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YEAR OF THE GREAT BETRAYAL



Index for 1972

Year of the Great Betrayal

By Jon Rothschild

In late February 1972 Richard Nixon visited the Great Wall of China. Standing atop the structure and gazing along its length, he was heard to remark to his hosts, "This certainly is a great wall." On February 27, during a banquet held on the last night of his stay in China, he declared, "This was the week that changed the world." The first statement, if less substantive, was nearer the truth.

The Peking trip, like its Moscow counterpart, was not aimed at changing the world, but at stabilizing and guaranteeing the status quo.

In exchange for U. S. imperialism's accepting the reality of the social conquests of the Russian and Chinese revolutions—even if only temporarily—the bureaucrats in Moscow and Peking agreed not only to accede to imperialist control over most of the world, but actively to aid the United States in its efforts to disarm those forces currently struggling against imperialist domination—especially the people of Indochina.

The two big summits brought in their wake a series of smaller ones

—Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik*, the India-Pakistan meeting in Simla, the "reunification talks" between the two Koreas, and even the Greek-Turkish negotiations over the future of Cyprus may be considered by-products of the Moscow and Peking meetings.

In no case did the summits settle any of the fundamental social problems that generate conflict in the world. That was not their purpose. In fact, 1972 may be characterized as a year during which the Western imperialists and the Stalinist bureaucrats succeeded in coming to agreements among themselves, but during which they were unable to suppress the underlying class struggle that develops independently of their will.

It was in Indochina that the new "era of negotiations" had the most disastrous effect. The spring offensive launched by the liberation forces in response to Nixon's escalation of the air war posed the question of power in South Vietnam. By the middle of 1972 most knowledgeable observers of the war agreed that the days of the Thieu regime were numbered. By the end of the year, the North Viet-

namese leaders were willing to accept a peace accord that recognizes Thieu's sovereignty over most of South Vietnam.

The change was due not only to the ferocious U. S. bombing, but also to Brezhnev and Mao's complicity with it. A brief recapitulation of the major events of the war indicates that in 1972 the world Stalinist movement, led by the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies, committed the most vicious betrayal in its long, perfidious history.

The withdrawal of large numbers of U. S. ground troops from combat assignment in South Vietnam entailed an escalation in the air war without which the Saigon army would have faced certain annihilation. In December 1971 Nixon ordered a renewal of regular bombing attacks on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

On January 25, after nearly a month of increased bombing, Nixon, in a national television speech, offered an "eight-point peace plan," the terms of which amounted to unconditional surrender by the liberation forces. The issuance of such proposals just after a significant escalation of aggression and as a prelude to more of the same had long been the pattern of U. S. diplomacy. So it was with the January 25 "offer."

When the liberation forces rejected Nixon's terms for capitulation, the next step in the intensification of the air war was taken. In mid-February, just one week before the Peking summit, U. S. bombing of South Vietnam was raised to its highest level since 1968. Days before Nixon's February 21 arrival in Peking, U. S. planes conducted the heaviest air strikes over Laos and Cambodia since 1970. During the entire week before the China trip North Vietnam was bombarded on a daily basis.

Chairman Mao and his coterie were scarcely fazed. The trip went on as planned. Photographs of Nixon shaking hands with Mao and Chou En-lai or touring Chinese monuments, movies of Patricia Nixon visiting Chinese kindergartens and spouting nauseating platitudes about women, children, families, and pets pushed the war off the front pages of the world press. But the bombing of Indochina continued during the visit; even North Vietnam was not spared.

The Maoist bureaucracy's decision to go ahead with the summit despite the dramatic escalation of imperialist aggression assured Nixon that neither

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

EDITOR: Joseph Hansen.

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Pierre Frank, Livio Mai-tan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.

COPY EDITOR: Lawrence Rand.

EDITORIAL STAFF: Candida Barberena, Fred Feldman, Gerry Foley, Jon Rothschild, George Saunders, David Thorstad.

BUSINESS MANAGER: Reba Hansen.

ASSISTANT BUSINESS MANAGER: Steven Warshell.

TECHNICAL STAFF: H. Massey, James M. Morgan, Ruth Schein.

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PARIS OFFICE: Pierre Frank, 10 Impasse Guemeene, Paris 4, France.

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his war plans nor his reelection strategy would be interfered with by Peking.

But just as important, Mao's action was a boon to the Kremlin. The Soviet bureaucracy was assured that it could proceed with the Moscow summit—regardless of events in Indochina—without having to defend itself against Chinese criticism. Peking's betrayal thus paved the way for Moscow's even more brazen sellout. Despite its loud appeals for the "people of the world" to "unite and defeat U. S. imperialism and all its running dogs," the Maoist leaders, far from uniting with their Soviet counterparts in defense of the Vietnamese revolution, entered into a peaceful competition with them to see which side could more effectively practice peaceful coexistence with Nixon.

Emboldened by his success in Peking and the consequent soaring of his rating in domestic opinion polls, Nixon took the next step in his escalation. On March 23, the United States suspended the Paris peace talks. At a news conference held the following day, Nixon reported with a straight face that he had canceled the sessions because the NLF and Hanoi had been "bullying the United States" during the talks.

The real reason for his move was just the opposite. By refusing to crack under the pressure of U. S. bombs the liberation forces had been gaining sympathy throughout the world. The negotiations were becoming a liability that Nixon could ill afford. Opinion polls conducted in the United States were showing a "negative" rating for his handling of the talks.

The cancellation of the Paris negotiations was a conclusive demonstration of Nixon's intentions. The January 25 proposal was to be the final U. S. offer; the escalation would continue until the Vietnamese came around to accepting it.

Exactly one week later, the liberation forces gave their answer. On March 23 coordinated artillery and infantry attacks were launched against a string of government bases in Quangtri, South Vietnam's northernmost province. By April 3 every Saigon base in the province save one—the central garrison in the provincial capital, Quangtri City—had fallen to the liberation forces. On April 2 Radio Hanoi broadcast a speech by General Vo Nguyen Giap in which he called on "the Vietnam people's armed

forces" to continue the struggle until "complete victory."

