

# Intercontinental Press

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## No More Merry Mummery?

### The New Venice

New York, once the world's titleholder in the pollution race, lost out a couple of years ago to Tokyo. The air of the Japanese capital is so "unsatisfactory" today that traffic cops take oxygen-breathing breaks.

Now Venice, Italy, appears to be bidding seriously for the title. An official order was issued January 3 to 206 companies in the suburb of Marghera to provide gas masks for their employees within four days.

The *New York Times* played up the news from Marghera on its front page:

"Enveloped by clouds in many shades of gray and baneful yellow, this industrial mainland suburb of Venice has become a place of fears and tensions.

"The scare started last Wednesday for the 200,000 Venetians who reside and have jobs here and in the adjoining—and equally unlovely—Mestre district. Without warning the provincial Labor Office ordered the local oil refinery, petrochemical plants and auxiliary enterprises to equip all their 50,000 workers with army-style gas masks by Monday."

Scores of workers had recently suffered gas poisoning, and air pollution had reached the "dangerous level."

The companies are resisting. The required military-style gas masks cost \$25 to \$30 each. And just where can you get that many high-quality gas masks on such short notice?

The gondoliers are also downcast. "Once there was merry mummery on the Grand Canal this time of the year," said one. "Now we'll soon all have to wear gas masks day and night."

Such pessimism will hardly last. There's the possible renown of Venice outdoing Tokyo. And that will help popularize the romantic sight of gondoliers singing in gas masks on the canals of Venice. □

#### Cover Photo

Antiwar march of 10,350 in Stockholm December 20 behind banner demanding "USA Stop the Bombing." Other slogans were "USA Out of Indochina" and "Recognize the PRG." Photograph is from December 21 issue of Stockholm daily *Dagens Nyheter*.

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## 'HUNS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY'

In December Dr. Leon Cooper of Brown University went to Europe to receive a Nobel Prize in physics. When he returned to the United States, he commented that his conversations with Europeans had convinced him that "we [Americans] are coming to be regarded in the eyes of the world as Twentieth-Century Huns." If the analogy is unfair to the Huns, it is nevertheless an accurate reflection of the opinion in which U.S. imperialism is held by the majority of the world's population.

The wave of international revulsion at Nixon's "carpet bombing" of civilian areas of North Vietnam was so intense that even governments maintaining close alliances with the United States felt compelled to protest publicly. Apart from the puppet regimes in Indochina itself, the only government in the world that explicitly declared its solidarity with the bombing was Indonesia's, a regime with several hundred thousand corpses to its credit.

But the wave of protest was by no means restricted to governments. For the first time since the beginning of the U.S. intervention in Indochina, there were signs that workers on a mass scale were ready to manifest their solidarity with the Vietnamese people by taking direct action against the American capitalist class.

The lead was taken in Australia and in Italy. On December 29 Elliot V. Elliott, federal secretary of the Australian Seamen's Union announced that the union's membership had voted to boycott U.S. flagships as long as the bombing of North Vietnam continued. In the Italian port city of Genoa dock workers declared a ban on all U.S. shipping. The Italian action was taken independently of the union leadership.

The Australian boycott was to become the most significant one. Less than one year ago, Australia had troops fighting in Vietnam. The Australian government was one of the most slavish followers of Washington, and the Australian population was considered by the U.S. ruling class to be as "safe" as that of the Middle American Heartland.

The day after the boycott was de-

clared, two more maritime unions announced their solidarity with it. Nixon retaliated through one of his American stooges. Thomas Gleason, head of the International Longshoremen's Association, called for a boycott of Australian shipping in all east-coast U.S. ports.

But the Australian workers held firm. The January 6 *Christian Science Monitor* reported that many Australian trade unions were considering declaring a boycott of all U.S. commodities. On January 4 representatives of thirty Australian unions handed a statement to the U.S. Consulate General in Canberra threatening an intensification of action against U.S. interests in Australia if Nixon did not end the war soon.

The newly elected Labor party government, which owes its victory largely to the rising militancy of the trade-union movement, felt compelled to take anti-Nixon action even before the boycott was declared. On December 27 Prime Minister Gough Whitlam canceled the military component of a \$25 million aid-to-Saigon program that had been initiated by the MacMahon government in 1972. The Australian program under which Saigon troops were being trained was likewise canceled. Clyde Cameron, the new minister of labor, suggested that the rest of the world might have to isolate the United States until Congress moved to control the "maniacs" who were determining bombing policy.

The class-action weapon of boycott was raised by trade unions throughout Western Europe. In Italy, after the Genoa dock workers declared the ban on U.S. shipping, port workers in other cities joined in. According to the December 31 issue of the far-left daily *Il Manifesto*, by the end of the year boycotts were being observed in the ports of Savona, Imperia, Trieste, Venice, Ancona, Livorno, and Civitavecchia.

Dock workers in Denmark proposed a boycott of U.S. shipping throughout Europe. The December 29 *Washington Post* reported that Thomas Nielson, head of the Danish union federation, had announced that he planned to meet with other European labor leaders to coordinate actions.

While use of the boycott tactic was geographically limited by the inaction of the trade-union leadership, other forms of mass protest took place throughout Europe.

In Italy, demonstrations were held in Bologna, Pisa, Palermo, Rome, and other cities. The editors of *La Stampa*, one of Italy's leading dailies, circulated an antibombing petition that was gaining endorsement throughout the country.

In Norway, eight political parties issued a statement January 2 calling for a complete and final halt to all bombing in Vietnam.

In Austria, demonstrators in Vienna splashed red paint on the entrance to a branch of the Bank of America.

In the Netherlands on January 6 some 100,000 persons marched in an Amsterdam demonstration supported by virtually all Dutch trade unions.

In Copenhagen, some 7,000 persons marched against the war on December 23.

In Sweden on December 20, more than 10,000 persons demonstrated in the largest antiwar action held in several years. The intensity of Swedish popular opposition to the bombing prompted Premier Olof Palme, who is generally cautious in criticizing the U.S. government, to issue one of the strongest antibombing statements of any Western regime.

"Things should be called by their proper name," Palme said. "What happens today in Vietnam is a form of torture. . . . What is being done is that a people are being tormented, that a nation is being tormented, to humiliate them to force them to submit to the language of force. That is why the bombings are an outrage.

"There are many of this kind in modern history. They are often connected with names — Guernica, Oradour, Babi Yar, Katyn, Lidice, Sharpeville, Treblinka. Violence has triumphed, but the judgment of history has been hard on those who carried the responsibility. Now there is one more to add to the list — Hanoi, Christmas, 1972."

Washington answered Palme's statement by asking Stockholm not to appoint a new ambassador to the United



States when the present representative, Hubert de Besche, leaves his post on January 8. But on December 30 Palme reiterated his opposition to the bombing.

The British Labour party has for years refused to raise the slightest protest against U. S. aggression in Indochina. But on December 28 Roy Jenkins, a notorious right-winger in the Labour party leadership, sent a public letter to Prime Minister Edward Heath describing the bombing as "one of the most cold-blooded actions in recent history." Jenkins urged Heath to publicly oppose the raids.

Labour party leader Harold Wilson called the U. S. bombing "deplorable." As of January 8, Heath was still maintaining total silence on the bombing. On January 5 he refused to recall parliament for a discussion of U. S. policy in Vietnam. But, uncharacteristically, Heath did not express support for Nixon's actions—a clear recognition of the antiwar mood of the masses and of the proven militancy of the British working class, dockers in particular.

Another Western regime that managed to maintain official silence in face of strong antiwar pressure was the Willy Brandt government in West Germany. While Brandt kept his mouth shut, six members of the Social Democratic party compared Nixon's bombing to Hitler's air attacks on civilians during the Spanish civil war. On January 2 the federal executive board of the Young Socialists, the Social Democratic youth

group, accused Brandt of "hush up tactics." Heinrich Böll, winner of the 1972 Nobel Prize for literature, appealed to Brandt to solidarize himself with Swedish Premier Palme.

Finally, Brandt partially conceded to antiwar pressure, leaking to the press the fact that he considered Nixon's Vietnam policy "disgusting and unfathomable."

Protest against the bombing was not limited to Europe. In Bangladesh on December 26 students set fire to the United States Information Center at Rajshahi, ninety miles northwest of Dacca. The Dacca USIC office was immediately surrounded by a large police guard. On January 1, when students demonstrated in front of the building, police opened fire, killing two students. In response workers and shopkeepers conducted a half-day general strike.

In Singapore 100 demonstrators rallied in front of the U. S. embassy on December 27.

Condemnation of the Nixon bombing was expressed not only in the streets and at the governmental level, but in the world press as well. The prestigious *Manchester Guardian* called the air raids "the action of a man blinded by fury or incapable of seeing the consequences of what he is doing. Does Nixon want to go down in history as one of the most murderous and bloodthirsty of American presidents?"

The Argentine newspaper *La Opinión*, a leading bourgeois daily, called the bombing "genocide" and "the most complete plan of destruction in human history."

The French magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur* said that the "sole aim" of the raids was "terror," and added, "The thirty-seventh president of the United States wanted to go down in history. It is a sure thing. He already has. So has Hitler."

*L'Express*, a leading liberal French weekly, compared the bombings to the torture used by French troops in Algeria under the command of the notorious General Massu.

The Paris daily *Le Monde* likened the bombing to the Nazi destruction of Guernica, noting that the raids on Hanoi and Haiphong represented a "new height of perversity."

In the United States itself, leading newspapers attacked Nixon's escalation. On December 28 the *Washington*

*Post* called the air raids "the most savage and senseless act of war ever visited . . . by one sovereign people upon another."

The *New York Times* on January 1 said that the "aerial blitz" had "transformed a national tragedy into an Orwellian nightmare."

Under pressure from both worldwide and domestic antiwar sentiment, U. S. Congressional "doves" began to stir again. On January 4, the Democratic members of the Senate voted thirty-six to twelve in favor of a motion to introduce legislation cutting off funds for the war. On January 2 the Democratic caucus in the House of Representatives passed a similar resolution, by a vote of 154 to 75.

The reaction of many U. S. columnists to the bombings bordered on hopelessness and despair. Typical were Anthony Lewis, who complained that Nixon was acting like a "maddened tyrant," and Tom Wicker, who wrote in his December 26 column in the *New York Times*:

"There is no peace. There is shame on earth, an American shame, perhaps enduring, surely personal and immediate and inescapable. Whatever happened in Paris, it is not they who in willful anger are blasting our cities and our people. It is we who have loosed the holocaust."

The despair of the columnists is understandable. They think in terms of parliaments and legislators as the sole agencies of social change. Confronted by the unconscionable savagery of the elected leaders of their own country, they are enraged. Recognizing the powerlessness of their congress, they become bitter. The anger turns to frustration and then to fatalism—an increasingly common malady among the American intelligentsia. Who, after all, wants to be a Hun?

But the reaction of the majority of the world's population—and specifically of the world's proletariat—was of a different kind. The Australian and Italian dockers have social power. As they began to exercise it, and as their example began to take hold throughout the world, the Nixon regime drew back.

The Australian and Italian workers have shown the way to end the Indochina aggression. Their demonstration of social power and the echoes it engendered were not lost on the U. S. ruling class. Next time their example may well spread to the western side of the Atlantic. □



# Nixon Dropped Equivalent of Five Atomic Bombs

By Jon Rothschild

When Henry Kissinger arrived at Orly Airport in Paris January 7, he told waiting reporters that he would not keep them as long as his "colleague," chief North Vietnamese negotiator Le Duc Tho, who had delivered a harsh and thoroughly justified attack on U.S. imperialism upon his own arrival one day earlier. Presumably for the sake of variety, Kissinger was telling the truth. His statement was brief and to the point. Of its three sentences, two were nonsense. The third: "President Nixon has sent me back to make one more major effort to conclude the negotiations."

The implication, which seems to have escaped the U.S. reporters present, was that this was Hanoi's last chance to capitulate, that if Washington's surrender terms were not accepted during the round of talks scheduled to begin January 8, Nixon's B-52s would be unleashed again.

Kissinger's threat was bolstered by a similar one from Herbert G. Klein, director of communications for the Nixon regime. Asked January 7 about the possibility of renewed air strikes against Hanoi and Haiphong, he replied that he would not rule out "any tactic" necessary to achieve essential military objectives.

The Nixon administration's readiness to resume its genocidal bombing does not necessarily mean simply a repetition of the attacks carried out from December 19 to December 29. During those raids virtually every available B-52 was used, and at levels of peak intensity. If they failed to accomplish their purpose, new raids will have to be qualitatively more destructive. The B-52s could be sent *en masse* against North Vietnam's dikes and dams; or they could be loaded with the original cargo they were designed to carry: atomic bombs.

An examination of the destruction caused by the December attacks leaves no doubt that Nixon would not hesitate at taking either option if he felt political conditions would let him get away with it.

There are not as yet fully reliable statistics on the December bombings.

After the first few days, Washington clamped a blackout on reports of targets struck, the tonnage of bombs dropped, the number of planes shot down, and the number of U.S. personnel killed, missing, or captured. On January 4 Hanoi released the results of a preliminary survey of the effects of the raids. During the ten days of bombings, U.S. planes flew 1,000 sorties against Hanoi; 500 of these were B-52 attacks. A total of 100,000 tons of explosives was dropped throughout North Vietnam, the approximate equivalent of five Hiroshima-type bombs. Forty percent of the total tonnage fell on Hanoi. The report indicated that U.S. bombs had obliterated economic, social, educational, and cultural establishments in 353 places. Some targets were hit as many as ten times.

The workers' quarter of An Duong in Hanoi was hit December 21 by at least eighty bombs dropped by B-52s. An area one-half mile wide and nearly one mile long was devastated; 200 homes, schools, food shops, and grocery stores were destroyed. Kham Thien Street, one of Hanoi's major thoroughfares, was hit December 26 by thirty B-52 bombers: 534 houses were destroyed; 1,200 others were damaged. The 940-bed Bach Mai Hospital was demolished.

On January 6 officials in Haiphong told reporters from Agence France-Presse that between December 18 and December 30, U.S. planes flew 366 sorties against the port area. Fifteen thousand tons of bombs were dropped; 5,800 homes and other buildings were destroyed.

The initial North Vietnamese survey reported that 1,318 persons had been killed and 1,216 wounded during the attacks. That figure is far too low. The initial report on the destruction of Kham Thien Street listed 215 dead. But an Agence France-Presse dispatch from Hanoi published in the January 8 *New York Times* reported that when clean-up squads got to the area, they found 1,445 bodies in two alleys adjacent to the street. One week after the halt in the raids on the two major

cities, rescue teams were still digging out bodies. The only reason civilian deaths were not even higher is that both Hanoi and Haiphong had been two-thirds evacuated.

Uncertainty also surrounds the number of U.S. planes shot down. North Vietnamese officials have announced that a total of seventy-six were downed, among them thirty-eight B-52s. The U.S. command admits to twenty-seven planes lost, fifteen of them B-52s. That figure is almost certainly false. It seems to have been computed in advance. The Pentagon predicted that U.S. losses would range from 2 to 3 percent; it then computed the number of sorties flown and announced the appropriate number of aircraft downed. The *New York Times* reported that B-52 crews stationed in Guam felt losses were higher than indicated by the Pentagon's statistics, but not as high as claimed by North Vietnam.

Pentagon statements during the December raids not only reached new depths of cynicism, but also seemed to verge on insanity. When Hanoi reported that U.S. air raids December 20 and 21 had damaged a POW camp, wounding some prisoners, Pentagon spokesman Jerry Friedheim at first denied the charge. Upon further consideration, the war criminals apparently decided, as they say in the U.S. army, to "cover their ass." If the report were true, a military official announced, Hanoi was violating the Geneva Convention by keeping prisoners of war "in an area particularly exposed to the dangers of war."

When Friedheim was asked about reports that Bach Mai Hospital had been hit by U.S. bombs, he dismissed the charge as "enemy propaganda." Later, when incontrovertible eyewitness testimony proved that the hospital had been razed, the U.S. command conceded that some damage may have been done to "what the enemy describes as a hospital."

When reporters complained that the U.S. command was not releasing sufficient information on the raids, Fried-

heim explained that a policy of "protection of information" (as opposed to "news blackout") had been imposed because revealing precise targets hit or damage done would provide important intelligence to Hanoi, whose leaders apparently were unsure of where they had been bombed—or rather where they had thrown civilians under U. S. bombs in violation of the Geneva Convention.

Most cynical of all was the Pentagon's insistence that no civilian areas were being targeted. In reality, the bombing was so concentrated in space and time that the overall statistics on the raids give only a partial indication of their destructive impact.

An Agence France-Presse dispatch dated December 27 described a visit to the An Duong district in northern Hanoi: "The districts of An Duong and Nghia Dung were on a strip 1,500 yards long and 300 yards wide that was literally plowed up by American bombs.

"There . . . lived 950 families, totaling 10,000 Vietnamese. The Mayor of Hanoi, Dr. Tran Duy Hung, said that 80 bombs were dropped there by B-52's one morning last week. Most of the bombs, he said, weighed 500 pounds. . . .

"A group of diplomats and journalists measured some craters, but could not count them all. Most of the craters were 15 to 25 feet wide and 6 to 10 feet deep. The visitors also saw too many razed houses to count, but the Mayor said there were 235."

