a twenty-five year prison term for his role in organizing landless peasants in the valley of La Convención in the Cuzco region into unions to defend their rights against the *hacendados* (big landowners).

In the winter of 1962 and spring of 1963, the revolutionary peasant unions led by Blanco engaged in large-scale take-overs of lands illegally held by the *hacendados*. The landowners responded by calling in the army and the police. In the battles that ensued, several soldiers were killed. Blanco became the object of a military manhunt, but he was successfully hidden by the peasants for months until he was finally captured.

In a recent interview published in the July 13, 1972, issue of the Buenos Aires weekly magazine *Panorama*, Blanco discussed this experience and pointed to the absence of a strong revolutionary party as the reason why the peasant land movement was unable to culminate in the social revolution. "I must point out that I have been a guerrilla," he said. "But the guerrilla movement that I led grew out of the agricultural unions, which decided to attack the lands of the big landowners. The guerrilla movement arose out of the repression directed at the agricultural unions and not as a result of mobilizing groups isolated from the masses. Unfortunately, what was missing was a party capable of leading the struggle begun at that time

to a victorious conclusion."

Following his capture, Blanco was held for more than three years in Arequipa in solitary confinement. Then, on August 30, 1966, he and twenty-eight other peasant organizers were put on trial before a military court in the tiny, isolated village of Tacna. Blanco's supporters throughout the world awakened public opinion to the danger—already reported in the newspapers prior to the trial—that Blanco would be sentenced to death. The military judges decided to reject the recommendation of their legal adviser that Blanco be given the death penalty and instead sentenced him to twenty-five years' confinement on the prison island of El Frontón, notorious for its brutal conditions.

In November of that year, the Peruvian regime again tried to get the court to order Blanco's execution. For almost a year, the peasant leader's life depended on an international campaign in his defense. Civil-liberties and trade-union groups throughout the world issued statements of support. Demonstrations, resolutions, and appeals were undertaken in all corners of the world.

In October 1967, the Supreme Military Court confirmed Blanco's original sentence, and the international campaign continued for his release. Today a campaign demanding his return is being waged in Peru. □

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# Nixon Strategy Points to New Bombing Escalations

By Allen Myers

"... the American explanation that the present weakness of the [North Vietnamese] dikes is due to neglect by the population is untrue," wrote Eugene Carson Blake, secretary general of the World Council of Churches, in a letter to Richard Nixon. "... American protests that no intentional bombing has occurred and that only 'accidental' bombs have fallen on or near the dikes must also be untrue."

Blake's letter, which was dated July 17, has provided an indication of the worldwide revulsion being aroused by the U.S. government's deliberate attacks against the dike system. The July 21 *New York Times* reported that Blake had been moved to write by eyewitness accounts of the bombing written by Agence France-Presse correspondent Jean Thoraval and by Swedish television films showing some of the damage to the dikes.

Blake told the *Times* that he had little confidence in the denials that have been issued by the Nixon administration: "The nature of the widespread rumors [of attacks on the dikes] reminds me of other occasions when reports first denied by the Defense Department were later admitted as true."

Blake's letter called on Nixon "immediately to cease this bombing" and to "stop the bombing in the region of the dikes in order that the people of North Vietnam can make repairs to avoid a catastrophe of unthinkable proportions."

Nguyen Thanh Le, a North Vietnamese spokesman at the Paris talks, reported July 20 that there had been twenty-two attacks on the dikes during July alone. Le also said that there had been a total of 5,000 air raids on North Vietnam during the preceding three months, compared with a total of about 3,000 in the three years 1969-71.

Nixon's aim, of course, is to force the Vietnamese into surrender with the threat of diverting more of the massive numbers of aircraft to attack the dikes. There appears, in fact, to be

little else in North Vietnam left for the bombers to attack.

"Indications are," Henry S. Hayward wrote in the July 18 *Christian Science Monitor*, "that American pilots are beginning to run out of new worthwhile targets in North Vietnam — only 10 weeks after the resumption

of United States bombing attacks." He added that "virtually all conceivable military targets already have received a thorough pummeling. . . ."

Hayward also noted that the Soviet and Chinese acquiescence in the blockade is making it easier for U.S. planes to bomb North Vietnam:

## "Let Me Know When There's A Winding-Down"



Herblock in the Washington Post

"The Communists also are making markedly less use of Soviet surface-to-air missiles, known as SAMs. This is partly because of successful U. S. air attacks on the missile sites and partly because of the difficulty of replacing the SAMs. The missiles are too bulky to come overland by rail — and no Soviet supply ships have docked since the blockade."

In South Vietnam, the bombing of Quangtri province has been intensified to unprecedented levels. On July 16 and 17, according to Associated Press reports, some 100 giant B-52s dropped more than 2,500 tons of bombs in support of the Saigon puppet army's attempt to recapture Quangtri.

The city itself was described by Reuters correspondent John Parcell as a "city of rubble and ashes." Parcell wrote of the devastation caused by the bombing:

". . . Quangtri is nothing but a desert of charred sticks pointing out of craters, with here and there a church and brick pillars of villas of the rich still partly intact."

Despite the intensity of the bombing, U. S. military officers have expressed a growing fear that it will be insufficient to protect Thieu's forces from falling into a trap.

"The North Vietnamese Army," Malcolm W. Browne wrote in the July 22 *New York Times*, "which still holds the citadel at the heart of Quangtri, appears to be initiating its classic technique of forcing enemy troops into a long, narrow corridor and then attacking from the sides. It is a tactic known to military men as the meat-grinder."

"On the drive along Route 1, from Danang to Hue, 60 miles to the northwest, and then on toward Quangtri, it is apparent that the Communist use of the tactic extends along the entire western flank of the highway for all that distance."

"There seems every probability," Browne concluded, "that the Route 1 campaign . . . will last for months. It also seems unlikely that the road can be kept open without great difficulty at any time in the foreseeable future."

"Under the circumstances, the re-taking of Quangtri city, which seems likely at some point fairly soon, seems almost irrelevant, although the Saigon command would obviously be delighted to hoist its flag over the

Citadel."

The U. S. strategists still have before them a disturbing reminder of the vulnerability of Thieu's forces even when they are backed by massive bombing. In an article evaluating the Saigon army's response to the liberation forces' offensive, Sydney H. Schanberg wrote in the July 19 *New York Times*:

"Anloc is a good example of what the South Vietnamese lost while they were 'succeeding.' Because of American air power, the troops inside the town were not overrun and the North Vietnamese circle around them has been considerably loosened. But they still must get all their supplies by air because the road to Anloc from Saigon is still blocked by an apparently small number of determined enemy troops."

"Two South Vietnamese divisions have spent three and a half months trying to break through. They have been badly mauled by enemy mortars and artillery, and casualties have been high."

A third division is now reported attempting to open Route 13 between Saigon and Anloc. While 4,000 to 5,000 of Thieu's troops are involved

in the effort, estimates of the force blocking the road range from a high of 500 to as little as 50.

Another indication of the low morale of Thieu's troops is provided by casualty estimates reported by Hayward in the July 15 *Christian Science Monitor*. Between March 30 and June 30, more than one-fourth of the Saigon army's losses are estimated to consist of soldiers who either were captured or deserted.

The soldiers in the Saigon army are no more eager to defend Thieu than they ever were, despite all of the Nixon administration's claims for "Vietnamization." To maintain his puppet in Saigon, Nixon has no alternative to continued escalation of the bombing in an effort to break the resistance of the Vietnamese people. The logic of his position leads straight toward the destruction of North Vietnam's dike system and new levels of terror bombing in the South.

The bureaucrats in Moscow and Peking, who pretend not to see Nixon's evident intention while wining and dining the war criminal in their capitals, have left the Vietnamese to face alone the most massive assault in the history of warfare. □

## U.S. Fire Prevention Experts Helped

## Pentagon Tried to Burn Vietnam Forests

From 1965 through 1967, the United States military made a number of attempts to set huge fire storms in Vietnam, according to reports published simultaneously July 21 in the *New York Times* and *Science*, the weekly journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The project was apparently abandoned when the tropical rain forest, damp even during the dry season, would not burn.

The project was carried out by the Pentagon's Advanced Research Projects Agency in collaboration with fire-prevention experts from the United States Forest Service, an agency of the Agriculture Department. These scientists apparently saw no contradiction between preventing forest fires in the United States and attempting to start them in Vietnam.

"The targets of the fire storm efforts were rare and desirable mahogany trees that many forestry experts consider a potentially valuable resource for the Vietnamese economy," wrote Robert Reinhold in the July 21 *New York Times*. Experts on tropical vegetation indicated that had the burning succeeded, "the trees would probably have been destroyed, replaced possibly by less useful bamboo and other coarse vegetation."

One military officer familiar with the project defended it with the argument "When you're fighting a war, do you want to save trees or lives?"

"A fire storm, unlike an ordinary conflagration, packs tremendous energy," wrote Reinhold. "It sucks in air from all around, creating a convection column and mighty whirlwinds."

What results resembles a cyclone and it is capable of ripping out bridges and 300-foot trees like matchsticks. Its demand for oxygen is such that people in the area perish from asphyxiation; this occurred during the Allies' World War II bombings of Dresden and Hamburg, in which more than 200,000 died."

A former commander of the project, Lieutenant Colonel Arthur McConnell Jr., described it in an article he wrote in 1970 for the *Air University Review*. The *Times* obtained an uncut draft of the article, which had been heavily censored. McConnell indicated that the first burning occurred in early 1965 and was dubbed Operation Sherwood Forest. He described it as "a massive attempt to burn out a defoliated section of the Boiloi Woods in the hopes of denying the enemy an extremely vital base camp area."

Several such efforts continued throughout 1966, until the final one, called Operation Pink Rose, in April 1967. During this attempt, planes flew

"approximately 225 sorties and delivered over a quarter-million gallons of herbicides on selected target areas in War Zones C and D." Foliage killed by the herbicide was intended to provide fuel for the fire.

Although, according to other sources, the undergrowth in the area was ignited, the fire failed to spread to the seventy-foot-high upper canopy made up of the tops of the mahogany trees.

The fire storm project had the approval of President Johnson, said one high-ranking officer, who noted that "the procedure was to get clearance from the White House on anything like this." And while it appears to have been abandoned following the failure of Operation Pink Rose, Reinhold indicated that military officials suggested that it be tried again "if better methods could be devised."

"They also suggested," he added, "that forest and other areas of the world be surveyed to determine if fire storms could be employed as a weapon." □

ing created that there was something dangerous about the case," said Graham July 12.

If ignorance is any basis for impartiality, the list from which this jury has been selected would seem well qualified. The fortieth prospective juror was the first to have actually read anything at all from the Pentagon papers. Only a half dozen knew what the papers had to say. The judge denied a defense challenge to one man on the prospective jury panel on the basis that there was doubt that the elderly immigrant, who had only completed grammar school in Italy, would be able to adequately read and understand the Pentagon papers. Boudin argued that mere literacy was not sufficient in this case since one of the functions of the jury will be to decide if long documents allegedly disclosed by the defendants contained information "relating to the national defense."

Judge Byrne also ruled that another prospective juror, John Hietala, would be acceptable as a juror despite the fact that he believed the defendants to be guilty. Hietala was later dismissed after the defense exercised one of the "peremptory" challenges to which it was entitled (challenges through which it can remove a prospective juror without stating any reason for doing so).

"The defense has expressed some bemusement over the professed ignorance of most of the prospective jurors about the Pentagon papers," wrote Graham July 21. To illustrate a theory that prospective jurors lie during jury selection in order to get on the jury, Ellsberg and Russo recently conducted "man-in-the-street" interviews in which they stopped people at random in Los Angeles residential neighborhoods and asked them what they thought about the Pentagon papers. "The two defendants," reported Graham, "found nobody who did not know enough about the papers to discuss them, and they assert that a majority of them felt that the secret information should have been released." □

## Defense Denied Right to Question Jurors

# Jury Selected in Pentagon Papers Trial

After a week and a half of jury selection in the trial of Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo, the eight women and four men who will make up the jury were sworn in on July 21. Six alternate jurors remain to be selected before arguments begin.

Ellsberg, a defense analyst, and Russo, a social worker, are charged with conspiracy, theft, and violation of the Espionage Act for their role in making the secret Pentagon papers available. They are alleged to have arranged to release the papers when they were associates at the Rand Corporation, a think-tank that does research for the Pentagon. Ellsberg could receive a total of 100 years in prison, Russo thirty-five years.

Throughout the jury selection process, the defense lawyers indicated concern over the fact that a large number of the prospective jurors were so clearly conservative in their political beliefs. The trial is being held in Los Angeles, California, an area where a

disproportionately high number of jobs depend on contracts with the U. S. Defense Department. In addition, Federal District Judge William Matt Byrne Jr., in an attempt to telescope a jury selection process that sometimes lasts for months, refused the defense lawyers the right to question prospective jurors and instead did so himself.

Despite these negative factors, reported *New York Times* correspondent Fred Graham July 22, defense attorneys "appeared relieved and guardedly pleased with the jury, which is dominated by the presence of seven middle-aged housewives or widows." The jury, he said, is "predominantly neutral toward the Vietnam war and governmental secrecy."

At the very outset of the trial, Leonard Boudin, Ellsberg's lead attorney, protested the "military atmosphere" created outside the courtroom by the "rudeness and impoliteness" of marshals toward people coming in and out. "He said the impression was be-

### When You Move...

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# NPAC Issues Call for Emergency Antiwar Actions

"Submit or be wiped off the face of the earth! That is Richard Nixon's ultimatum to the Vietnamese. Because he has not been able to force their surrender, he is trying to obliterate their civilization.

"Their dikes and dams are being systematically bombed. As the waters rise in the monsoon rains the danger that the flood-control system will collapse mounts. Compounding the menace is the U. S. government's artificial rain-making by cloud-seeding.

"A catastrophic disaster is impending with the lives of millions of human beings at stake."

With these words, the major resolution adopted at the July 21-23 conference of the National Peace Action Coalition (NPAC) set the context for a program of actions against the Indochina war.

Approximately 700 persons at the plenary session of the Los Angeles meeting voted overwhelmingly for a five-point action proposal submitted by the NPAC coordinators:

1. Emergency nationwide demonstrations August 5-9. In addition to commemorating the victims of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, these actions will protest the bombing of the dikes in North Vietnam.

2. Locally organized mass demonstrations on Saturday, November 18, to demand the complete and immediate withdrawal of all U. S. troops and materiel from Southeast Asia. The demonstrations will be held in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Denver, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New York, Philadelphia, Portland, San Francisco Bay area, Seattle, St. Louis, Washington, D. C., and possibly in other cities.

3. Picket lines at federal buildings on Saturday, October 28. The pickets will serve as building-actions for the November 18 demonstrations.

4. Keeping the war at the center of public attention during the election campaign by raising the "Out Now" demand at forums, election rallies, etc.

5. Demonstrations against leading figures of the Nixon administration,

"not as an exercise in partisan politics, but because they are committing military aggression against the Indo-chinese."

A major area of discussion in the conference workshops and plenary sessions was the question of the attitude that the antiwar movement should adopt toward the presidential election campaign. Supporters of Senator George McGovern introduced a resolution calling on NPAC to endorse his candidacy.

The majority of those present, however, maintained that NPAC should continue its traditional policy of refusing support to political candidates. The power of the antiwar movement, they argued, lies in its ability to organize masses of people independently in the streets. Endorsing candidates would only divide the movement and narrow its base of support. The coordinators' action proposal pointed out in this respect that polls show 79 percent of the American public opposed to the war—a degree of support not enjoyed by any candidate for public office.

During the plenary session on July 23, supporters of the pro-McGovern resolution withdrew it, saying that they had not realized earlier that NPAC had a traditional position of not endorsing candidates.

Another resolution, calling on NPAC to set itself the goal of seeing that "the war criminal Nixon" is not reelected, was voted down by the conference.

The delegates also adopted an international call introduced by national coordinator Ruth Gage-Colby:

"We here assembled at the National Peace Action Coalition national antiwar convention in Los Angeles, July 21-23, 1972, call upon the peoples of the world to join us in emergency international demonstrations against U. S. bombing of the dikes and dams in Vietnam. The lives of millions of people marked for annihilation by Nixon's barbaric bombing attacks can be saved by immediate worldwide protest actions.

"We call upon the peace forces in all countries to join together to sup-

port the right of self-determination of the Vietnamese and to force the United States government to stop bombing the dikes and stop mining the harbors and stop waging its aggressive war against the people of Indochina.

"We call upon the people of all nations to march in unity with the American people in demonstrations throughout the world on Saturday, October 28, and Saturday, November 18, 1972. Together will demand an end to the bombing now! A total, immediate and unconditional withdrawal of United States military forces, war planes, ships, and material from Southeast Asia and an end to United States support of the Thieu dictatorship or any other United States-imposed regime in Indochina."

The bulk of the conference participants were young. They came from twenty-three states and five foreign countries: Canada, Denmark, England, France, and Sweden.

Fifty-five different political or antiwar organizations were represented. The participants came from thirty-two unions, 259 colleges, forty-three high schools, two junior high schools, and one elementary school.