By April 8 the liberation forces were advancing on four fronts. The highway running through the central highlands had been cut and several provincial capitals were threatened; just fifteen miles from Saigon, the capital of Binhlong Province, Anloc, was besieged; the much-heralded U. S. pacification program in the populous Mekong Delta was in a state of collapse; and at least half the province of Quangtri was in the hands of the liberation forces.

"This is the decisive moment when the survival or loss of our country is at stake," Thieu declared in an April 5 television speech. The necessary terminological changes being made, the statement was not wrong.

The first casualty of the NLF-Hanoi offensive was Nixon's "Vietnamization" program. In not a single area did Thieu's army acquit itself well. The Third Infantry Division, stationed in Quangtri just south of the demilitarized zone, was representative of the puppet troops' behavior. "Let's face it," commented one U. S. official on the scene, "the Third Division was routed. It was nothing but a mad rush to the rear once the North Vietnamese started shelling them. Thousands of them came running here those first few days as fast as they could."

On April 6 regular U. S. bombing of North Vietnam was "officially" resumed. By April 9 Nixon had begun assembling the largest air armada in the history of the world. On April 15-16, for the first time, giant U. S. B-52s were sent to bomb Hanoi and Haiphong. The number of B-52s stationed in Southeast Asia was increased from eighty to 130. Four more U. S. aircraft carriers were en route to the Vietnamese coast. The total number of U. S. fighter-bombers stationed in Thailand, South Vietnam, and on nearby aircraft carriers had risen from 400 before the offensive to 700 by the middle of April.

As the intensity of the battle in Vietnam increased, the U. S. antiwar movement began to revive. On April 22 some 100,000 persons marched in New York City through a driving rain to protest the new escalation. On the West coast Los Angeles had one of the largest antiwar actions in its history—30,000. During the week preceding April 22, demonstrations,

marches, rallies, or other forms of activity took place on more than 100 campuses.

"The bombs that thundered down on North Vietnam from American B-52's have fractured two years of campus peace," the *New York Times* editorialized on April 20. The rallies and marches, while smaller than the April 1971 actions, indicated that should the escalation continue, the antiwar movement would experience another upsurge.

On April 26 Nixon delivered a television speech. It was one of the more belligerent declarations of his administration. "We will never surrender our friends to Communist aggression," he said.

Already by that time, Moscow and Peking's failure to react to Washington's new aggression had encouraged Nixon to press ahead on the military field. "The Soviet response to the bombings," Terence Smith wrote in the April 23 *New York Times*, "was vigorous in public . . . but muted in private. A formal protest note was delivered to the American Ambassador in Moscow, but there was no follow-up in Washington nor any acrimony between the American and Russian officials engaged in subsidy negotiations on economic and trade matters. . . ."

"The reaction in Peking was equally pragmatic. The Chinese denounced the American air strikes, but as their statements came over the news tickers in Washington, their touring Ping-Pong players were trading pleasantries with the President in the White House Rose Garden."

Discussing Nixon's use of B-52s against Hanoi and Haiphong, *New York Times* correspondent Benjamin Welles noted on April 16 that "the Washington Special Action Group, a subcommittee of the National Security Council headed by Henry A. Kissinger . . . had carefully calculated likely Soviet and Chinese reaction before recommending the B-52 raid to Mr. Nixon.

"'You can be pretty sure that they weighed that angle with the utmost care,' said one source who asked not to be identified. 'If they'd thought that there was a likelihood of a serious

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This is the final issue of the year. We will not publish on January 1 or 8. Our next issue will be dated January 15, 1973.

Chinese or Russian reaction—such as sending in troops—they wouldn't have gone ahead."

The *Washington Post*, one of the leading American bourgeois newspapers, was still more direct in an April 25 editorial: "The Kremlin, by limiting its reaction and by continuing preparations for the pending summit, has shown itself hopeful that *the President will succeed in his evident attempt to bring the North Vietnamese offensive to an end before the summit begins.*" (Emphasis added.)

Thus, even before the end of April, the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies had gone a long way toward isolating the Vietnamese liberation forces. Militarily, Nixon was given a free hand; politically, the Kremlin's desire to press ahead with the summit no matter what the cost not only represented an encouragement to Nixon, but dealt a serious blow to the antiwar movement, which, after a brief upswing, began to show signs of demobilization as the Kremlin did its best to assure the world that Nixon's escalation entailed no danger to world peace.

But still, events were far from played out. The power of the NLF-Hanoi offensive was greater than had been anticipated and the failure of the Vietnamization program to create a viable Saigon army was revealed as complete. On April 30 U. S. Secretary of State William Rogers went on national television to assert that Nixon's bombing had blocked the NLF offensive. He pointed with pride to the fact that after four weeks of fighting "no provincial capital had been taken" by the liberation forces. Twenty-four hours later, Quangtri City fell to the NLF. In the central highlands the city of Kontum seemed on the verge of liberation.

During the next week, the Western press was flooded with stories of the ignominious collapse of the puppet army. Saigon soldiers fled at the first shots from the NLF. The desertion rate soared. Despite the most extensive air support in the history of warfare, the puppet army crumbled in face of the NLF advance.

The dedication of the Saigon troops to General Thieu is perhaps best illustrated by one report that appeared in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*. Many of the "tanks" with which the NLF and North Vietnamese soldiers overran Saigon strongholds were in fact jeeps covered with cardboard

"armor" designed to simulate tanks.

At the beginning of May, Nixon further augmented the air armada: 140 B-52s and 900 fighter-bombers had been assembled; six aircraft carriers were stationed off the Vietnamese coast and the number of military personnel on the ships stood at 41,000, compared to 15,000 in March.

Then, on May 8 Nixon announced that he had ordered all North Vietnamese ports and waterways mined. Overland supply routes from China to North Vietnam were ordered destroyed. The action served a dual purpose: Militarily it was aimed at interdicting the 85 percent of Hanoi's supplies that reached the country by sea; politically it was a challenge to the Kremlin. The Soviet bureaucracy was ordered to stand by and allow another workers state to be strangled economically and decimated militarily.