On December 28 Agence France-Presse correspondent Jean Leclerc du Sablon visited Kham Thien Street, which he described as "a mass of ruins and a scene of desolation and mourning today in the wake of the latest series of American air raids. . . .

"Kham Thien and adjacent streets were 'carpet bombed' by planes, including B-52's, that plowed up a strip nearly a mile long and several hundred yards wide." A local official told Leclerc du Sablon that the quarter had been hit December 26. The inhabitants had only five minutes to reach shelter before the bombs hit.

Kham Thien was also visited by a group of U. S. observers who had gone to Hanoi before the raids began to deliver packages to prisoners of war. Michael Allen, associate dean of the Yale University Divinity School, described Kham Thien as "the most horrible scene I've ever seen in my

life." He said that, "as far as I could see, everything was destroyed."

Allen, along with Telford Taylor, a retired U. S. general who served as a prosecutor in the Nuremberg war-crimes trials, and folk singer Joan Baez, also testified to the destruction of the Bach Mai Hospital, which Taylor described as "blown to smithereens."

Reports of massive civilian casualties also came from Haiphong. A January 6 Agence France-Presse dispatch published in the January 7 *New York Times* said that one observer "saw square miles that had become a sea of mud, twisted metal, fragments of walls and heaps of debris of all types.

"Six miles from the city there are craters in the rice paddies, hundreds of yards from any building. Then there appears a vast expanse of destruction, sometimes stretching out of sight, where nothing remains intact."

Most of the damage seems to have been done in the suburbs, the industrial belt that is also the location of workers' quarters. "The results of the bomber attacks can be seen in oval-shaped scars of destruction, one to two miles long and almost a mile across at the widest point," Agence France-Presse reported.

"There are five such ovals west-southwest of Haiphong. Three stretch one after the other, forming an almost uninterrupted path six and a half miles long, where life continues only in a few small 'islands' of some hundred square yards.

"To the west, the village of Hung Vong and the district of Thuong Ly were notable targets. The district is Haiphong's main industrial area and had already been raided, but less severely damaged, by B-52's last April 16.

"One major plant that produced cement is now a blackened ruin. There were also oil storage tanks, now split open, a food factory and a shipyard that present a picture of torn metal and mud."

When the Pentagon was asked to comment on the description of devastation in Haiphong, a spokesman replied, "I haven't seen that report but we would have no comment on that." Asked why there would be no comment, he answered, "I guess I wouldn't want to go beyond that."

The U. S. raids were halted, at least temporarily, on December 30 (Hanoi-time, December 29 Washington-time).

Credit for bringing the destruction to an end must go exclusively to the Vietnamese and to the international wave of revulsion and antiwar action that greeted the bombing. The bureaucrats in Moscow and Peking followed their time-honored policy of near immobility.

In fact, Moscow and Peking's initial reactions to the escalation suggested that the two bureaucracies were actually surprised by the raids, having taken at face value Nixon's professions of peaceful intent. The official Peking news agency, Hsinhua, issued a brief factual account of the first raids on December 19. There was no editorial comment. Also on December 19, apparently in lieu of an official government statement, the Soviet press agency, TASS, published an "authorized declaration" on the bombing.

The Paris daily *Le Monde* gave its report of the TASS declaration the headline "Moscow's reaction could not have been more moderate." Correspondent Alain Jacob pointed out that statements issued earlier in the war used somewhat more vigorous language. Moscow's declaration of April 16, 1972, for example, warned that the U. S. bombing represented an "aggravation of the international situation." The December 19 declaration said only that "governing circles of the Soviet Union are very seriously examining the situation."

Jacob also pointed out that by implication the TASS statement even gave credence to Nixon's negotiating position: "Moscow charged the United States with wanting to pressure the Vietnamese to accept 'American conditions for a settlement in Vietnam.' In a sense this acknowledges that Washington wants a settlement and regards the recent bombing essentially as an episode in the negotiations. But the USSR goes so far as to admit—and in this it is closer to the U. S. position than to North Vietnam's—that on the road to a settlement and cease-fire there remain 'questions that have not yet been agreed to.' This is to admit that the document drawn up last October 20 by Le Duc Tho and Henry Kissinger is incomplete and to recognize that the document must be the subject of further talks."

The Moscow bureaucracy's second comment on the U. S. escalation was delivered by Communist party Gen-



eral Secretary Leonid Brezhnev on December 21. Speaking in Moscow to a gathering of representatives from more than a dozen Communist parties from various countries, he hailed the détente in Soviet-American relations. Then he said, "However—and this should be emphasized—much will depend on the course of events in the immediate future, and, in particular, on what kind of turn is taken on the issue of ending the war in Vietnam."

The bourgeois press in the United States interpreted this statement as a warning to Nixon that the détente could not proceed in the absence of an Indochina settlement. Brezhnev also described the U.S. bombing as "barbaric," and devoted a short section of his three-and-a-half-hour speech to denouncing it.

The capitalist press played up this milksop verbiage, but noted that there were compensating factors. Brezhnev attacked China much more sharply than he did the United States. He spent more time detailing the allegedly glorious achievements of the Moscow summit than in denouncing imperialist aggression in Vietnam. And most important, the leader of the world Stalinist movement did not propose any concrete Soviet action to counteract the U.S. bombing, nor did he call upon the Communist parties around the world to initiate any specific actions of solidarity with the Vietnamese revolution, even though an international gathering of CP members would seem like the ideal forum for such a call.

The Vietnamese got no more help from their so-called allies in Peking.

Hsinhua followed up its original no-comment account of the bombing with a "commentary" representing government views. U.S. officials in Peking, according to the December 21 *Washington Post*, called the Peking statement "fairly moderate under the circumstances." It contained the usual nonspecific pledges of support to the Vietnamese people, but fell short of projecting any concrete action.

Like the Soviet statement, the Hsinhua commentary even implied support for Washington's view of the negotiations. It said, for example, "At a time when the talks are in recess and will enter the final stage [!], the United States has resorted to the tactic of sudden attack and resumed bombing of all parts of North Viet-

nam." The commentary complained that the bombing "has threatened [*sic*] to wreck a peace agreement which is near at hand."

On December 27, Nguyen Thi Binh, foreign minister of the South Vietnam Provisional Revolutionary Government, arrived in Peking for talks with Chinese leaders. The sluggishness of Peking's greeting to her was presumably noted in Washington. Chairman Mao mobilized all of 4,000 Chinese schoolchildren to meet Binh at the airport. There were few spectators along the route of her motorcade to Peking, and the welcoming crowd at Tien An Men Square was officially estimated at only 50,000. By Chinese standards, this amounted to a token gesture.

At a gala banquet held the following day, Binh may have been alluding to her welcome when, in thanking the Chinese government for its support, she noted that in the past "millions of Chinese" had taken to the streets to show their solidarity with the Vietnamese people.

The banquet was also the scene of the only public Chinese comment on the effect U.S. bombing might have on the Washington-Peking détente. There was one U.S. reporter present, Marilyn Berger of the *Washington Post*. She asked Chou En-lai whether "the second resumption of bombing since he received President Nixon in Peking in February would affect China's relations with the United States." Chou answered, "Certainly." Asked "how the breach could be healed," Chou replied, "Stop."

The premier indicated that he hoped Berger would convey his attitude to the American people, something Chou

apparently felt to be beyond his own competence.

Whether Nixon's bombing has achieved its objective—forcing Hanoi into total surrender—will not be known until the latest round of negotiations takes place. Most observers agreed that Washington's central aim was to compel the North Vietnamese to concede Thieu's sovereignty over all of South Vietnam, thus recognizing the permanence of the division of Vietnam and assuring Hanoi's abandonment of the revolutionary forces in the South.

The pattern of bomb first, then negotiate, then bomb again at a more intense level has been Washington's standard operating procedure since the beginning of its aggression in Indochina. In the present case, the exact timing is easily understood. After winning significant concessions from Hanoi in October, Nixon halted the bombing and announced, just before the elections, that peace was imminent.

The U.S. electorate thus pacified, and the Moscow and Peking bureaucrats brought into line, Nixon demanded total surrender from the North Vietnamese. When Hanoi refused to capitulate, Nixon attempted to crush the Vietnamese people's will to resist.

If Hanoi continues to defend its rights—and Le Duc Tho's January 7 reiteration of the demand that Nixon sign the October accord suggests that North Vietnam has not changed its position—then Nixon can be expected to unleash the bombers once again. It is only the international antiwar movement that stands between Nixon and the complete obliteration of North Vietnam. □

## SWP Vote Total Is Biggest Yet

Socialist and radical candidates for president in the U.S. elections polled nearly 250,000 votes in 1972, an increase over the 178,000 votes for left parties in 1968.

The Socialist Workers party candidates, Linda Jenness and Andrew Pulley (or electors pledged to support them), won 68,226 votes, the highest vote ever won by a Trotskyist presidential slate. The tabulation does not include 9,773 votes that were cast for Jenness and Pulley in Cuyahoga County (Cleveland), Ohio. Although their names appeared on the printed ballot in Ohio, Jenness was barred from official ballot status because she was not thirty-five years old.

Impressive votes for Jenness were recorded in Mississippi (2,458), Texas (8,664), and Louisiana (14,398).

The vote for the revolutionary socialists surpassed those cast for Communist party candidate Gus Hall (25,595) and Socialist Labor party candidate Louis Fischer (53,811).

The People's party, a coalition of left liberals and radicals, ran Dr. Benjamin Spock for the presidency. He won 78,801 votes in eleven states. Almost 80 percent of his vote came from California, where no other radical group was able to win ballot status. The significant vote for Spock reflects his standing as a nationally known antiwar activist.

### Concern for Saigon Political Prisoners

The fate of the political prisoners in South Vietnam's jails is of growing concern to antiwar activists and civil libertarians throughout the world. That they have good ground for their forebodings has been shown by various reports. The most recent one was an article in the December 23 *Far Eastern Economic Review* written by Alexander Casella.

"The detention system is extremely complex," he says. "In addition to the six PoW camps, there are four national prisons (called re-education centres), and 31 provincial prisons. To these must be added about 200 district jails, an undisclosed number of detention centres for whole families, police station jails, military prisons, and a corps of 'battle coolies,' which consists of captured deserters who do transport jobs for the army under guard. There is a final category of prisoners called 'civil suspects for security reasons,' who reportedly are detainees imprisoned under Article 19 of the 004 law of February 15, 1966, stating that any individual can be detained without trial by administrative decision for a maximum period of two years. The term is renewable.

"There is no consensus about the number of prisoners. According to figures issued in Saigon, there are at present 35,000 PoWs, including 9,000 who are said to be North Vietnamese, and about 31,000 inmates of civilian jails. . . . These figures exclude the 20,000 who have been arrested during the past three months, including students and political opponents of the Government of all creeds. Other sources claim that there are between 100,000 and 150,000 political prisoners, not including the PoWs. NLF sources, which make no distinction between PoW and political prisoners but speak of 'patriots,' advance a number exceeding 350,000."

Casella describes the unsuccessful efforts of the International Committee of the Red Cross to investigate the treatment of these political prisoners.

"After exerting whatever pressure it could, the ICRC was finally permitted one visit in 1971 to all the 41 largest listed prisons, with the exception of Con Son Island, notorious for its

'tiger cages.' However, the ICRC's visits, which amounted to little more than a guided tour of the jails, had to be announced one month in advance, and the delegates were prevented from speaking to the prisoners outside the presence of guards.

"Whether such visits serve any purpose is doubtful, except that prisoners are liable to get a better meal on the day of the ICRC inspection. However, if a prisoner dares voice a complaint to the ICRC delegate, he obviously exposes himself to reprisals since the ICRC is in no position to ensure either his safety or the improvement of the conditions of detention. . . . Moreover, by visiting prisons under such restrictive conditions, the ICRC inadvertently but undoubtedly contributes to the Saigon propaganda mill."

### Rally at U.S. Embassy in Stockholm

### Thousands March Against War

Stockholm

A crowd of more than 10,000 persons marched here December 20, in solidarity with the struggle of the Vietnamese people and against the U.S. bombing of North Vietnam. The action, called by the United NLF Groups and supported by a number of other Swedish antiwar organizations, was the largest of the annual demonstrations held on this date to mark the anniversary of the founding of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam.

The demonstration started with a rally outside the Swedish parliament building and ended with a massive rally at the U.S. embassy after marching across the entire city. Speakers at the final rally included U.S. actress and antiwar activist Jane Fonda, former SDS leader Tom Hayden, and the ambassador of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to Sweden.

The North Vietnamese representative attacked Nixon's terror bombings and declared, "We will never be frightened by the violence. Nixon is trying

The ICRC has carefully refrained from probing into the reasons for the mass jailings:

"The intervention of the International Committee of the Red Cross in 1965, coinciding with the presence of U.S. ground forces, aimed only at obtaining improvement in the conditions of detention while making a point of ignoring the problem of whether detention was justified."

Investigation of the latter question would have been embarrassing to the U.S. government as well as the various Saigon regimes. For instance, Casella reports that in 1970, "30% of the 7,000-odd prisoners of Con Son Island had never been either tried or sentenced."

Moreover, the reports made by the ICRC on prison conditions are submitted only to Saigon and Washington. The North Vietnamese and the NLF are allowed no access to these studies.

"The inescapable conclusion: that the ICRC delegates can visit a PoW camp does not imply in any way that the prisoners of that camp are humanely treated." □

to terrorize us into accepting his unreasonable conditions, but we shall continue the struggle."

Fonda described her trip to North Vietnam and the support given to the American antiwar movement by the Vietnamese people. She stressed the necessity of the U.S. antiwar movement mobilizing against the recent escalation of the war. With the resumption of the bombing, she said, "Nixon lost every mandate he had," from the November elections.

A contingent of more than 500 persons marched under the banners of the Indochina Solidarity Campaign, an antiwar organization supported by the Revolutionary Marxist League, the Swedish sympathizing organization of the Fourth International, and other antiwar activists. The ISC opposed the inclusion of the demand that "Nixon must sign" the Paris accords as one of the demands of the demonstration. The ISC felt that antiwar activists' raising this demand violated the Vietnamese people's right to self-determination. □



## Excludes Opposition Parties From Ballot Box

### Thieu Prepares for 'Free Elections'

Hours before the expiration of the emergency powers granted him last March by South Vietnam's National Assembly, President Thieu issued a decree on December 28 establishing such strict qualifications for political parties that only his own newly formed Dan Chu (Democracy) party is expected to be able to meet them. The Saigon regime, which long ago barred all pro-NLF or "neutralist" political activity, is now cracking down on the twenty-three "legal" opposition parties. The purpose is to win a Nixon-style "mandate" for himself in any forthcoming "free elections."

The new regulations require all parties to establish chapters in at least 25 percent of the villages in twenty-two provinces, including Saigon. Each chapter must enroll 5 percent of the registered voters as members. In addition, each party must win at least 20 percent of the seats in both the senate and the lower house. Parties which do not meet all of these requirements will be dissolved.

Thieu is not leaving his political fate open to any decision at the ballot box. The January 1 *Washington Post* carried a report on what he is doing in Gocong province, thirty miles from Saigon:

"The staff at the party's temporary office in a Buddhist temple consists of four civil servants—three young men from province headquarters assigned by the province chief to work at the party office, and a woman typist from the Agricultural Development Bureau. Printing and typing of party documents and letters are done in government offices on government equipment.

"The party's permanent Gocong headquarters is being constructed a few blocks away by a platoon of army engineers, using American-supplied equipment and imported Korean cement paid for by U. S. aid funds."

The province party chief, continued the report, "said a legal ban on partisan politics by military officers has been partly circumvented with government approval, to permit officers assigned to non-military duties to join the party. He called them 'civilian officers.'"

Other parties are targets of Thieu's heavy-handed recruiting techniques. According to Daniel Southerland, reporting in the December 26 *Christian Science Monitor*, "The PNM [Progressive National Movement] is anti-communist and usually supports basic government policies. But PNM leaders say that many of their followers are being coerced into joining the government party."

As is customary, the U. S. embassy feigned surprise when Thieu's moves against his opponents were made public. However, the December 29 *New York Times* stated that "one official said he thought the effect would be 'healthy.'"

### Plan Protest at Nixon's Inauguration

### Antiwar Forces Respond to New Escalation

In response to the murderous terror attacks against Hanoi and Haiphong, antiwar forces in the United States have united to build a "March Against Death and for Peace in Vietnam" in Washington, D. C., on January 20. The demonstration will coincide with the festivities surrounding Nixon's second coronation as president. Protests will also take place that day in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland, San Diego, Seattle, Denver, and St. Paul.

In a December 30 press statement Jerry Gordon, national coordinator of the National Peace Action Coalition (NPAC), said that the protests would go ahead as planned despite Nixon's decision to halt bombing above the twentieth parallel.

"No one should give any credence to Nixon's shabby pretense of seeking peace," he warned. "Now more than ever masses of Americans must act decisively to force the U. S. government to stop the killing once and for all."

Sponsors of the January 20 actions include Jerry Wurf, international president of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; Bobby Seale, chairman of the

"You wait and see, many opposition groups will be in favor of it," the official said. "It will more likely lead to a consolidation of parties than to their complete elimination."