The breadth of the conference was also symbolized by the rally held on the night of July 21. Speakers represented—in addition to traditional antiwar organizations—labor unions, student governments, the Black movement, the Chicano movement, and the gay movement.

Bobby Seale, chairman of the Black Panther party, stressed that the war should be and is an important issue for the Black community and that greater efforts must be made to involve Blacks in mass antiwar actions. He also urged the audience not to trust the promises of political candidates but to maintain an independent mass antiwar movement that could force the U. S. government to end the war no matter who is president.

The conference concluded by reelecting as national coordinators Ruth Gage-Colby, Jerry Gordon, Jim Lafferty, Fred Lovgren, Katherine Sojourner, and John T. Williams. □



## Antiwar Veterans Indicted for 'Conspiracy'

The U.S. Justice Department has set in motion the machinery for another conspiracy trial—this one around alleged plans to disrupt the Republican party national convention, scheduled to open August 20 in Miami Beach, Florida.

On July 7-8 twenty-three members of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) were subpoenaed to testify before a federal grand jury meeting in Tallahassee, Florida, to investigate the activities of antiwar organizations planning demonstrations at the Republican convention. Four refused to cooperate.

On July 13, Federal District Judge David Middlebrooks imprisoned them on contempt charges. He said they would be held until they agreed to testify or until the grand jury was dissolved. This, Middlebrooks said, could be as long as eighteen months. But on July 18, the United States Court of Appeals ordered the four released and instructed a Florida court to begin hearings of "serious and substantial" challenges of why they had been denied bail.

The next day, the grand jury handed down conspiracy indictments against six national and regional leaders of the VVAW under the "anti-riot" clause of the 1968 civil rights act—the same law that the Chicago Seven were accused of violating in 1968. The July 15 *New York Times* reported that the government accused the antiwar veterans of "conspiring last April 1 to cause death and destruction during the Republican convention.

"The weapons to be used, the Government said, included bombs, cross-bows, automatic weapons, and wrist rocket slingshots—rubber-thonged devices that can propel projectiles accurately for up to 100 yards."

The indictment stated in part:

"It was part of the said conspiracy that the defendants and individual co-conspirators would organize numerous 'fire teams' to attack with automatic weapons, fire and incendiary devices, police stations, police cars, and stores in Miami Beach, Fla., on various dates between Aug. 21 and 24, 1972."

On July 14, the six indicted VVAW leaders were jailed in Tallahassee and held on \$25,000 bond each.

The next day, the VVAW moved to expose the frame-up charges. It turns out that, as is usual in such cases, the government's case is based on the testimony of a federal undercover agent—one William Lemmer. Martin Jordan and Donald Donner, both VVAW members, filed affidavits July 15 stating that they had tape recordings in which Lemmer "documents that 95 percent of his testimony to the F. B. I. and the Justice Depart-

ment is false and was given to them to raise his own income as an informer." Donner said that it was Lemmer, and not the indicted leaders, who had proposed committing violence at the Republican convention.

The central defendant in the case is Scott Camil, who is charged with conspiracy, manufacturing and possessing a firebomb, and instructing others on how to use explosives. If convicted, he could get twenty years in jail and be fined \$30,000. Charged only with conspiracy, and facing up to five years in jail and fines of \$10,000 each are William Patterson, Peter Mahoney, Donald Perdue, John W. Kniffin, and Alton Foss.

The VVAW plans to hold daily demonstrations at the Republican convention to protest the victimization of its members. □

## Leading Dubcek Supporters Among Defendants

## Six Sentences Announced in Prague Trials

Thirteen Czechoslovak intellectuals who were leading supporters of the Dubcek regime went on trial in the Prague city courts July 17. Citing "usually well-informed sources," a July 17 Reuters dispatch from Prague reported that the defendants have been charged with subversion because they distributed a leaflet during the election period last fall urging citizens to exercise their constitutional right to cross names off the single-list of government-approved candidates.

The defendants include Jiri Litera, former secretary of the Prague committee of the Communist party; Jiri Müller, a former student leader; Jan Tesar, a historian; and Rudolf Battek, a sociologist.

It is believed that the thirteen accused will be tried in three groups. CTK, the official Czechoslovak news agency has confirmed that one group, which includes Müller, was being tried, but it has not mentioned the other two. The penalty for "subversion" is one-to-ten years in prison.

Information about the trial or trials is hard to come by because the government has barred the public from attending. Only wives and parents of the defendants have been admitted.

But a July 18 Reuters dispatch indicated that the defendants had admitted drafting and circulating the election leaflet but denied that this was a violation of the law. "Courtroom sources" said Müller and Tesar had taken "much of the responsibility" for the leaflets. Tesar said he had drafted various protests and petitions, that he had done this out of conviction, and that in no way was this activity directed against socialism.

On July 20, three defendants were sentenced. Litera was sentenced to two-and-a-half years in prison, Josef Stehlik to two years, and Milon Rocek to one year, which was suspended.

At the same time, a city judge announced three other sentences already handed down: Premysl Vondra, a former Czechoslovak radio employee, twenty-eight months; Ota Krizanovsky, formerly a professor at the Communist party university, eighteen months suspended; and historian Josef Belda, one year suspended. □

### They Already Have a King

Leka, who claims to be King of the Albanians, has announced the formation of a united front against the government of Enver Hoxha.



# Victory for Popular Unity in Two Elections

Salvador Allende's Unidad Popular coalition won two electoral victories in July, a by-election in Coquimbo Province on July 17, and the elections to the FECH (Federación de Estudiantes de Chile—Chile Federation of Students) at the beginning of the month.

The FECH election returned the pro-government candidate, Alejandro Rojas, to the presidency, and gave the UP five of the ten members on the executive committee. Three of the other seats went to the Christian Democrats and two to the right-wing National party. In addition, 200 members representing the thirteen colleges of the university were elected. The UP received forty percent of the vote (10,370), the Christian Democratic candidate twenty-nine percent (7,258), the National party sixteen percent, the FER (Frente de Estudiantes Revolucionarios—Front of Revolutionary Students) six percent. No other candidates received more than two percent.

Although the Coquimbo by-election was held in a province in which the left is traditionally strong, both the UP coalition and the opposition viewed it as a kind of plebiscite on the Allende regime. The clear victory for the UP candidate, Amanda Altamirano, coming as it did after the government coalition lost the last three congressional by-elections, was hailed by Allende as an event of "national and international importance."

Altamirano, a Communist, defeated the opposition-backed candidate, Orlando Publete, owner of a small copper mine and a member of the Party of the Radical Left, by 50,482 to 42,309 votes. Despite the victory for the Allende coalition, however, the more than 8,000 vote margin showed a decline in UP strength in the province. In municipal elections in Coquimbo last year, its victory margin was 23,000 votes.

Official results of the elections to the CUT (Central Unica de Trabajadores—Workers Central Union) held at the end of May were announced July 17.

According to the July 10-16 international edition of the Santiago newspaper *El Mercurio*, the results for the three main parties were announced as follows: Communists, 173,068; Social-

ists, 148,140; and Christian Democrats, 147,531. The FTR (Frente de Trabajadores Revolucionarios—Front of Revolutionary Workers), which is affiliated to the MIR (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionario—Movement of the Revolutionary Left), received 10,192 votes. The president and general secretary of the CUT will remain respectively Luis Figueroa, a Communist, and Rolando Calderón, a Socialist. □

# Growing National Struggles in Baltic States

By George Saunders

Evidence continues to mount of sharpening struggle between Soviet national minorities in the Baltic states and the Moscow bureaucracy's policies of Russification. In Estonia the appearance of an organization is reported that calls for a referendum on "self-determination." And in Lithuania, repercussions from the recent protests continue, as new information leaks out indicating that those protests were even more significant than previously supposed.

The Estonian development is reported in the *samizdat* journal *Chronicle of Current Events*. Its issue No. 25 apparently came out on schedule in May, the third issue to appear despite a ruling last December by the Soviet party's Central Committee that the gadfly journal be suppressed.

The text of *Chronicle* No. 25 is described in part in a story from Moscow by Charlotte Saikowski in the June 21 *Christian Science Monitor*. Regarding Estonia, she reports:

"Among the new items of information in issue No. 25 is a report on the existence of an 'Estonian national front,' which seeks a referendum on the self-determination of Estonia. . . . The *Chronicle* states it does not know the size of the organization.

"The publication in May of a new underground journal called *Eesti Demokrat*, which carries the Estonian front's program, is also recorded."

Whether the *Chronicle* carries more details about the front's program than indicated by Saikowski remains to be seen. Even this sketchy report, however, is sufficient to indicate that a significant trend has surfaced now in

the third Baltic republic, reflecting the same moods as the recent open letter by Latvian Communists protesting Russification and the demonstrations in Kaunas in May.

There is a new report concerning the Kaunas demonstrations that youthful demonstrators were supported by workers on the job. "On the second day [of protests]," Paul Wohl writes in the June 30 *Christian Science Monitor*, "strikes broke out. The big new synthetic fiber factory, the pride of Communist Lithuania, had a sit-down."

The protests began at the May 18 funeral of a 20-year-old Lithuanian worker Roman Talanta (or Kalanta), who immolated himself on May 14 in the park in Kaunas, where Soviet rule in Lithuania was first proclaimed. When police prevented youths from attending the funeral or placing flowers in the park, street demonstrations began. Hundreds were arrested, of which some two hundred are said to be now facing trial.

A second youth immolated himself a few days later in Varena in southern Lithuania, a 23-year-old plumber named Stonis, according to Soviet dissidents. Stonis and three friends had tried to hang national flags at the Varena fair but were detained by police. Stonis escaped and later burned himself to death. On June 3, there was a third self-immolation, and an unsuccessful attempt on June 10.

Protests spread to Vilnius, the capital itself, where some 150 students were arrested. During an international handball tournament, June 11-18, students had reportedly passed out "anti-Soviet" leaflets and hung up Lithuanian flags. □

## Sadat Boots Out Soviet Troops, Advisers

By Jon Rothschild

In the past, Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat has sought to establish a completely unjustified reputation for candor by occasionally airing certain differences with his allies in the Kremlin bureaucracy. So there was nothing very unusual in his mentioning, in the course of a speech July 18 to the Central Committee of the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) his most recent disagreements with the Kremlin.

But after enumerating some of these, Sadat not only stunned the ASU leadership, but triggered waves of confused speculation throughout the world. "After receiving Soviet explanations of the Moscow talks with President Nixon," he said, "I felt the need to review the situation calmly and without excitement or convulsions, since our decisions are made here and at the appropriate time.

"After fully reviewing the situation in all its aspects and in full appreciation of the huge Soviet aid to us, I found it appropriate to adopt the following measures:

"1. Terminate the mission of Soviet advisers and military experts who came at our request as of yesterday [July 17] to be replaced by our sons in the armed forces.

"2. All military equipment and installations built after June 1967 are to be manned by the Egyptian armed forces and become the property of Egypt, and

"3. Invite a Soviet-Egyptian meeting, at a level to be agreed upon, to hold consultations to decide on the next phase of operation."

The first and second steps, Sadat said, had already been carried out. Soviet military experts and advisers were already on their way out of Egypt.

At first, the scope of the expulsion order was not clear. By the end of the week, some four thousand Soviet advisers attached to Egyptian units had left the country. Apart from these advisers, there are an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 regular Soviet troops in Egypt. Described in the Western press as "combat troops," they are in fact

mostly aircraft maintenance personnel, anti-aircraft and artillery crews, base security troops, and administrators. Their major function has been to operate the bulk of Egyptian air defenses in the heavily populated Nile Valley, from Alexandria south through Cairo to the Aswan Dam. In addition, there are said to be about 200 Soviet pilots in the country.

By July 23, Western news sources reported that nearly all these troops were packing up and would soon leave Egypt. Sadat's first decision, then, appears to have been a sweeping one. It is now believed that only about 2,000 Soviet personnel, most of them highly specialized technical instructors, will remain. They will function under Egyptian command. The Western press spoke of a Russian "exodus," and while such language may be attributed to initial overexuberance, it seems clear that for once Sadat was not merely mouthing empty rhetoric.

Sadat's decision was taken with extreme secrecy. Only four top officials knew of the move. One of them, Premier Aziz Sidky, flew to Moscow July 13 and apparently informed Kremlin leaders of the new state of affairs. *New York Times* correspondent Henry Tanner cited "informed sources" in Egypt as saying that Sidky was mandated only to report Sadat's decision to Kremlin leaders, not to negotiate with them.

The Egyptian and Soviet regimes both appeared to be concerned with minimizing the importance of the expulsion. The Soviet news agency Tass treated the news routinely, presenting the Egyptian decision as a bilateral one: "After an exchange of views, the sides deemed it expedient to bring back to the Soviet Union the military personnel that had been sent to Egypt for a limited period."

On the Egyptian side, Sadat called attention to the fact that the fifteen-year Soviet-Egyptian friendship pact signed last year would remain in effect, and on July 21 Yenia Abdel Kader, the Egyptian ambassador to Mos-

cow, was given ten minutes of Soviet television time to give a speech hailing the "shining example" of Egyptian-Soviet relations.

On July 20, the Egyptian government announced the cancellation of a military parade scheduled for July 23 to commemorate the anniversary of the 1952 coup that placed Nasser's "free officers" in power. The downplaying of Egypt's most important official holiday was widely felt to be aimed at preventing the army from turning the occasion into an anti-Soviet demonstration.

It would appear, then, that Sadat has by no means broken definitively with the Kremlin. But he has dealt the Soviet bureaucracy a significant rebuff. A clear bid to the West has been made, and the defensive capability of Egypt has been weakened.

According to most reports, the chief source of anti-Soviet pressure within Egypt was the traditionally anticommunist Egyptian general staff. Reports of conflict between Egyptian officers and Soviet personnel had been rife for months. "Informed Arab diplomatic sources" cited by the July 21 *New York Times* claimed that "some Egyptian military quarters were calling for the liberation of Egypt [from the Soviet Union] before the liberation of [Israeli-] occupied Sinai."

*Al-Nida*, the newspaper of the pro-Moscow Lebanese Communist party, suggested that Minister of War Mohammed Sadek and Chief of Staff General Saad Hussein el-Shazli had informed Sadat that if Soviet troops were not ordered out of Egypt, "the army would impose the measure by direct interference in the country's political affairs."

The veracity of this report of a virtual threat of military coup was not accepted by most Arab diplomatic sources, but neither was it rejected out of hand. Whether the general staff went that far cannot be told with certainty, but it can be said that the officer corps, which has consistently opposed Egypt's close relations with the Soviet Union and which has always favored reliance on the United States, seized upon the prevailing political conditions to force the first significant break with the Soviet Union since the June 1967 war.

But the nature of the Sadat regime is such that the president must have needed little convincing. "It is felt here

[Cairo]," the July 22 *New York Times* reported, "that the discontent expressed here earlier this year by anti-Soviet rightist civilians was not a major element of pressure but, on the contrary, had been used, and to some extent orchestrated by President Sadat."

Sadat's explanation of the expulsion of the Soviet personnel to the Egyptian people was couched in terms of Egyptian nationalism. The left in Egypt has been increasingly hostile to the Soviet bureaucracy's consistent betrayals of the Arab revolution. In expelling the Soviet troops, Sadat tried to play on those feelings by recalling the Kremlin's failure to deliver offensive weapons to the Egyptian armed forces. The expulsion of the Russians was presented as a continuation of "our battle against Israel" and as an assertion, in the tradition of Bandung, of Egyptian national independence.

The real situation is otherwise. As usual, it was left to Sadat's lesser aides to spell out the meaning of the master's gibberish. On July 22, Mohammed Hassan el-Zayyat, minister of state for information, held a news conference—in English—for the foreign press. Explaining that the government had become exasperated with the state of no-war, no-peace that has existed in the Arab East since the 1970 cease-fire went into effect, he noted that Egypt, because of Soviet failure to provide sufficient weaponry, was not in position to make war. "We desire peace and friendship with all," he said. Logicians can draw the inference.

El-Zayyat's news conference, the *New York Times* noted with its usual incisiveness, "strengthened the impression among foreign observers here that Mr. Sadat and his army commanders had excluded war as a feasible policy and were looking for a way to renew the search for a negotiated settlement in the Arab-Israeli conflict."

Also on July 22 wide coverage was given in the Egyptian press to a statement by Ismail Sabry Abdullah, the minister of state for planning. Past fears about foreign investment in Egypt, he said, were no longer valid; the Egyptian economy could only benefit from the implantation of foreign capital. He advocated loosening restrictions on foreign investment.

By making a further leap in the two-year-long rightward plunge of the

Egyptian government, by demonstrating to the West that fears of Soviet domination of Egypt are unfounded, Sadat is aiming at reestablishing contact with the United States and inducing Nixon, or his successor, to bring pressure to bear on Israel to make some significant territorial concessions as part of a new peace agreement.