The Johnson administration had considered mining North Vietnam's harbors. But, as the Pentagon Papers revealed, the move was rejected as too dangerous. It was feared that it would elicit too strong a response from Moscow and Peking. Nixon himself had refrained from taking the step during the first three years of his administration.

But the Peking trip and the Moscow summit that was soon to follow had changed all that. In February the Maoist bureaucracy had demonstrated that its nationalist self-interest took precedence over the Vietnamese revolution. The failure of the Moscow bureaucrats to respond to earlier escalations convinced Nixon that he had nothing to fear from the Kremlin.

In retrospect it can be seen that May 8 and the few days after it represented the decisive turning point in the current stage of the Vietnamese revolution. All the factors that could have precipitated a major social crisis in the United States were operative.

The capitalist class—not only in the United States but on a world scale—seemed on the verge of a serious split on the Indochina war. In a May 10 editorial the *New York Times* compared Nixon to the Bourbons, saying that he was taking the country down the same road that Lyndon Johnson had, disregarding the lessons of the last seven years.

Public support for Nixon's policies was at a low point, and the antiwar movement seemed poised for a new upsurge. Reports from the battlefield

indicated that the liberation forces had stockpiled sufficient supplies to continue their offensive despite the U. S. blockade.

A meaningful response from the Kremlin—even a simple call for international solidarity actions with the Vietnamese—could have stymied the imperialist attack.

On May 11, the Moscow bureaucracy came out with its answer to Nixon. In fairness, it must be said that the Soviet statement did not assert support for the U. S. blockade, nor did it declare its solidarity with Washington's attempt to contain Communist aggression. Short of that, it must have fulfilled Nixon's highest hopes.

It failed to reassert the Soviet Union's right to continue supplying material aid to the Vietnamese revolution. It failed to encourage—or even to mention—international antiwar actions in solidarity with the Vietnamese. It did not warn of any possible countermeasures that would be taken if Nixon refused to deactivate the U. S. mines.

It did not even cancel the scheduled Moscow summit. The same day the Soviet statement was released, the Kremlin dispatched Nikolai S. Patolichev, Soviet foreign trade minister, to pay a "courtesy call" on the White House. Patolichev allowed himself to be photographed having a "cordial meeting" with Nixon. The two had a languid discussion on such crucial issues as the relative difficulties of the Russian and Polish languages for an English-speaking person. After the meeting, Patolichev was asked by reporters whether the summit was still on. He expressed surprise that the question would even be asked.

The Kremlin's reaction to Nixon's May 8 escalation set the subsequent course of the war. Since the beginning of the U. S. intervention in Indochina, imperialist strategy has been limited by three interrelated factors: the ability of the Vietnamese to resist, the strength of the antiwar movement (especially of its U. S. component), and the military and political responses of the workers states (especially the Soviet Union and China).

In May 1972, Vietnamese resistance had attained its highest level in the war's history. This in turn had set the stage for new developments in the antiwar movement. The Kremlin's capitulation to Nixon weakened the Vietnamese and helped sabotage the

antiwar movement. Demonstrations held in the United States on May 21 were noticeably reduced in size, Kremlin passivity having removed all sense of urgency. The U. S. bourgeoisie, with the assistance of U. S. Stalinism, intensified its efforts to draw the antiwar movement off the streets and into the presidential elections.

By May 29, the day the Moscow summit ended, the Vietnamese liberation forces were thoroughly isolated on a world scale. During the following months, the Vietnamese people were subjected to the most criminal assault in the history of humanity. They were left to face it largely alone.

The bomb tonnage dropped by U. S. B-52s averaged the equivalent of two and a half Hiroshimas a day during most of 1972. During June and July incontrovertible evidence from independent observers proved that Washington was systematically bombing North Vietnam's dikes, destruction of which could have killed as many as 15 million people. Weapons used by the United States included delayed-action bombs, plastic fragmentation devices that leave slivers undetectable by X rays, anti-personnel bombs that spray wide areas with steel pellets, and carcinogenic chemicals.

In spite of this brutal assault, the best Nixon could achieve was a battlefield stalemate. The puppet forces proved incapable of defeating the NLF offensive. But with his hands freed by Kremlin treachery, Nixon was able to inflict huge casualties on the civilian population of Vietnam. With no ships running the blockade, Hanoi was deprived of a good part of its supplies.

Under these conditions, the leaders in Hanoi offered their October 8 peace proposal, which became the basis of the Tho-Kissinger accord released by Radio Hanoi on October 26.

As the year drew to a close, the agreement had still not been signed. Having extracted significant concessions from Hanoi, U.S. imperialism was holding out for more, especially a firm commitment by North Vietnam to withdraw its forces from the South, leaving the NLF prey to Thieu's army. Thieu's intentions were abundantly clear. The last weeks of 1972 were marked by an unfolding white terror in Saigon-held territories. A series of decrees cast away the last shreds of democratic pretense.

But even if the Tho-Kissinger agreement, or some variant of it, goes into effect, peace will not come to Vietnam. The accord recognizes two regimes in South Vietnam and recommends that they resolve their conflict through holding an election. The Indochinese have had experience with such agreements in the past.

The signing of the draft would open a new stage in the Vietnamese revolution—an intensification of the civil war, and quite likely a reemphasis of the guerrilla struggle. The outcome of that struggle will depend on the ability of the liberation forces to prevent Thieu's bloodbath and of the antiwar movement to respond decisively to any fresh U. S. intervention should the Saigon regime crumble.

Responsibility for the carnage that will inevitably accompany this process must be placed squarely where it belongs—in Washington, Moscow, and Peking.

Asia—Summits and Repression

On the rest of the Asian continent, a veneer of enlightened summitry overlaid the reality of crisis, repression, and resistance.

On July 4, after Nixon's China trip and as a prelude to the secret Vietnam negotiations, North and South Korea issued a joint communiqué asserting their "common desire to achieve peaceful unification of the fatherland as early as possible."

A "coordinating committee" was established to oversee further negotiations between Pyongyang and Seoul, and the two regimes agreed not to slander one another. For the Korean peninsula itself, the July 4 statement was virtually meaningless, except insofar as it entailed Kim Il Sung's recognition of the southern regime. Its real significance lay in its relation to the Indochina war. In June Chou En-lai had publicly referred to the settlement of the Korean war as a model of international diplomacy.

