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**Bolivian
Peasants
Join
Anti-Banzer
Rebellion**

**British
Miners,
Tories
Gird for
Showdown**

Dissidents Imprisoned

Three weeks after President Park Chung Hee's emergency declaration banning any criticisms of the constitution and setting up special courts martial to try violators of the decree, nine dissidents were tried and sentenced to prison.

Chang Joon Ha, a former member of the National Assembly and an adviser to the Democratic Unification party, and Paik Ki Wan, also a former opposition politician, had been two of the main leaders of the petition drive launched in December calling for a new constitution. The petition drive had called for direct election of the president; separation of executive, legislative, and judicial powers; and a guarantee of civil rights. By the time of Park's emergency decree on January 8, more than 500,000 signatures had been obtained on the petition.

After the January 8 decree, dozens of religious leaders, intellectuals, students, and opposition politicians were put under surveillance, arrested, or detained for questioning. Chang and Paik were the first to be tried in a special court martial at the South Korean Defense Ministry. On February 1 they were each sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment, the maximum penalty under the emergency decree. Chang had already served seven jail terms under the Park regime and in 1972 had been detained and tortured by the Korean Central Intelligence Agency.

The following day, February 2, seven medical students at Yonsei University received prison terms ranging from five to ten years. A spokesman for the courts martial also announced that three medical students at Seoul National University had been arrested on charges of violating the decree.

In its decree the Seoul regime also ruled that foreign journalists would be subject to arrest if they reported on the activities of the dissidents. Eleven Japanese reporters were warned on January 12 that "their attitude was considered unfavorable."

Just prior to his arrest, Chang Joon Ha had told reporters that the petition drive would continue secretly, particularly among church members. □

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Price Hike Sparks Explosion in Bolivia

By Gerry Foley

When it increased the price of staple foods January 21 by more than 100 percent, the Bolivian government touched off a wave of rebellion that quickly spread not only among the workers and the urban poor but among the long conservatized peasantry, threatening to overwhelm the shaky military dictatorship.

The price increases, part of an international trend of rising food costs, came as a particularly cruel blow to one of the poorest countries in the world, where most of the population lives at the level of bare subsistence. Pictures taken in the poor neighborhoods of La Paz on the day of the announcement, reported the Buenos Aires daily *La Opinión* in its January 23 issue, "showed scenes of grief, weeping, dismay, and condemnation."

Sugar went up from 140 pesos a hundredweight (20 Bolivian pesos equal US\$1) to 310; rice from 227 to 368; bread from .30 to .50 pesos. The price of flour went from 177 pesos a hundredweight to 300; noodles from 235 to 370.

Although it launched a crackdown on the unions after overthrowing the labor-supported Torres government in August 1971, the rightist regime failed to break the economic organization or combativity of the workers. This was shown by the mass opposition to the effects of the peso devaluation in November 1972, a little more than a year after the coup, that brought on a series of strikes that forced the government to make major concessions. In the case of this latest attack on the living standard of the masses, the reaction of the workers and the poor was quick and powerful.

"After the announcement," the January 23 *La Opinión* reported, ". . . the stores shut down and spontaneous protest marches were organized that were dispersed by the police."

"On Monday [January 21], during the night groups of enraged demonstrators, most of them women, tried to throw up barricades in a main street in a poor section of La Paz, but they were rapidly dispersed by

the police."

At almost the same time, 15,000 factory workers began a thirty-six hour strike in protest against the price increases. "The manufacturing workers who denounced the economic measures in the strongest document they have yet issued against the government were dispersed yesterday by tear gas when they tried to assemble in a football field in the industrial section of the city," the *La Opinión* report continued. The miners declared a twenty-four hour strike to begin on January 23.

The protests spread rapidly. "A gigantic wave of protests welled up yesterday against the civilian-military government, which the Bolivian people blame for the marked rise in the cost of living," the January 24 *La Opinión* reported. "A considerable part of the economic life of the country was paralyzed by the strikes of the miners, factory workers, and clerks."

At the same time, the flour workers and builders unions, as well as the La Paz and Cochabamba peasant federations went on an "emergency footing." The La Paz peasant organization issued an appeal to the armed forces "once again, as in the days of Busch and Villarroel, to take the side of the exploited against the exploiters."