The Egyptian move is part of a broader diplomatic trend. At the be-



ANWAR EL-SADAT

ginning of July the Republic of Yemen (north) reestablished diplomatic relations with the United States. Two weeks later, Sudanese President Gafar el-Nimeiry announced that his country would follow suit. Both Nimeiry and Muammar el-Qaddafi, the notoriously anticommunist Libyan strong man, enthusiastically praised Sadat's expulsion of the Russians.

The elimination of the Palestinian fedayeen from the political scene, which seems to have been decisively achieved by the Israeli invasions of Lebanon in June and the subsequent suspension of fedayeen actions against Israel, has increased Sadat's freedom of action to deal directly with U.S. imperialism instead of relying on the Soviet bureaucracy as an intermediary. Sadat has learned the lessons of the year of the summit—the Kremlin is not an ally to be trusted, even for

limited objectives; and the U.S. ruling class is not especially averse to exchanging a smaller ally for a larger one, as Chiang Kai-shek has discovered.

Sadat has offered Nixon a partial and very tentative break with the Soviet Union. It is now Nixon's move. Will he rashly press the advantage by demanding thorough Egyptian capitulation to Israeli territorial claims, or will he force his Zionist ally to be conciliatory, threatening to dump Israel for Egypt if Tel Aviv resists?

Sadat's policy clearly aims at the latter possibility. For Egypt, this is a serious and dangerous gamble. The Israeli regime has shown no sign of willingness to part with the Sinai peninsula. It is difficult to see what interest Nixon would have in putting any serious pressure on Israel to do so. In the long run, U.S. imperialism will discard its Zionist ally only if it is definitively demonstrated that the Arab regimes can be more effective than the Zionist state in quashing the development of the Arab revolutionary movement.

Accomplishing that task will require much more than a partial split with the Soviet bureaucrats and much more than a few trial balloons about Egypt's desire for foreign capital. It will require a new counterrevolutionary offensive that the Egyptian workers and students are not likely to accept without massive resistance.

Sadat has taken the first big step down this road. He has done so cautiously, leaving himself room to retreat, to resolidify his Soviet alliance. If a favorable response to the first step is forthcoming from the U.S. government, he can be expected to press on. In that case, the Palestinian people can expect further Israeli-Egyptian deals to be made at their expense, and the Egyptian people can expect the attendant repression needed to enforce those deals. □

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### Rock of Ages

When Kim Il Sung was a boy, he used to play on the "sliding rock," an activity his mother strongly encouraged. Now a tourist attraction in Kim's native village, a guide explains the rock's import: "Our wise and beloved leader continued sliding and was able to liberate his country from Japanese oppressors. This rock celebrates such a significant event in the history of the Korean people."

# Trotskyism and the Australian Labor Party

By Dave Holmes

[The following article is reprinted from the June 30 issue of *Direct Action*, a revolutionary-socialist fortnightly published in Sydney.]

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Recently, the Central Executive of the Queensland ALP [Australian Labor party] decided to proscribe what it called the "Trotsky movement" and asked the Federal Executive to do likewise in other states. The grounds cited were its alleged "anti-ALP" attitude and "infiltration" of Young Labor branches in Queensland.

This is an alarming development. What is meant by the "Trotsky movement"? There are several groups who claim (with varying degrees of justification) to be Trotskyist. Does the ban apply to all of them or only one? Who decides what constitutes membership in the "Trotsky movement"? How did the Central Executive decide this "movement" was "anti-ALP"? As far as we know there has not been any open hearing where any accused individual or group could put their case and defend themselves. Surely the membership and supporters of the ALP have a right to hear the viewpoint of both sides?

It would seem that the real issue is not that the Queensland ALP is in danger of being taken over by its enemies, but is that of party democracy, i.e., the right of left-wing oppositional tendencies to exist within the party, put forward their views, and attempt to win over the majority. The reformist leadership is clearly trying to witch-hunt dissidents out of the party. Hence the looseness and lack of definition of the term "Trotsky movement" (the easier to label opponents with it) and the absence of any grounds for the "anti-ALP" tag.

The Queensland ALP leadership's act is only a beginning, and the object is not only "Trotskyists" but all shades of left-wing dissent. We know, too, that the party brass in other states, especially Victoria, is looking for ways to silence its left-wing critics within the party. In Victoria, Ian Turner has been given an attorney's brief for the prosecution. In *Labor 71* (November 27, 1971) he presented some preliminary research, wherein the Socialist Left (SL) was characterized as "Trotskyist". We venture to predict that "Trotskyism" will be one of the charges when eventually moves are made against the SL.

It is no accident that these moves are being made at this time. With the likelihood of a Federal ALP government later this year it is imperative for the leader-

ship to remove from within the party any critics who could identify their betrayals and develop a mass opposition to them. The party regime that the reformist party brass aspire to is that of the morgue. Any left opposition threatens the role they play in crisis-beset capitalism—that of harnessing the masses to capitalism. Mass labor parties exist also in England, Canada and New Zealand. Similar trends can be noted in each of them in their internal life.

The Socialist Workers League, called Trotskyist by the tendencies on the left, after the name of Leon Trotsky who launched on a worldwide scale the struggle against the Stalinist corruption of Marxism-Leninism, understands why Trotskyism has been, and is, an issue in the ALP. The development of a class analysis of Australian society and the mobilization of the working class and its allies for a socialist solution is the greatest challenge before the ALP today. Trotskyism, with its developed class struggle program and revolutionary internationalist strategy, is the only consistent theory of socialism.

How shallow and baseless are charges that Trotskyism is "anti-labor" is apparent to anyone familiar with the analyses made and the positions taken by our movement in relation to the mass labor parties here and overseas.

## What Is the ALP?

The state labor parties (which later federated into the ALP) were formed by the trade unions at the beginning of the 1890s. This project was given decisive impetus by the savage defeats of the great strikes in the early 1890s. The historic lesson that the workers drew from these defeats was that it was necessary for the working class to have its *own* political party, which would defend their interests in Parliament against the parties of the capitalists. The state Labor parties were then conceived as the political arm of the trade-union movement.

In 1925 in *Where is Britain Going?* Leon Trotsky characterised the British Labour party as "an invaluable historic achievement, from which nothing can ever detract." The ALP is the fundamental historic achievement of the Australian working class in that it embodies the idea of independent working-class political action. The ALP is a step along the road from bourgeois politics to independent working-class politics on the way to the revolutionary struggle for socialism.

The loyalty of the mass of the organised

working class to the ALP has endured since its inception. The workers see the ALP as their party against the bosses' parties. This applies irrespective of the ALP leadership, which has invariably been right wing and class collaborationist to the core.

However, if the ALP is a step forward in the struggle for socialism, it is also an obstacle to it. It represents the concept of independent class politics, yet it is led by hardened reformists and cannot be transformed into a revolutionary party. The ALP will never lead the socialist revolution—that role can only be fulfilled by a mass revolutionary-socialist party armed with the program of Trotskyism.

It is necessary to understand the dual nature of the ALP, that it is both bourgeois and proletarian at the same time. In its origin and structure it is a working-class party, the party of the unions. It was formed by the unions in a period of great defeat for the class. It is organisationally based on the unions, whose predominance is guaranteed over that of individual members from the branches. The unions provide the overwhelming bulk of its funds. Even its official aim (the "Objective") reflects this character.

On the other hand the ALP is *not* a socialist party. It has never in its entire existence threatened capitalism in this country. Its program and politics are class collaborationist through and through. Its field of action is the parliamentary arena: mobilising the masses in direct struggles is utterly alien to it. The ALP leaders have always been right-wingers and have often, at moments of crisis, gone over openly to the capitalist parties (Hughes, Lyons). The ALP leadership has perpetrated numerous and repeated crimes on the working class.

Failure to comprehend this two-fold nature of the ALP leads both to sectarianism and opportunism. Both have plagued the left over the years. The CPA veered between the sectarianism of the Stalinist "third period" ("social fascism") to opportunist blocs with the ALP. Many of today's radical youth see only the sellout Labor fakers and fail to see the historic relation between party and class.

## Building a Left Opposition

Given the relation of the ALP to the working class it is clear that the development of mass consciousness from reformist to revolutionary positions will only occur through a struggle *within* the context of the unions and the ALP. The workers will test the ALP and find it wanting. Revolutionary socialists must go through this experience with the class. Nor would the revolutionaries who remain outside the ALP and in opposition to it be able to decisively influence the development of the political consciousness of the working class from reformist to revolutionary conclusions.

Using the method of the Transitional Program, we approach the masses at their present level of consciousness and lead

them forward around a program of democratic and transitional demands. Such a program must consist of demands around which to mobilise the class and its allies against capitalism, and demands related to the "internal" struggle against the Labor bureaucracy (for inner party democracy, real accountability of the leaders to the rank and file, etc.).

We give the Labor party *unconditional* support as the party of the unions and the working class. That is, we support it against the capitalist parties irrespective of its leadership, and call for its return to power in elections. This support is, however, of a critical nature as regards the program of the ALP. The Trotskyist attitude to the ALP is similar to our attitude to the unions and the workers states—we support the basic conquests but retain our freedom to criticise the leadership.

We maintain this attitude of unconditional support as long as the ALP remains the party of the unions, the alternative for the workers to the parties of the bosses. The ALP has betrayed the workers many times but it has never betrayed the consciousness of any significant section of the class.

It would be a grave mistake to confuse the growing militancy of the class at an economist level with a step forward in its political consciousness. Impatient young radicals, disillusioned militants, and sectarians on the left must understand that the ALP cannot be bypassed nor wished away, that the road to the mass revolutionary party lies through a struggle against the reformist leaders within the unions and the ALP. Revolutionaries must have the long-term perspective of building a class-struggle socialist alternative leadership in the unions and the ALP, which, armed with the Trotskyist transitional program, can take on both the anti-labor bureaucracy and the capitalists.

Only when a revolutionary alternative leadership is constructed, solidly rooted in the mass organisation of the class and capable of fighting the Labor fakers, will the workers advance beyond reformism. From this struggle will come the decisive forces for the mass revolutionary party that will lead the Australian socialist revolution.

## The Socialist Left

Already, under the impetus of the youth radicalisation and the spur of Federal intervention, a broad left wing has formed in the Victorian ALP—the SL. We see the SL, with its emphasis on extraparliamentary mass action, as a very progressive development and support it wholeheartedly although critically. We shall carry further articles on the SL and shall make only a few general points here.

The SL is at the beginning of the role it can play in the ALP. It is necessary for the SL to clarify its perspectives on a wide range of issues, i. e., it must adopt a program. At the moment it is a very

heterogeneous grouping containing all shades of opinion from reformist to revolutionary socialist.

The crucial tests for the SL lie ahead. It is likely that the right wing will try to curb it before the elections. Quite possibly the method used will be to make charges of . . . "Trotskyism". The purpose of this would be to obscure the real political differences in the ALP by smearing and to attempt to split the united front resistance of the SL to any attempted repression. We emphasize: the real issue is party democracy; and only a united resistance by all the forces of the SL will be able to withstand such an attack.

Another problem for the SL will arise if Labor wins the Federal elections. Elements in the SL will favour an unprincipled cooperation. On the contrary, it is precisely in such an event that the SL can push itself forward as an alternative leadership for the class.

## Labor to Power!

The 1972 elections take place in a period of deepening crisis of the world imperialist economy, which is reflected in Australia in the rising unemployment and growing inflation. In all the advanced capitalist countries the capitalists are forced to attack the wages and conditions of the working class. Unemployment, inflation, intensification of labour, attempts to hold down wages, attacks on the union movement, are all on the order of the day. However, the developing crisis occurs when whole layers of youth are in revolt against the system and when the militancy of the working class is very high.

The Liberal government stands on a platform of an assault on the unions via the "Lynch Laws", and of opposition to all the demands of the mass movements. The ALP leadership has capitulated to the ruling class, adopting a modified version of the infamous Cameron proposals. The ALP has not identified itself with any of the mass extraparliamentary movements, although elements of it have. The ALP's reforms can be no solution to the needs of the masses.

Whichever party wins office, it will be obliged to carry out a similar program. Some sections of the capitalist class even call for an ALP victory. Does this mean that revolutionaries are indifferent to the result of the elections? Do we take an abstentionist position? The answer—No!

We are for a Labor victory and we clearly and unequivocally say this—"Labor to Power". An ALP defeat would be a defeat for the class and its allies. It would mean that the Liberal party had been returned and that the capitalists had resolved to make a much more vigorous attempt to shackle the unions and workers' militancy. An ALP defeat would mean that, yet again, the Labor fakers would be able to pose as the alternative to the Liberals for the mass of workers. The breaking of the workers from reformism can

much better take place with Labor in office than out.

Revolutionary socialists identify themselves with the progressive aspirations of the working class. In the context of support for Labor, without in any way compromising ourselves with the right-wing leadership, we can advance our program of democratic and transitional demands to a much wider and more interested audience than usual. We point out that it is precisely the right-wing policies of the leadership which make it hard for them to win office.

What should be the main demands socialists advance? The following should feature prominently (although it is not an exhaustive list by any means): a shorter working week with no loss of pay; for a sliding scale of wages; an end to all restrictive laws against unions; immediate implementation of equal pay for all women workers; an immediate end to Australia's complicity in the Vietnam war; no Australian support for U. S. aggression in Indochina; withdrawal of Australia from ANZUS and SEATO; an immediate repeal of all anti-abortion laws—a woman's right to choose; self-determination for Black people; nationalisation of all basic industries, transport, and financial institutions under workers' control. □

## Rebels Active in West Irian

An Indonesian army patrol was ambushed by rebels in West Irian, according to a report in the July 5 issue of the *Australian*. The clash was said to have occurred about two weeks earlier, near the capital of Jayapura.

At least three soldiers were reported killed. The rebels, Papuans, left only one dead behind but were thought to have dragged off the bodies of others killed in the fighting.

The *Australian* quoted an official in Australian-ruled Papua New Guinea as denying reports that Indonesian troops had crossed into Papua New Guinea and attacked rebels from West Irian. The paper said there had been a buildup of government personnel in the area because of an outbreak of cholera. □

## Correction

In the article "An Interview With Four Brazilian Trotskyists" in our July 24 issue, the fourth question on page 855 incorrectly repeats the preceding question. It should read "What is your opinion of the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia?"

# French CP and SP Sign Joint Program

By Michel Lenoir and Joseph Krasny

[On June 27 the French Communist and Socialist parties signed a joint governmental program, widely hailed as the rebirth of the Popular Front of the 1930s. The following article analyzing the reasons for the accord and its likely future is reprinted from the July 8 issue of *Rouge*, weekly newspaper of the Ligue Communiste, French section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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Hardly a month and a half ago, things were not going so well between the Communist and Socialist parties. They were vying and grappling with each other. The SP, emboldened by its success in the abstention on the Common Market referendum, proposed to the non-Communist left a united candidacy in the first-round legislative elections. At the time, with great foresight, Georges Marchais wrote in *l'Humanité*, "Today, everything looks as though the SP's basic aim is to reduce our influence and compel us to play the role of a balancing force, all the while envisaging an agreement with our party." Well? Will this agreement, which we are told is as important as the Tours conference that founded the Communist party, definitively wipe out the differences of yesteryear? Will the political plans of the CP and the SP, so clearly divergent only a few weeks ago, suddenly find a deep common confluence, a basis for solid agreement?

### Why the Agreement?

The tactical accord concluded on June 27 has its origins in two common CP-SP assumptions:

1) *The sharpness of the regime's political crisis*, as evidenced by the bourgeoisie's failure to come up with a back-up team for a change-over regime (the Chaban-Messmer patchwork can in no way cover this up), and, on the other hand, *the sharp-*

*ness of the social crisis*, as evidenced by the continuing high level of working-class militancy on the eve of the vacation period, both prove that the situation is ripe for power intrigues.

These politicians, whose mental horizons are limited by the sad level of elections, feel themselves "called" to power; they feel that from now on they must enter the game with the maximum number of winning cards in hand. Otherwise, others will pass them by. Thus, program in hand, they get set at the starting line, already putting forth guarantees of their seriousness, their progressive good faith, their ability to govern. They declare themselves ready, whether or not elections take place. But for all that, they are not such great executives, nor are they very daring. If they sign a governmental program and not just an electoral agreement, it is because the latter would have lacked credibility in face of the struggle of workers directly confronting the strong state and its police. They had to respond in terms of power, partly opening the door to socialism. If they signed so quickly, it was not so much because they wanted to, but because the advanced gangrene of the governmental team (rumors, confirmed slightly later, of Chaban's resignation) and the distant murmur of impending elections pushed them unmercifully.

When Marchais and Mitterrand stand sipping champagne on the early morning of the night of June 27, they are not making history, but only *reflecting it by distorting it; because on the French electoral field, the tension of class struggle is growing*. That Mitterrand should have gone "so far" in his compromise with the CP shows that he is not in control of the basic forces compelling the agreement. Only yesterday, he turned his back on the Communists; now, he goes so far that he frightens the notables of the SFIO [Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière—French Section of the Workers (Second) International], many of whom were elected against

Communist candidates. That Marchais should have made such concessions, compared to what the party wanted at first, allowing the minimum number of nationalizations to fall from twenty-five factories to fifteen, proves the same thing about him.