First reaction by opposition leaders, however, was bitter. Tran Van Tuyen, a leader of the Vietnam Quoc Dan Dang, said, "It will drive the people underground and into the Communist side. Only Thieu's Democracy party can meet the criteria."

But the optimistic American official surmised that "if a cease-fire is agreed on, the Communists would have serious difficulty openly organizing party branches in South Vietnam's cities, where the Government police would remain active.

"Thus, under the terms of the decree, the Communists would be legally dissolved." □

the Agreement' and we on the basis of 'Out Now.'" The Student Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam has called for actions January 19 on college campuses and in high schools.

The renewal of heavy bombing against North Vietnam's major cities sparked an outraged response from much of the scientific community in the United States. A letter of protest to Nixon was signed December 28 by 250 scientists, among them Nobel Prize winners George Wald, Salvador Luria, and Albert Szent-Gyorgyi. The letter denounced the "unprecedented orgy of killing and destruction that horrifies people everywhere — as Guernica, Coventry, and Dresden once horrified them."

The Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association adopted a resolution December 27 charging

Nixon with "carrying out a brutal and inhuman war against the Vietnamese people."

On December 31 the *New York Times* carried an antiwar advertisement signed by 151 editorial employees of the ultrareactionary *New York Daily News*.

During the Christmas holidays protests were called on short notice in many cities and towns. About 1,500 persons gathered in New York City's Times Square to denounce the renewed aggression. On Christmas eve 2,000 persons marched in Palo Alto, California, led by the city's mayor. A Christmas day demonstration called by the Washington (D. C.) Area Peace Action Coalition drew between 500 and 700 persons. Antiwar actions took place in Seattle, St. Louis, Detroit, San Francisco, Hartford, Cleveland, and other cities. □

Now' bandwagon which has accumulated some rather odd bedfellows. The Vietnamese comrades are absolutely justified in trying to use all means necessary to get the US out of Vietnam even though this involves or might involve certain concessions on their part.

"Our position, however, should be the following: *we, as socialists in the imperialist heartland, are not in favour of US imperialism and its allies gaining or forcing any concessions from the Indochinese and we do NOT recognise their right to do so.* Furthermore the 'Sign Now' position implies that the struggle would be over once a peace treaty were signed. This is also false, as a civil war against the puppet regimes in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos would undoubtedly continue, and to imagine that "Sign Now" would solve every problem is to disarm the solidarity movement.

**"CONTINUING SOLIDARITY AS FAR AS THE IMG IS CONCERNED IS THE ONLY ANSWER.**

"The International Marxist Group participated in and sponsored the Indochina Solidarity Conference held a few weeks ago. We intend to step up our commitment to the Vietnamese and Indochinese struggle in the coming months. We will participate in the January 20th (Inauguration Day in the U. S.) mobilisation and will help build an even bigger action in February. That is why we feel it essential to base solidarity actions on the following slogans, rather than restricting them to the changing diplomatic needs of the Vietnamese comrades:

"Solidarity till final victory!

"Withdraw all imperialist troops now!

"Victory to the PRG!

"End British complicity!"

The "sign now" position is supported by the British Communist party and all the Maoist organisations. These groups have charged the International Marxist Group with "not supporting the Vietnamese"—a slander that is belied by the IMG's central role in all recent solidarity actions.

As the January 20 mobilisation approaches, the Socialist Labour League and the International Socialists, both of which have refused to participate in united-front activity against the war, will come under increasing pressure to abandon their sectarian and economist stance and join in the demonstration. □

## London Action Protests New Escalation

### 700 March Against War

London

Nearly 700 persons turned out December 23 to march in a militant demonstration here against the bombing of North Vietnam. The action was organized on an emergency basis, in forty-eight hours, by the Indochina Solidarity Committee. The demonstrators marched from Hyde Park to Grosvenor Square, where a rally was held in front of the U. S. embassy. Some Maoist groups and a few Young Communist League members joined the demonstration, but the International Socialists and the Socialist Labour League refused to participate.

One of the speakers, Tariq Ali of the International Marxist Group, appealed to those present to make the demonstration scheduled for January 20, the date of Nixon's inauguration, the biggest in recent years.

The latest developments in the war have resulted in renewed opposition. A Solidarity Conference on Indochina drew more than 600 activists and was addressed by Ly Van Sau of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Noam Chomsky, and I. F. Stone. A series of workshops was held. The main debate at the conference was between advocates of the "sign now" slogan

and the IMG, whose position was explained in a leaflet distributed at the December 23 demonstration:

"Nixon has made his motives clear. He wants to bomb the Vietnamese into accepting a settlement which is 99% favorable to the imperialists. The Vietnamese have clearly and unequivocally rejected this. General Giap declared in a broadcast yesterday: 'The U. S. hopes to bend the will of the Vietnamese people by mass bombings in Vietnam. This will prove to be an illusion. Hanoi, Haiphong and other cities may be bombed and even razed, but the will of the Vietnamese people will never give.' Giap's defiant statement is in marked contrast to the muted criticism of the U. S. uttered in Moscow by Brezhnev. The fact that the Vietnamese have knocked down 15 B-52s over the last week shows what they would be capable of doing provided they were given more military hardware. Last year the Kremlin bureaucrats gave North Vietnam military aid worth only 100 million dollars compared to the 350 million dollars given to the wretched anti-communist regime of Sadat in Egypt.

"Given Nixon's tactics it would be incorrect in our view to back the 'Sign



## Austrian Workers Begin to Move

Vienna

An old familiar bourgeois specter is haunting Austria, the specter of "stability." Every capitalist, every bourgeois hireling, and the entire bourgeois press bows before it. The brakes have to be put on now; the economy is in the gravest danger!

What, then, are the factors that have so deeply shaken the economy? In January 1973 a sales tax will begin operating, and the capitalists have taken this pretext to introduce a steep increase in prices. Even the Socialist party finance minister had to admit on the occasion of the adjustment of the tax law that no price rises were really necessary, since the only purpose of the new law was to change the method of accounting.

The capitalists, however, refused to accept such "reassurances" and raised their prices wherever they could. In many cases they completely circumvented the parity commission established to regulate prices, the favorite child of Austrian social partnership, and showed in an exemplary way what pipes have to be danced to in bourgeois society. The Social Democratic government, which functions as an administrative committee of the bourgeoisie, immediately ducked its head and began to complain about the "inadequacy of the laws," which offered no handy means for intervention. Since the capitalists, on the other hand, did not remain "idle," the cost-of-living index for the month of October rose 7% over the previous year's level (with pensions rising by 7.4%). For the coming months, the so-called economic experts predict a rise of 9%, 10%, or even more.

The bourgeoisie and its shabby train of "experts" have been shaken out of this juggling of figures, which in the last analysis is only good for separating the optimists from the pessimists (those who predict an inflation rate of under 10% and those who predict one over that level), by a force that they believed that they had lulled into a deep sleep—the Austrian working class. After a phase of truly "angelic" patience, the workers have cast off their almost absolute passivity and

begun in places to resist the capitalist attack on their living standards.

Permanent inflation, growing unrest in the factories, picayune wage increases that in most cases did not even equal inflation and contrasted with the enormous increase in prices for the capitalists as a result of the gigantic tax windfall they enjoyed—all of this could not be accepted quietly by the workers. And in fact the workers have fought their first defensive actions. These were spontaneous in character, uneven, and strictly limited even in numbers. Nonetheless, they were of enormous importance, since they unmistakably expressed the *tendency* of the workers to refuse to submit passively any more to the measures of the capitalists.

In recent months the strike statistics have risen rapidly. Only a minority of work stoppages were officially sanctioned by the unions. The workers have not waited for the approval of the trade-union bureaucrats and have unleashed wildcat struggles. The frightened representatives of the workers tried immediately to serve as a "firebreak" and where possible to extinguish outbreaks.

The attempts of the union leadership to witch-hunt militants fell on deaf ears, and officials who tried to "put on the brakes from above" met with a steady chorus of whistles and mocking laughter. This time even where it was still possible to achieve some success with the pacification tactic, the trade-union bureaucrats were forced to agree to important concessions.

In some cases, however, all help came "too late." The best example of working-class resistance to the officers of capital was the actions of the railroad workers in the Hauptwerkstätte Linz. At first spontaneously, these workers downed tools and demanded that their representatives report on the current negotiations with management. When these officials failed to give a satisfactory accounting, *a hundred workers marched through the city* to the union headquarters to present their demands to the leadership.

The workers managed also to make

use of their votes. In the nationwide shop-steward elections, there was a clear shift to the left. The SP list at the same time suffered significant losses. In some factories (Elin in Weiz, Magnetsit Radenthein in Erzberg) real landslides occurred. The candidates of the CP trade-union fraction, GE [Gewerkschaftliche Einheit—Trade-Union Unity], won gains of 600 to 800 votes. In Erzberg they were able to triple their vote, almost entirely at the expense of the SP.

The shift in the votes in the factories almost never favored the "Christian" or OVP [Österreichische Volkspartei—Austrian People's party] trade-union fraction, and this is a clear indication that the OVP's social demagoguery is not penetrating the working class. The GE was much more the winner. In 137 factories with a work force of 115,000, in comparison with the 1967 elections the SP lost 64 positions, the Christian Democrats gained 9, and GE gained 105. The GE won 6,200 votes and thus reached a total of 22,100. There were 51 more positions up for a vote this time.

The Communist party and the GE are naturally far from representing a revolutionary alternative to the Social Democracy. They are not even very persistent in their reformism. And they are so opportunistic that when two of their stewards were fired without notice and the SP stewards supported the factory management, they did not appeal to the workers themselves but to the parliament (*sic!*) and to the leaders of the OGB [Österreichische Gewerkschaftsbund—Austrian Labor Federation].

Nonetheless, it is true that the GE stewards are more progressive than the class-collaboration-oriented SP stewards, and (although in a limited way) they do defend the immediate interests of the workers. Because of this and because there was no other alternative for the workers, the CP stewards were elected.

This, therefore, is the background to the bourgeoisie's reaching an agreement on stability with its political administrators. And thereby it is clear what, or rather *who*, is to be cooled off and "pacified." It is the working class. This, of course, cannot be achieved by isolated measures. The brakes applied by the federal government and the states (a building halt, credit limitations, budget restrictions) are not sufficient. What is needed is no

less than "Konzertierte Aktion" [a wage board bringing together representatives of the unions and government and business leaders].

All participants in the economic process, plus the federal government and the states and the unions, must stand together to achieve the desired result of "cooling off the economy"—that is, throwing the workers onto the pavements and rationalizing industry, i.e., squeezing more profits out of the workers remaining at their jobs, and along with all this guaranteeing the sacrosanct "social peace."

As a result, after its November 17 session, where a "stabilization program" was voted, the federal government immediately announced that its measures would only become effective if complementary decisions were made by their "social partner." Since then they have been hard at work on such an agreement, that is, a peace treaty, a straitjacket for the working class. All the bourgeois publicity organs are being called on to impose this muzzle on the workers. The radio and television, as well as the press, have been carrying on a constant campaign to achieve this. The parliament has been summoned for a day-long special televised session.

Only the workers remain to be convinced. The representatives of the capitalists and the trade-union bureaucrats already gave their agreement November 17 to such a "treaty of moderation." So the only thing in question now is the proper form for getting the workers to accept the capitulationist agreement imposed on them in the interests of the bureaucrats and capitalists, and what sugar-coating can be put on it (the possible range extends from a wage-price freeze to informal agreements to hold back demands in the coming months.)

In the meantime, the agreement has been published. The main point is the OGB's acceptance of wage restraints. The agreement says that if the rate of inflation remains "within tolerable limits," there will be no adjustments between contracts and no cost-of-living increases. The OGB will strive to keep labor costs as low as possible. Within individual factories, wage increases must first be approved by the manufacturers' association and the union concerned. If there is no agreement at this level, then the parity commission is to intervene. Thus, in fact,

every way out is barred to the workers in the factories.

On the price side, the federal parliament has issued an "appeal" to the capitalists to keep increases down to the "absolutely necessary minimum." So, there is to be no across-the-board price freeze. By a de facto wage freeze and "cooling-off mechanisms" the workers are to be kept in check, thus achieving the peace necessary for boosting the profit rate.

It goes without saying that much of the economic pressure the bourgeoisie is putting on the workers is the result of compelling necessity. The climate in the world market—to be exact, competition—is becoming sharper and sharper, and Austria's association with the Common Market is introducing new standards of competitive-

ness. Nonetheless, some sectors of capital have layers of "fat" and thus are not operating at the lowest possible profit level. This is because the "angelic patience" of the Austrian working class has produced unusually favorable conditions for capitalist exploitation.

It will be of decisive importance to figure out the margins of maneuver open to individual capitalists if the GRM [Gruppe Revolutionäre Marxisten—Revolutionary Marxist Group] is to begin direct agitation and propaganda among the workers. Then we will have to know what sectors *really* cannot give concessions to the workers so that we can adjust our methods accordingly and not just ignore economic reality like the reformist CP. □

## Lambertists Reject Agreement

## Ligue Communiste, Lutte Ouvrière to Present Joint First-Round Candidacy

In the French elections next February, the Ligue Communiste and Lutte Ouvrière will be jointly presenting 309 candidates during the first round. The December 14 issue of the Paris daily *Le Monde* reported that 176 of these would be from Lutte Ouvrière and 133 from the Ligue Communiste. They will run in eighty departments.

Seven months of negotiations preceded the agreement, which was signed on December 11. In a joint statement, the two organizations explained that the negotiations, in which the Lambertist OCI (Organisation Communiste Internationaliste—Internationalist Communist Organization) had also participated, had produced agreement on a division of electoral districts among the three groups, when the OCI unilaterally bolted the negotiations. The reason for the OCI move was its stated intention to leave open the possibility of calling for a vote for candidates of the Communist or Socialist parties in districts where either the Ligue Communiste or Lutte Ouvrière is also on the ballot.

"Since the representative of the OCI [to the negotiations] refused to sign a joint statement with the Ligue Com-

muniste and Lutte Ouvrière," the two latter groups explained, "the representatives of these organizations made a last attempt at conciliation by asking that the OCI publish, on its own, a statement in its own words calling for a vote for the candidates of the Ligue Communiste and Lutte Ouvrière in cases where they are on the ballot. The OCI representative rejected this proposal, thereby bringing the negotiations to an end." □

## U.S. Irish Boo Lynch

"Mr. Lynch, who is visiting the United States to encourage investment in his country, was booed by demonstrators when he arrived at the American Broadcasting Company television studios at 1 West 67th Street to appear on the program 'Issues and Answers,'" the January 8 *New York Times* reported. "Several eggs splattered against his car as he departed."

Lynch chose to visit Nixon after ramming harsh repressive laws through the Irish parliament and arbitrarily jailing militant nationalists. On "Issues and Answers" he appealed for continuation of British military occupation of Northern Ireland. About 500 persons, representing nine Irish organizations, protested furiously against Lynch's capitulationist line.



## Evidence of Nationalistic Unrest in Kirgizia

By Cliff Conner

Evidence of nationalist discontent in Kirgizia has come to the surface in the form of an official campaign against two Kirgizian historians. According to Leo Gruliov, in the December 14, 1972, *Christian Science Monitor*, the newspaper *Sovietskaya Kirgizia* has leveled charges of "nationalism" against professors K. Nurbekov and R. Turgunbekov. Kirgizia, in central Asia on the border of Chinese Sinkiang, is one of the USSR's fifteen republics.

The accusations, first made at a republic-wide party conference, are especially interesting in light of the USSR's claims to have "solved the national question." A huge ballyhoo to that effect has been featured in the Soviet press for the past year to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the USSR (December 30, 1972).

But the official attack against the historians and the publicity given to it testify to the existence of a current of nationalist sentiment among the Kirgiz people. Evidently the scholars either represent a body of existing opinion or they are being used as scapegoats in an attempt to intimidate those moving in their direction.

Professor Nurbekov was accused of making a fetish of a people's right to self-determination and secession. Nurbekov's claim that "no one has the right to intervene forcibly in the nation's internal affairs and to correct its mistakes by force" was criticized for not taking "class interests" into consideration.

Nurbekov was also charged with holding the view that any forcible change in the borders of a Soviet republic should be considered aggression or annexation. His critics, according to Gruliov, consider such talk to be "nonsense" since "the Soviet people constitute one community."

The question of forced border changes is not academic, but a very real threat. An article in the January 3 *New York Times* reports that a Soviet planning economist "has come up with a startling proposal to revise

the boundaries of [the USSR's] ethnic republics for more efficient coordination and planning of the complex Government-run economy." A similar theme marked a speech by Soviet party leader Brezhnev in the middle of December.

The economist, Professor Viktor Kistanov, cited as an example of a "problem area" the central Asian Fergana Valley, which lies partly in Uzbekistan and Tadzhikistan, but mostly in Kirgizia. The *Times* article notes, "Any alteration of borders is likely to meet opposition in the republics losing territory. . . . nationalist feelings still tend to be strong in some areas."

Both Nurbekov and Turgunbekov were held at fault for praising an early attempt to establish a small Kirgiz province in the 1920s. Apparently the authorities suspect that the historians favor setting up a special Kirgiz province *now*, within the Kirgiz republic, after the national question has already been solved.