The issuance of the July 4 communiqué was a means of putting further pressure on the Vietnamese to make concessions to Washington. After all, if North Korea could recognize the Seoul government and agree to U. S. troops being stationed in South Korea, why should Hanoi not follow suit in regard to Saigon? It should be added

that the supposed détente with the North did not prevent Park Chung Hee from imposing martial law in South Korea later on in the year.

From June 28 to July 3 Pakistan's President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi met in Simla, India, to discuss the outstanding disputes between their two countries. The Simla talks produced the usual professions of peace and goodwill, but the major points of contention between New Delhi and Rawalpindi went unresolved, and even undiscussed. As the year ended, there was still no agreement on exchange of the prisoners of war captured during the 1971 India-Pakistan war over control of Bangladesh. Kashmir remained a point of military confrontation.

Internally, Pakistan continued to be rocked by the social crises resulting from the 1971 war against the Indian army and the Bengali people. Bhutto arrested hundreds of political activists in an attempt to crush a wave of strikes. In the North West Frontier Province and in Sind, two of Pakistan's four remaining provinces, national minorities raised demands for greater freedom from the central government.

In Bangladesh, the Bengali masses were robbed of the fruits of their heroic fight for independence. During 1972, the bourgeois regime headed by Mujibur Rahman's Awami League consolidated its control over the country. While it was unable even to begin to deal with the social problems confronting it, the absence of a revolutionary-socialist combat party left a leadership vacuum that the Awami League was able to fill.

In Sri Lanka Sirimavo Bandaranaike's "United Front" government passed a series of laws setting up kangaroo courts to bring to trial the more than 10,000 youths who have been held in concentration camps since the 1971 witch-hunt. More than a year and a half after the supposed insurgency that occasioned the repression, the state of emergency remains in effect. The government-censored press has reported that trials of the young rebels have begun, but no verdicts have been announced.

Toward the end of the year, signs of a renewal of struggle appeared. On October 18 more than one million persons participated in a hunger strike to protest the repression. Rallies and

demonstrations — most of them in defiance of the state of emergency — also took place on October 18. The anti-strike provisions of the emergency laws were successfully challenged by a militant strike of bank workers.

The year 1972 saw repression extend to yet another Asian country, as Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos imposed martial law and placed more than 1,000 persons under arrest.

Mobilizations in Africa

In three African countries, 1972 saw significant mass mobilizations that pointed toward a new rise in popular struggle against neocolonial regimes.

In December 1971 some 20,000 members of the Ovambo tribe in Namibia went on strike. Nearly the entire mining industry was effectively shut down. The strike took on a double significance. Namibia, also known as South West Africa, is ruled by the South African apartheid regime in defiance of United Nations resolutions, the World Court, and the indigenous population. The Ovambo strike, besides crippling a good part of South African industry, challenged apartheid control over Namibia.

The Pretoria government expected the strike to fall apart at the first sign of government repression. But the Ovambo miners formed a strike council that circumvented the official, government-controlled Ovambo Council. On January 12, the apartheid regime sent police reinforcements into Namibia to break the strike. Popular resistance, occasionally armed, successfully thwarted that aim. The strike ended in a partial victory when Pretoria was forced to abolish the slave-like contract-labor system.

The Ovambo strike also helped foster resistance to apartheid in South Africa itself. In June hundreds of white students in Johannesburg and other cities held demonstrations in support of the demands of striking Black students. Cops were sent out against the white students, for the first time in recent South African history.

The government met the general rise in popular militancy with repression. On April 4, four members of the Non-European Unity Movement who had been held in prison and tortured for nearly a year, were convicted of having violated the notorious Terrorism

Act. They were given sentences ranging from five to eight years in prison.

Just north of South Africa, in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), the Black population managed to block passage of a British-Rhodesian scheme to lift the economic sanctions that had been imposed on Rhodesia by Great Britain.

In November 1971 the Heath government and the Ian Smith regime agreed on a pact that would have granted international recognition to Rhodesian "independence," which was unilaterally declared by Smith six years previously. The agreement called for ratification of a new Rhodesian constitution that would have allowed for majority (that is, Black) rule after four or five transitional generations. The "democratization" process initiated by this fraudulent constitution was the condition Heath imposed for lifting sanctions against Salisbury.

To strengthen the democratic credentials of the proposed constitution, Heath dispatched an investigatory commission whose stated task was to poll Black opinion about terms of the constitution. The commission arrived in January, expecting to talk to a few servile chiefs out in the countryside and report back to England that the Zimbabweans were overjoyed at the prospect of decades more of racist rule.

But when the commission arrived in Salisbury it was met by mass demonstrations of Blacks chanting what was to become a widespread slogan in Zimbabwe: "No! No! No!" Police murder of demonstrators failed to end the actions, which instead spread to cities throughout the country.

After holding more than fifty public hearings on the proposed constitution, the British commission was able to find only one Black who said he favored the deal. On May 23 the commission was forced to report that Blacks opposed the accord. The new constitution had been defeated.

Perhaps the most significant upsurge to take place in Africa during 1972 occurred in the Malagasy Republic. On May 13, police opened fire on student demonstrators demanding the "Malagacization" of the former French colony's educational system.

President Philibert Tsiranana declared a state of emergency and banned all demonstrations. But workers in the capital city of Tananarive walked off their jobs in a general strike that was to last more than a week. A series of demands, both eco-

nomical and political, were raised, and the Tsiranana government was toppled. While lack of leadership allowed Tsiranana to pass governmental power over to an army general, Gabriel Ramanantsoa, the Malagasy strikes showed that the specter of May 1968, of the urban masses challenging the state power, was not confined to the advanced capitalist world.

While there were hopeful signs of revolutionary upheaval in parts of Africa, the continent also continued to be the scene of ethnic conflicts — a legacy of imperialist domination. In Burundi, as many as 100,000 people may have died in a genocidal slaughter unleashed against the Hutu tribe by the dominant Tutsis.