2) *The second common assumption of the two parties* is that neither can achieve its aims without the other. *For the SP*, signing the pact was the price it had to pay in order again to present itself—to a wide section of the progressive electorate that has shunned the SP for years—as a sincerely leftist political force purged of past errors, cleansed of the role the Socialists played in the Algerian war, of Guy Mollet's presence in de Gaulle's first government and of his sending a contingent endowed with special powers to Algeria, etc. (The list is long.) Besides, in the long run, the SP seeks to assure itself of being able to play leap-frog, of using the CP's back, and its members, to come to power in 1976.

*For the CP*, signing the agreement is a guarantee of a favorable relationship of forces with the SP. It shows the leftist voters that it is Mitterrand who has to pass under the Caudine Forks of advanced democracy and not the other way around, Marchais bending under those of Bonaparte-Mitterrand

### Explosive Contradictions

They realize that from now on they have to scheme for power, and to do this they need each other. But apart from this weak common ground, already their plans are different. These disagreements impose on the governmental program *two contradictions* that in time threaten to become explosive.

1) First of all, the CP-SP program is "united" only in appearance. In a deeper sense, in its vacillations, its shame-facedness, its tiny nuances, and especially in the tactical function each party assigns to it in relation to the other and to the electoral sphere, the program faithfully reflects the relative incompatibility of their plans. So how can anyone take seriously as an axis around which to build proletarian power in France a program whose key part—nationalizations—was the product of endless bargaining and is



only the result of a lousy shopkeeper's compromise? How can such a program, adopted only after a struggle with knives drawn and by means of a system of unprincipled reciprocal concessions be anything logical and constructive for the masses?

2) Furthermore—and this is the *second contradiction*—in adopting this program, neither renounces its own basic goal—to govern on the back of the other: the SP by making the CP its stepping-stone for the 1976 presidential elections, by refining its basis of maneuver with the CP in an electoral test so as to effectively institute a Brandt-style or a Swedish socialism in which a coopted working class would gather the crumbs of the expansion; the CP by using the SP and the left wing of the Radicals (the recent meeting of Marchais and Fabre, head man of the latter) as an indispensable springboard to that fateful 51 percent.

The party bureaucrats really believe their traditional blather about winning the middle classes. When they sketch out a cross section of society, adopting a program for each layer, when they hitch the working class to the lurching wagon of the middle classes that waver endlessly between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, when they refuse to initiate an offensive policy toward the middle classes, calling on them to follow the proletariat instead of the other way around, when they do all these things, it is not merely to justify their betrayals. They really believe in the possibility of a regime *under Communist hegemony*, but neither bourgeois nor proletarian, a regime in which the alliance of classes excludes only the monopolist bourgeoisie, only a fraction of the ruling class. This reformist and utopian tactic of the gradual conquest of power, which can only result in the Communist ministers implementing the policy of a fraction of the bourgeoisie, serves it as a guarantee against the working class and implies a privileged alliance with the SP.

The basic respective preoccupation of the CP and the SP in relation to each other is *to build, beginning today, a relationship of forces leading to the day when they believe they ought to govern together*. On this question, the contradictions between their respective plans is explosive, as many polemics have shown since the signing of the agreement.

## Mutual Sabotage

On the SP's part, Mitterrand set the tone the day after the agreement was signed when he spoke to the Vienna congress of the Socialist International: "Our fundamental objective role is to rebuild a great Socialist party on the ground occupied by the CP itself—to demonstrate that of the 5,000,000



MITTERRAND: Sipping champagne with a longtime enemy.

Communist voters 3,000,000 can vote Socialist! That is the reason for this agreement. . . . The reconstruction of the historic bloc by escaping from Communist leadership, by the confrontation of analysis and action in the field; these are the only tactical means that may bring about our aim: the revival of the great Socialist party, boldly oriented to the left so as to recover its authenticity, but also standing in first place at the head of the masses."

It couldn't be more clear. And *l'Humanité* regrets the cynicism of this false brother Mitterrand, who seeks to win over the Communist voters, instead of the potential "thousands of voters" who are still under the sway of reaction.

And the second tolling of the bell, tending in the same direction, at the Socialist meeting: "We are definitely

not alone with the Communists. Already many Radicals are thinking it over. Already many democrats understand the choice confronting them. One is not alone when one is joined by eight, ten, twelve, or—why not?—thirty million Frenchmen." (Mitterrand speaking last weekend to a convention of SP officeholders.) These harangues are aimed at reassuring a whole wing of the Socialist party that is virulently anti-Communist, that finds the price paid for the agreement too heavy, and that is afraid of the campaign of the traditional right, which will accuse them of bargaining with the devil.

On the part of the CP, there is great uneasiness at seeing the SP cease to be a simple apparatus, a simple general staff. Behind the smiles lies distrust. And the referendum—in which the CP did not hesitate to scuttle unity in order to prevent Mitterrand from too rapidly reinflating the Socialist balloon—is not so long ago.

So we have here not so much the reign of unity as some close in-fighting, each attacking the other so as to strengthen itself. This battle, symbolized by the recent municipal elections in Arles in which the Communist candidate was elected without Socialist support, threatens to get out of the control of these adversaries who pretend to be comrades. The referendum proved that. And the marriage of convenience, concluded, as Mitterrand himself said, "under the rules of separate property," threatens to be a tumultuous one. □

## Another Execution in Iran

According to a government communiqué published July 16, a member of a "subversive group," Aliyar Reyhavi, has been executed by a firing squad in Ahwaz, in the southern part of Iran after being sentenced to death by a military tribunal. The victim was said to have entered Iran last August from Iraq.

"The newspapers in Teheran indicate that Aliyar Reyhavi belonged to a 'commando' group of four men whose mission was to blow up a highway bridge and tunnel in the Ilam region, some fifty kilometers from the border between Iraq and Iran," according to *Le Monde* July 18. □



## Trotsky's Views on the National Question

By Livio Maitan

If there is any fundamental Marxist concept to the defense and further elaboration of which Trotsky tirelessly contributed, it is the conception of the obsolescence of the national states, the international thrust of the proletarian revolution, and the necessity of an international framework for the building of socialism. These ideas run through the entirety of his works from his first significant writings of the 1905 period and the polemics of the first world war to the tracts of the crucial period of his struggle against Stalin (the years of *The Third International After Lenin* and *Permanent Revolution*) and the articles of the period of exile in Mexico, right up to the eve of the second world war.

### Historical Crisis of the National State and the Necessity of Socialism

It is sufficient to recall a few brief points. As early as 1905, Trotsky wrote that "the proletariat's work will not, of course, be confined within the limits of a single state. The very logic of its position will immediately throw it into the world arena."<sup>1</sup> He later returned to and further spelled out the same idea in *Results and Prospects*. This concept flows from, among other things, the analysis that "the time for national revolutions is past, in Europe anyway, and so is the time for national wars. . . . We are living in the era of imperialism, which means not only a system of colonial expansion but also a very distinctive type of domestic regime. It is no longer a matter of a bourgeois nation opposing an old regime, but of the proletariat opposing the bourgeois nation." (1905, p. 322.)

In 1914, when the international socialist movement was torn by the war, and the commonplaces of patriotic rhetoric were being unfurled, Trotsky returned on several occasions to the same theme: "The forces of production which capitalism has evolved," he wrote in the preface to a series of articles which appeared in *Golos*,<sup>2</sup> "have outgrown the limits of nation and state. The national state, the present political form, is too narrow for the exploitation of these productive forces. The natural tendency of our economic system, therefore, is to seek to break through the state boundaries. The whole globe, the land and the sea, the surface as well as the interior, has become one economic workshop, the different parts of which are inseparably connected with each other. This work was accomplished by capitalism. But in accomplishing it the capitalist states were led to struggle for the subjection of the world-embracing economic system to the profit interests of the bourgeoisie of each country. What the politics of imperialism has demonstrated more

than anything else is that the old national state that was created in the revolutions and the wars of 1789-1815, 1848-1859, 1864-1866, and 1870 has outlived itself, and is now an intolerable hindrance to economic development.

"The present War is at bottom a revolt of the forces of production against the political form of nation and state. It means the collapse of the national state as an independent economic unit. . . ." (pp. 20-21.)

"Yet at the same time it proclaims the downfall of the capitalist system of economy. . . . World production revolts not only against the confusion produced by national and state divisions but also against the capitalist economic organization, which has now turned into barbarous disorganization and chaos." (pp. 22-23.)

"For the economically backward countries of Europe," Trotsky continues, "the War brings to the fore problems of far earlier historic origin—problems of democracy and national unity. . . . Yet in the present epoch it is quite impossible to treat these questions in and by themselves. They are utterly devoid of an independent character." (pp. 24-25.)

The conclusion this implies is the formulation of a slogan that was to generate lively polemics at the time it was advanced and in other periods as well under different formulations: "In these historical circumstances the working class, the proletariat, can have no interest in defending an outlived and antiquated national 'fatherland,' which has become the main obstacle to economic development. The task of the proletariat is to create a far more powerful fatherland, with far greater power of resistance—the *Republican United States of Europe*, as the foundation of the United States of the world." (p. 28.)

We have made a rather long quotation from a little-known work because it effectively synthesizes Trotsky's ideas on the historic crisis of the national state and on the inevitable subordination of national problems—themselves legitimate—to the logic of imperialist interests. He absolutely did not ignore the existence of national problems and aspirations, but he regarded it necessary always to keep in mind the overall framework and to struggle against any mystification aiming to conceal from the masses the most profound causes of imperialist slaughter. Let us add in passing that, except for the divergences on the formulation of the socialist United States of Europe, Lenin's position was essentially the same: He did not question the possibility of the birth of national movements in small oppressed countries, but he emphasized that the Belgian or Serbian question could not be posed in the abstract outside the context of the struggle between the two opposed imperialist camps, which in the final analysis defined the nature of the conflict.<sup>3</sup>

1. *1905*, Vintage Books, 1971, p. 310.

2. *The Bolsheviks and World Peace*, Boni and Liveright, 1918.

3. For the polemics on the socialist United States of Europe, see the first part of *The Third International After Lenin* and Vol. 22 of *Lenin's Works*.

In *The Third International After Lenin* Trotsky's concept is reasserted in the form of a criticism of the Stalinist concept of socialism in one country. "The productive forces are incompatible with national boundaries. Hence flow not only foreign trade, the export of men and capital, the seizure of territories, colonial policy, and the last imperialist war, but also the economic impossibility of a self-sufficient socialist society. The productive forces of the *capitalist* countries have long since broken through the national boundaries. The socialist society, however, can be built only on the most advanced productive forces, on the application of electricity and chemistry to the processes of production including agriculture; on combining and generalizing, and bringing to maximum development the highest elements of modern technology. . . . How then can socialism drive the productive forces back into the boundaries of a national state which they have violently sought to break through under capitalism?"<sup>4</sup>

In conclusion, "the invincible conviction that the fundamental class aim, even more so than the partial objectives, cannot be realized by national means or within national boundaries, constitutes the very heart of revolutionary internationalism." (p. 72.)

Finally, in the last months of his life, when war had already broken out, Trotsky denounced in the most resolute fashion the new mystification by which attempts were being made to camouflage the imperialist nature of the conflict behind "national" or "democratic" pretexts. "Our whole-hearted recognition of the right of every nation to self-determination," he wrote, among other things, "does not alter the fact that in the course of the present war this right does not have much more weight than thistle-down."<sup>5</sup> And, conjuring the prospect of a socialist Europe in one of his typical rough outlines of the future, he stated: "For Europe economic unification is a question of life and death. . . . Europe must become Socialist United States if it is not to become the cemetery of the old culture. A socialist Europe will proclaim the full independence of the colonies, establish friendly economic relations with them and, step by step, without the slightest violence, by means of example and collaboration, introduce them into a world socialist federation. The USSR, liberated from its own ruling caste, will join the European federation, which will help it to reach a higher level. The economy of the unified Europe will function as one whole. The question of state borders will provoke as few difficulties as now the question of administrative divisions inside a country. Borders inside the new Europe will be determined in relation to language, and national culture by the free decisions of the populations involved.

"Will this seem utopian to 'realistic' politicians? To the cannibals in their time the giving up of human flesh was utopian."<sup>6</sup>

4. *The Third International After Lenin*, Pathfinder Press, 1970, pp. 52, 53.

5. *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939-40)*, Merit Publishers, 1969, p. 37.

6. "World Situation and Perspectives," interviews in the *St. Louis Dispatch*, March 10, 17, 24, 1940; as cited in *Writings (1939-40)*, pp. 25, 26.

## Self-Determination and Proletarian Politics

His analyses of the fundamental nature of the conflicts of our age and the assertion of the necessity of passing beyond national boundaries in no way led Trotsky to ignore or minimize the national question. During the first world war, in *The Bolsheviks and World Peace*, he summed up the conditions of peace in the following slogans: "No contributions [indemnities]. The right of every nation to self-determination. A United States of Europe without monarchies, without standing armies, without feudal ruling castes, without secret diplomacy."<sup>7</sup> At the same time, as to Russia, he identified among her central tasks the recognition of the right of autonomy for the nationalities oppressed by the czarist empire. Moreover, it is precisely the period of war and revolution that permitted him, as it did Lenin and the Bolshevik leadership, to define with greater precision and clarity the terms of the national question. The most lucid synthesis of these concepts is contained in precisely the masterful chapter of the *History of the Russian Revolution* entitled "The National Question."

"Language," writes Trotsky, "is the most important instrument of human communication, and consequently of industry. It becomes national together with the triumph of commodity exchange which integrates nations. Upon this foundation the national state is erected as the most convenient, profitable and normal arena for the play of capitalist relations. In Western Europe the epoch of the formation of bourgeois nations, if you leave out the struggle of the Netherlands for independence and the fate of the island country, England, began with the great French revolution, and was essentially completed approximately one hundred years later with the formation of the German Empire.

"But during that period when in Europe the national state could no longer contain the productive forces and was overgrown into the imperialistic state, in the East—in Persia, the Balkans, China, India—the era of national democratic revolutions, taking its impetus from the Russian revolution of 1905, was only just beginning. The Balkan war of 1912 marked the completion of the forming of national states in southeastern Europe. The subsequent imperialist war completed incidentally the unfinished work of the national revolutions in Europe leading as it did to the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary, the establishment of an independent Poland, and of independent border states cut from the empire of the tzars."<sup>8</sup>

The author then recapitulates the main points of the Leninist concept of the intransigent defense of the right of self-determination against counterposed deviations. This concept—it should be remembered—implies two specific points. The first is that the defense of the right of self-determination does not imply that the revolutionary party automatically upholds any demand for independence or of secession (in other words the question of principle is distinct from the question of what position to take in each specific case). The second is that in regard to the party and to the organization of the proletariat in gen-

7. *The Bolsheviks and World Peace*, p. 231.

8. *History of the Russian Revolution*, Vol. 3, Univ. of Michigan Press, 1960, p. 36.

eral, Bolshevism does not renounce its centralist concepts, even while struggling against any national-federalist tendency.

More generally, the Leninist view was based on the premise that the solution to the national question represented in principle a historically progressive factor. Its point of departure was the consideration that national oppression prevented great masses of the petty bourgeoisie and even some layers of the workers from understanding the social origins of their exploitation: As social oppression was reduced the actual social dialectic would stand out more clearly, the masses would attain a higher level of political consciousness, and they would begin to settle accounts directly with their own bourgeoisie.

In 1917 Lenin completely shared the conclusion that Trotsky had sketched out earlier in defining the theory of permanent revolution: In the context of the age of imperialism, the final phase of capitalism, it was henceforth impossible to conceive of a dynamic of struggle for national independence implying a bourgeois national-democratic stage sharply separated from the socialist stage of the revolution. Consequently the proletariat would take the head of struggles aiming at a resolution of the national question, which could in fact be resolved only to the extent that the capitalist regime was overthrown. As for Trotsky, having called to mind that the Bolsheviks were in agreement in principle on the right of self-determination, he added immediately: "However, the question of power was decisive even though the temporary leaders of the party revealed themselves absolutely incapable of understanding the irreducible contradiction between the Bolshevik slogans on the national and on the agrarian questions on the one hand, and on the other hand the maintenance of the imperialist bourgeois regime, even if camouflaged under democratic forms." That is what the theory of permanent revolution meant concretely in 1917; that is why "the nationalist torrent spilled into the bed of the October Revolution" and, more generally, why national revolutions appear as the "stairsteps of the world revolution of the proletariat."

It is possible here to answer the question of whether the national question must be subordinated to the interests of the proletarian revolution. The Bolsheviks were reproached for such a subordination, it is well known, having revealed their hypocrisy in the matter, according to their adversaries, at the time of the Georgia incidents in 1921, for example.

The case of Georgia is quite specific, and it is known that both Lenin and Trotsky were troubled at the military intervention and opposed the methods later used in the region by the tendency of the party inspired by Stalin. An essay published by Trotsky in 1922, independent of his decision to go along with the official explanation of the intervention, incontestably demonstrated in any case that Georgia was absolutely not independent, but was tied in integrally with the interplay of reactionary national and international forces that had launched the war against the Soviet republic. Aside from Georgia, in any case, Trotsky never concealed the fact that the national question could not be considered an absolute priority, and like Lenin he explained the reasons for this through the polemics on Belgium and Serbia at the time of the first world war.