Russification has proceeded much further in Kirgizia than in the Ukraine or the Baltic states, where widespread resistance to the process has arisen. In the Ukraine more than three-

fourths of the population is Ukrainian; in Kirgizia only forty-three percent are Kirgizian. Therefore, a demand for a Kirgiz province controlled by the Kirgiz people within the borders of Kirgizia would not be at all incomprehensible.

The Russification process is designed to ultimately bring about a merger of all the various Soviet nationalities into a single Soviet people with a single, "more advanced" Soviet culture. In practice, the "blended" culture turns out to be . . . Russian culture. This, coupled with the absolute political control wielded exclusively by bureaucrats in distant Moscow, who use Great Russian chauvinism as a base, is the source of rising nationalist discontent in the Soviet Union. The appearance of a current of Kirgizian nationalism is striking evidence that flooding a national republic with Russians, even to the point of reducing the home nationality to a minority, cannot automatically succeed in destroying the latter's national identity.

Although the October Revolution of 1917 provided the basis for the Kirgiz people to raise themselves from a nomadic to a more modern form of existence, the subsequent degeneration of the revolution under Stalin and his heirs reinstated Great Russian chauvinism as an oppressive force throughout the USSR. The national question in the Soviet Union has not been solved and promises to play an important role in the process of political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucrats in the Kremlin. □

## Laird Says U.S. Navy Will Stay in Culebra

U. S. Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird revealed December 27 that the Pentagon has decided to renege on a formal commitment it made on April 1, 1971, to remove its controversial naval and air-gunnery range from Culebra Island off Puerto Rico by June 1975. Plans now are to keep the range there until at least 1985.

Not only will the range not be relocated, Laird said in a letter to members of the Armed Services Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives, but "air-to-ground weapons training" on rocks and keys west of Culebra "is projected to increase."

The navy's gunnery operations around the tiny island, with its population of around 1,000, have long been a topic of intense controversy in Puerto Rico.

Laird's statement—which represented a complete about-face from a statement he made on November 4, only three days before gubernatorial elections were held in Puerto Rico—has thrown new fuel on the controversy.

The Culebra issue figured prominently in the recent election, in which Governor Luis A. Ferre was defeated by Rafael Hernandez Colon, whose Popular Democratic party has links with the U. S. Democratic party. The Nixon administration's decision to stay in Culebra has brought an angry response even from anti-independence Puerto Ricans on the island and in the United States. The mayor of San Juan, for example, has called on the governor-elect to help form a "Puerto Rican United Front" to kick the U. S. navy out.

## A Travesty of Marxist Method

By George Novack

I spoke on December 1 at the Militant Labor Forum in New York City on the relevance of philosophy to politics. In the course of this wide-ranging talk I made the following points.

1. Philosophical theorizing and practical politics are almost totally divorced from each other in the United States today. The dominant schools among the professorial specialists in philosophy see no organic connection between their speculations and the practice of politics, while the officeholders and contenders for power in the Republican and Democratic parties have no use for philosophy.

2. This mutual estrangement of philosophy and politics is a sign of the degradation of American thought, not of its advancement and elevation.

3. In periods of intense class struggle there has as a rule been much closer collaboration between these two aspects of human activity. I cited as illustrations the reasonings of the classical idealists, Plato and Aristotle, in regard to the revolutions and reactions that agitated the advanced city-states in ancient Greece; John Locke, the theorist of the consummation of the bourgeois revolution in England who wrote equally well and influentially on the empirical conception of knowledge and the issues of bourgeois parliamentarism; Ethan Allen, Tom Paine, Jefferson, Franklin, "and even Washington," leaders of the Patriot cause, nonchurchgoers who "turned away from orthodox systems of faith as well as against the sanctity of the British Crown"; John Dewey, whose instrumentalism provided a philosophic rationale for the middle-class reform movement of Progressivism and liberalism; and, last but not least, the Bolsheviks who headed the October revolution.

4. I concluded that the partnership of generalized thought and political action was indispensable for any genuine revolutionary movement against capitalism in our time and that the estrangement of philosophy and politics could best be overcome and their reunification effected through dialectical materialism, the theoretical foundation of Marxism.

Not everyone present agreed with all these propositions. The December 18, 1972, *Bulletin*, weekly organ of the Workers League, carried a full-page account of this talk; written by Alex Steiner, it was captioned "George Novack's Crusade for Philosophical Tolerance." Like so much of the material issued by these pseudo Trotskyists, it is crammed with misrepresentations and sheer stupidities.

I shall discuss as a sample only that part of the piece dealing with questions of American history, to show how the factional malice acquired in the Healy-Wohlforth School of Detraction and Distortion propels its author beyond the bounds of Marxism and how students of dialectical materialism can be misled if they mistake such views for the genuine article.

Though this section is only five paragraphs long, it

contains that many errors. "Novack," Steiner writes, "was forced to revise history itself, in the course of the lecture. He stated that the American Revolution of 1776 was led by people who had assimilated the highest developments in philosophy of their time. Novack even went so far as to say that the American Revolution represented a closer unity of philosophy and politics than the French Revolution, because in the former, the 'philosophers' such as Sam Adams and Tom Paine were actually men of action, while the French *philosophes* were not."

The reporter, who listened with only one ear and a prejudiced mind, missed what was actually stated. I observed that philosophizing and politics were more closely associated during the First American Revolution than at any other time in this country's history and that this fusion of theory and action was worth imitating. Second, that, while the "philosophes" of the Enlightenment from Voltaire to Diderot and Rousseau heralded the French revolution and prepared certain ideological prerequisites for its advent, their contemporaries, the leaders of our War of Independence, did more. The latter organized their revolution and led it to victory. This example of combining theorizing with participation in the revolutionary process was an admirable precedent for us to follow.

My critic, however, is concerned with neither the main facts of the historical situation nor the lessons they can convey to American revolutionists today. He protests that the ideologists of 1776 engaged in "the most shallow borrowing of the ideas of Locke and the *philosophes*."

The textbooks teach that they did indeed take many of their ideas on philosophy and politics from England and France. What Steiner disregards is the fact that they further developed and deepened these ideas and, above all, applied them to the problems at hand more radically and thoroughly than their mentors. Locke was not an antimonarchist, and he did not propose to disestablish the official Church of England.

The Patriot leaders took his doctrine of popular sovereignty so seriously that they booted out King George III and did not replace him with any native monarchy. They separated church from state. They embodied their bourgeois-democratic principles in enduring political institutions by creating a federal republic which was the freest in the world at that time.

To those who have understood what Marx meant when he declared: "The philosophes have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point is, to *change* it," this side of their activities is most decisive. Paine, Jefferson, Franklin, and their associates changed America along revolutionary lines. Steiner's failure to appreciate the national and world-historical significance of their deeds shows what a pedantic approach he takes to American history and how inadequately and ineptly he applies the method of Marxism to one of its outstanding events.



The rebellious American colonists were the Vietnamese of the eighteenth century. They waged the first triumphant colonial uprising of modern times against the mightiest of oppressive overseas powers. A young people that bred a Sam Adams, a Jefferson, and a Franklin, and adopted Tom Paine before Robespierre and Marat appeared on the scene were not inferior in revolutionary fervor, fortitude, or foresight to their transatlantic counterparts. Sam Adams was the ablest organizer of revolutionary forces, and Tom Paine the most influential propagandist for revolutionary ideas among the masses in American history. The many-sided Franklin and Jefferson had as much culture and capability as the Europeans among whom they diplomatized.

To say that these founding fathers were interested in nothing but "Locke's defense of the right of the bourgeoisie to private property as a 'natural' and 'inalienable' right," as Steiner does, is a vulgarized, one-sided interpretation of their role that is proper to sophomoric "debunkers" but does not come from the Marxist school of historical science.

Since they were *bourgeois* revolutionists, all of them, whether of high or low estate, they defended the rights of private property in principle and in practice. But, in order to secure and strengthen these rights for themselves and the classes they represented, they had to summon the masses to struggle and to arm themselves, wage a revolutionary war, topple crown rule, drive out royalists and loyalists, uproot feudalists, and in the process promote a measure of democracy as the price of victory.

This would-be exponent of the materialist dialectic completely overlooks the *contradictory* character of all the great revolutions from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. These were both bourgeois and democratic. In order to defend and extend the powers and specific private-property interests of the native possessing classes, large and small, their more radical representatives had to institute rights previously denied to the people by monarchical, clerical, and aristocratic regimes. (See my *Democracy and Revolution* for an explanation of this dialectical process.)

In 1918, in "A Letter to American Workers," Lenin wrote: "The history of modern civilized America opens with one of those great, really emancipatory, really revolutionary wars of which there have been so few compared with the numerous predatory wars which, like the present imperialist war, were caused by quarrels among kings, landlords, and capitalists over the division of usurped lands and stolen profits." Note the marked difference between this laudatory appraisal of our War of Independence and Steiner's attempt to downgrade its leadership. The authentic Marxist speaks one way, the sectarian another.

This stern schoolmaster points an accusatory finger at me for defending "the likes of George Washington as a great revolutionary of his time, as if this opportunist slave-owner had an ounce of the revolutionary spirit and elan of the great revolutionaries of France such as Robespierre or Danton!" It is true that Washington, like Jefferson, and others, was a slaveholding planter, just as Hancock, the first signer of the Declaration of Independence, was the richest merchant of the colonies. It is also true that he directly represented the patrician upper crust in the Patriot camp rather than its plebeian ranks. But

surely he must have had at least "an ounce of revolutionary spirit and elan" to risk his life and his possessions by taking command of the Continental armies and keeping them in the field for seven years until they beat the British and won independence.

In fact, Washington's role in the eighteenth-century American revolution was comparable to that played by William of Orange in the Dutch War of Independence of the sixteenth century and by Cromwell in the English civil war of the mid-seventeenth century. These commanders in chief were all landed proprietors. But they exhibited enough courage, stamina, and initiative to battle and defeat the forces arrayed by the old regimes against their rebellions.

In discussing England's revolutionary traditions, Trotsky had this to say about Cromwell: "We need not waste a single word to prove that Oliver Cromwell was the pioneer of *bourgeois* society, and not of *socialist* society. This great revolutionary bourgeois was opposed to the universal suffrage right, for he saw in it a danger to private property." But, Trotsky went on, "Cromwell was the great revolutionary of his time, who learned to *hesitate at nothing* to defend the interests of the new bourgeois social order against the old aristocratic order . . . We may say with a certain justification that Lenin is the proletarian Cromwell of the twentieth century." (*Whither England?*, pp. 131-33.)

Through this characterization, Trotsky was not intent on exalting Cromwell any more than I was intent on idealizing Washington. He had other aims in view. He wanted to indicate with scientific objectivity the work accomplished by this central figure in the revolution of his time and place and thereby recall to the English workers the audacity in action displayed by their revolutionary forebears so they might be inspired to emulate that example in their own struggles.

Steiner, who claims to be a true disciple of Trotsky as against the imposter Novack, does neither of these things. In order to deal an unmerited blow against a political opponent (a purely pragmatic purpose!), he is compelled to belittle and disfigure the national revolutionary traditions of the American people and to avoid bringing them forward as precedents for the workers to follow. This double default is the result of his departure from the scientific objectivity of Marxism.

He derogates the Patriot leaders for their "pragmatic, piecemeal borrowing from the philosophers of England and France." What they did, as I pointed out, was to assimilate the best ideas from the most progressive trends of thought available to them (empiricism bordering on materialism and the radical rationalism of the Enlightenment) and put these into practice to solve their most pressing social and political problems. And they did so with tremendous success.

As a diversion, Steiner throws in a comment from Engels on the theoretical backwardness of Americans in general and the workers in particular in the 1880s. However, Engels was not contrasting our bourgeois-democratic revolutionists of the eighteenth century with their forerunners or their contemporaries in Europe, as Steiner implies. He was doing something different. He was unfavorably comparing the mentality of the industrial work-

ers here in the late nineteenth century with their European brothers and sisters.

This deficiency has persisted to the present day. The American workers are far less advanced in their ideology and politics, as everyone knows, than their counterparts in other major industrialized countries — and even in many less economically developed ones.

It does not occur to our critic that two centuries after 1776 American revolutionists face a similar situation and have comparable tasks to perform on a far higher historical level. Just as our forefathers borrowed and learned from their European predecessors, so contemporary Marxists in this country have to borrow the ideas of scientific socialism from our German and Russian predecessors and use them as a guide to practice.

If the current generation can carry out this job as effectively as Paine, Adams, Jefferson, and even Washington

did theirs, we shall have discharged our duties well. Our tasks are greater and our adversary at home more formidable. But we have the advantage of the examples given by Marx and the Bolsheviks and the knowledge derived from the revolutionary experiences since their time incorporated in the teachings and program of the Trotskyist movement.

However, those who aspire to impart the philosophical and political doctrines of Marxism to others should first educate themselves in the ideas and methods of dialectical materialism and then apply them with a scrupulous care for scientific objectivity. Steiner and his mentors fail to meet these elementary qualifications. Steiner's tendentious assertions on philosophy, history, and politics are a sectarian travesty of the Marxist method.

December 27, 1972

## Demand Freedom for Delfina Burgoa

# USLA Plans Campaign on Bolivian Prisoners

Sixty-seven Bolivian political prisoners who arrived in Cuba November 6, after escaping from the prison on Coati Island in Lake Titicaca, have described the brutal torture inflicted on political opponents by the regime of Colonel Hugo Banzer. The November 12 issue of the Cuban newspaper *Granma* gave an account of the jail-break.

"We just had to wait for the right moment, which came after a football game between prisoners and guards," one of the former prisoners explained. "Two comrades broke into the command post and overcame the guard and the chief colonel, who was kept as a hostage."

"The prisoners then seized six rowboats and a motor boat," *Granma* reported. "It took them over an hour to cross the lake, taking with them the colonel and six other hostages who were forced to act as guides. At the prison a number of guards had shed tears and begged for mercy, fearing that the prisoners might take justice into their own hands, but, as one escapee put it, 'The whole operation was carried out without firing a single shot or dealing a single blow.'"

Once on the mainland, the escaped prisoners broke into several groups and began their trek across the peninsula toward Peru, with Yunguyo as their goal. They took the colonel

as far as the outskirts of Santa Ana, where they left him securely tied. The march to Yunguyo took more than twelve hours. Four of the prisoners were captured in the escape and were taken to Copacabana. "We are convinced they are being tortured right now in prison," one ex-prisoner said.

When they reached the small Peruvian town of Yunguyo, the local people gave the escapees food and clothing. They were taken to Lima, where they boarded a plane for Havana.

All of the fugitives reported that they were tortured while incarcerated on Coati island. Beatings with rubber hoses, burning of the testicles, and driving of pins into the genitals were common occurrences. Several of the fugitives had broken ribs.

The sadism and brutality of the Banzer regime's executioners were indicated by such incidents as the castration of two students from La Paz and the case of Señora N. N., whose breasts were amputated by agents of the Ministry of the Interior.

In view of these facts, the U. S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners has begun a campaign to free the 1,000 or more political prisoners held by the dictatorship.

As an initial step in this effort a dozen U. S. scholars, artists, and civil libertarians have sent a letter to U. S. newspaper and magazine editors pro-

testing the savage treatment of Delfina Burgoa, a sixty-eight-year-old Bolivian woman who has been held without charges since April 4, 1972. Burgoa, who belongs to no political party, taught reading and writing in La Paz public schools for forty years. For many years she was a member of the Commission of Human Rights, in which capacity she visited prisoners and helped them to find lawyers.

Despite her age and poor health, Burgoa has been tortured in prison and three of her ribs were broken. She is now held incommunicado in the cold and isolated Achocalla Prison.

The protest against the inhuman treatment of Delfina Burgoa was signed by Ramón Arbona, Julian Beck, Noam Chomsky, Jules Feiffer, Nat Hentoff, Irving L. Horowitz, José A. Irizarry, Judith Malina, James Petras, Gloria Steinem, and Paul Sweezy. □

### Angola Movements Merge

An agreement was signed December 13 uniting the Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola (MPLA), headed by Agostinho Neto, and the Frente Nacional de Libertacao de Angola (FNLA), of Holden Roberto thus ending more than a decade of rivalry. Responsibility for political and military affairs will be divided, respectively, between Holden and Neto.



## The Truth About Truman

By Fred Feldman

Truman's death December 26 at the age of eighty-eight met with the expected reaction in the ruling circles to whom he had devoted a lifetime of loyal service. Nixon, declaring thirty days of nationwide mourning, called him "a man with guts." Former President Johnson said: "Few men of any times ever shaped the world as did the man from Independence [Missouri] . . . one of the greatest men to lead freedom's cause." The Greek dictator Papadopoulos joined the chorus with the right touch of a handkerchief to his eyes: "His name . . . fills our hearts with affection and gratitude."

Truman was selected by Franklin D. Roosevelt to be vice president during his fourth term. The choice was a safe one: Truman had a long record of undeviating dependability in the corrupt Pendergast political machine in Missouri.

Shortly after succeeding to the presidency following Roosevelt's death, Truman carved his own niche in history. He ordered the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. More than 300,000 persons were incinerated. Others are still dying from exposure to the radiation. Alteration of the gene structure of the survivors will show up in their descendants for generations to come.