When the peasants, the main prop of the conservative counterrevolution in Bolivia, began to join in the protests, the Banzer government apparently became convinced that it faced the threat of a mass uprising throughout the country. It appeared to call on its remaining supporters in the bureaucratized peasant organizations to go on a civil-war footing.

"President Hugo Banzer appealed to the peasants of the country to take up arms to defend 'the nationalist process,' when the Federación de Trabajadores del Agro [Federation of Agricultural Workers] reaffirmed its support for the government and the January 21 measures," the January 25 *La Opinión* reported.

"The chief of state said that he per-

sonally would give the signal 'for the peasants, together with the armed forces and the parties of the Frente Popular Nacionalista [Nationalist Popular Front, the coalition backing the junta], to go out to defend their revolution because not just the fate of a government is in question but of an entire nation.'"

Nonetheless, the revolt continued to gain momentum: "The government of General Hugo Banzer declared a state of siege on Monday, January 28," *Le Monde* of January 30 reported, "while thousands of armed peasants continued to block roads in the Cochabamba region. According to certain reports, the peasants demanded the formation of a new government."

In a radio broadcast to the country on January 28, Banzer claimed that his government was threatened by "an international subversive plot." The *Le Monde* report went on to note: "The chief of state said that the aim of this plot was not only to establish a new government but to establish, in addition to a 'puppet' regime, a new center of activity for the extremists 'who are trying to recover the positions they have lost in America.'" Banzer claimed that the blockades were designed to drive the urban population to desperation by cutting off food supplies.

The dictator's theme was taken up by his minister of agriculture, Colonel Alberto Busch, who said, according to a January 29 UPI dispatch, that "the peasant leaders in Cochabamba were calling for the establishment of a worker-peasant government and that this proved leftist extremists were behind the action."

But the UPI dispatch went on to describe the development of the events in Cochabamba this way:

"Disturbances erupted in Cochabamba and Quilacollo, a smaller town 10 miles away, five days ago. Since then, troops and factory workers have clashed in the streets, two bridges have been dynamited and Bolivia's major east-west highways have been cut." The day after Banzer's speech, the armed forces attacked the peasants holding the roads in Cochabamba.

"A communiqué issued by the Seventh Army Division indicates that the soldiers intervened to open up the roads after peasants seized General Juan Pérez Tapia, who had gone to the town of Punata to negotiate with

the rebels," a Reuters dispatch reported in the January 31 *Le Monde*.

A January 30 dispatch from La Paz in the Buenos Aires daily *La Nación* reported: "The Department of Cochabamba, where combined land and air forces carried out an operation to open up the roads blocked by peasants, was declared a 'military zone' by the government hours after bloody clashes occurred. . . .

"An official communiqué said, referring to the first armed clash between the peasants and the army in the locality of Tolata that the troops were attacked by armed peasants. The soldiers defended themselves, killing four peasants and wounding another three.

"However, a correspondent reported that the number was eight. The daily *Los Tiempos* of Cochabamba spoke of six casualties, while Minister of Information Guillermo Bulacia said that seven persons were wounded and sixteen killed." General Adriazola, the commander of the operation, appealed to the press to accept the reports issued by the Ministry of Information. "We are not going to hide anything," he assured.

The peasants wounded in the clash, however, gave a different account than the Ministry of Information.

"Armed soldiers guarded the Viedma hospital in Cochabamba, where some of the peasants wounded in the clashes are being treated," the Buenos Aires daily *Clarín* reported February 1. "'We have no medicine or money. Our families are destitute. It is better for them to come in and kill us here. We don't want to suffer anymore,' said one of the wounded peasants, Severino Arévalo Ustarez, the 45-year-old father of seven children. 'The military came with their tanks and began firing. We had no weapons. Our wives had stones.' . . .

"In a dark room where at least forty workers are being treated, there are seven of those who were wounded in Sacaba, Cliza, and Tolata—all towns along the Cochabamba-Santa Cruz highway—during the armed actions. Vidal Ríos Cedeno, a 30-year-old peasant, was shot in Tolata. 'There were 3,000 of us peasants protesting against our poverty. We were going off shift to return to our homes, when they told us President Banzer was coming. We went back and found ourselves facing six tanks and eight Cro-

codiles [military trucks], which opened fire.'"

The peasants' story was confirmed by the military governor of the department, General Juan Pérez Tapia, who denied being taken hostage.