"Understanding how important this principle [the right

of self-determination] was in the age of transition to socialism," he wrote in his essay *On Georgia*, "our party did not for a minute turn the democratic principle of self-determination into a dominating factor above all other historic requirements and tasks."<sup>9</sup> In the *History of the Russian Revolution* the assertion is even sharper: "This subordination of belated national revolutions to the revolution of the proletariat follows a law which is valid throughout the world. Whereas in the nineteenth century the fundamental problem of wars and revolutions was still to guarantee a national market to the productive forces, the problem of our century is to free the productive forces from the national boundaries which have become iron fetters upon them."<sup>10</sup>

The question thus could not be posed in the abstract, as if it were a matter of choosing between national revolution and proletarian revolution conceived as absolute entities. The proletariat would have to uphold national demands even if their realization would end up with the formation, for a rather long period of time, of national states ruled by the bourgeoisie (in that this would represent a step forward and an objective prerequisite of socialism). But in the context of the age of imperialism this is a quite improbable hypothesis. The imperialist bourgeoisie crushes underfoot and destroys, out of a necessity intrinsic to the system, all nationalities and their independence. As to the national bourgeoisie, it is incapable of playing a significant anti-imperialist role. Thus the resolution of the national question, just like the other bourgeois-democratic tasks, hereafter is up to the proletariat and will be accomplished only by means of a revolution under the hegemony of the proletariat (supported by all the exploited layers of the urban and rural population).

### Strategy for the Colonial Countries

We thus hit upon another fundamental aspect of Trotsky's view of the national question. In the struggle against the bureaucratic caste which had forced its hegemony on the party, the state, and the Communist International itself, Trotsky launched a closely reasoned polemic against the Stalinist notions, which were very close to former Menshevik concepts, by sketching, on several occasions, the lines of a revolutionary strategy for the colonial and semicolonial countries.

It is sufficient to recall, for example, his position regarding the Sino-Japanese conflict, which combined a

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9. *Between Red and White*, Communist Party of Great Britain, 1922, p. 83. This edition of the essay *On Georgia* is reprinted by University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor-London, 1962.

10. *History of the Russian Revolution*, p. 55. On this subject see other passages in the essay *On Georgia* and *The Bolsheviks and World Peace*, p. 171. See also in *Stalin* the following passage, interesting from the standpoint of method: "It was Lenin's view that the right of self-determination was merely an application of the principles of bourgeois democracy in the sphere of national relations. A real, full-blooded, all-sided democracy under capitalism was unrealizable; in that sense the national independence of small and weak peoples was likewise 'unrealizable.' However, even under imperialism, the working class did not refuse to fight for democratic rights, including among them the right of each nation to its independent existence." *Stalin*, Harper & Bros., N. Y.-London, 1941, pp. 153-54.

systematic critique of the role of the "national" bourgeoisie and of Chiang Kai-shek with the description of the progressive character of the struggle of semicolonial China against Japanese imperialism (it is very valuable to recall the "instruction" untruthfully attributed in literature on the subject to Trotsky "not to prevent the Japanese empire from occupying China"). Recall also the lucid pages on the necessity of a significant anti-imperialist struggle in Latin America (implying a condemnation of the Stalinist line of collaboration with the "democratic" imperialism of the United States) or on the orientation to be followed in the revolution in India:

"In the event that the Indian bourgeoisie finds itself compelled to take even the tiniest step on the road of struggle against the arbitrary rule of Great Britain," we read in a 1939 letter, "the proletariat will naturally support such a step. But they will support it with *their own* methods: mass meetings, bold slogans, strikes, demonstrations and more decisive combat actions, depending on the relationship of forces and the circumstances. Precisely to do this must the proletariat have its hands free. Complete independence from the bourgeoisie is indispensable to the proletariat, above all in order to exert influence on the peasantry, the predominant mass of India's population. Only the proletariat is capable of advancing a bold, revolutionary agrarian program, of rousing and rallying tens of millions of peasants and leading them in struggle against the native oppressors and British imperialism."<sup>11</sup>

Note should be taken of Trotsky's contribution during the thirties to a correct solution to the question of the Blacks in the United States, which had become during the preceding debate a burning issue of the day. Combating any misunderstanding and resistance in the ranks of the revolutionary movement itself, he asserted the validity of the principle of self-determination for Afro-Americans also and grasped the very great importance that a movement of Blacks would have as a driving force of the revolution in the United States. In a discussion that remains very current, he drew a parallel with pre-revolutionary Russia and explained: "The Russians were the European Negroes. It is very possible that the Negroes also through the self-determination will proceed to the proletarian dictatorship in a couple of gigantic strides, ahead of the great bloc of white workers. They will then furnish the vanguard."<sup>12</sup> This is a guideline to be reflected on by advocates of any kind of workerism formulated in terms of sterile schemas.

### Catalonian Question and a Meaningful Hypothesis

Nor did Trotsky minimize the importance of national demands in the period between the two wars even in certain countries of Western Europe. In analyzing the Spanish crisis from the beginning of the thirties he emphasized the importance of the democratic task of self-determination for Catalonia. "The separatist tendencies," he wrote,

11. "An Open Letter to the Workers of India," in *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1938-39)*, Merit Publishers, 1969, p. 38. See also pp. 15-16.

12. *On Black Nationalism and Self-Determination*, Merit, 1967, p. 18.

"present the revolution with the democratic task of *national self-determination*. These tendencies were accentuated, to all appearances, during the period of the dictatorship. But while the 'separatism' of the Catalan bourgeoisie is only a pawn in its play with the Madrid government against the Catalan and Spanish people, the separatism of the workers and peasants is only the shell of their social indignation. One must distinguish very rigidly between these two forms of nationalism. Precisely, however, in order to draw the line between the nationally oppressed workers and peasants and their bourgeoisie, the proletarian vanguard must take the boldest and most sincere position on the question of national self-determination. The workers will fully and completely defend the *right* of the Catalans and Basques to organize their state life independently in the event that the majority of these nationalities express themselves for complete separation. But this does not, of course, mean that the advanced workers will push the Catalans and Basques on the road of secession. On the contrary, the economic unity of the country with *extensive autonomy of national districts* would represent great advantages for the workers and peasants from the viewpoint of economy and culture."<sup>13</sup> The essential criteria for orientation on the national question spring up once again in the clearest way.

In terms of method, it is interesting to call to mind a hypothesis advanced by Trotsky on the eve of the second world war:

"If a new war ends only in a military victory of this or that imperialist camp; if a war calls forth neither a revolutionary uprising nor a victory of the proletariat; if a new imperialist peace more terrible than that of Versailles places new chains for decades upon the people; if unfortunate humanity bears all this in silence and submission then not only Czechoslovakia or Belgium but also France can be thrown back into the position of an oppressed nation (the same hypothesis can be drawn in regard to Germany). In this eventuality, the further frightful decomposition of capitalism will drag all peoples backward for many decades to come. Of course if *this* perspective of passivity, capitulation, of defeats and decline comes to pass, the oppressed masses and entire peoples will be forced to climb anew, paying out their sweat and blood, retracing on their hands and knees the historic road once already travelled.

"Is such a perspective excluded? If the proletariat suffers without end the leadership of social-imperialists and the communo-chauvinists; if the Fourth International is unable to find a way to the masses; if the horrors of war do not drive the workers and soldiers to rebellion; if the colonial peoples continue to bleed patiently in the interests of the slaveholders; then under these conditions the level of civilization will inevitably be lowered and the general retrogression and decomposition may again place national wars on the order of the day for Europe."<sup>14</sup>

It is significant that during the first world war Lenin

13. *The Revolution in Spain*, published in pamphlet form by the Communist League of America in March 1931; translated by Morris Lewitt. Full text is available in L. Trotsky, *The Spanish Revolution (1931-1939)*, Chap. 5, Pathfinder Press, 1972.

14. "On the Character of the Coming War." *Writings (1938-39)*, p. 15.

advanced a similar hypothesis, on the purely theoretical level.<sup>15</sup> Neither of these hypotheses were actually realized in history, quite as the authors themselves had expected. But the very fact that they expressed these views confirms on the one hand that they attributed a very great importance to the national question, and on the other that they confined themselves to proceeding in their arguments from an objective context—real or potential—and not from a schema transformed into an absolute norm.

### The National Question in the Transitional Stage

Upon the specific development in the Soviet Union of bureaucratic degeneration, the national question arises also for the period of transition from capitalism to socialism. Trotsky made a new contribution during some of the most troubled yet productive years of his life in grappling with and clarifying the terms of the problem in a new context.

The problem had already been stated in the program of the Left Opposition, which denounced the rebirth of Great Russian chauvinism and nationalism during the NEP period and prior to the first five-year plan: "Bureaucratism, sustained by the spirit of Great-Power chauvinism, has succeeded in transforming the Soviet centralization into a source of quarrels as to the partition of official positions among the nationalities. It has spoiled the relation between the center and the frontiers. It has reduced to nothing, as a matter of actual fact, the significance of the Soviet of nationalities. It has carried bureaucratic guardianship over the autonomous republics to the point of depriving the latter of the right to settle land disputes between the local and the Russian population. . . . In these circumstances 'nationalization' of the local apparatus takes place at the expense of the national minorities. . . ." To thwart these tendencies it was necessary to effect a resolute turn by adopting a series of precisely specified measures which could be summed up in the slogan "Return to the Leninist position."<sup>16</sup>

In *The Revolution Betrayed*, written in 1936, an entire chapter ("Nation and Culture") is devoted to this aspect of Stalinist degeneration. According to Trotsky, national oppression had taken on a special character: "It is a question, therefore, not of the oppression of one nationality over another in the proper sense of the word, but of the oppression of the centralized police apparatus over the cultural development of all the nations, starting with the Great Russian."<sup>17</sup>

But Trotsky refined these ideas especially with respect to the Ukrainian question, which he discussed in several important works. ". . . despite the giant step forward taken by the October Revolution in the domain of

national relations," he wrote in July 1939, "the isolated proletarian revolution in a backward country proved incapable of solving the national question, especially the Ukrainian question, which is, in its very essence, international in character. The Thermidorian reaction, crowned by the Bonapartist bureaucracy, has thrown the toiling masses far back in the national sphere as well."<sup>18</sup> Hence the legitimacy of the aspirations of independence which are concretized in the slogan "For a united, free, and independent workers' and peasants' Soviet Ukraine."<sup>19</sup> Moreover, Trotsky was convinced that to the extent that a revolutionary regeneration is attained in the Soviet Union an independent Ukraine "might subsequently join the Soviet Federation; but voluntarily, on conditions which it itself considers acceptable." (*Writings (1939-40)*, p. 72.)

Nor does Trotsky confine himself in this case to a proclamation of abstract principles, but expresses a principled demand in a historically determined context. The national discontent of the Ukrainians was one of the contradictions born of bureaucratic degeneration. The problem thus is to exploit this contradiction in the framework of the worldwide struggle against bureaucracy: ". . . the national uprising . . . represents nothing else but a single segment of the political revolution." (*Writings (1939-40)*, p. 77.)

But the slogan of independence for the Ukraine produced an additional implication. At the time Trotsky was writing, part of the Ukrainian population was subject to Polish, Hungarian, and Rumanian rule. The demand for independence and unity of the Ukraine could thus play a disruptive role in this direction as well: "The same slogan opens up for the proletarian party the opportunity of playing a leading role in the national Ukrainian movement in Poland, Rumania and Hungary." (*Writings (1939-40)*, p. 176.) In this sense the Ukrainian question could acquire "an enormous importance . . . [not only for] Southeastern and Eastern Europe, but also [for] Europe as a whole," (p. 72) and "The program of independence for the Ukraine in the epoch of imperialism is directly and indissolubly bound up with the program of the proletarian revolution." (p. 73.)

The orientation set by Trotsky with respect to the Ukraine retains its usefulness in similar situations which arose after the second world war. It suggests an essential criterion in weighing the national problems in the countries of Eastern Europe to which Moscow bureaucratic rule has given birth. That is why the Fourth International introduced into its program "the slogan of the independent and sovereign Soviet Socialist Republics of Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Georgia, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, while at the same time advocating the confederation of all these workers' states on a strict basis of equality, in one or several democratic federations of workers' states."<sup>20</sup>

The Trotskyist view of the national question is thus strictly integral with the general conception of the revolutionary dynamic of our time, and in the final analysis it is no more nor less than a particular expression of the concept of permanent revolution, the fulcrum of the entire body of Trotskyist thought. □

15. "If the European proletariat remains impotent, say, for twenty years; if the present war ends in victories like Napoleon's and in the subjugation of a number of viable national states; if the transition to socialism of non-European imperialism (primarily Japanese and American) is also held up for twenty years by a war between these two countries, for example, then a great national war in Europe would be possible." ("On the Junius Pamphlet," *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964, p. 310.)

16. *The Real Situation in Russia*, Harcourt, 1928, pp. 103-104, 107.

17. *The Revolution Betrayed*, Pathfinder Press, 1970, p. 177.

18. "Independence of the Ukraine and Sectarian Muddleheads" in *Writings (1939-40)*, p. 75.

19. "The Ukrainian Question," *ibid.*, p. 72.

20. *Fourth International*, Number 1, Winter, 1958, p. 71.

# REVIEWS

## Twenty Years of Secret Warfare

*The War Conspiracy* by Peter Dale Scott. Bobbs-Merrill Company, New York, N. Y. 238 pp. \$7.50. 1972.

Canadian scholar Peter Dale Scott has done a remarkable job of uncovering a great deal of the truth behind the last two decades of U. S. involvement in East Asia. His achievement is all the more notable in that *The War Conspiracy* is based not on "leaks" by disillusioned bureaucrats but almost entirely on the public record: Congressional hearings, books, U. S. and Asian newspapers, etc.

In eight chapters, Scott covers everything from the role of the CIA's Air America in the Southeast Asia opium trade to the *Pueblo* incident to the 1971 invasion of Laos. What he demonstrates is that the United States government has consistently and continually followed a course toward greater and greater military involvement in Southeast Asia—a course that has not been changed for even a moment by international agreements (Laos, Vietnam). The less sophisticated representatives of the U. S. ruling class have sometimes defended this course rather bluntly, as did former Admiral Felix B. Stump, board chairman of Air America, in 1960: "World War III has already started, and we are deeply involved in it."

A key ingredient in the pattern of escalation has generally been "intelligence" reports that, on closer examination, turn out to be highly misleading if not totally spurious. This was the case, for example, with the illegal U. S. military supplies sent to the Laotian government in 1959, allegedly to help counter a "North Vietnamese invasion." In fact, the "invasion" consisted of some minor skirmishes between Pathet Lao troops and forces of the generals who had shortly before—with U. S. encouragement—forced the Pathet Lao out of the coalition government.

The role of phoney or deliberately misinterpreted "intelligence intercepts" in the Tonkin Gulf incidents of 1964 is already well known. Scott demonstrates that the 1968 voyage of the

*Pueblo* into North Korean waters was similarly misrepresented to American and world opinion. He makes a strong case for the likelihood that the voyage was intended to provoke an attack—although the capture of the vessel was a bit more than the war planners had bargained for. Certainly the timing of the incident was very convenient for Lyndon Johnson, who always avoided the politically dangerous move of openly mobilizing the National Guard for the Vietnam war. The units mobilized allegedly to deal with the *Pueblo* crisis in fact ended up in Vietnam.

Scott believes that the evidence he has assembled indicates the existence of a conspiracy by military and civilian intelligence officials to conceal facts from elected government officials in order to be able to carry out their own idea of what U. S. policy in Asia should be. This interpretation not only strains the evidence but also misses the real point that his book quite clearly illustrates.

There are of course inevitable tactical differences within the U. S. ruling class, and it would be naive to assume that one faction or another would not resort to devious means to win acceptance of its program. It would be equally naive, however, to attribute such deviousness only to the "hawks"

or to assume that the tactical differences outweigh the common strategic goals shared by "hawks" and "doves," military officers and elected officials.

It does not really matter, for example, whether Lyndon Johnson believed that U. S. ships had been attacked in the Gulf of Tonkin on August 4, 1964, or whether he was deliberately misled by false reports. As the Pentagon Papers make clear, he had already decided to take whatever military measures proved necessary in order to maintain a puppet regime in Saigon. If Johnson was deceived about the Tonkin Gulf incident, it would mean only that he was saved the effort of inventing his own pretext for escalation of the war.

Scott acknowledges that for both Johnson and Nixon "what they above all wished to avoid was not escalation, but personal responsibility for the decision to escalate." But this "indecision," he argues, invited "covert operations and manipulated intelligence which effectively took the decision out of the President's hands." It would be far more logical to say that Johnson and Nixon, having decided to escalate, delegated to their subordinate agencies the task of finding a suitable pretext. The evidence does in fact indicate a conspiracy, but one by the president, not against him.