In a radio speech announcing the bombing of Hiroshima, Truman said: "The world will note that the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, a military base. That was because we wished in this first attack to avoid, insofar as was possible, the killing of civilians." A United Press dispatch described Truman as "smiling and buoyantly happy when he made the announcement."

Truman's apologists claimed that he ordered the two atomic bombs to be dropped as a humanitarian effort to spare American lives that would have otherwise been lost in an invasion of Japan. In fact, the Japanese government was already seeking to negotiate its surrender before Truman decided to preserve his name

as one of the bloodiest "humanitarians" the world has known.

The real goal of the bombings was described by James W. Forrestal, who became Truman's secretary of defense:

"Byrnes [the secretary of state] said he was most anxious to get the Japan-



... and generations to come will be in his debt."—Nixon.

ese affair over with before the Russians get in." That is, before the Russian armies attacked the Japanese forces in China.

It was also charged that Truman ordered the use of the two bombs to demonstrate the qualitative leap in the military capacity of the United States, intending thereby to intimidate the government of the Soviet Union.

An additional motive may have been the desire of the military chiefs to experiment with actual use of atomic weapons under wartime conditions.

The memory of Hiroshima and Nagasaki may explain the failure of the rulers of Japan to join in the funeral eulogies of the "spunky" president who

"never lost a night of sleep" because of those he obliterated.

With World War II at an end, Truman launched the Cold War, a worldwide counterrevolutionary campaign aimed at domination of the world by U. S. imperialism. It was under Truman that Washington, brandishing its monopoly of the atom bomb, took on the role of policing the world and encircling the Soviet Union with military bases.

In conjunction with the Cold War, Truman opened the assault on civil liberties in the United States that paved the way for McCarthyism. This began in 1947 with a witch-hunt against government employees, who were required to take "loyalty" oaths. Those suspected of leftist sympathies were fired and blacklisted.

The U. S. labor movement was also a target. Although Truman posed as a "friend of labor," he put up only token resistance to passage of the anti-labor Taft-Hartley Act in 1947. He then used the strikebreaking provisions of this law on a scale not equaled by any of his successors in the White House.

When civil war broke out in Korea in 1950, Truman ordered massive U. S. military intervention, carrying it out under the flag of the United Nations. The main target was China, where the Maoist regime had come to power in 1949. Chinese troops succeeded in rolling back the U. S. invaders and the war ended in a bloody stalemate.

In Korea, as in Japan, bombing on a previously unheard-of scale played the key role in Truman's military strategy. More than two million Korean civilians died during the conflict, largely as a result of saturation bombing by U. S. planes.

By the end of the first year of the war, Major General Emmet O'Donnell Jr. stated:

"I would say that the entire, almost the entire Korean peninsula is just a terrible mess. Everything is destroyed. There is nothing standing worthy of the name."

According to the January 8, 1973, *Newsweek*, "Truman was 5 feet 9 inches tall but the adjective for him was always 'little.'"

When it came to mass murder, however, Truman thought big. And that is how he will be judged when the true history of his services to the capitalist system is written. □

## French Communist League Holds Convention



Some of the participants at the third convention of the Ligue Communiste. Gathering adopted theses on building revolutionary Leninist party.

The third convention of the Ligue Communiste, French section of the Fourth International, was held in Versailles December 7-10.

"We have grown in numbers, in ability, and therefore in responsibility," reported the December 16 issue of the Ligue's weekly, *Rouge*. "From now on, it will not be enough to denounce the dead end toward which reformist paths inevitably lead. It is no longer enough to say that workers will not take power that way. We must be in a position to clear our own path—to build an effective instrument capable of resolving, in a revolutionary direction, the contradictions strangling capitalist society.

"The sense of the discussion on the twenty-two theses proposed to the convention was to build a revolutionary

party that does not settle down in society as it is now constituted, that does not develop into the left opposition of the left, and that can serve as the lever the masses need in order to get rid of the power of the bourgeoisie. . . .

". . . it is a question of building an organization that uses bourgeois legality without becoming its hostage, while remaining conscious of the fact that our relationship to the laws of the bourgeoisie is one of outlaws on reprieve."

The theses on building the party were adopted by a vote of 229 to 8 for the Bolshevik-Leninist tendency, 2 for a tendency centered in Dijon, and 34 abstentions.

Another focus of discussion at the convention was the upcoming elections (see following article).

There were 287 delegates to the convention; their average age was twenty-three. They represented 386 cells, 80 cities, and 18 sections of Paris. Of the delegates, 176 were workers, 100 students, and 11 high-school students.

*Rouge* reported that the Ligue Communiste today has a membership of 5,000, of whom 68% are full members and 32% are candidates. Workers make up 35% of the membership, and teachers and college and high-school students 65%. Women account for 30% of the membership. Since its last convention, it has increased its size by 32.5%.

The Ligue has cells or members in 270 factories and carries out regular propaganda activities at 180 others.

Between 10,000 and 15,000 copies of *Rouge* are sold each week. The organization has more than fifty full-time functionaries throughout the country.

Some thirty messages were sent to the convention from all over the world, many of them from other sections of the Fourth International. Personal greetings were also presented by representatives of a number of organizations, including the Revolutionary Communist League, Japanese section of the Fourth International, the MPLA (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola—Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), and the United States Socialist Workers party. □

### CIA Undertaking?

The bodies of American soldiers killed in the Vietnam war are being used to transport heroin into the United States, the Associated Press reported in December. According to a report in the December 18 issue of the New York Spanish-language daily *El Diario-La Prensa*, federal authorities revealed that "the heroin is purchased in Thailand for \$1,700 a kilo, is brought into the United States sewn inside the bodies of soldiers killed in Vietnam, and is sold here for \$20,000 a kilo." It is assumed that the drug dealers behind the operation are persons able to move freely between the war zone and the Washington, D. C., area.



## The Communist League's Position on the Coming French Elections

[The following is a report on the discussions of the February 1973 French legislative elections that took place at the recent convention of the Ligue Communiste. It appeared in the December 16, 1972, issue of the Ligue's weekly, *Rouge*, from which it has been translated by *Intercontinental Press*.

[In France, elections occur in two "rounds." On the first, only candidates with an absolute majority are elected. On the second, held a week later, a plurality suffices.]

\* \* \*

There were three positions at the convention regarding the Ligue's tactical approach to the 1973 elections: The "Bolshevik-Leninist Proletarianization" tendency advocated abstention on both the first and second rounds. A minority of the outgoing Central Committee proposed withdrawing on the second round in favor of only candidates of the CP. The majority was for voting for candidates of the Union of the Left on the second round.

*Each of these positions stems from a different assessment of the present political conjuncture and of the Union of the Left.*

### Abstain on Both Rounds?

For the comrades of the "B-L-P Tendency" (Tendency 1), the post-May '68 period is characterized by a strain in the links between the working class and its traditional organizations. The brake the CP has put on struggles is causing the workers to increasingly distrust the political solutions advanced by that party.

"In these conditions," these comrades say, "the 1973 elections do not appear to the workers to be able to accomplish much. And this results in a relative lack of interest in the agreement between the SP and the CP, which seems all the less worthy of credibility in light of the fact that the workers remember how the left exploded in May '68." Consequently, this agreement and the scenario it has come up

with for the elections are incapable of setting off any dynamics whatsoever. The wait-and-see attitude and the disarray that it arouses within the working class will be reflected in an increase in abstentions. By calling for abstention on both rounds, revolutionary Marxists will therefore be responding to the spontaneous sentiments of the workers' vanguard. Furthermore, the Ligue Communiste has better things to do today than to devote all its forces to the electoral arena. It will take part in the battle through the regular activity of its cells, without attempting to systematically put up candidates.

### Not Just Any Election

Many spoke against this position at the convention. They felt that the members of the tendency were making a serious error in analysis. The election in winter 1973 is not, in fact, just any election. It will be the first legislative election since the general strike of May-June '68 and since General de Gaulle left office.

It is taking place in the context of a marked erosion of the government, of crisis within the majority's coalition, of a rise in the combativity of the workers, and of increasing discontent among the masses. The very signing of the joint program produces the appearance of a credible alternative solution. While a broad workers' vanguard tens of thousands strong is, indeed, skeptical about the strategy of the Union of the Left; while it doubts—correctly—that a victory of the Union of the Left will open up the road to socialism; and while, as a result, it is particularly receptive to the criticisms revolutionary Marxists make of the joint program, the fact nonetheless remains that the bulk of the class that has been brought up on electoral illusions will remain true to that perspective and that the workers' vanguard itself, whatever reservations it may have, sees in a victory of the Union of the Left the only concrete way of flushing the UDR

[Union pour la Défense de la République—Union for the Defense of the Republic] mafia out of power and thereby unlogging the situation.

For all these reasons, while it is true that the Union of the Left has not filled the workers with enthusiasm, it is absurd to maintain that it has met with "relative disinterest" on their part and that it has no credibility. To say that the '73 elections "do not appear to the workers to be able to accomplish much" is to completely misunderstand reality.

### Stakes of the Greatest Importance

On the contrary, because of the political conjuncture in which they are occurring, the '73 elections involve stakes, and a battle, of the greatest importance. The favorable evolution in the relationship of class forces that has been characteristic of the post-May '68 period could now be reflected in the electoral arena in a sizable defeat of the majority and a victory for the left opposition. This change in the relationship of electoral forces in a country where the working class has been brought up on electoralism will in turn affect the evolution of the relationship of forces between the classes: *A victory for the Union of the Left will be seen by the workers as a defeat for the bourgeoisie and a victory for the workers' movement.* It will serve as a stimulus to workers' combativity, intensifying the contradiction today between combative workers and the reformist apparatuses, thereby increasing the opportunities for bypassing the latter. A victory (unlikely, but not out of the question either) of the Union of the Left would in time set off a major political crisis capable of leading to a generalized explosion of struggles and to a test of strength between the mass movement and the bourgeois state apparatus.

This is why what is at stake in these elections takes on exceptional importance for all those who take part in them. They are going to give rise to some very serious quarrels. They have already totally polarized French political life during the first few weeks of the year. Within the working class, the question that is posed is nothing less than that of a socialist society and the strategy for taking power. Revolutionary Marxists must equip

themselves with every means possible for them to become active participants, with full rights, in this battle. Running candidates everywhere the Ligue is located will allow us to take advantage of all the platforms made available by bourgeois institutions (the regional radio and press, etc.) in order to gain a hearing from the workers.

Experience has shown that no serious political campaign is possible during an electoral period without directly participating in the competition. Not to run candidates would be to go unnoticed. Such are the rules of a game that we do not control. There are elections in which a relatively low profile is possible and justified (cf. the '71 municipal elections). But given the importance of the coming elections, we must make our presence felt this time in a big way.

### Vote Only for the CP?

The resolution of Tendency 1 was rejected 262 to 12. But a new debate immediately developed within this anti-abstentionist majority itself over what tactic to adopt on the second round.

Certain comrades, agreeing with the minority of the outgoing Central Committee, advocated refusing to vote for the candidates of the SP and the left-wing Radicals on the second round, and thus of withdrawing in favor of only the CP.

These comrades denounced the political orientation of the SP at length: With a worsening of the crisis of the regime in the offing, what it [the SP] is attempting to do is put together a standby political solution for the big bourgeoisie that incorporates the working class through its most representative organizations, particularly the CP and the CGT [Confédération Générale du Travail — General Confederation of Labor]. The institutions of the Fifth Republic and the semi-presidential character of the regime more than counterbalance the inferior ability of the SP to reach an audience and to organize. What François Mitterrand has his eye on is the presidential elections of 1976, for which the '73 legislative elections are only a springboard. For the first secretary of the Socialist party, it is a question of installing himself in 1973 as the undisputed leader of a united left. Which implies not only establishing

himself as its most prominent figure, but also of creating a favorable relationship of forces with the CP within the Union of the Left, in the absence of which the bourgeoisie will never agree to go along with this solution. Following this, there will be plenty of time leading up to the presidential elections to make a big move toward the center-right in order to consolidate the relationship of forces and win the confidence of the ruling classes once and for all. As head of the SP, Mitterrand is thus attempting to bring together the voices of the working class for a bourgeois-technocratic standby solution of the Wilson-Brandt type.

Revolutionary Marxists must in no way give any approval to such an operation. *The vote they call for must make it possible for the workers to register their mistrust of the Union of the Left, a bourgeois standby solution to which a genuine class vote ought to be counterposed.* By calling for a withdrawal of candidates in favor of the CP alone, the Ligue Communiste is urging the workers to reject any compromise with the bourgeois parties. Through such a vote, Communist voters are telling their leadership: "Break with the left-wing Radicals and the Socialist party! Break with the bourgeoisie! Apply your program! Struggle for power on a class basis!" A withdrawal in favor of the Union of the Left as a whole, on the other hand, would mean giving approval to the Mitterrand operation, would deprive us of the political means for denouncing it, and would force us to call for a vote for bourgeois candidates like Defferre, Faure, and many others. In short, it would be opportunist and would reflect the pressure of the Union of the Left on the organization.

### A General Reformist Alternative

The convention was not convinced by this line of argument. Many who spoke noted the imprecise and incoherent elements in it. First of all, it is not serious to characterize the Union of the Left by Mitterrand's plan alone. It is this plan that the minority comrades are denouncing.

But it is neither the only, nor the main, plan. What is today at stake in the Union of the Left is contradictory plans (those of the CP and

the SP). They are confronting each other in a relationship of forces that is not clear. What François Mitterrand is hoping for is one thing; the political and social reality of post-May '68 France is another. The Union of the Left cannot be analyzed as though the SP and Mitterrand had established their hegemony over it once and for all when, in fact, by signing the joint program and by publicly repudiating the centrist alliance, they were forced to accept the CP's terms.

Journalistic considerations aside, the class nature of the Union of the Left must be analyzed. One cannot fail to see that the Union of the Left differs from classic front experiences (Popular Front, the Liberation) in that it does not represent an alliance of classes between the proletariat and a leading section of the big bourgeoisie under the leadership of the latter, but a general reformist alternative on the part of the traditional workers' movement. There is no party in the Union of the Left that really represents big capital, such as the Radical party in 1936 or the MRP [Mouvement Républicain Populaire — Popular Republican Movement] in 1945. The "left-wing Radicals" and the SP are relics and marginal groupings, not parties of the big bourgeoisie. It is the CP, a reformist workers' party, that has hegemony within the Union of the Left today. The conditions that have been imposed upon it are those of the CP. *It is this hegemony of the CP over the alliance as a whole that gives it its class nature, and not the presence of this or that bourgeois politician.*<sup>1</sup>

The ruling class in its entirety is making no mistake about this. No section of it today supports the Union of the Left. On the contrary, as it is constituted in 1973, the Union of the Left is leading to a class polarization: on one side, the working class (represented by its political and trade-union organizations, the CGT, the FEN [Fédération de l'Éducation Nationale — National Education Federa-

1. The Lambertists notwithstanding, the rallying of the left-wing Radicals to the Union of the Left changes nothing in the class nature of the latter; the marginal character of these allies is shown by the fact that they did not even take part in discussions on the joint program that they had to sign!



tion], the CFDT [Confédération Française et Démocratique du Travail—French Democratic Confederation of Labor], etc.), polarizing various petty-bourgeois layers; on the other side, the various sections of the ruling class, also polarizing various layers of the middle and petty bourgeoisie. This is why the ruling class fears and fights the dynamics involved in the Union of the Left. The latter does not today constitute a "bourgeois standby solution," even though the bourgeoisie may find itself compelled to rally to it in case of a catastrophe, just as it resigned itself to having the CP in the government in 1945. Under these conditions, it is clear that it makes no sense to criticize the Union of the Left in the name of the "Workers' United Front"—that is, with slogans like "Comrades of the CP, apply your program! Break with the bourgeoisie! Break with the SP and the left-wing Radicals!" To do so would be to assume that the CP had betrayed its proletarian program by capitulating to the bourgeois program of the SP, when actually their programs are the same and the signing of such a joint program constitutes a radical break with the traditional policy of the Socialist party.

### Position of the Majority

For the majority of the outgoing Central Committee, the Union of the Left thus represents a general reformist solution over which, whether we like it or not, the organized workers' movement as a whole has taken charge. The workers see it as the workers' alternative to the powers that be. As a result, their vote will have a class meaning. For these reasons, *an electoral victory for the Union of the Left would, in the present political conjuncture, constitute an important element in deepening the political crisis of the regime and, at the same time, a powerful stimulus to the combativity of the masses.* It is in the interest of the workers (as well as of revolutionary Marxists) for the majority coalition (viewed by the masses as belonging to the bourgeois camp) to meet with the biggest possible defeat and for the Union of the Left (viewed by the masses as the workers' camp) to meet with the greatest success.

This is why, on the first round, the Ligue Communiste must carry out an intense campaign of political de-

nunciation and explanation (emphasizing in particular the reformist dead end of the Union of the Left) and why, strengthened by this clarification campaign, it must call for a vote on a national scale<sup>2</sup> for the Union of the

2. Which does not exclude the possibility of certain exceptions being made on the basis of proposals on a city level and a decision by the Central Committee.

## Tudeh Party a Casualty of Agreement

## Shah of Iran Recognizes East Germany

The government of Iran recognized the German Democratic Republic on December 7, and the two sides agreed to base their relations on "principles of peaceful coexistence."