In Uganda, General Idi Amin ordered the deportation of some 50,000 Asians who had been resident in the country for decades. Thousands found themselves stateless persons, unwelcome in any of the "civilized" Western countries. The Ugandan masses were diverted from the struggle against imperialist exploitation toward nationalist hatred of the Asian population, at most a secondary feature of the country's dependence on the West.

Confrontation in Latin America

The experiment in Chile remained a focal point of the struggle in Latin America throughout 1972. It was a period that saw a growing polarization that peaked in two successive waves of right-wing opposition to the Allende regime.

The first culminated with a mass "March for Freedom" of some 200,000 in Santiago on April 12. Some leftist forces, including a few of the parties in the Popular Unity coalition, responded to this offensive by mobilizing the masses in the streets. This approach provoked a crisis in the government when, under orders from the Communist mayor, a leftist march was attacked by police in Concepción on May 12. The crisis was resolved by a cabinet shake-up that marked a shift to the right and a strengthening of the Communist party within the coalition.

Throughout these months, increasing evidence was discovered of collusion between the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation and the right-wing Chilean opposition

in attempts to undermine the Allende regime.

The second wave came with the "capitalist strike" in October and the simultaneous campaign by the Kennecott Copper Corporation to prevent Chile from selling its copper on the international market. The mobilization of the masses to counter the strike occurred in large part outside the framework of the popular front coalition and led to considerable advances in the organization and in the political consciousness of the working people. But this wave, too, ended with further concessions to the right and the inclusion of the military in the cabinet.

The opposition now appears content to bide its time until next March's legislative elections, when it hopes to gain a majority in congress, which would enable it to impeach Allende. The big challenge in Chile is for the working class to organize in time to prevent a right-wing reaction and to be ready for the coming confrontation.

The Argentine ruling class is seeking to gracefully replace the eroded military regime with a civilian government of national concord and has sought the aid of former president Juan Perón in order to accomplish this. His return to Argentina in November after seventeen years in exile was intended to help facilitate this process; he thus disappointed many of his militant followers, who had hoped he would return to lead a struggle against the Lanusse dictatorship. The legal solution the military is attempting to find has nevertheless opened up some new possibilities for the left in an atmosphere that is otherwise generally pervaded with repression. The Partido Socialista Argentino (Argentine Socialist party), for instance, has been able to register as a legal party and to campaign—without illusions about the nature of the current period of legality—for a working-class alternative in the elections scheduled for next March.

While the military was maneuvering toward its goal of a political settlement, world attention was drawn to the severe repression in Argentina and the widespread torture of political prisoners. The world was stunned by the barbaric massacre by Lanusse's troops in Trelew on August 22 that left sixteen imprisoned guerrillas dead

and three wounded. The victims had been part of a dramatic prison escape from Rawson prison on August 15 in which ten guerrillas succeeded in hijacking a plane to Chile, which they subsequently left for Cuba, where they were granted exile.

The Trelew massacre was part of a campaign to liquidate the guerrilla movements, in particular the ERP (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo—Revolutionary Army of the People) for its role in the March 21 kidnapping of the general director of Fiat Concord Argentina, Oberdan Sallustro, and the assassination of general Juan Carlos Sánchez in Rosario April 10. Sallustro was shot the same day as police broke into the "people's prison" where he was being held. At year's end, the prosecutor is asking life imprisonment for fourteen of fifteen persons who allegedly took part in the kidnapping.

On June 12, Peruvian revolutionist Hugo Blanco left Mexico, where he had been since he was expelled from Peru last fall, for Argentina. A month later, he was arrested and held without charge by Argentine authorities, who put him on a plane for Chile on October 26. He is currently seeking permission to continue his exile there.

The Banzer regime in Bolivia is on shaky legs. The political alliance it is based on is crumbling, the economic situation is getting worse, and the workers' movement showed, by staging militant strikes at the end of November, that repression has failed to crush it.

Repression is also characteristic of other Latin American regimes. On April 15, a "state of internal war" was declared against the Tupamaros in Uruguay. Since then, more than 1,000 guerrillas have reportedly been captured—including Tupamaro leader Raúl Sendic—and some twenty killed.

The Brazilian regime has continued to add to its reputation for torturing political dissidents and is engaged in a vigorous anticommunist campaign. Stringent censorship rules went into effect on September 16.

Repression against the left, the students, and the peasants has been severe in the Dominican Republic. Yet the country is seeing continuing struggles, such as the November teachers' strike, and the most extensive rural unrest in decades.

Colombia, too, has experienced con-

siderable ferment among the peasantry and agitation among students and teachers. Tens of thousands mobilized last April in support of a work stoppage by teachers, and student unrest led the authorities to close down Bogotá University for a semester in October.

In Mexico, there has been a growing militancy among certain unions, and student struggles on several occasions have been able to link up with the workers' and peasants' movements.

On February 15, the military overthrew President José María Velasco Ibarra of Ecuador. His only base of support had been the army. Another coup took place on December 4 when the eighteen-month-old civilian government in Honduras was overthrown.

As the campaign for next December's elections in Venezuela gets under way, the Movimiento al Socialismo (Movement Toward Socialism) has formed an electoral front along working-class lines, and Nueva Fuerza (New Force), the Venezuelan version of the Chilean popular front, is in increasing disarray.

Efforts to isolate Cuba proved increasingly difficult for U.S. imperialism during 1972. After gaining diplomatic recognition from the Allende regime, it resumed relations with Peru last summer and with the Caribbean states of Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, and Jamaica in mid-December. The first trip by a Latin American head of state to Cuba since the revolution occurred with Allende's visit in December.

The Puerto Rican independence movement scored a moral victory August 28 when a twelve-year campaign by Havana resulted in a United Nations special committee naming Puerto Rico as a "colony" of the United States.

The Kremlin's Repression Goes On

The Kremlin bureaucrats were much more accommodating to the leaders of Western imperialism than they were to their domestic opponents. In 1971 the Twenty-fourth Congress of the Soviet Communist party ratified a decision to reverse the partial easing of controls that had been granted in the years following Stalin's death. There followed a fresh campaign against dissent, one that was carried over and intensified during 1972.