On balance, however, Scott's book is a valuable addition to the growing number of works debunking the lies used to justify U. S. aggression in Indochina. One hopes that it will have a wide circulation, particularly in the United States.

—David Burton

## Program of Action for Black Liberation

*A Transitional Program for Black Liberation*. Pathfinder Press, New York, N. Y. 23 pp. \$0.35, £0.15. 1972.

This new edition of *A Transitional Program for Black Liberation*, which was adopted by the 1969 national convention of the Socialist Workers party, has been provided with a new introduction by Andrew Pulley, the SWP's candidate for vice president in the current election campaign.

As Pulley notes, "mobilization of the

black community in action against its capitalist oppressors provides the key to the continued development" of the nationalist struggle. It is the question of how to encourage and direct this mobilization that is the central focus of the program.

Key to the struggle, the program argues, will be the fight for Black control of the Black community and the formation of an independent Black political party. The pamphlet includes a sample platform such as might be adopted by such a party. □



## PRT's Position on 'Democratization' in Argentina

[The following editorial appeared in the May 1972 issue of *El Combatiente*, the organ of the Argentine PRT (Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores—Revolutionary party of the Workers). The statement was entitled "Revolutionists and the Democratization of the Country." Translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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The elections [planned for March 1973] represent a concession by the military dictatorship to the working class and to the people in order to divert them from revolutionary war and to contain the upsurge of the mass movement, while at the same time defending the interests of the bourgeoisie and imperialism. But the idea that "bourgeois legality" in no way expresses the interests of the proletariat is completely incorrect. This absurd idea boils down either to the narrow notions of the intellectual petty bourgeoisie to the effect that the electoral road to power stands in contradiction to the path of revolutionary war and that for this reason we have no need of bourgeois political freedom, or else to anarchism or ultra-leftism, which denies the proletariat any participation in bourgeois politics and in bourgeois parliamentarism.

At least legality makes it that much more a guarantee that the proletariat will become organized; this conclusion is the origin of the Leninist thesis that in a certain sense the electoral process will be a greater aid to the proletariat than to the bourgeoisie.

The people may be confused since certain sections of the bourgeoisie (Perón, Balbín, Frondizi) include certain democratic demands in their programs, but they do not go beyond reformist measures that do not endanger the interests of the class that they represent.

For the bourgeoisie, it would not be desirable for the new parliamentary regime to overdo things by eliminating all the measures instituted by the

military dictatorship, as for example the repressive legislation and the police and military bodies that it created in its struggle against the masses and their guerrilla movement; in other words, it would be best not to take this "democracy" to its ultimate, logical, and full conclusion.

Revolutionists maintain that the bourgeoisie betrays the cause of freedom, that it is incapable of developing a consistent democracy, and that it is unable to follow an independent policy in the face of imperialism. Many bourgeois sectors speak of "peaceful change" and "national liberation," but always with full respect for the honorable provisions of the dictatorship's laws so that the organization and consciousness of the working class and the people are developed as little as possible by this change. For the working class, in contrast, it is best to win all reforms through mass mobilizations and the development of revolutionary war, for only in this way—and not by taking the path of pacifist reformism—will the true accumulation and organization of forces for the socialist revolution be achieved. This is why Perón dreads violent revolution but uses revolution to frighten the dictatorship; this is why he is concerned about avoiding armed confrontation and instead proposes petty reforms in order to hold back the advance of revolutionary war. And it is not only Perón, but Frondizi, Balbín, Ricci, Cámpora, and all the defenders of the GAN [Gran Acuerdo Nacional—Great National Agreement] who defend this point of view.

Many of them put forward a program calling for democratic freedoms, as well as freeing political prisoners and abolishing the repressive legislation. But their situation as an expression of the ruling classes leads them to desert the struggle for democratization. Fearing the advance of the proletariat, they pull back, each time observing an even greater silence in the face of the government's policy, in the face of the hunger, the exploita-

tion, the removal of our wealth, the repression, and the torture. The conditions of economic, political, and social oppression that the proletariat must endure compel it to take a consistent approach in struggles for democratic and economic demands. Evidence can be seen almost daily of the upsurge in new mass mobilizations for economic and political demands, such as the mobilization against the electricity rates, the struggle against hunger, and the struggle for the release of political prisoners and against repressive legislation.

We also know that any kind of political and economic reform of the framework of the capitalist system in our country has its limits. The economic crisis is getting worse and worse. The needs of imperialism are so great that stable capitalist development becomes impossible. No sector of the bourgeoisie is capable of pursuing a policy independent of the big monopolies that run our economy and of pulling the country out of stagnation.

By developing the struggle for democratic goals, the proletariat will continue to gain in strength. And the greater the number of sectors involved in fighting the dictatorship; the less sectarianism there is; and the more the revolutionary and progressive forces join together against the common enemy, the broader will be the scope of the struggle and the more resolute will be the progress toward the socialist revolution.

If we turn to the rich theoretical arsenal of Marxism-Leninism, we will see that the great classical thinkers always maintained that the proletariat should energetically participate in democratic struggles, be the vanguard of the struggle for democracy, and take every advantage of legal opportunities; if it does not, the mass movement will run the risk of falling into the hands of forces that are hostile to the revolution.

Many times we will meet certain revolutionists who fear participating in



legal struggles in a front with other nonproletarian, reformist, and populist currents, or belonging to various mass organizations together with these currents when the latter formally enjoy the leadership of the movement. But what should interest revolutionists is the practical role that we play in this struggle and the determined participation of the workers in this struggle, which are both incorporated into our strategy of revolutionary war. By proclaiming "independence" from reformism and populism, petty-bourgeois sects isolate themselves in practice from the mass movement and transform themselves into mere spectators who know everything and criticize everything but who in practice mobilize no one, do not actively participate in mass mobilizations, and leave this movement in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

As we can see, our perspective for making alliances with reformist parties and groups and other nonproletarian forces is of vital importance for the development of the immediate struggle of the proletariat.

The solution to this problem of alliances can be seen in the fact that these parties and groups (CP, socialists, Christians, PCR [Partido Comunista Revolucionario—Revolutionary Communist party], VC [Vanguardia Comunista—Communist Vanguard], rank-and-file Peronism, Radical Left, etc.) represent certain working-class sectors, and essentially sectors of the petty bourgeoisie and progressive bourgeois sectors, that is, sectors that suffer from the political and economic oppression of the regime and can have an interest in the revolution, but not with sufficient consistency to be able to lead it forward.

In the same way, we emphatically oppose the sectarian characterizations of petty-bourgeois intellectuals who claim that these parties and groups are the objective allies of the government. To them we reply that they are allies of the proletariat and that whether we march with them together in the struggle for socialism depends not so much on the vacillating activity of these groups as on the ability of the proletariat and its party to implement a frank and sincere policy of alliances.

We must bear in mind which forces are standing up to the policy of the dictatorship and can lead the strug-

gle against the big bourgeoisie and imperialism, as well as the parties and political groups that represent these social forces.

These forces cannot be the big bourgeoisie, the landholders, the imperialists; these forces cannot be Perón, Balbín, Paladino, Cámpora, Alsogaray, Frondizi. We know that they are incapable—they demonstrated this in their time—of developing a decisive struggle against the monopolies, against the big landowners, against the army and the mercenary police. As representatives of the bourgeoisie in its various shades, they need the entire state apparatus and all the repressive forces in order to defend themselves against the working class and the people.

The working class is the main party interested in this change. The peasants, the students, the teachers, the professional people, the small merchants and other sectors of the petty bourgeoisie, as well as a very small sector of the bourgeoisie, are standing up to the regime. Various representatives of these social forces are suffering in prison, confronting the repressive forces daily, and are undergoing torture in workers' and people's struggles. The economic crisis is spreading increasingly to these sectors and compels them to enlarge the ranks of the proletariat. Through its party, the working class must be the first to bring together these forces and hurl them against the enemy in whatever camp, making use of all forms of struggle and organization. At the present political conjuncture with its concessions from the bourgeoisie and the rising mass movement, it is more necessary than ever that in the area of struggles around economic and democratic demands the proletariat and its party make use of legality and, through active participation, transform themselves in practice into the vanguard of the democratic struggles.

The victory of the revolution and of the revolutionary war will be a victory of the people. It will be a victory of the workers, of the urban bourgeoisie, of the poor and middle peasants. For this reason, we speak in the program of the ERP [Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo—Revolutionary Army of the People] of a revolutionary people's government led by the working class.

It is necessary to overcome sectar-

ianism and stress the kind of joint activity on behalf of the interests of the people that can daily unite greater people's forces, while at the same time independently carrying out an intense ideological struggle on behalf of the historic interests of the proletariat.

With its policy of the GAN, the dictatorship wants to isolate us from our strategic allies (CP, socialists, and other progressive sectors), portraying us as enemies of "institutionalization," portraying us as enemies of the democratic demands of the people. To this we reply that we will tirelessly struggle for the democratic freedoms of the people.

Revolutionary proletarians sincerely want to have fraternal relations with the organizations and sectors that are confronting the dictatorship in the struggle against the paltry concessions of the GAN, and that are mobilizing and organizing the entire people to free the political prisoners from jail, to put an end to torture, to prevent any kind of electoral ban from being applied, to see to it that the working class and the people have their representatives in parliament, and to oppose attempted coups by a military that is constantly looking for ways to keep itself in power, and to oppose hunger, exploitation, and poverty.

This entire popular mobilization, this entire democratic struggle, will make it possible for the people's forces to gain in strength. We have no illusions about the legality being offered by the dictatorship or about the future parliamentary regime lasting forever; neither the bourgeoisie nor imperialism have been placed at bay by the sudden attack of the masses and the development of revolutionary war—"legality" will find itself again circumscribed by new military coups or by a fascist evolution of the future parliamentary regime. It is thus perfectly clear that our participation in legal struggles and our view that a regime replacing the dictatorship would be desirable do not represent our strategic goal and do not represent a definitive and total solution for the working class and the people; this is only a tactic that will make possible a broader organization of the masses and thereby respond to their immediate needs. But giving this tactic concrete form is of fundamental importance for the revolution.

These legal or semilegal struggles,

and this use of bourgeois legality, must be inseparably linked to the development of revolutionary war, to the independent building of the Revolutionary party of the Workers and the Revolutionary Army of the People. Thus if the proletariat and its party are able to become the vanguard of the democratic struggle, without the prejudices in the minds of the petty-bourgeois intellectuals about losing the formal leadership of the democratic movement, in practice we will be able to play our vanguard role. The revolutionary forces of the people will be so powerful and have reached such an organizational level that repressive attempts by the regime will be in vain. Popular indignation and rage and the struggles of the masses will develop to such an extent that the dictatorship will have to fall back on the forces of imperialism as its last attempt to hold back the triumphant socialist revolution.

The revolutionary war began a short time ago; it still has a long way to go. It is true that the influ-

ence of our party on the masses is still insufficient, but our war clearly demonstrates the existence of forces capable of fighting a decisive struggle until the final victory. Each step of the revolutionary war, each step forward in the present development of the struggles of the working class and the people, with the active participation of our party and the other revolutionary and popular forces, will quickly awaken the consciousness of thousands of workers, peasants, students, and intellectuals. By making the party's policy a concrete reality, and by developing our practice, the masses will be irresistibly drawn toward the goals of revolutionary war and socialism since they are the only goals that fully and consistently express the interests of the working class and the people.

Our party, the Revolutionary party of the Workers, has decisively undertaken to participate along with all revolutionary, reformist, and progressive forces in the struggle for democratization, making use first and fore-

most of the struggle for the release of all political prisoners, and the struggle against repressive legislation, against torture, kidnappings, and police crimes, against any kind of ban, against the rising cost of living, and against the penetration of imperialism. We are ready to participate in and form any kind of trade-union, student, peasant, political, and working-class neighborhood group that will make it possible to organize struggles among broad layers of the people for their social, economic, and political demands.

Our party, the Revolutionary party of the Workers, has decisively undertaken to be in the front lines of all proletarian and revolutionary layers in order to build the great PRT and the ERP by developing the revolutionary war closely linked to the struggle of the masses and to the struggle for socialism.

This will be in practice the policy of the PRT for leading the working class and the people step by step down the victorious road of revolutionary war and socialist revolution. □

## Manifesto of Argentine Socialist Party Convention

[In its June 21 issue, *Avanzada Socialista*, the weekly paper of the Argentine Socialist party, announced that it had fulfilled the requirements for taking part in the elections that have been promised by the military dictatorship. Among other things, the Socialist party was able to register 35,000 people as members to meet the stipulations for getting ballot status. The party offered the platform it gained in this way to all revolutionary forces that wanted to campaign against the dictatorship and for a socialist Argentina. This offer was repeated in the manifesto of the Socialist party convention, which we have translated below.]

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To the revolutionary activists, to the anti-imperialist fighters, to the workers, to the students, and to the militant youth, the Fifty-First Convention of the PS [Partido Socialista—Socialist party] reaffirms its determination to fight for a socialist revolu-

tion.

Anti-capitalist struggles are spreading around the globe. This is the dynamic our Vietnamese brothers and sisters are following and it is present in all countries, even in the very entrails of the imperialist monster, which is being rocked by the struggles of the American masses themselves. Day by day, these struggles are growing in intensity, despite the counterrevolutionary agreements signed between the imperialists and the bureaucrats of the workers states, who themselves are being shaken by demands for proletarian democracy.

Our country is not absent from this red battle map of workers' and popular offensives. Since 1969, the date of the historic uprising in Córdoba, we have been caught up completely in the revolutionary torrent sweeping indiscriminately over national borders. Although our main enemy is imperialism, which exploits the country as a whole, our national liberation can be achieved only by getting rid of the bourgeoisie, which is in-

timately linked to, allied with, and dependent on the foreign monopolies.

The present occasion is a special one for a convention of Argentine socialists on two accounts. This is the sixth anniversary of the rise to power of the "Argentine Revolution" [the military dictatorship], and this date coincides also with a redoubled militant offensive of the workers and students, who have just carried out a new Tucumán uprising and are in the course of waging more than a dozen trade-union struggles.

This coincidence offers a good occasion for drawing up a balance sheet of the last six years, which have been rich in revolutionary lessons and experience.

A direct result of the "Argentine Revolution" is the dire need that is creating despair in the homes of our people. Other results are the million unemployed clustering in our cities and the fury of the repressive forces, who are imprisoning and torturing our best young people. The final outcome of the "Argentine Revolution" is the

political scheme called the "gran acuerdo nacional" [the Great National Agreement] by which the big capitalist parties (the Peronistas, the Radicales [liberals], etc.) are trying to set up an electoral trap as their last defense against the onslaught of the masses.

The bonapartist government rose to power ostensibly to right the wrongs done by imperialism and the bourgeoisie. Like the monarchs of old, it promised an era of progress and happiness. And now, at the end of six years, the regime must prepare to retire ingloriously from the scene, junking all of Onganía's pretenses and illusions.

This failure epitomizes the historic incapability of the Argentinian bourgeoisie to develop the country, free it from the yoke of imperialism, and guarantee its inhabitants a decent standard of living. This long period of more than half a decade—in which the most powerful sectors of the national bourgeoisie, concealing their nature behind military swagger and gold braid, have ruled us—has brought a worsening of the catastrophic trend of the last twenty years. For this whole time the country and the workers have steadily lost ground economically.

The Bonapartist government of Onganía found its direct support in four powerful sectors that have alternated in the leadership of the country's economic and political life—the landowning oligarchy; the big modern national monopolies; the big foreign industrial and financial monopolies; and the bourgeoisie serving as the intermediary for foreign investment—the sector favoring industrial development, represented by Frondizi and Alende.

With a few differences in their points of view, these sectors concurred on a governmental program whose essence boiled down to two points—getting an inflow of investment from abroad and increasing the productivity of labor, that is, the exploitation of the workers. They began to get their investment after they crushed the great strikes of the stevedores, railroad men, and sugar workers. They achieved this with the complicity of the trade-union bureaucracy. The sellout was symbolized by the tie that Vandor put on for the first time to meet Onganía; it was embodied in a wage freeze, compulsory arbitration, and repeal of the law on firings in the construction

industry.

The setback of the workers and the defeat of the student movement were the exact barometer of imperialist penetration. When the new team led by Krieger Vasena took over, representing the rise to dominance of the financial bourgeoisie, it achieved the "miracle" of stabilizing the peso and getting a strong flow of investment into the modern and high-productivity industries. In the face of such "success," the liberal middle bourgeoisie ousted from power by the coup and the Peronista industrialists prostrated themselves, putting the wraps on their criticisms. From Madrid, Perón said: "We will have to wait and see."

But far from bringing progress, the Yankee capital that the Argentine bourgeoisie pined for introduced an enormous imbalance into our economic structure. There were no bounds to investments and financial penetration, and so foreign capital began to flood sectors previously reserved for the Argentine bourgeoisie—the banks, agricultural sectors, modern light industry, supermarkets, etc. This situation led to growing opposition from wings of the bourgeoisie. Frondizi, Alende, and other politicians who had played leading roles in assisting colonization, became alarmed at the disastrous result of financial penetration. The lead of this bourgeois opposition was taken by Perón and Balbín, in the name of the middle bourgeoisie in ranching and agriculture and new light industry. This was the beginning of the history of the Hora del Pueblo [Hour of the People—a middle-class united front], whose final chapters are being played out in these days.