"I was never a prisoner or a hostage. On the contrary, I was treated cordially at all times by the peasants. I feel the same grief for the dead that they do."

Despite the "joint military action," the peasant resistance did not seem broken. "The operations, carried out by troops supported by tanks and airplanes, made it possible to clear away the barriers on the three principal highways linking Cochabamba with the rest of the country," the *Clarín* report continued. "But reports from the rural areas claim that the groups dispersed yesterday by armed force have regrouped and that new barriers have been erected, especially on the road leading to the eastern department of Santa Cruz.

"Military censorship continues. But radios in the towns along the highways, which have not been silenced, broadcast today the peasants' decision to continue their resistance 'to the ultimate consequences.'"

The night of January 30 Banzer broadcast a special appeal to the peasants, calling on them to have confidence in his government "because it is the only one that can give you what you want." He accused "foreign Communists" of wanting to take away the peasants' land: "I will not permit this because what I most want is for you to keep your land."

It did not seem possible to deny, however, that previously progovernment elements made up at least a good part of the rebels in the countryside. Of the peasants arrested, *New York Times* correspondent Jonathan Kandell cabled from La Paz February 2: "The prisoners were described as left-wing extremists, but a partial list of those detained showed that most were veteran peasant leaders who had formerly backed the Banzer Government and had never previously been accused of left-wing sympathies."

The peasant revolt seemed to mark the culmination of a long process in Bolivia and perhaps a major change in the relationship of social forces in the country.

"Unquestionably the most important

step taken in the history of Bolivia," a commentator wrote in the January 31 issue of the Buenos Aires weekly *Panorama*, "was the August 2, 1953, decree that abolished the latifundist system that had kept the peasant masses in the most extreme backwardness.

"But when the potentially revolutionary Indian masses received individual plots of land, they became an extremely poor petty bourgeoisie in which the authorities tried to cultivate a conservative mentality. More and more rightist governments used peasant mobilizations to break the strikes of the combative mine workers. This was done by the last MNR [Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionaria—Revolutionary Nationalist Movement] governments that slowly dropped their nationalist aims, starting by reprivatizing oil in 1956 and introducing American advisers into every unit of public administration. It was done by the military dictatorship of General Barrientos."

But in this latest upsurge, it has been precisely the small landholders in the Cochabamba Valley that have spearheaded the revolt against the government. And they were provoked to this action by a rise in the cost of food, which should benefit them. Seasonal factors may explain this partially, the highland farmers having already marketed their produce. They now have to pay inflated prices for imported and processed foods. But more profound reasons were almost certainly involved, such as the inability of the tiny farms to sustain a growing population on the land and the increasing importance of imported food in the national diet.

In any case, in combination with the workers revolt that seems still to be spreading, the peasant actions gravely undermine the Banzer regime. And in the face of these pressures, the splits in the government and military that have been apparent for some time seem to be widening. It is notable that in his January 28 speech, Banzer accused "some narrow-minded persons" of trying to use "subversion" for political ends. This could indicate that some elements hope to be able to ride the tiger of a popular mobilization, like the ousted Torres. It could herald a split in the ruling class that would open up a new prerevolutionary situation like the one in 1971. □

Miners, Tories Prepare for Showdown

By John P. Roberts

London

On January 24 the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) decided by a vote of 16 to 10 to ballot the membership on the question of strike action. But the NEC was so certain that the rank and file would approve a strike that it did not wait for the results of the balloting before informing the National Coal Board that the strike would begin February 10.

For some time prior to the NEC decision to ballot, miners in the traditionally militant Welsh, Scottish, and Yorkshire coalfields had been calling for an extension of the industrial action (the overtime ban, which began November 12). On January 26, Arthur Scargill, Yorkshire-area union president, urged the whole trade-union movement to join with the miners in a national strike.

Circumscribed by its Common Market commitments and the deterioration of the British economy at home and the pound abroad, the government has set a course of confrontation. By instituting a three-day week, the Tories are robbing millions of workers of up to 40 percent of their wages and have driven unemployment to its highest level since the 1930s.

Mick McGahey, vice-president of the NUM, told a rally January 26, "We will make sure that not only coal production is stopped. We intend not only to stop the movement of coal, but of other essentials for power stations."