While the belated recognition of the East German workers state by the shah is welcome, the effect of the "peaceful coexistence" part of the agreement will be to curtail the activities of the Tudeh party (the Iranian Communist party), which has its headquarters in East Germany.

The Tudeh party was declared illegal by the shah in 1949. Following the CIA-engineered coup in 1953, its underground cells were discovered and many of its militants were executed. Today its activities are essentially limited to operating its press and a radio station in East Germany.

Within the last decade, the shah has established diplomatic and economic relations with the other East European workers states. But he held back from recognizing East Germany, demanding that the activities of the Tudeh party be suspended.

In its December 7 air edition, the Teheran daily *Keyhan* reported that East Germany has accepted the shah's demand to suppress the Tudeh party. The same paper reported on December 19 that the general tone of the Tudeh party broadcasts had changed. However, it did not elaborate.

The fate of the Tudeh members in East Germany is uncertain. In recent years, some Tudeh militants have reportedly been handed over to the Iranian regime by the Moscow bureau-

Left on the second round. For the outcome of these elections will have a definite impact on the relationship of class forces and we are not at all indifferent about whether this relationship evolves to the advantage of the working class or of the bourgeoisie.

This position was finally adopted by 191 votes, with 71 for the Central Committee minority and 12 for the abstentionists. □

cracy, only to be subsequently executed. After the executions, the Tudeh leadership has claimed that the murdered militants had gone to Iran of their own free will. In the 1930s, leaders of the Iranian Communist party forced to go into exile in the Soviet Union were executed by Stalin.

Stalinism has always used the Tudeh party to serve its own narrow bureaucratic interests. The first public demonstration by the party, for instance, was organized in 1944 in order to pressure the Iranian government into granting the oil concession of the northern regions to the Soviet Union.

Thus far there has been no word from the Tudeh party explaining the latest betrayal by a Stalinist bureaucracy. Ordinarily, the party justifies the policies of peaceful coexistence by claiming that they cause the shah to move away from United States imperialist domination.

Just two weeks after the agreement with East Germany, however, it was announced that Iran would buy 500 helicopters from the United States at a cost of \$720 million. The press also reported that diplomatic relations were to be strengthened.

Richard Nixon has appointed Richard Helms, director of the CIA, as the next U. S. ambassador to Iran. Iran's new ambassador to the United States is Ardashir Zahedi, who collaborated with the CIA in helping his father lead the 1953 coup against Dr. Mossadegh, thereby returning the shah to power. □

# Left Caucus Wins Support in Ontario's NDP

By Mark Gans

[The following article is reprinted from the December 25 issue of *Labor Challenge*, a revolutionary-socialist bi-weekly published in Toronto.]

\* \* \*

The left wing is alive and well in the Ontario NDP [New Democratic Party].

Barely a half-year since the Waffle was purged at Orillia,\* the left re-emerged with surprising vigor as the Left Caucus at the party's provincial convention in Toronto, December 8-10.

The left's unexpected strength, in the wake of the exodus of the majority of the Waffle from the party, clearly startled the party brass and the capitalist media.

"Plainly it was the ghost of Christmas past. Embarrassingly it was the ghost of Christmas present, and, chillingly for the NDP, it showed every promise of being the ghost of Christmas yet to come," commented the *Toronto Globe and Mail*.

That was laying it on a bit thick. But beneath the obvious desire of the media to create an exaggerated impression of an NDP still bedevilled by a noisy, radical left, lay the recognition that the caucus was able to consistently gain the support of almost a third of the convention's 1,300 delegates. In two debates, on Vietnam and women's liberation, the Left Caucus position was able to carry the convention.

The mood of dissent and openness to socialist ideas among convention delegates made a mockery of provin-

cial leader Stephen Lewis's claim before the convention that "internal difficulties were a thing of the past." The Left Caucus helped to mobilize that dissension against the leadership.

From the outset, the caucus sharply polarized debate. It forced the party leadership to alter the first morning's agenda by including a twenty-minute debate on Vietnam, which it used to win delegates to a motion opposing a Canadian peacekeeping force.

Later in the convention, the caucus narrowly missed amending a leadership proposal to increase the taxes of the resource industry in favour of outright nationalization.

The caucus also carried strong debates on housing policy, where it posed public ownership of the housing industry against the reformist leadership's feeble scheme to set up a land bank for urban development; on women, where it urged the establishment of a permanent NDP women's commission to forge links between the party and the women's liberation movement and fight for women's rights in the party; and on a proposed party anti-strikebreaking campaign, where it called for mass action by the workers going beyond the narrow confines of the leadership's parliamentary lobbying.

The most contentious debate of the convention, however, was initiated outside of the Left Caucus, by a labor caucus of rank-and-file union militants seeking to ban parent labor organizations from appointing delegates to NDP proceedings in the name of their local affiliates. The resolution was aimed particularly at many Steelworkers staff bureaucrats who are appointed to conventions by the union apparatus rather than by workers on the job.

That this was striking at the heart of the trade-union bureaucracy's control of the party was evident from Lewis's later statement to a post-convention press conference that the resolution "represented a more serious challenge to the party than the Waffle had."

That recognition underlay Lewis's

ill-timed and arrogant intervention into the debate after delegates had approved the resolution. "I urge you to reconsider the matter," Lewis said, "because I don't think you realize what you've done."

He followed this with an evening of intensive lobbying, and when the convention reconvened the following morning, Chairman Gordon Vichert reopened debate by declaring that the previous day's resolution had been "out of order." With its strays safely shepherded back into the fold, the leadership's position carried, amid noisy disruptions and protest from the floor.

Lewis's cynical manoeuvring did little to check his waning popularity in the party. Of 1,060 votes cast for party leader, 184 were deliberately spoiled, and 124 went to perennial "protest" candidate Douglas Campbell—a stinging rebuff in a convention which did not feature a serious leadership contest.

Discontent was also reflected in the 300-400 votes the Left Caucus polled in debates and in voting for its nominees for party office, and in the multiplicity of caucuses which characterized the convention. In addition to the Left and labor caucuses, there were separate caucuses of women, teachers, and Franco-Ontarians, each of which had its own special grievances against the bureaucracy.

The existence of the caucuses, the fractious atmosphere of the convention, the low vote polled by Lewis, would appear to indicate that a rebellious mood exists in the party, and that it is by no means united behind a leadership which is still trying to wash its hands of the blood of the Waffle.

Unlike the past period, however, when discontent was generalized politically around a single pole—the Waffle—dissent at this convention was diffuse, expressed through a variety of caucuses, and often organizational in character, turning, for example, on questions of raising the party dues, Lewis's "personality," and the weight of the trade unions in the party structure. While caucus influence radiated through the convention, its meetings of 75-100 delegates were considerably smaller than those held by the Waffle at the peak of its support.

Caucus organizers are confident; however, they will be able to organize much of the sentiment they tapped during convention debates.

\* Shortly after the passage of a motion banning the left-wing Waffle Caucus, which was rammed through the Ontario New Democratic party's provincial council at a meeting held June 24 in Orillia (see *Intercontinental Press*, July 24, 1972), a majority of the Waffle leadership split from the NDP to form the Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada. A large minority of the Waffle opposed the split and advocated continuing the fight within the NDP against the ban and the reformist policies of the Lewis leadership. — IP



"It's a process," said Peter Horbatiuk of Toronto Beaches-Woodbine riding, one of the leading spokespersons of the Left Caucus. "Party members have to see us as a viable alternative to the right-wing bureaucrats, rather than as a ginger group, before they join us. That doesn't happen in three days at one convention.

"They've got to become more familiar with our program and strategy."

The Left Caucus program for the party was outlined to the delegates by Steve Penner of Toronto who polled close to 400 votes in a losing bid for the Party presidency, and by Heather Jon Moroney of Peterborough the group's unsuccessful nominee for party secretary. Penner was later elected to the twenty-six-member provincial executive, the sole representative of the Left Caucus to crack the tight leadership slate.

"The leadership of this party has shown itself to be completely inadequate to provide a clear socialist alternative to the bankrupt politics of the parties of the corporations," Penner charged.

"During the federal election, David Lewis said the corporations were not the enemy.

"But ask the people of Northern Ontario who are faced with pillage of their resources by greedy corporations.

"Ask autoworkers faced with increasing speedups and worsening conditions of work whether corporations are the enemy.

"Ask the people of Eastern Ontario who are living in poverty because capitalism is unable to provide balanced and equitable growth who the enemy is," Penner stated.

Moroney told delegates the first thing she would do as party secretary would be "to request all ridings to immediately link up with union locals, tenants, students, consumers, women's groups, and so on in their communities and actively participate in their day-to-day struggles.

"Because our concept of the role of party secretary is a political and not an administrative one, we see the secretary's role as going beyond filing membership cards or hiring extra organizers at election time.

"We see the secretary encouraging a lively process of internal discussion and debate in the party—starting with the establishment of a weekly labor paper—and throwing the weight of

the party behind the extraparliamentary movements and struggles that are exploding daily around us."

In coming months, the caucus will systematically begin promoting its ideas in the party. It plans to issue a regular newsletter, convene a provincial conference of its supporters in early 1973, and begin organizing across the country in preparation for the next federal NDP convention.

Its future would appear to lie primarily in the new generation of party militants, many of whom surfaced for the first time in the various caucuses at the convention.

They are, for the most part, young workers, women's liberationists, teach-

ers, government workers, Franco-Ontarians, who have in some cases come out of the storm centers of the class struggle in Canada. They are looking for radical answers to the exploitation, inequality, racism, and sexism that are built into capitalist society.

With capitalism in crisis, the reformist leadership of the NDP has absolutely nothing to offer. All it could propose as its "major" contributions to the convention were mild patchwork schemes—intended to rationalize capitalism rather than change it—calling for community health centers, land banks to hold and lease land for development in urban areas, better day-care centers, and noise pollution control laws. □

## An Interview With Malachy McGurran

# Under the British Occupation

[The following interview was given on December 26 to Gerry Foley by Malachy McGurran, the leader of the Official republican movement in Derry city, Northern Ireland.

\* \* \*

*Question. What effect did the British army occupation of Free Derry have on the political work of the Official republican movement?*

*Answer.* The barricades had actually become an impediment in a sense, because of the lack of popular involvement. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) had gotten tied down in trying to administer the "no-go" area and defend the barricades. This left no time for well-organized political activity. Some street committees were started and later fell away. At the same time, what military and political activity was carried on was confined to the barricaded areas.

When the people were upset and confused by the massive display of military might of Operation Motorman, we thought that an opportunity had been presented for taking the masses back onto the streets, fighting on the basis of general political issues such as the presence of the British army, internment, repression and coercion, social questions. These were all issues

which the people had been involved in but had fallen away from because of frustration, because of the feeling that nothing was going to be solved by the bombings and sporadic shootings.

Free Derry was a challenge, a challenge that in many respects we failed to live up to. The problem now is to try to resurrect the kind of political involvement that existed in this city in 1968, 1969, and 1970. That is not going to be easy but it is what the movement must set its sights for.

*Q. But Operation Motorman did pose the immediate problem of increased repression. The barricaded areas for instance had become something of a refuge for persecuted political activists from all over the island. How did you respond to this immediate danger?*

*A.* We had felt for some time and had stated both privately and publicly that we, as the Official IRA, did not hold Free Derry and could not defend it in isolation from massive involvement of the population. We realized many months before Operation Motorman that there were many possibilities of the area being taken by the British. On this basis the leadership came to a clear, and I believe

correct, decision that if we could not mobilize the people as we had done in September 1971—when large numbers of troops came into the area and we were able to mobilize the people to defend the barricades, defend their homes, and defend their streets, and force the army out after about two days—then we had to retreat.

British propaganda had had an effect. There was a hope in many people's minds that there was going to be a new deal. As a result of a reaction to apparently sporadic sniping and bombings, the population slowly drifted away over a period of months. So by the time of Operation Motorman it was quite clear to the British that there would be little or no massive public, civilian reaction to their military moves. We in the Official republican movement decided that without the massive involvement of the population, military resistance was impossible. In fact, to try to do so was exactly what the British wanted. They wanted a situation where the people would be at home crouching under their beds, while the 200, at the most, IRA men were out blazing away at thousands of troops, with weapons that in many cases were defective or even genuine antiques.

As regards repression specifically, the Official republican movement had announced its ceasing of retaliatory military actions. We had made it clear that we were not involved in a military campaign as such but there were times when one wondered how near we were to being actually involved in a primarily military campaign. At the time of the cease-fire it was felt that there were many things that had happened in the past in the Free Derry area that the British military would want to arrest people for. A number of our people got out of the area and went on the run. But others felt this was a situation where we had to take the risk of staying in the area, putting up posters, handing out leaflets, selling our paper, the *Starry Plough*, holding public meetings, as members of the Official republican movement. We had to put forward to the people certain lines of action such as calling for the formation of street committees to guard against massive raids in the area. The military invasion has affected the movement in general and us as individuals. But I think that to a large extent

the fact that we came out openly despite the presence at that time of armored cars and Centurion tanks, thousands of troops, people being stopped, searched, and harassed, has enabled us to continue operating.

In the face of massive military intimidation, there was not a great public reaction at first when we called a meeting the morning after Motorman. But slowly the people realized that they could continue to make their protest effectively against the British troops and exert their pressure. It was a situation that demanded open massive political mobilization, and that was what the Official republican movement attempted to do in Derry at that time. That we have been successful in increasing the sales of the *Starry Plough*, in forming new republican clubs in the area, and in becoming more active is indicative, I think, of the fact that the Official republican leadership realized that there was a new situation that required new tactics, a new strategy.

*Q. During the period of Free Derry, the Official IRA tried to take responsibility for administering law and order in the area, such as dealing with looters and petty criminals. What were the results of this? Has it left any permanent mark on the community?*

*A.* A few of these attempts have left some very serious marks on the community and on the image of the Official movement. The problem is that when you deal with petty criminals or looters, you have to make a distinction between people who steal from the capitalists and [those] who steal from their own class. Looting and hijacking cars from working-class people had to be dealt with. What we tried to do, and in a sense it was utopian, was to take the person who had broken the law of the people, which was one of trust among workers, to the people of the street or the area, and let them deal with the problem. This was hard to achieve because many people said that it was up to the IRA to handle the matter. It was only in a very few areas where there were active street committees that you could get a response to appeals for the people to deal with this kind of thing.

When you start things like tarring and feathering or shooting in the knee-

caps, you find yourself in a position where you are judge, juror, and executioner. Things deteriorate to a point that when a husband beats his wife, or vice versa in some cases, all these kinds of issues are taken to you—maybe you as an individual or branch of the movement in that area—for settling. You can find yourself beset with solving this kind of petty problems—not petty for the people involved but small in comparison to the general political ones. You get caught in a situation of being a family adviser, a marriage consultant, a social welfare worker. You may become a judge or someone required to execute someone else's sentence.

There is at least one case that bears mentioning. That is the case of a member of the British army who was captured in the Free Derry area, a person called William Best. He was from the Free Derry area; his parents and family still lived in it. He was home on leave at the time. The night before his death a young, fifteen-year-old lad was shot dead by the British army for no reason whatsoever from the walls of Derry. The back of his head was blown off. He was doing a message for his mother to a nearby shop. There was a tremendous emotional, bitter reaction against the British army. Within the next twenty-four hours, units of the Official IRA captured Ranger Best while home on leave. Apparently he was questioned, and the decision was taken to execute him in the belief that this was in keeping with the movement's general policy of retaliating against the atrocities of the British army.

When this was carried out, there was an immediate reaction from many forces in the community here, not just the reactionary forces who obviously had been waiting for something like this. It has to be said that the force that was the first to lead this reaction and direct it into actual physical abuse of Official IRA members were elements of the Provisionals, who apparently saw this as an opportunity to get rid of the "Stickies."\* In their ignorance, they did not see that this reaction was going to hit all people

\* The Officials and Provisionals are called respectively the "Sticky Backs," or "Stickies," and "Pinheads" for the kind of Easter lily emblems they wear for the anniversary of the 1916 uprising. — IP



who called themselves republicans. The negative reaction from a lot of people brought home to our own movement that this type of nearly non-political military action, actions whose political or military sense the people could not understand, was very dangerous.

Our movement was living on a wave of popular support. We had just as much popular support as the Provisionals had. But it was not support for our socialist policies but rather sympathy from the people because we were being persecuted by the British army and were on the run. When we committed an act the people did not understand we lost this sympathy. It was a sad and hard lesson for our movement to learn. I only hope that it has learned it deeply enough, in order to understand fully the need for political activity that can win massive involvement of the people. Military force might be used to support this activity, but military action would not be allowed to dominate as it was once here in Derry.

*Q. What do you see as the focus of mass activity in the next period? What role does the civil-rights movement have to play? Do you think it would be possible, say, to extend civil-rights activity to the island as a whole now that the new repressive laws have been passed in the South?*

A. The focus of mass activity here in Derry will be to attempt to couple the political issues—the fight against imperialist repression and coercion—with the social issues that affect so many of the people here in this town. So far, however, we do not have a definite blueprint for lines of action. Our movement both nationally and locally is going through a period of coming to realize the need for reorganization and reeducation, of developing a clearer perspective of its role in relation to the national question and the social question, of how to combine these two main issues and achieve a oneness of the struggle.