The government that shortly before had been all-powerful began to show its intrinsic weakness. It could no longer play the role of arbiter in the conflicts between different sectors of the bourgeoisie and imperialism. Lacking any support or strength of its own, it was left suspended in midair. At the same time, the first symptoms appeared of a wave of worker and student rebellions, especially in the interior of the country where the trade-union bureaucracy was weaker and less able to hold back struggles. Under the influence of new leaderships, new battles started up. One of these, the fight waged by the SMATA [Sindicato de Mecánicos y Afines del Trans-

porte Automotor—Union of Automobile Mechanics and Related Workers] against layoffs culminated in the Córdoba uprising, which could only be understood in the context of the economic crisis and social discontent embracing the various strata of the population.

While the tremendous imperialist offensive served to dislocate the structure of the economy and accentuate still more the economic crisis and conflicts within the bourgeoisie, the explosion of rebellions in the interior profoundly altered the entire situation in the country as a whole. They left an indelible imprint. The changes went beyond the fall of the Onganía government and a shift in the political line of the "Argentinian Revolution." They left their impress on the mentality, experience, and organization of the Argentinian masses. In this sense, the Córdoba uprising was the same thing for us as the "spring revolution" for Czechoslovakia, the Gdansk rising for Poland, the Tet offensive for Vietnam, the colossal mobilization against the war in the United States, the Uruguayan strikes, the great advance of the revolution in Bolivia, and the French May, all of which occurred in the same period.

For the workers and people's movement the Córdoba uprising was a landmark in the cycle of struggles that are continuing and intensifying in this period, a cycle which has now also passed through other memorable episodes such as the rebellions in Rosario, Mendoza, Mar del Plata, and now, once again, Tucumán. This cycle has various features that make it unique. In the first place, the student movement and the middle class have broken out of their traditional isolation from the working class and joined with the workers in a common front against the regime. In the second place the process of developing new leaderships has intensified. In the previous period this was proceeding in a scattered and molecular way. Now in the living reality of the immense majority of workers' struggles led by independent or left leaderships, the process has become concentrated. There is an objective tendency for these new leaderships to group together in class-struggle and revolutionary nuclei outside the Peronista apparatus, which is controlled by the trade-union bureaucracy and the bourgeoisie. The

high-water mark of this trend has been the development of the group around Sitrac-Sitram [Sindicato de Trabajadores de Concord-Sindicato de Trabajadores de Materfer—the Materfer and Concord plant unions]. Although this formation suffered a temporary defeat, it can be repeated on a higher, directly political, level in the Polo Obrero y Socialista [Proletarian and Socialist Pole].

The Córdoba uprising and the workers and people's struggles forced the government and the exploiters to change their political plans completely. Onganía himself tried to carry out a change in course, but he was already discredited in the eyes of the bourgeoisie. So, they pulled the Levingston transitional government out of the hat. This regime tried to continue the Bonapartist administration, basing itself on the pro-European development sector represented by Alende and Ferrer. It tried to answer three needs—to make some precautionary concessions to the masses, such as civil liberties, pay rises, etc., to cool their militancy; to placate the bourgeois opposition and the imperialists themselves by promising elections and a return to constitutional government; and to save what was salvageable of the national economic sectors not yet swallowed up by the financial penetration of Yankee imperialism. This necessary line of timid nationalism and populism ended up seeming derisory both to the masses and the bourgeoisie itself. So, the Junta Militar decided to make a decisive shift. Lanusse took over with his new variant of the "Gran Acuerdo Nacional" (GAN).

Lanusse accentuated the nationalist-populist course, which is an objective necessity for the bourgeoisie as a whole and which coincides with the demand for elections by the Yankee imperialists, who see a return to parliamentary democracy as the only means for sidetracking the mass upsurge. The present government is continuing the Bonapartist tradition of the "Argentinian Revolution." However, it has tended to favor and base itself on the big agricultural bourgeoisie that produces for export. It has sought by this means to reinforce the capitalist economic structure as a whole and in the process shoved the financial sectors somewhat to the back-

ground.

But Lanusse's classical Bonapartism is combined with a need for achieving a parliamentary type of agreement with the bourgeoisie as a whole and its political parties. He needs unity in order to confront, divert, and devitalize the social struggles that are shaking the foundations of the regime. This is the significance of the "Gran Acuerdo Nacional," or the pact with the big bourgeois parties and with Perón in particular, which is aimed at preparing the way for an electoral solution. As a result of it, we are now suffering a kind of Lanusse-Radical-Peronista coalition government.

It should be pointed out that the bourgeois parties and Perón have accepted this variant and that the tensions and conflicts are due to the extreme gravity of the economic crisis, which leaves little room for making populist concessions and setting the final seal on a "gentlemen's agreement" between the bourgeoisie and imperialism. The greatest supporter of the "bosses' agreement" and the government is still the Peronista trade-union bureaucracy, which has put on the white shirt and tie of class collaborationism for good. It is seconded by the Communist party, which through the ENA [Encuentro Nacional de los Argentinos — National Meeting Ground of Argentinians] is proposing partial alliances within the camp of the bourgeois and imperialist forces who subscribe to the "acuerdo."

The Holy Alliance of Perón, the trade-union bureaucracy, the imperialists, and the government has proved insufficient to contain the colossal upsurge of the working class and the working people. With fresh fighters moving into the front lines and new cadres developing, the struggle gives no respite. From the automotive industry to education and the courts, there are constant struggles going on. And these are continually reinforced and deepened by the student movement, which, although lacking a leadership that could give its struggles a mass character and a revolutionary direction, is confronting the problems that flow from inadequate state financing of the schools and from bourgeois and professorial domination. These problems keep the student movement on a permanent battle footing.

It is the duty of socialists and revolutionists to unify all these struggles of the workers, popular sectors, and students by stressing the need for mutual solidarity and support. It is their duty to give a conscious expression to the objective tendency toward unity in action and the development of a common front of struggle for common objectives.

Our party has devoted itself to an unconditional defense of the democratic liberties that the bourgeoisie tramples under foot every time they constitute a threat to the regime. Presently the working class and the popular sectors are the sacrificial victims of a criminal apparatus of repression and coercion. It is the duty of all democrats and revolutionists to fight for the release of the prisoners, for the abolition of the repressive laws and apparatuses. Along with this, we demand political rights for all parties and leaders. This means the right for Perón to return freely and exercise all his civil rights, and for the Communist party and the rest of the groups on the left to carry on their political and propagandistic activity legally. This demand for civil rights for all overrides any differences we may have with other groups.

In our demand for the release of Tosco, Flores, and Santucho, as well as the other prisoners, and for ending the outlawry of Perón and the Communist party, we want to sum up the democratic objectives that should lead us to carrying out common mass action against the government.

The formation of a coordinating committee by the youth groups of the Peronistas, the Communist party, and other parties can be a very positive step forward in waging this democratic struggle. We are well aware that this move holds the danger of a maneuver by the government and the bourgeois forces to promote a kind of organization that would fit in with the "acuerdo," such as the Frente Cívico de Liberación [Civic Liberation Front]. But the mere formation of such a coordinating committee raising democratic demands is a step we must support and further by calling for a consistent struggle for the democratic objective that it has set itself.

There is only one way to unify and give a mass character to the demands of the workers, popular sectors, the students, and to demands for democ-

racy. The highest body of the organized workers, the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo—General Confederation of Labor] must issue a plan of struggle and carry it out. This plan must set forth a minimum program including the following, among other workers' and popular demands: an emergency raise, a sliding scale of wages, a guaranteed work week, wages for the unemployed, higher appropriations for education, health, etc., the immediate release of the prisoners, and repeal of the repressive laws and bans.

All of our mobilizations must be designed to press the CGT leaders to call a congress of the rank and file that could draw up a plan of struggle and elect a new proletarian leadership capable of carrying it out. We must be guided in this by the examples of the Mendoza teachers and the Mar del Plata students, who were able to force the CGT to support them. The day-to-day struggle against the bureaucracy that we are waging in the factories must be combined with making public demands on the bureaucracy to assume its leadership responsibilities. By making such demands, without placing the slightest confidence in the bureaucracy, we can force it to move or to end up by exposing its betrayals in front of the masses.

But checkmating the new style Bona-

partist dictatorship, confronting the bureaucracy, and shaking the regime by mass struggles is not enough. What we win in a hundred mobilizations, we can lose in an instant if our enemies are able to get their "Gran Acuerdo Nacional" off the ground without our being capable of projecting an adequate political response. Against the background of the Argentinian crisis, what we are discussing is the crisis of revolutionary leadership, the lack of leadership of our heroic masses, who despite their selfless militancy have been continually sold out and betrayed.

The political stage opened by Lanusse has enabled us to begin to overcome this tragic lack of a strong revolutionary leadership capable of leading the proletariat and the people and directing their struggles toward the political objective of a genuine socialist revolution.

From the Córdoba uprising up to today, the Argentinian proletariat has produced thousands of revolutionists, who have participated in and frequently led the factory and popular struggles. For these activists and fighters against the bosses and the bureaucrats we raise the historic possibility of grouping ourselves in a Polo Obrero y Socialista [Proletarian and Socialist Pole], in a front capable of forging a revolutionary party. Concretely, we call on the compañeros who led the

historic Chocón strike, on the members of Sitrac-Sitram, on the supporters of the Lista Marrón that has won in the Córdoba SMATA, on workers at Banco Nación, Petroquímica, Chrysler, Citroën, as well as all the class-struggle tendencies and activists involved in the new day-to-day struggles to use the recognized legal status of the Partido Socialista to constitute a force that can unify the new revolutionary worker and student vanguard on a national scale. This organizing on a political level will immediately be reflected in a qualitative leap forward for the mass struggle.

Finally, the Fifty-First Convention of the Partido Socialista declares that by mobilizing the workers and popular sectors and by organizing the Polo Obrero y Socialista, we will be able to carry on the task of building an internationalist revolutionary party capable of undertaking the construction of a socialist Argentina, which is the only alternative to a bourgeois and semicolonial one.

We affirm the necessity of the socialist road and restate once again our methods of thought and action—revolutionary Marxism as our philosophical approach, and mobilizing the masses on the basis of their immediate needs and constantly raising the level of the struggle as our method of action. □

## OCI and POR-Lora Debate Strategy for Bolivia

[We have translated below, for the information of our readers, two articles from *Informations Ouvrières*, official weekly of the Fédération des Comités d'Alliance Ouvrière (of Lambertist orientation).

[The first, originally entitled "The Policy of the POR of Bolivia and the Revolutionary Anti-imperialist Front," was written by Filemón Escobar, a member of the Central Committee of the Partido Obrero Revolucionario (Revolutionary Workers party). This organization—also known as the POR-Lora, and not to be confused with the POR-González, which is the Bolivian section of the Fourth International—is an adherent of the Lambert faction of the "International Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International," one of the rem-

nants of the bloc that opposed the principled reunification of the Fourth International in 1963.

[The second article, originally titled "Workers' United Front and Anti-imperialist United Front," is a response to Escobar by the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (Internationalist Communist Organization), the group headed by Pierre Lambert.

[The first article appeared in the

May 17 issue of *Informations Ouvrières*; the second was serialized in the May 24 and May 31 issues. Both are described as "discussion preparatory to the second session of the Pre-Conference convoked by the International Committee, which will take place in July."

[All subheads are by the OCI.]

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### Escobar Explains Policy of POR-Lora

For us Bolivian Trotskyists the tactic of the anti-imperialist united front to which the documents of the first four congresses of the Third Interna-

tional refer—especially in the theses on the Orient—must be regarded as the alliance of the oppressed classes of the semicolonial countries under

the leadership of the proletariat, which is considered the leader of the whole oppressed nation.

In the backward countries, the proletariat finds itself obliged to raise, and to make its own, the goals of the struggle of other social classes—which means it must take over the carrying out of bourgeois-democratic tasks. It must never be forgotten that the Bolsheviks did not for a minute cease to fight around the line of democratic tasks and slogans. Their aim in this was to win over the peasant mass and the urban petty bourgeoisie, including the soldiers and officers of the czarist army.

Without the alliance of these classes under the leadership of the proletariat not only is it impossible for the working class to engage effectively in the struggle for power, it is even useless to envisage such a struggle.

There is still another fundamental reason for the anti-imperialist positions that the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie adopt under historically determined circumstances. The Latin American experience is rich on this point. The political vanguard of the proletariat has the responsibility of making the masses understand the limitations of these positions by utilizing a correct tactic that must allow for the development of struggle around democratic slogans, as well as for an intransigent struggle for the political independence of the proletariat. This is the only way the bourgeoisie's and petty bourgeoisie's limited confrontations with imperialism can be exploited usefully. This limited anti-imperialist role that these social classes can play is the consequence of the backward character of the country and the foreign oppression to which it is subject.

### **Workers' United Front and Anti-imperialist United Front**

To create confusion between the tactics of the anti-imperialist united front and of the workers' united front by claiming that the former would be merely an extension of the latter is to fail to recognize that these are two distinct tactics corresponding to two different realities. The Bolsheviks advanced the tactic of the workers' united front for the industrialized countries under conditions in which this front must consist of a political alliance of

workers' parties. The united front defended by Trotsky as the only way to block the advance of fascism in Germany is an example. To support the premise—as does the leadership of the OCI—that achieving the anti-imperialist united front is subordinate to achieving the workers' united front is to contradict reality and, at the same time, to advance a position contrary to that of the Bolsheviks.

In our documents we do not speak of the workers' united front, because we consider it a sectarian slogan for the backward countries. It can only separate the proletariat from its natural allies and also make the perspective of the struggle for power more remote. We must not forget that the workers' united front signifies not only a tactic but also a strategy—the establishment of a workers' government to carry out directly socialist tasks. The perspective of the anti-imperialist united front, on the other hand, is to establish a workers' government supported by other oppressed classes in order to carry out democratic tasks of a transitory character leading to the socialist tasks.

Through their theoretical positions the comrades of the OCI express a political position—one that demonstrates an incomprehension of the revolutionary process in the backward capitalist countries and one that leads them to identify the workers' united front with the situation prevailing at the moment when the working class of the oppressed country attains the highest level in the development of its political class independence; that is, the moment when it becomes conscious of its immediate and historic interests.

This development of its political consciousness cannot be confused with the formation of the united class front—on the contrary.

The united front is nothing but the expression of the proletariat's own freedom from the ideology and tutelage of other social classes, a step on the road that leads the proletariat to subordinate these classes to its own interests, which are also the interests of the whole oppressed nation. By identifying this political development of the proletariat with the united front one comes to reduce the breadth of agreement that the party of the working class concludes with other tendencies in the working class (for example

with the Communist party) to that of a purely trade-union front; that is, to something completely foreign to the perspective of political struggle for power. The trade union is already an elementary form of the class united front. If it remains isolated from other social classes, the proletariat is destined to be beaten, even in the purely economic struggles it may raise.

Inside the workers' organizations, alliances between the party of the working class and other parties claiming to be such are formed on a daily basis. But it is a matter of alliances formed in the framework of the anti-imperialist struggle and which have nothing to do with the designation workers' united front. The workers' united front is of no use in the struggle for any political objective of national scope. At least that is what experience, if not Marxist documents, tells us.

In Bolivia, the workers' federation itself, the COB [Confederación Obrera Boliviana—Bolivian Workers Federation], does not claim to be simply a class united front, for in its ranks are found not only trade-union organizations of the working class, but also middle-class organizations as well as organizations representing the peasant masses. The COB was born in this form during the great struggles of 1962. It can be asserted that the COB is a front of classes and not just a workers' united front.

### **The Experience of the Popular Assembly**

In a number of party documents, as well as in the documents of the workers' organizations and the Popular Assembly itself, it is said that the Assembly, more than just an organ of workers' power, was the highest expression of the anti-imperialist united front under the hegemony and leadership of the worker minority. It was not only the working class that was represented in the Assembly, but nearly all other popular sectors and organizations, including all the parties claiming to be Marxist as well as several nationalist tendencies.

The Assembly's program, as well as the methods of struggle it adopted, was the program of the COB—that is, a program whose strategic line is the struggle for socialism. In addition to the political submission of the other



classes and parties to the working-class program, the workers held a physical majority in the Assembly.

The birth and existence of the Assembly was made possible by the alliance of different classes and parties, and only in this way was it possible to confront the fascists and to mobilize the people and the proletariat. The Assembly was not born simply of an alliance between the POR and the Communist party, but through the participation in this process of other parties, even if this meant waging a tenacious ideological struggle.

Today it is part of our analysis that the Assembly was the expression of the political development of the proletariat. It was an expression of the revolutionary upsurge, a product of the rapid march of the proletariat and of the radicalization of significant sectors of the petty bourgeoisie in a relatively brief period (1969-1970). It must never be forgotten that until 1969 all the workers' own organizational forms — unions and parties claiming to have a revolutionary program — had been completely wiped out under the blows of the fascist violence of the Barrientos regime.