The bureaucracy continued its practice of interning political dissidents in mental hospital-prisons. Aleksei Tumerman, a young dissident who took responsibility for releasing to the West the transcript of the one-day frame-up trial of Vladimir Bukovsky, himself one of the most prominent dissenters, was confined to a mental institution on the eve of Nixon's visit to Moscow.

Another repressive tactic utilized by the Kremlin was to induce (or compel) oppositionists to leave the Soviet Union and then deny them the right to return. Yuri Glazov, Yuri Titov, Aleksandr Yesenin-Volpin, and Joseph Brodsky were among the participants in the democratic movement to be expelled in this manner.

In December Valery Chalidze, one of the founders of the democratic movement, was granted permission to visit the United States to lecture on the subject of Soviet law. While in New York City, Chalidze was confronted by Soviet "diplomats" who confiscated his passport and informed him that he had been deprived of his citizenship for "conduct unbecoming a Soviet citizen."

The Kremlin did not stop at mere imprisonment of dissenters. Yuri Galanskov, who had been sentenced to seven years in prison for the crime of editing two samizdat publications, died in a Mordovian labor camp on November 4. Galanskov had suffered from ulcers for years and was not provided adequate medical care by his captors. He died while undergoing surgery.

One of the central targets of the Kremlin's repression was the underground magazine *Chronicle of Current Events*. Despite the bureaucracy's concerted attempts to eradicate it, the *Chronicle* continued to appear on a bimonthly basis, carrying news of the democratic movement and of the bureaucracy's repression.

From the *Chronicle* and other dissident sources reports reached the West indicating that Stalin's heirs may be confronting challenges from new quarters. Sweeping arrests in the Ukraine at the beginning of the year did not succeed in crushing the dissident movement there. Based both on opposition to bureaucratic rule in general and to the bureaucracy's specific violation of the Leninist policy on the national question, the Ukrainian democratic movement appears to be

among the best organized in the Soviet Union.

Opposition to the bureaucracy's Great Russian chauvinism was also manifested in the three Baltic republics. In January, seventeen Latvian Communists managed to smuggle a letter out of the Soviet Union. It detailed the effects of Russification on Latvia and appealed, on a Leninist basis, for a movement against it.

In May, the public suicide of a young Lithuanian worker triggered two days of street demonstrations and battles with the security forces.

In Estonia there were reports of the formation of a group demanding a referendum on the question of self-determination.

As the year ended, ominous reports from the Soviet Union hinted that Pyotr Yakir, perhaps the best-known leader of the left wing of the democratic movement, had been tortured into recanting his views. Yakir had been arrested in June and had been interrogated constantly since then. While reports of his recantation were unconfirmed, their mere circulation suggested that the Kremlin may be preparing the groundwork for conducting a series of show trials of dissidents.

Stalinist repression in 1971 was not restricted to the Soviet Union. During the summer the Kremlin's agents in Prague took the first steps toward Moscow-style frame-up trials. A total of forty-six persons were convicted in a rapid-fire series of nine carefully stage-managed proceedings. Most of the defendants were supporters of the Prague Spring policies of the Dubcek regime. None was charged with anything other than literary or propaganda activity.

The trials were accompanied by more repression in other aspects of life. The writers' union and various cultural institutions were targets of purges. Estimates of the number of persons having lost their jobs because of their political beliefs or activities range between 20,000 and 40,000.

The Czechoslovak repression gave rise to serious divisions within the world Stalinist movement. The French, Italian, Dutch, British, and Australian Communist parties expressed varying degrees of opposition to the trials. The American Communist party was one of the few Western ones to slavishly toe the Kremlin's line.

In Yugoslavia, the Tito regime jet-

tioned its liberal reputation and initiated a crackdown on both Communist-party and nonparty dissidents. Chief among the targets of Tito's repression were leftist students, including three who were handed prison terms on charges of having tried to organize a Trotskyist movement in Yugoslavia.

In certain respects, the Yugoslav events suggest future developments in the Soviet Union. Tito's economic reforms, carefully contained within bureaucratic limits, threatened nevertheless to unleash a technocratic tendency in favor of restoration of capitalism. At the same time, the leftist movement of the students began to find echoes within the working class, where opposition to the inequality engendered by the economic reforms was on the rise.

Compelled to defend its bureaucratic base against restorationist trends, the Tito regime took the opportunity, in classic Stalinist fashion, to amalgamate the leftist dissidents with the rightist ones. The result was a general tightening of bureaucratic control for which the Kremlin hacks expressed strong approval.

No Detente in the Arab East

The spirit of détente did not come to the Arab East in 1972. Events in the region were again dominated by Israeli military aggression against the surrounding Arab states and by the entrenchment of the Zionist occupation of the territories conquered during the June 1967 war.

The Palestinian fedayeen, already severely weakened during 1971 by brutal attacks by the Jordanian army, continued to suffer setbacks in 1972. By the end of the year, the commando organizations had been virtually eliminated as an effective political force in the region.

Hussein's attacks in 1971 had forced most of the commandos to transfer their bases of operations to southern Lebanon. The last remaining stronghold from which the fedayeen were able to launch guerrilla attacks on the Israeli armed forces was the Arkoub region of southeast Lebanon, an area the Lebanese government had ceded to the commandos in the Cairo agreements in 1969.

Taking advantage of the growth of reaction that had characterized the region during 1971, the Zionist state

moved quickly to deprive the commandos of their Lebanese sanctuaries. On February 25 a column of Israeli tanks and infantry crossed into Lebanon, moving six miles into the Arkoub. Under the cover of air strikes carried out by U. S.-supplied Phantom fighter-bombers, the infantry demolished both fedayeen bases and civilian villages. The Israeli soldiers remained in the Arkoub for four days, during which time they constructed a highway to facilitate future invasions.

As the Zionist troops left, the Lebanese army—not to be seen during the Israeli incursion—moved in. The Cairo accords were overturned; the Lebanese army took control of the region. The leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Fateh-dominated umbrella group that includes most of the commando organizations, declined to contest the Lebanese army's occupation of the area. PLO spokesman Kemal Nasser explained on March 3 that the fedayeen wished instead to "strengthen mutual confidence" with the Lebanese regime.