Unfortunately, these two issues are overshadowed in our minds and in the minds of many of the people by the threat of a sectarian holocaust—where large numbers of Protestant and Catholic working-class people will lose their lives, and the British will just sit back and allow this to happen,

waiting some hours or even days, and then move in with the might that they can produce and impose a solution on the people. The idea would be that at that stage most of the people will be so frightened, so terrorized, and so intimidated that they will accept anything.

The Civil Rights Association is quite clearly not the mass movement of the people that it once was, the movement that mobilized primarily large sections of the Catholic people. Its impetus as a mass movement is on the wane. As a strong pressure group with a fairly large membership, it is still reasonably effective. But there are other forces in the field, which have to be taken into consideration. The forces of sectarianism, for example, negate an awful lot of the potential of the civil-rights movement.

I think that activity in the Twenty-Six Counties has already started off on the wrong foot. Jack Lynch, who heads the Southern government, has learned from the previous Northern regimes of Faulkner, etc. The new repressive laws that have been brought in have not been applied on a massive level against the republicans and the socialist forces in the South of Ireland. I think that Lynch's plan is simply a slow whittling away of these forces, and sniping at the opposition to the neocolonialist regime in the Twenty-Six Counties.

But at the same time I believe that there is a fairly large cross section of the population in the South that can be mobilized if there is the right leadership and the right sense of direction. These are not all radicals but include liberals and progressives of all types. But unfortunately elements of the Provisionals have attempted to get in first by setting up an Irish Civil Rights Association, without a sign even of trying to make it a broad-based organization. Already the trade unions and other important forces have turned away from or shown disinterest in this new Irish Civil Rights Association, because they see that its organizers are simply trying to set it up as a Provisional front organization.

I think that we must try to explain to the Provisionals that this sort of attempt to take all the forces opposed to repression in the South and the neocolonialist regime of Jack Lynch and Fianna Fail is not a correct rev-

olutionary political strategy. We must explain to them that unless the anti-repressive organization is broad-based and seen to be broad-based, it will fail to get support from the trade-union movement, farmers' organizations, tenants' organizations, and the other groupings in the country. Not only is a front organization doomed to failure; it is certain to distract attention from the need for organizing real opposition to the present repressive laws. We hope that we will be able to talk to the Provisionals, that they have learned from their mistakes and even from the mistakes that our movement made in relation to this issue at some stages in the development of the civil-rights movement in the North of Ireland.

*Q. You say you think that you, meaning presumably the Official republican movement, have to explain to the Provisionals why their tactics are wrong. Does this mean that you envisage united-front activity with the Provisionals on some issues, especially the fight against repression?*

A. In regard to united fronts with the Provisionals, we would have to define the meaning of the word "front" very carefully. In the Twenty-Six Counties we are faced with open, naked repression, with laws that go beyond even Franco or Salazar. The fact that they have not been used widely so far is only an indication of the Dublin government's cautious strategy of repression. Within this context I could see a united front not in the terms of burying one's own identity and one's own principles and one's own policies, but unity in terms of opposing and exposing the repression, even the injustice of the arrest and farce of a trial of Seán Mac Stiofáin. It would be the same thing if Cathal Goulding [the reputed Official IRA leader] were arrested. It would be the same for members of any other organization that might be arrested. Our job is to expose the repression no matter who it affects.

Within that context our movement would have to take a principled stand toward the Provisionals, and they to us. We have had other experiences with them, and they with us. There is a lot of fear and suspicion in our members' minds and even in my mind about these people and their intentions



Workers and socialists demonstrate against unemployment in Derry city, where more than a third of men in Catholic ghettos have no jobs.

towards us and their ultimate objective, which some of our people would characterize as [being] as near to counterrevolutionary as you can get without going over to the side of the right.

But despite this our position is that we would defend Seán Mac Stiofáin against the repression that has forced him to go on a hunger and thirst strike and brought him very near death. On these issues, and on these issues alone, there could be areas of joint action and joint activity with the Provisionals, with the Communist party of Ireland, with the Irish section of the Fourth International, with other radical, progressive, and even liberal forces. But this cooperation would have to be on immediate problems of fighting repression.

*Q. Have you seen any changes in the attitudes of the Provisionals as a result of the attacks they have suffered from the Free State government in particular?*

*A. I have noticed a sense of outrage in the Provisionals that the Free State government would dare move against them, especially against the leadership of Seán Mac Stiofáin. That*

was the attitude of Mac Stiofáin himself, I think, unfortunately for him. He seemed to feel that Jack Lynch could not risk taking him before a special court, trying him, and sentencing him to prison.

I have not seen any great change in the minds of the average rank-and-file Provisional. There seems to be a kind of unthinking determination to push on with activities such as sniping and bombing in the hope that something will build, that the Russian rockets they have gotten hold of will raise morale again in the short run. But, unfortunately for the Irish, whose history has proven it, the British are experts in coping with this sort of thing.

*Q. How would you describe the mood of the people in the North and in Derry in particular? How could you sum up the results of four years of fighting at this point?*

*A. The attitude of the average working-class person here in Derry is still one of strong resentment against the presence of the British military in their streets, in their schools. That is reflected as always by the attitude of*

the children, who jeer, stone, and insult the troops as they come and go to and from school. But I think it would be fair to say that the attitude of many of the people is to question what the last four years have achieved. They wonder what the deaths of the people who died at the hands of the British forces on Bloody Sunday and at other times, and in the bombings and the shootings, produced. But a lot of them would say that now things can never be the same, and I agree that it can never be the same. I think the Unionists, as represented by O'Neill, realize it can never be the same. Wilson, even Heath and Whitelaw, realize that it can never be the same.

I think that this sense of frustration has produced apathy on the part of large sections of the population. But it is hard to predict how the people may react if provoked. If there is an incident in Derry or Belfast, it might give rise to tremendous outbursts of emotion on the part of the population, and that can bring large sections of the people back into conflict with the British troops. It may be a lasting conflict. It may not. But all the time there is that possibility. The problem is to recognize the potential and to lift up these reactions from the emotional level into constructive action that will bring us closer to achieving our objective.

The situation in general terms is that the forces of reaction appear to be winning. They are strengthening their hand day by day. The dominance of British propaganda is almost complete. To some extent this falls on deaf ears among the Catholic population. But at the same time there are many, many thousands in the Catholic areas who heed it. The problem is to develop a campaign of propaganda that can get people to begin asking questions again, not only here but in Europe. Unless we can turn public opinion in our favor and get the people mobilized again, I am afraid that we will see even more tightening than we have seen in the last twelve months and that the revolutionary forces will be isolated and smashed. But the situation is still fluid enough, the potential is still there to take advantage of situations and get the people to start asking questions again. □



## The Vietnamese Revolution, Cease-fire Perspectives, and Tasks of International Revolutionary Movement

[The following resolution was passed by a majority at a recent plenum of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International.]

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1. The opening of negotiations between the United States and the Vietnamese, and their subsequent evolution, can be correctly understood only in the complex framework of the existing balance of forces between the revolutionary and counterrevolutionary forces, both on a world scale and in Indochina itself.

The basic weakness of the Indochinese revolution lies in its relative international isolation. The main cause of this isolation is the conservative policy of peaceful coexistence followed by the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies and by the Communist parties they control on a world scale. This policy has enabled American imperialism to carry out a systematic escalation of its murderous attacks on the revolutionary forces in South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam without an adequate response in the least way from the bureaucracies in power in Moscow and Peking. What aid they have given the Vietnamese fighters has been doled out drop by drop and has at the same time increasingly been used as a means of putting political pressure on these fighters to "moderate" their struggle.

The relative isolation of the Vietnamese revolution, which was partially ameliorated only by the growth of the worldwide mass movement of struggle against the war of imperialist aggression, worsened after the announcement of Nixon's trips to Peking and Moscow. Nixon succeeded in demobilizing a significant part of the antiwar movement in the United States, enabling him to launch a new military escalation in Indochina. Under these conditions the Vietnamese revolution cannot win victory over imperialism on a purely military level. Hence the attempt to reach a negotiated solution in order to end imperialism's military intervention in Indochina.

The basic power of the Indochinese revolution lies in the unprecedented breadth and vigor of the revolutionary process initiated and developed in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. Because of this, the imperialist intervention has experienced a series of strategic setbacks. First there was the failure of "special war," then of "local war," and today the props of the "Vietnamization" policy have been undermined.

The victories scored by the revolutionary forces in Cambodia (after Lon Nol's coup d'etat) and in Laos (after the battle of Bass Loo in February 1971) prevented the crushing of resistance in South Vietnam. The offensive unleashed in South Vietnam eight months ago destroyed the "pacification" program in the countryside and generally altered the relationship of forces in favor of the popular

revolutionary forces. The agrarian revolution and the formation of organs of revolutionary power have moved forward in vast rural areas of South Vietnam. The air attacks on the North and on the liberated zones of the three countries of Indochina did not succeed in breaking popular resistance or in preventing the revolutionary armed forces from continuing their offensive.

In this context, the Vietnamese Communist party's attempt to win through negotiations a withdrawal of imperialist troops from Vietnam does not necessarily imply a step backward for the Vietnamese revolution. The immediate prospects for the Vietnamese revolution can be laid out and the tasks of revolutionary Marxists in relation to it can be defined only through a correct analysis of the military, political, social, economic, and psychological effects that the possible cease-fire accords may have on the various South Vietnamese social classes and their major political expressions.

2. In any event, withdrawal of the U.S. armed forces from Vietnam and cessation of the bombing of both the North and South would constitute a shift in the relationship of forces in favor of the Vietnamese revolution. This would reflect imperialism's inability to break the heroic resistance of the Vietnamese masses as well as its retreat before the strength of antiwar sentiment in the United States itself.

But in itself such a retreat does not guarantee the victory of the permanent revolution in South Vietnam. It only means that the revolutionary process will be able to develop with a reduced, but not eliminated, foreign interference. U.S. aid to the counterrevolutionary forces in South Vietnam will continue. The American fleet will remain in Indochinese waters, threatening the masses of these countries with a resumption of bombing should the revolution make fresh advances. The retention of U.S. bases in Thailand entails an analogous threat. Moscow and Peking's pressure on the Vietnamese CP will scarcely cease. The continuous rearming of the puppet army, the transformation of U.S. troops into "civilian advisers," the continuing financial and economic aid to the Thieu regime, the increase in Saigon's police terror, the sending of forces from an international control commission, which, inasmuch as it is composed of bourgeois armies will intervene in favor of the counterrevolutionary forces—all these factors show that U.S. imperialism will seize every opportunity offered it by the continuation of dual power after the possible signing of accords of the type proposed in October 1972.

Under these conditions, everything will depend on the development of revolutionary mass struggles both in the cities and in the countryside, on the policy followed by the Vietnamese CP, and on the interrelation of these two

factors and their impact on whatever counterrevolutionary military apparatuses Thieu's puppets will command.

3. The current situation in South Vietnam is one of dual power from top to bottom. On a countrywide level and on a provincial level, in countless villages and in various cities the workers and peasants' governmental structures and armed forces stand opposed to the governmental structures and armed forces of the counterrevolution, the big landlords and the comprador bourgeoisie, the puppets of imperialism. Some important regions have been completely liberated and are administered by revolutionary organs of power. But this dual power has yet to be extended to the country's principal cities. The success or failure of the revolutionary struggle of the masses in extending the formation of organs of revolutionary power and in destroying the bourgeois state apparatus—a struggle to be waged after the possible signing of a cease-fire agreement—will determine the outcome of the revolutionary process in Indochina.

It is in this context that the question of a "national coalition" government or structure must be approached. We must clearly explain that there is no possibility, in Vietnam or elsewhere, of "national concord" between the exploiting and exploited classes. The Fourth International remains opposed to coalition governments with the bourgeoisie, whatever the specific composition of these governments. Even when the bourgeois ministers are hostages of an already proletarian state power, their presence does not facilitate the consolidation of the revolutionary seizure of power and can only disorient the proletariat's class consciousness.

But this principled opposition to any coalition government with the bourgeoisie does not entitle us automatically to define all cases of such governments as popular-front regimes stabilizing and defending the economic rule and the state of the possessing classes. History offers us the example of France and Spain in 1936, France, Italy, Greece, Indonesia, and elsewhere at the end of the second world war, where this was the case. But it was not the case in Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and China, where the presence of bourgeois ministers in the central government did not prevent the socialist transformation of the revolutionary process from occurring. The decisive thing is the nature of the state, that is, the class character of those who control the armed forces. If the bourgeoisie is in reality disarmed, then the bourgeois ministers are hostages of the proletarian state (whether bureaucratically deformed or not). If the proletariat and poor peasantry are in reality disarmed, then the revolution has suffered defeat. If both the proletariat and the bourgeoisie retain their arms, then the "government" or structure of "national coalition" can only be an expression of dual power; that is, it represents but a momentary hiatus in an ongoing civil war that can be ended only by the victory of one or the other existing camp of class antagonists.

4. The revolutionary offensive of the South Vietnamese laboring masses will develop along already discernible lines that make any interruption in the political struggle less than likely:

(a) In the countryside, the deepening of the agrarian revolution—which in many areas has already reached the stage of forming cooperatives—and its extension to other regions, that is, its generalization throughout South

Vietnam; elimination of the landed proprietors, usurers, big traders, and the gangster-watchdogs of the Thieu regime, and implacable opposition to their returning to villages from which they have already been driven.

(b) In the cities, the struggle against the high cost of living, speculation, gambling, hoarding of vital goods and basic necessities, exploitation of the masses by the industrial, financial, and big commercial bourgeoisie.

(c) In the cities and the countryside, immediate struggle for the release of the 200,000 political prisoners, for political rights, and for complete freedom of action for all organizations illegalized by the Thieu regime.

(d) In both the cities and the countryside, dissolution of the puppet military and administrative apparatuses through the combined effects of the processes just described.

All indications are that the cadres of the NLF and the Vietnamese CP are systematically preparing the South Vietnamese population for this mass political struggle. The U. S. withdrawal, like the perspective of reunification with the North and the acceptance of the principle of free elections with the participation of all political parties today consigned to clandestinity, will inevitably stimulate mass struggles and will further tilt the balance of forces in favor of the revolution.

5. The Vietnamese Communist party and the NLF leadership enjoy such prestige and authority among the South Vietnamese laboring masses that their orientation will significantly affect the pace and breadth of the mass mobilizations. To evaluate all the actions of this leadership it would be necessary to know in detail the situation in South Vietnam, which for us is impossible at present. We can only make some general observations.

First of all, a capitulation of the CP leadership, which would entail the dissolution of the revolution's independent armed forces, seems very unlikely in light of what happened both to the cadres and to the South Vietnamese masses after the Geneva accords. Further, if the Stalinist training of the Vietnamese CP leaders implies the possibility of opportunist maneuvers—which are reflected in the written public program of the NLF—the balance of the last fifteen years clearly demonstrates this party's tenacious commitment to the overthrow of the bourgeois state in South Vietnam. Finally, the relationship between the CP and the South Vietnamese mass movement is not simply a function of the CP's political authority, but also of the unusual pressure of the revolutionary masses on a party which in its practical orientation has broken with Stalinism's classical Menshevik line in the colonial and semi-colonial countries and which is independent of the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies.

6. All opportunities for independent intervention in this process by revolutionary Marxists must be utilized to the fullest extent possible, with the principle aim of deepening the permanent revolution in South Vietnam and of helping it attain final victory. On the scene, this will involve action to strengthen the independent proletarian organizations in Saigon, in which our movement has a real tradition.

It is especially important to stress the role that devolves on us on an international scale, not only today, when imperialism's barbaric war is in full swing, but tomorrow as well, in the event a cease-fire agreement is signed. The



revolution will go on after the signing. International solidarity with this revolution will remain more than ever a vital necessity, the more so as the Communist parties around the world sink further into immobility, if not into open abandonment of the defense of the Vietnamese masses' fight to complete their revolution. Our responsibility in developing mass actions to support the Indochinese revolution will thus increase, and we will have to fight against any attempt to demobilize active international solidarity.

The main lines of our activity are clear: extension of the support actions now being waged by our sections, especially against any imperialist intervention continuing after the signing of the possible cease-fire accords (for the complete withdrawal of the U. S. fleet and of U. S. "civilian advisers," for the elimination of the air-naval bases in Thailand, against the sending of "international control forces" composed of bourgeois armies); the development of increased propaganda against the "peaceful coexistence" policies of the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies, which substantially contributed to the deterioration of the international relationship of forces in which the Indochinese revolution is unfolding.

In case a cease-fire agreement is signed, our movement must explain that there must be no letup in support for

the Indochinese revolution. It is around the line of complete support for the Indochinese revolution until total victory—a line carried out through concrete slogans in each country in accordance with the concrete situation of the mass movement—that we must mobilize militants and continue our mass work of support to the Indochinese revolution.

Today an international campaign must be prepared demanding the immediate release of South Vietnamese political prisoners and against the terror unleashed by the Thieu regime—terror for which U. S. imperialism bears full responsibility. From now on, the American government's responsibility for any massacre of these prisoners must be sharply stressed. This campaign must be carried out in the most united fashion possible.