The preventive coup organized by international and internal counter-revolution on August 21, 1971, has put off the perspective of the realization of the revolutionary objectives of the proletariat. They have been temporarily delayed. The defeat, like all defeats, resulted in a change in the political situation. The functioning of the Popular Assembly as such, along with all the characteristics that defined it, is no longer possible. But because

the Assembly was able to make itself the sole authority for the masses, it is indisputable that in the consciousness of the masses it remains alive, even after the defeat, and that it will be reborn with greater force in the next revolutionary upsurge.

### The Revolutionary Anti-imperialist Front

But the defeat in no way means that the masses now find themselves deprived of all political leadership. The struggle the left waged during the August events — based on a unity defined by the programs and goals of the Popular Assembly — provided the necessary basis allowing for the maintenance of unity in this new period of clandestine struggle. This unity is concretized in the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Front [FRA — Frente Revolucionario Anti-imperialista].

The FRA asserts that it is the continuation of the Popular Assembly. By this, it must be understood that it strives for the Assembly's goals and will utilize its methods of struggle. The FRA's program is the same as the Assembly's. Besides the political organizations claiming a working-class program, the FRA includes certain nationalist currents as well as a sector of the army that cannot be considered Marxist but must be characterized as progressive and as an enemy of the military dictatorship.

The front is by nature an anti-imperialist one, and that is why the workers' organizations — especially the most militant of them — participate in it.

When we say that the FRA presents itself as the continuation of the Assembly, we intend only to point out that the proletariat and its program are the leading forces in the front. It would be absurd to identify the front with the Assembly. The former is the response to the current political conditions of repression in Bolivia; the latter was an expression of the revolutionary upsurge during a period of democratic freedoms. What we mean to stress is the continuity between them as regards their goals and as regards the tactic of the anti-imperialist united front.

To deem the united front a simple bloc of parties and to assert that our party's objective must be limited to the struggle to win other tendencies

to the program of Trotskyism is not to say very much. But it is also to reduce the party to a simple propagandist or polemical organization and in no way recognizes the party as the political leadership of the proletariat. In this way one denies that the party could, in the given political circumstances, concretize the tactic of the anti-imperialist united front, whose aim is to draw the majority of the country behind the program and leadership of the proletariat.

In Bolivia today it is also to forget that only the people as such can move from passive to active resistance behind democratic slogans capable of mobilizing and uniting other classes behind the proletariat. The working class cannot wage this struggle alone, and still less can the party do so.

It is indisputable that the tactic of the anti-imperialist front was devised by Stalinism, for which it served as a means of subordinating the proletariat to bourgeois and petty-bourgeois leadership. Such is not the case in Bolivia, and this is no longer a reason for trying to substitute the workers' united front for it. The anti-imperialist front preserves all its value as a tactic in countries where national emancipation is one of the basic democratic tasks whose solution depends on the proletariat's ability to take power as the leader of the oppressed nation, that is, at the head of the urban petty bourgeoisie and in alliance with the great peasant masses. On the part of the OCI comrades, failure to understand the tactic of the anti-imperialist front is failure to understand the application of Marxism — whose highest expression is found in the transitional program and the theory of permanent revolution — in the backward countries. That means, in the final analysis, to deny the relevance of Trotsky's theory.

The opposition of the International Committee and OCI delegates to voting on the document presented by the POR to the Latin American conference for the reconstruction of the Fourth International and their call for a supplementary discussion can only retard revolutionary work and the reconstruction of the Trotskyist movement. We asserted that this urgent task could not be undertaken today on the fringes of the Bolivian experience.

In the document to which we have just referred, we wrote:

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other than a position taken on the crucial problems of revolutionary strategy. The problems of the continent, the great questions of revolution in our time, were posed in the countries of the Altiplano, and it was here that the main lines indicated for their solution were found. From this derives the revolutionary obligation of taking a position on the controversial question of Bolivia, which became the acid test of all tendencies and groups in the broad span of the left."

and if national peculiarities "can be of decisive importance for revolutionary strategy over a span of many years," they are not located *outside* social relations and world politics. *They cannot be abstractions.*

The particular social and political relations of the class struggle in a given country are an *expression* of world relations. It would be just as erroneous not to take account of national peculiarities as it would be to set them up as independent entities *above* and *outside* world relations. That would be to deny the theory of permanent revolution, which Trotsky, let us recall once again, characterized as follows:

"The theory of permanent revolution now demands the greatest attention of every Marxist, because the development of the ideological struggle and the class struggle has definitively raised this question out of the realm of memories of the old disputes of the Russian Marxists and has posed it as the question of the *character, the internal lines, and the methods of the international revolution in general.*" (Our emphasis — OCI.)

## The OCI's Reply to Escobar

### National Peculiarities and World Unity of the Class Struggle

"To create confusion between the tactics of the anti-imperialist united front and of the workers' united front by claiming that the former would be merely an extension of the latter is to fail to recognize that these are two distinct tactics corresponding to two different realities. The Bolsheviks advanced the tactic of the workers' united front for the industrialized countries under conditions in which this front must consist of a political alliance of workers' parties. The united front defended by Trotsky as the only way to block the advance of fascism in Germany is an example. To support the premise—as does the leadership of the OCI—that achieving the anti-imperialist united front is subordinate to achieving the workers' united front is to contradict reality and, at the same time, to advance a position contrary to that of the Bolsheviks." Thus writes Filemón Escobar.

Comrade Escobar at least deserves credit for putting in black and white a critique that crops up in the POR documents but has, until now, remained verbal. For the polemic to be fruitful, however, it would be necessary that the positions defended by the OCI not be distorted. The OCI has never considered the anti-imperialist united front to be a simple extension of the workers' united front; any more than we have ever said that there was any such priority as: first the workers' united front, then the anti-imperialist united front.

On the contrary, the OCI has insisted, and still insists, on the response

given by Trotsky to Stalin, formulated in the French preface to his book *The Permanent Revolution*:

"Under the guise of providing an economic justification for internationalism, Stalin in reality presents a justification for national socialism. It is false that world economy is simply a sum of national parts of one and the same type. It is false that the specific features are merely supplementary to the general features, like warts on a face. In reality, national peculiarities represent an original combination of the basic features of the world process. This originality can be of decisive importance for revolutionary strategy over a span of many years."

The delineation of the tactic of the anti-imperialist united front at the Fourth Congress of the Communist International was a response to specific requirements that flowed from, and still flow from, the specific features of the social and political relations of the economically backward countries under the domination of imperialism, features which were not identical to those prevailing in the imperialist metropolises. Moreover, each economically backward country, like each imperialist metropolis, has its peculiarities resulting from the place it occupied in the development of the world imperialist system and from its own history.

But, it must be understood, "world reality is not the simple sum of its national parts." World reality forms an organic totality. National peculiarities are the component parts of this organic totality. World reality is not a jigsaw puzzle of independent pieces, but an ensemble of differentiated parts.

### Democratic Tasks, National Independence, Dictatorship of the Proletariat

Our uneasiness begins when, in the name of the POR, comrade Escobar writes:

"In our documents, we do not speak of the workers' united front because we consider it a sectarian slogan for the backward countries. It can only separate the proletariat from its natural allies, and also make the perspective of the struggle for power more remote. We must not forget that the workers' united front signifies not only a tactic but also a strategy—the establishment of a workers' government to carry out directly socialist tasks. The perspective of the anti-imperialist united front, on the other hand, is to establish a workers' government supported by other oppressed classes in order to carry out democratic tasks of a transitory character leading to the socialist tasks."

Escobar is compelled to defend an arbitrary assertion: "The OCI states that the anti-imperialist united front is just an extension of the workers' united front and that the latter must be achieved before the former can be." This serves the POR as the point of

departure for opposing the anti-imperialist united front to the workers' united front and rejecting the latter. For comrade Escobar, the anti-imperialist united front excludes the workers' united front which, according to him, "would separate the proletariat from its natural allies" and this because "the workers' government (in the backward countries) supported by other classes must carry out democratic tasks of a transitory character leading to the socialist tasks."

Escobar goes so far as to write that the workers' united front "does not flow from the framework of a simple trade-union front (in the economically backward countries); that is, from something completely foreign to the struggle for power."

But at the same time, the POR leadership never stops repeating that the anti-imperialist united front can only be realized under the leadership of the proletariat and through its hegemony.

Under these conditions, the following question arises: Why, and how, must and can the proletariat's hegemony be realized within the anti-imperialist united front?

To the first part of the question Trotsky replies unambiguously. Proletarian hegemony is necessary because "the democratic revolution is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat which bases itself upon the alliance with the peasantry and solves first of all the tasks of the democratic revolution." (*The Permanent Revolution*, thesis four, our emphasis—OCI.)

This is so because in the epoch of imperialism the realization of bourgeois-democratic tasks and the struggle against imperialist domination and for national independence are problems and tasks *inseparable* from the struggle for the world proletarian revolution and are imbedded in this struggle as "one of its component parts." This is why only the proletariat is capable of carrying out these tasks and of effectively leading this struggle. And this is also why proletarian hegemony is necessary.

There is no doubt that in the economically backward countries the proletariat leads the struggle of other exploited layers that are victims of imperialist domination. The proletariat *integrates* their demands into its own program.

It forms alliances with these social layers and with their organized political expressions. Polemicizing against Bukharin, Trotsky wrote:

"If yesterday the Chinese bourgeoisie was enrolled in the united revolutionary front, then today it is proclaimed to have 'definitely gone over to the counterrevolutionary camp.' It is not difficult to expose how unfounded are these transfers and enrollments which have been effected in a purely administrative manner without any serious Marxian analysis whatever.

"It is absolutely self-evident that the bourgeoisie in joining the camp of the revolution does so not accidentally, not because it is light-minded, but under the pressure of its own class interests. For fear of the masses the bourgeoisie subsequently deserts the revolution or openly displays its concealed hatred of the revolution. But the bourgeoisie can go over *definitively* to the counterrevolutionary camp,' that is, free itself from the necessity of 'supporting' the revolution again, or at least of flirting with it, only in the event that its fundamental class aspirations are satisfied either by revolutionary means or in another way (for instance the Bismarckian way)."

It would be a poor revolutionary who could not understand and could not possibly utilize these contradictions in the colonial or semicolonial bourgeoisie.

The possibility of an anti-imperialist united front in the colonial and semicolonial countries is born of these specific class relations and of these peculiar tasks. But the proletariat must protect its class independence. It must exercise political hegemony over the possible anti-imperialist united front. And here the second question is raised: How can this hegemony be effectively assured? To this question we reply: to assert its hegemony and to maintain its class independence, to take up and lead the struggle for democratic demands and national independence, which are *its* demands as well as those of other exploited layers, the proletariat *integrates* into its program the *specific demands of other exploited layers*. But in the struggle to carry out these tasks, the proletariat must utilize *its own class methods* and *also* lay out *its own specific demands*.

Now for that it is necessary, indispensable, for the proletariat to *unify*

*itself and organize itself as a class*, for otherwise proletarian hegemony would be nothing but a hollow phrase.

## Democratic Tasks and Socialist Tasks

Although he includes the government arising (according to him) from the anti-imperialist united front and that arising from the workers' united front under the same label—workers' government—in fact Filemón Escobar comes to counterpose one to the other, just as he counterposes the anti-imperialist united front and the workers' united front themselves.

He establishes differences in the tasks each is supposed to carry out. He even makes a caricature of them.

According to him, in the economically backward countries the workers and peasants' government must carry out "democratic tasks leading to the socialist tasks." In the metropolises, on the other hand, the government, according to Comrade Escobar, is supposed to "carry out directly socialist tasks."

Reality is not so simple and logical. On the one hand, in the semicolonial countries the workers and peasants' government, in order to carry out the bourgeois-democratic tasks, must expropriate not only imperialism, but also a good part of the "national" bourgeoisie itself, which is at the same time tied to and hostile to imperialism.

In the imperialist metropolises, on the other hand, the workers and peasants' government will have to carry out tasks that on the face of it have nothing "socialist" about them—they relate to the situation of the petty bourgeoisie, the small peasantry, the layers that struggle against the exploitation of the monopolies. The proletariat of these countries also has to form bonds with other exploited social layers against big capital, finance capital, the government, and the bourgeois state. The defense of democratic freedoms is one of the bases of struggle for the workers' united front.

But in the imperialist metropolises, just as much as in the backward countries, the proletariat engages in and leads this fight on its own ground, for its own demands, and by its own methods. Only on this condition can it draw other social layers behind it. It can win over and lead other exploited layers only insofar as it unites and organizes itself as a class. This

is the reason for the existence of the workers' united front, and this is also precisely what raises the necessity for and the role of soviets.

Filemón Escobar makes a basic error. He sees—even if in a somewhat simple and formal manner—what *differentiates* the workers and peasants' governments in the economically backward countries and in the imperialist metropolises. On the other hand, he seems not to see what *unites* them, where lies their *common content*, which flows from humanity's present historical period, that of imperialism, which is also the period of world proletarian revolution.

Whether they be in the economically backward countries or in the imperialist metropolises, workers and peasants' governments are always *governments of transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat*, governments whose central tasks are at bottom identical in all countries—to *destroy the bourgeois state*, to institute *the dictatorship of the proletariat* on the basis of soviets, to establish the workers state; and this is the case even if the social and political relations under which the proletariat and its revolutionary party win support for carrying out these tasks vary from country to country.

His lack of understanding of this point leads Comrade Escobar very far afield—for example when he writes that one should not "separate the proletariat from its natural allies." The formulation is dangerous. From it one can deduce that if the proletariat struggles for its own objectives it "isolates itself from its natural allies." It is even more dangerous if put alongside this other formulation: "The workers' united front is of no use in the struggle for any objective of national scope."

Furthermore, F. Escobar virulently asserts that the workers' united front "makes the perspective of the struggle for power more remote," that in the colonial and semicolonial countries it is reduced to the limits of trade-union type agreements. Must we conclude from this same reasoning that the workers and peasants' government—whose essential tasks are the destruction of the bourgeois state, the march toward the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the construction of the workers state—would no longer be necessary in order to achieve "any

objective of national scope"? Or even that these tasks would not be political tasks?

### The Strategy of the Workers' United Front

In fact, Comrade Escobar falls into considerable confusion. He grasps the workers' united front solely as an accord between workers' organizations, parties, and unions. Agreements of this sort are one of the manifestations of the workers' united front. But the soviets, as Trotsky explained, are the most developed form of the united front of the working class.

The strategy of the workers' united front stems from the proletariat's basic need to unify and organize itself as a class in order to carry out its political tasks. This truth is even more evident when the proletariat is numerically small and weak in relation to other classes and social layers. Without unifying and organizing itself as a class it is impossible for the proletariat to draw other exploited classes and social layers into struggle against imperialism and to exercise its hegemony over them.

The fight for the workers' united front *can* and *must* be waged in the colonial and semicolonial countries so that the proletariat may be in position to engage in the struggle to carry out the democratic tasks and for the liberation of the nation from the imperialist yoke. And this is *precisely* because these are tasks that *devolve upon the proletariat* and which oblige it to fight to unify, in and for this struggle, the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie around and behind itself in the framework of an anti-imperialist united front.

On the other hand, the progress that it will be possible to make in the realization of the anti-imperialist united front on a consistent program will allow for the development of the struggle for the workers' united front. Democratic demands and national independence are in reality demands of the workers as well as of other exploited layers and classes.

There is neither any priority nor logical sequence, first the workers' united front, then the anti-imperialist united front, or vice versa. On the contrary, it is perfectly conceivable, for example, that the Communist party or other working-class political or-

ganizations will refuse to organize the working class for anti-imperialist or democratic demands or to participate in a consistent anti-imperialist united front.

In that case, the revolutionary organization has the political duty to center its fight for workers' unity and the organization of the proletariat as a class precisely in relation to these democratic objectives and national independence and for the realization—on the basis of proletarian hegemony—of the anti-imperialist united front. Such a struggle is in no way contradictory to the struggle for the realization of the specific objectives of the working class.

It is also possible that the revolutionary party could be the only workers' party. In this case, the proletariat will unify and organize itself under the party's impact and leadership and will engage in the struggle for a workers and peasants' government under conditions in which the revolutionary party will seek to effect political agreements along the lines of the anti-imperialist united front with the political organizations representative of other exploited layers.

### The Class Independence of the Proletariat

The essential thing is always to assure the class independence of the proletariat, its unity, its organization as a class, its fight for its own objectives (among which necessarily figure national independence and democratic tasks), the struggle for the workers and peasants' government, the destruction of the bourgeois state, and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat based on soviets. Such is the content of the workers' united-front strategy.

Far from being hostile to the achievement of the anti-imperialist united front under the leadership of the working-class organizations, of its party or parties, that is, under conditions where the hegemony of the proletariat is assured, the strategy of the workers' united front is inseparable from it.

Comrade Escobar will agree with us that more discussion of this problem was and still is necessary. This will not "retard revolutionary work." Just the opposite, it is indispensable for correctly carrying it out. □