The Israeli army was to cross into Lebanon repeatedly during 1972, but the power of the fedayeen in the Arkoub was broken in February. It was not reestablished.

Less than one month after the Arkoub invasion another event occurred that indicated the waning influence of the Palestinian organizations. On March 28 the Israeli occupation regime conducted elections on the West Bank of the Jordan River. The fedayeen had denounced this attempt to provide legal cover for the occupation, but they were unable to mobilize any forces to block it.

The impasse in which the Palestinian movement found itself gave rise on the one hand to splits among the organizations and on the other to a series of disastrous excursions into individual terrorism, a tactic the fedayeen had largely shunned when the movement was at its height. On May 30, three Japanese youths acting in the name of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine opened fire with automatic weapons on passengers at the Lydda airport.

This action occasioned impassioned displays of moral outrage from Western governments, whose representatives' concern for innocent human life is a matter of record. The Israeli re-

gime, taking advantage of the prevailing political climate, launched new raids on Lebanon—on the grounds that the offices of the PFLP are located in Beirut.

But the Israeli government's claim that its raids were aimed at suppression of the fedayeen was transparently false. The most intensive attacks of the year (against Syria) occurred in late October, following a period of weeks during which there had been no commando activities. In reality, the Israeli raids and invasions of the latter part of 1972 were not part of a war on terrorism. By its nature the Zionist state must preserve and periodically demonstrate its military superiority to the Arab world. Its continual acts of aggression (in 1972, the Israeli armed forces killed or wounded several hundred Arab civilians) serve a strategic function of intimidation. In this sense, Israeli incursions into neighboring countries are the norm. They will be carried out whenever domestic political conditions permit, subject only to the exigencies of international pressure and to Zionist diplomatic requirements.

One effect of the year-of-the-summit's failure to produce a settlement in the Arab East was the ripening political crisis in Egypt. President Anwar el-Sadat's base steadily eroded during the year, as the unprincipled maneuverer sought to balance between the United States and the Soviet Union in the international sphere and between the leftist students and workers and the rightist upper officer corps on the domestic level.

In January of 1972, Sadat's regime was shaken by a week-long student strike in Cairo that threatened to link up with the powerful Egyptian trade unions. The strike, which began in protest against Sadat's passivity in face of Israeli occupation of the Sinai peninsula, soon raised an impressive list of demands aimed at democratizing Egyptian society. While the movement fell short of detonating an explosion of the Egyptian working class, the ferment on the university campuses and within the industrial belts around Cairo and Alexandria continues. At the same time, the right-wing members of the old Nasserite apparatus, who have been Sadat's mainstay since he took over as president in 1970, have become dissatisfied with the slow schedule they believe he is following in rolling back

some of the reforms the masses won under Nasser.

Sadat tried to work his way out of this difficult situation first by turning to the West. In July he expelled some 20,000 Soviet military advisers from Egypt. When no quid pro quo was forthcoming from Washington, Sadat cautiously retreated, attempting to mend fences with the Kremlin. There was apparently opposition to this reversal among the officer corps. To carry it out, Sadat was forced to carry on a rather extensive purge of the armed forces—a dangerous move for a president whose main base lies in the military.

Capitalism and the Terrorist International

On September 5 eight Palestinian commandos broke into the apartments housing the Israeli delegation to the Olympic Games being held in Munich. Two Israelis were killed resisting the fedayeen; eleven others were taken hostage. The commandos demanded that the Israeli government free 200 political prisoners, in exchange for which the athletes would be released.

The fedayeen and the hostages were provided helicopters and were flown to a NATO air base near Munich. The police had agreed to provide the commandos and the hostages with air transport out of Germany.

But at the airfield the German police opened fire on the commandos. A gun battle ensued. When it was over, all eleven Israelis, five commandos, and one policeman were dead. Three of the fedayeen were captured. (They were later released by the West German government in exchange for the return of a Lufthansa airliner.)

Western imperialism seized on the Munich incident and launched an international witch-hunt, first against Arabs and persons of Arab descent, then against the radical movement. The modus operandi of the campaign was the old reliable technique of amalgam. But the imperialist governments—deprived of the traditional scapegoat, Communist Conspiracy, by the détente spirit—came up with a new one: the Terrorist International.

The first of a spate of articles claiming to expose this mythical creature appeared in the September 18 issue of the U. S. magazine *Newsweek*. The gist of the article was a crude attempt to cast the Fourth International as

the organizing force holding together a disparate group of bomb-throwers including Palestinian commandos, Irish Republican Army members, anarchist groups in Western Europe, and Latin American urban guerrillas.

Newsweek's article was followed by similar pieces in various Western newspapers. Then the September 23 issue of *The Economist*, voice of a considerable sector of the British financial elite, went *Newsweek* one better. *The Economist* charged that the Fourth International had "co-ordinated the complex operation" that led up to the PFLP shootings at the Lydda airport. Where *Newsweek* had merely concocted sensationalized but vague innuendos, *The Economist* told deliberate lies.

The Terrorist International was to become a major imperialist talking point. The reason is not hard to find. By attacking "terrorism," the Western regimes were attacking the colonial revolution and the growing far left in the developed capitalist countries.

The struggle against "terrorism" served as an excuse to limit democratic rights in the imperialist metropolises themselves. For example, the right of unrestricted travel among member nations of the Common Market, supposedly guaranteed in the charter of that body, could be infringed upon in the name of the need to control terrorism.

Foreign migrant workers, an increasingly important sector of the working class in many European countries, could be screened in the name of the hunt for mad bombers. Troublesome radical organizations could be banned, also in the name of the holy struggle to defend civilization against maniacs.

The Terrorist International witch-hunt fit in well with the general tendency toward increased reliance by the West European capitalist class on repression. The combined pressure of inflation and stagnation, as well as the declining rate of profit in countries such as Great Britain, Italy, and Japan, deepened the social crisis of capitalism.