The development of the situation in Laos and Cambodia must be closely followed. It will also most probably necessitate many solidarity actions.

7. The importance of the questions raised by the future of the Indochinese revolution necessitate a continuing discussion in the framework of preparation for the tenth world congress (fourth since reunification) of the Fourth International.

December 6, 1972

## Argentine Revolutionists Plan for Coming Elections

[Three gatherings of the revolutionary left in Argentina took place in Buenos Aires in mid-December. A major point of discussion in each was the elections scheduled for next March.

[On December 16, a national meeting of the Frente Obrero (Workers' Front), a united front of working-class candidates, met to consolidate its plans to run a campaign independent of the capitalist parties. The same day, the Juventud Socialista de Avanzada (JSA—Vanguard Socialist Youth) held its convention. The JSA is affiliated to the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party), formerly the Partido Socialista Argentino (PSA—Argentine Socialist party). The PST, which has been officially recognized as a party under that name, held its convention on December 17.

[The PST has decided to place at the disposal of Frente Obrero candidates 75 percent of the slots it receives on the ballot as an officially recognized party. The Frente Obrero hopes to field some 1,000 candidates.

[The Frente Obrero meeting was the culmination of a series of local gatherings involving hundreds of activists and leaders of the workers' movement. More than 1,000 persons from all

over Argentina, including a number of prominent leaders of militant union struggles, were in attendance. Among these was José Francisco Páez, leader of the now banned Sindicato de Trabajadores Concord (SITRAC—Concord Workers Union) in Córdoba. Páez was released from prison only hours before he appeared at the meeting.

[The Frente Obrero decided to run a presidential slate. During the discussion, a PST official announced that while the party was prepared to run two of its own members for president and vice president—Juan Carlos Coral and Nora Sciapioni—it would yield to a slate of Páez and Leandro Fote, secretary of the San José sugar refinery workers in Tucumán. Fote, who was not present, declined the nomination by telephone for personal reasons. Páez stated that while he supported the Frente Obrero, he would have to discuss his nomination first with the Córdoba delegation, which was not in agreement on his candidacy.

[The following day, Páez announced to the PST convention his decision not to accept the nomination. He said that while he was personally in favor

of accepting it, it would create problems for, and risk dividing, the newly formed Frente Obrero in Córdoba. Many in the workers' vanguard there, he explained, have an ultraleftist approach to elections and oppose any participation in them. Instead, they advance slogans like "Neither Coup nor Election, Revolution!" and "Active Boycott of the Elections." Following his announcement, the PST convention proceeded to nominate Coral and Sciapioni as its presidential ticket. Coral is a nationally prominent socialist figure, with a long record of fighting against the dictatorship and of leadership in the movement to defend the Cuban revolution. Sciapioni is a former union leader in the textile plants who has been blacklisted and is currently a full-time party worker.

[Some 700 young persons attended the JSA convention, representing a membership of around 2,000. The PST convention had a total of 195 delegates representing the capital and the provinces of Buenos Aires, Tucumán, Santa Fe, Córdoba, San Luis, Misiones, La Pampa, Río Negro, Neuquén, Chubut, Mendoza, and Corrientes.

[The following two documents have been translated by *Intercontinental Press* from the December 20 issue of the PST's weekly newspaper, *Avan-*

*zada Socialista*. The first is the program of the Frente Obrero. This is followed by an article explaining the PST's position on the elections.]

military bodies and punish those responsible for torture.

### *Politics*

Against FREJULI [Frente Justicialista de Liberación—Justicialist Liberation Front, the Peronist electoral front], the Alianza Republicana [Republican Alliance], the Frente Manriquista [Manriquista Front, named for its leader Manrique], the Alianza Popular [People's Alliance], and all other parties of the bosses.

For workers' candidates.

For a workers' and popular government as a first step toward a socialist Argentina. □

## Program of the Workers' Front

Forty percent across-the-board increase in wages and a minimum [monthly] wage of 1,200 pesos [about US\$120]. A sliding scale of wages to be adjusted every three months.

Nationalization, under workers' control, of all plants that have been shut down.

Deal with the housing shortage by expropriating resort homes and houses that are standing empty. Eliminate the slums and institute a plan whereby the cost of housing will amount to 10 percent of one's salary.

Control over retirement funds by those in retirement.

Nationalize medicine. Free medical care and treatment.

Local and neighborhood control over municipal budgets and their distribution.

A progressive tax on the more well-to-do sectors and on industries located in each zone in order to finance every area's gas, light, and water systems, etc.

### *Against the Trade-Union Bureaucracy*

Remove leaders from office every two years and let sovereign assemblies decide whether to return them to office. A leader's salary cannot be higher than the average wage of a worker.

No government interference in the trade-union organizations.

No trade-union bureaucracy. For a new leadership of the CGT (Confederación General del Trabajo—General Confederation of Labor), to be selected by a rank-and-file convention.

### *On the Problems Facing the Country*

For the nationalization, under workers' control, of all foreign and national monopolies, foreign trade, banking, and financial and credit institutions.

Repudiate the national debt.

Expropriate and break up the large rural estates and distribute them without cost to the poor peasants and agricultural workers.

Equal pay, opportunity, and rights

for women and men; free, twenty-four-hour child-care centers.

Immediate freedom for political, trade-union, and student prisoners. Review of the sentences laid down by the antisubversive law. Compensation to those who have been victims of it.

Dissolve the parapolice and para-

## Revolutionary Alternative in the Elections

In June 1969 in the city of Córdoba, we began to say "Enough!" to hunger, exploitation at the hands of imperialism and the national bourgeoisie, persecution, torture, and also to the sellout directives of the trade-union bureaucrats, who always embraced whatever government happened to be in power. Hundreds of strikes and mobilizations followed the Cordobazo [the semi-insurreccional uprising that occurred in Córdoba], engulfing entire cities in raising the demand for bread, dignity, and justice for the workers.

We are far from having obtained these things. But the oligarchic and imperialist dictatorship, which had planned to rule for twenty years, had to renounce its plans, change its list of priorities, and call elections. Thus, it opened up the possibility of exercising civil liberties, although it is maintaining a monstrous repressive apparatus that threatens the life and freedom of the people's fighters.

With the elections the regime is attempting to divert us from our struggles by getting us to place our trust in electoral promises and to support the various fronts put together by the old politicians of the bosses. In order to accomplish this, it was obliged to allow Perón to return and to permit the participation, within certain limits, of the Justicialist [Peronist] movement.

The compañeros who are followers of Perón must ask themselves in a completely candid way what prompted Lanusse to allow the presence of Perón and the Justicialist movement,

as well as why Perón is declining to run, why he is joining with our worst enemies, and why he is refusing to struggle against the repression, hunger, and high prices. We fraternally alert them to the fact that so many years of struggling and hoping for Perón's return, and so many years of fighting—which we did side by side with them—for the right to vote for the eternally banned party might blind them to the fact that, now that Perón has thrown in the towel, this party that is tearing itself apart with bullets, this party with its Cámporas, Osindes, Anchorenas, Ruccis, Miguels, and Corias, this party that has been embraced by Balbín, Frondizi, Solano Lima, and Amadeo, is a key element in the effort to divert us from the struggle.

### No Faith in False Promises

Our party is also intervening in the elections. By doing so, we are going to defend the small amounts of legality that the masses have won and respond to the challenge of the government and the bosses' parties. We are taking part in the elections in order to proclaim a very simple truth: In the face of the economic disaster in the country, which constitutes a merciless burden on the backs of the working people, there is no possibility of getting out of the situation without removing the oligarchy, imperialism, and the big national bourgeoisie from political and economic power.



All the parties of the bosses are promising everything under the sun in exchange for our votes. Yet, underneath all their pompous phraseology, none of them are guaranteeing real solutions, none are calling for a show-down and a break with the oligarchy and imperialism, and none foresee a reorganization of the country in the interests of the workers. But even when they do—demagogically—put forward some proposal that would benefit the workers (as when Alsogaray, for instance, proposes an end to unemployment, or when all the parties of the bosses assure us that they will defend the people's standard of living) the problem is who will guarantee it. For not one sector of the bosses is capable, in the present circumstances, of adopting and carrying out a consistent policy of solving the problems facing the people. Only the workers in power can do this.

We ask the parties of the bosses and their various fronts and candidates, who are promising us everything under the sun if we vote for them: Why have you refused up to now to initiate any mobilization of the working people in behalf of a minimum [monthly] wage of 1,200 pesos [U. S. \$1 equals approximately 10 pesos] and freedom for all prisoners?

We are going to unmask all these parties with the truth that only struggle and mobilization can guarantee bread, dignity, and justice for the workers—never the promises made by bourgeois military men and politicians.

Not that we seek violence. We are working people and as such we suffer from brutal exploitation and persecution. Many of our brothers live in pigsties, earn miserable wages, and have to watch their children die of hunger and illness. We hope to change this state of affairs by getting rid of exploitation of man by man. And we hope to accomplish this peacefully. But we have learned that winning even a pitiful increase in salary requires a struggle, that to keep ourselves from being thrown out of the shacks we live in requires putting a whole municipality on a war footing, and that even the constitutional right to have an election has to be taken by force through Cordobazos, Tucumanazos, Rosariazos, and Mendosazos. All the more will we have to struggle to bring

about real solutions to the daily tragedy that is the life of the workers.

### In the Election Campaign, Let's Build a Workers' and Socialist Front

But we are also taking part in the elections in order to build a most necessary instrument: the workers' and socialist front.

For many years, the workers' movement has been the captive of a trade-union and political leadership that has brought it defeat after defeat. The workers have gone through a tragic experience under most of the trade-union leaders, who are as dangerous as, if not more dangerous than, the bosses. The sellouts by the Peronist trade-union bureaucracy, together with the policy of the Peronist movement toward the bosses (which originates with General Perón himself), are the cause of the things that are most frustrating for us—from their passive acceptance of the mere 12 percent wage increase to the New Year's present they are preparing to give us by accepting a devastating 25 or 30 percent galloping inflation, and the order to vote for Cámpora, Solano Lima, or Anchorena.

For years, thousands of working-class activists and leaders have been rebelling against this kind of leadership and searching for an independent path to follow. Generally, they have been kept down by the weight of the government, the bosses, and the bureaucracy, or else they remain in a state of cautious expectation, knowing that if they take chances, they will be crushed. In any case, this independent, antiboss, and antibureaucratic vanguard is desperately looking for a way to unite in order to create a new, alternative leadership for the workers' movement.

The election campaign and political struggle are giving us the historical opportunity to do this. The PST's call for the formation of a workers' front has coincided with the hopes of this vanguard, of hundreds of union committees, delegates, and activists—many of them fired from their jobs—and heroic union leaderships like that of SITRAC-SITRAM [Sindicato de Trabajadores Concord-Sindicato de Trabajadores Materfer—Concord Workers Union-Materfer Workers Union], which led the Cordobazo.

Thus, we have been able to launch a workers' front in which the class-

struggle union vanguard, community representatives active in the mass mobilizations, and activists of various organizations have come together. We are united around one, principled point, which differentiates us from all the other forces: Our candidates are neither generals, nor bosses, nor trade-union bureaucrats, but workers elected by the Workers' Front. While the trade-union bureaucrats are calling for support to Cámpora, and while every front put together by the bosses is looking for a general or dignitary with links to the oligarchy or with "progressive" credentials, the Workers' Front has sought out the best fighters of the workers' movement and working-class communities, and the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores has turned over 75 percent of its spots on the ballot to these candidates. The Workers' Front is the only movement that is offering a solution to the great problems facing the people. On the one hand, through its program it is seeking to reorganize the country to meet the needs of the workers. On the other hand, by organizing the workers on a trade-union and political basis, it is laying the groundwork for the future workers' and people's government that will be capable of carrying out these solutions to the problems of hunger, high prices, unemployment, housing shortage, lack of medical care, and imperialist and capitalist exploitation in general.

### This Campaign Will Give Us a Chance to Build a Strong Workers' and Revolutionary Party

The elections have led to a small subsidence in the struggles of the working people. While the bourgeois parties are seeking frantically, by making promises on all sides, to prolong this subsidence, we are certain that the struggles will begin anew in the near future. This will not happen simply because we want it to. It will be the product of the situation in Argentina itself, of the economic crisis, and of the absolute inability of the oligarchic and imperialist regime to solve the problems of the people.

But the indisputable precondition for enabling the coming Cordobazos to end in a triumph of the workers and the people is that when they break out they find a workers' vanguard, organized into a great revolutionary-socialist party, that is able to set

political goals for the struggles. Without it, the battles will have only a partial character, they will be frustrated, or they will be co-opted by the bosses. The PST, the only workers' party that is challenging the bourgeoisie in the opening offered by the elections, is planting the seeds of this great revolutionary party that will lead the coming, inevitable struggles to the taking of power by the working class.

We call on the best compañeros of the class-struggle vanguard, the architects of the workers' front, to swell the ranks of the party whose task it will be to issue the call for a socialist Argentina.

### Fill the Country With Committees of Workers, Youth, and Socialists for the Candidates of the Workers' and Socialist Front

Since March, the PST has opened one local a week in the main cities in the country. These fifty centers represent the base of support and the leverage with which the workers' and socialist front will be able to begin its election campaign. In these centers, and in the limited time allowed by the restrictions and the deadlines set by the statute on political parties, we have drawn up the lists of workers' candidates. Unfortunately, the restrictions and obstacles prevented us from reaching thousands of working-class, youth, and socialist fighters, who have remained off these lists and who would deserve to have been placed on them in the interests of making them more representative. But all these compañeros must now link up with the political struggle that is beginning, thereby assuming a role of enormous responsibility. Hundreds of support committees for the workers' and socialist candidates must be created in every factory, neighborhood, union, and locality. These committees will have all the autonomy they need to democratically debate positions and to decide on the form, methods, and content of the electoral campaign. These committees will be the nerves and lifeblood of the workers' front. We especially call on the working-class and student youth to form youth support committees. The youth, together with the working women, constitute the most exploited sector of the people; that is why they sparked the Cordobazos, and that is why we believe

they will be able to begin, without the aid of tutors, to organize themselves into the workers' and socialist front by forming their own committees.

We call on worker activists, on union committees and delegates' bodies, to join the antiboss, antibureaucratic front that will begin to form a nucleus out of their impressive but scattered forces. We call on them to create a support committee for the front in every factory.

We call on community activists and activists in the Sociedades de Fomento [Improvement Societies] to join the front that can unite them with the organized workers' movement and thereby provide leverage for their struggle for decent living conditions. We invite them to set up a committee for the workers' candidates in every community.

We call on the socialist fighters and activists, today dispersed in various groups, to join in this concrete opportunity to build a workers' and socialist movement with broad influence among the masses.

Enough of military and capitalist governments! For a workers' and people's government!

Free the political prisoners and those imprisoned for related social reasons; apply democratic freedoms! Down with the repressive legislation!

For an immediate 40 percent wage increase, a minimum salary of 1,200 pesos, and a periodic adjustment of wages to keep up with the cost of living. For an end to plant shutdowns and for the nationalization under workers' control of any factory that stops production or shuts down.

Expropriate summer or luxury homes and distribute them among those who have no roof overhead. For loans to build housing amortized

at a rate of 10 percent of family income.

Free medical care and medicine through nationalization of medicine, clinics, and laboratories.

Equality for women in work, wages, opportunities, and rights. Free, twenty-four-hour child-care centers. Allowances to unmarried or separated mothers equivalent to half of their wages for each child.

For control over retirement funds by the retired. Authorize the nationalization, under workers' control, of those establishments that do not pay into the retirement funds.

For a university government consisting of a majority of students and made up of students, teachers, and nonteaching workers.

Nationalize the imperialist and national monopolies; nationalize foreign trade under workers' control; repudiate the foreign debt.

For the immediate recognition of Cuba, withdrawal from the OAS [Organization of American States] and all international bodies that tie us to imperialism, and repudiation of all colonizing agreements.

For diplomatic and material support to peoples struggling against imperialism—above all to the heroic Vietnamese people—and any step toward national independence taken by the people or government of any Latin American country.

For an economic plan worked out in a Rank-and-File Convention of the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo—General Confederation of Labor] in order to develop the national economy in the interests of the workers and the country.

Nationalize and distribute the big rural landholdings, thereby implementing a new rural settlement program. □

## Torture Used Against Spanish Strikers

Hundreds of the 20,000 workers in Vigo, Spain, who went on strike last September have since been interrogated, and by December 5 some 180 were to have been sentenced. Most of those fired since the two-week strike ended September 26 were representatives of the official "union" who were accused of "insubordination and indiscipline" for going over to the side of the workers.

Many of those arrested were tortured, according to a document put out by the illegal workers' commissions last Novem-

ber. The case of Manuel Gil Araujo, a worker at the Citroen plant in Vigo, was typical, reported the Swedish daily *Dagens Nyheter* December 1: "Immediately after his arrest, Manuel Gil Araujo was beaten in the face and stomach and then kicked in the testicles. As soon as he collapsed from the pain, he was forced to stand up and after a half hour, blood was streaming from his mouth." He was also forced to stand with his hands above his head and go four days without food, water or sleep. He has lost his job and is out on bail while he awaits sentencing. □