The attempt of the West European bourgeoisie to meet the challenge of increased competition with the United States under the conditions created by Nixon's August 15, 1971, decree took the form, in part, of a series of moves aimed at strengthening "European uni-

ty," specifically the Common Market.

But the imperialist dream of a united, capitalist "super-Europe" remained largely on paper. While integration of Europe would be advantageous to the capitalist class as a whole, any real step toward such unity necessarily entails restrictions on the "national" prerogatives of each capitalist class.

Thus, the bourgeoisie's moves toward unity during 1972 took the form of expansion of the Common Market and a generalized tendency toward imposition of wage controls or incomes policies aimed at forcing the workers to pay the costs of the capitalist crisis.

In several key European countries, the bourgeoisie's program was met by determined resistance from the working class. In January 200,000 British miners walked off their jobs, demanding substantial wage hikes. Despite all attempts to break it, the strike lasted for well more than a month and ended in a significant victory for the miners.

In July, after five dockworkers were jailed for "contempt" of a court order, more than 100,000 dockers went on strike, triggering the biggest crisis in Britain since the 1926 general strike.

On November 6, finding itself unable to convince the labor movement to go along "voluntarily" with its wage controls, the Heath government decreed an immediate wage freeze, effective for ninety days and including a provision for a sixty-day extension. Heath has thus set the stage for a new round of class battles with the British workers.

The Norwegian people dealt a blow to the Common Market in September, when they voted against entry by a 53.9%-46.1% margin.

Spain, for years held tight in the grip of Francoite repression, has in the seventies become the weakest link in the European capitalist chain. The explosive social contradictions stemming essentially from the proletariat's low standard of living, the permanent crisis in agricultural production, and Spanish industry's inability to compete in the world market have burst to the surface, triggering waves of student and workers' struggle.

In Italy, although the prerevolutionary crisis of 1969-1970 has been surmounted, the bourgeoisie is far from having resolved its crisis of leader-

ship. Its need to bolster its declining rate of profit will impel it toward decisive confrontations with a working class that, while it has been thrown onto the defensive, has not suffered a major defeat.

In Germany, the political life of the country was to some extent dominated by the elections to the seventh Bundestag, won decisively by Willy Brandt's Social Democratic party. The German bourgeoisie, one of the main targets of Nixon's August 1971 *diktat*, has been unable to keep the wages of the working class low enough to maintain its previous privileged position in world competition. Faced with the necessity of reducing the proletariat's standard of living, the Brandt regime will doubtless find itself in major confrontations with the labor movement.

In France, 1972 saw the largest mobilization of the far left since the May 1968 struggles. On February 25 a factory guard at the state-owned Renault factory in the Paris suburb of Boulogne-Billancourt shot and killed Pierre Overney, a Maoist activist.

The murder triggered mass protests by the far left which reached their peak when an estimated 200,000 persons marched in Overney's funeral. The French Communist party, which denounced the martyred activist as a provocateur, found itself confronted by a new situation, one in which the far left, previously derisively sneered at as "grouplets," showed itself capable of mobilizing thousands. Later in the year, applying the détente spirit to its own country, the CP formed an electoral alliance with the Socialist party in an attempt to recreate the popular front of the 1930s.

The most explosive struggles waged in Europe during 1972 were those of the Irish masses. On January 30 British troops in Derry opened fire on a civil rights march, killing thirteen people in cold blood. The murders triggered the broadest mass upsurge since the current wave of resistance to British rule began in 1969. On February 2, a march of 50,000 persons organized by the trade-union movement in the formally independent Irish Republic marched through Dublin to protest "Bloody Sunday." Before the eyes of the intimidated police, the crowd burned the British embassy to the ground.

The depth of the upsurge posed new challenges to both the Official and Provisional republican organizations, challenges that neither was able to fully meet.

Taking advantage of tactical and strategic mistakes of the republican leadership, the British government and its allies in the Dublin regime gradually moved to isolate the vanguard from the masses. The decisive repressive blow was struck on July 31, when British troops occupied Free Derry, the enclave that had served not only as a laboratory of political organization but as a haven for persecuted militants throughout the island.

When the occupation failed to trigger any mass resistance, the Heath government continued to press for a repression against the IRA. On December 2, the Irish parliament passed drastic new repressive legislation giving the regime the power to arrest members of the IRA without bothering to charge them with any crime. As the year ended, Ireland was tensely waiting for the repression to strike.

The Japanese bourgeoisie in 1972

demonstrated its ability to come from behind in the political field as it had already done in the economic field. Even after the announcement in 1971 of Nixon's plans to visit Peking, the Japanese regime remained tied to its old policy of political isolation from China. In July, retiring Premier Eisaku Sato was replaced by Kakuei Tanaka, known in Japan as the "computerized bulldozer." Tanaka was in office less than three months when, on September 25, he took his turn at the Peking banquet scene.

Diplomatic relations between China and Japan were established immediately. Temporarily, as the *New York Times* put it, Japan had "leapfrogged ahead of the United States in the world rush to tie new links with the one-time international pariah, mainland China."

The Peking bureaucrats were equally as conciliatory to Japanese imperialism as they had been to Nixon. In his talks with Tanaka, Premier Chou En-lai did not raise the issue of Japan's military alliance with the United States, nor did he challenge Japan's complicity in the Indochina war. In return for overlooking such

details, Chou got a fat trade deal out of Tanaka. Yet another demonstration of Chairman Mao's Revolutionary Diplomatic Line.

In Canada, both English and bourgeois rule in Québec were shaken during May, as more than 100,000 workers from both the public and private sectors walked off their jobs to demand repeal of an antilabor bill and general amnesty for all workers victimized for ignoring injunctions that violated their right to strike. In some Québec towns, notably Sept-Îles, the trade unions took over municipal administration during the strikes.

The year 1972 was marked primarily by the Stalinist betrayal of the Vietnamese revolution. But despite the spirit of summitry, the class conflicts endemic to the capitalist system forced their way to the surface on all continents. The disease afflicting the bourgeois system will not be cured by doses of Kremlin champagne or of mao tai. Stronger medicine will be required. The new generation of revolutionists will be prepared to administer it. They will not forget to deal as well with the bureaucratic flunkies of the war criminals.

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