This type of action could mean a relatively quick and victorious outcome for the miners, but it requires the backing of organised workers in industry.

Typifying the attitude of sections of militants in other unions, an Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers shop steward said, when interviewed on BBC radio: "Now, with this three-day week, we'll have plenty of time to support the miners' pickets." But since the mass picketing of 1971-72, the Tory government has tightened

the laws on picketing, even reviving an 1875 conspiracy law for use against strikers.

With coal stocks built up and spring coming, the pickets' ability to prevent coal and oil from arriving at the pow-



Direct From Cuba

HEATH: Weakening union "moderates" but strengthening police.

er stations will be crucial. Speaking to an Aberdeen miners rally February 1, McGahey stated: "It may be that the government will call in troops, but troops are not all anti-working-class. I will appeal to them to assist the miners."

So strong is the feeling amongst the miners and so great the support for them amongst the rank and file of the union movement, that the Trades Union Congress (TUC) has been forced into the uncharacteristic position of public solidarity.

But, terrified of a clash with the government, the TUC attempted to woo the cabinet to a position of con-

ciliation. Led by the traditional "left" — Scanlon of the Engineers and Jones of the Transport Workers — they offered Heath assurances that if the government granted the miners' claim, the TUC would not cite this case in any other pay claim. Even this was rejected out of hand by Chancellor Anthony Barber and later by Heath himself.

The reaction of the Labour party is to attempt to ensure that the protests and struggles of the miners are kept within safe, parliamentary bounds.

The main problem before the TUC and the Labour party is one of controlling the rank and file. If the miners win their demands after a showdown with the government, then the whole working class will be encouraged to pursue their own claims. If the miners are forced to confront the threatened repressive measures, the mobilisation of substantial numbers of unionists in their aid would threaten to take the leadership of the struggle out of the hands of the present class-collaborationist leaderships. That is why Labour party leader Wilson and TUC General Secretary Murray complain so bitterly that Heath is weakening the moderates in the unions with his policies.

The miners' militancy has forced a reversal in the public position of the Communist party. With the largest industrial machine of any political group, the CP has attempted at every stage to hold back the miners' struggle and to isolate the various disputes taking place, refusing to link up the demands of the miners, engineers, and railmen.

The Communist party has six of the twenty-seven positions on the NEC of the NUM, including the influential Vice-President Mick McGahey. For more than two months, the CP opposed a strike ballot, preferring to suggest such alternatives as a three-day workweek for the miners.

This avoidance of a clear line allowed Joe Gormley, right-wing president of the NUM, and his allies to keep the initiative and offer deal after deal to the government. With the winter now nearly over, the right wing has nothing left to offer and has turned to militant talk and the strike ballot. This militant talk from the right and the fear of losing its hegemony over the militants to the revolutionary left forced the CP to vote

for a strike ballot it had previously opposed.

However, the CP's delaying tactics have put the miners in a weaker position, which could lengthen the strike. Present coal stocks, if used sparingly, could last sixteen weeks, whereas a

strike in December would have emptied reserves in a relatively short time.

The Tories are nevertheless concerned about the outcome of the struggle. Commenting on the confrontation, Peregrine Worsthorpe wrote in the January 27 issue of the right-wing

Sunday Telegraph: "Realism precludes any confidence in the Government's ability to win such a battle. If the miners insist on fighting it this way, so devastating will be the effect on the economy that the Government may well be forced to cave in." □

Behind Tory Frame-Up of Building Workers

Heath Aims Shrewsbury 'Precedent' at Miners

By Tony Hodges

London

"Police forces will have thousands of men available to deal with any picketing trouble if the miners vote for a strike," Peter Chippindale reported in the January 28 *Guardian*.

"Mobile police squads will be ready to deal with mobile pickets; hundreds of men will be available to converge on potential trouble spots; and a centralised intelligence unit has been set up at Scotland Yard to act as a clearing house for provincial forces and give early warning of unrest which may turn into violence."

Chippindale went on to note that fears of "unrest" were in part attributable to "the present ill-feeling among many workers about the sentences of up to three years given to building industry pickets at Shrewsbury and the more exact definition of the law on picketing—made in December when it was held in the Lords that a man who stood in front of a lorry was guilty of obstruction. . . ."

Discussing the prospect of a miners' strike in the same issue of the *Guardian*, Philip Jordan bluntly described the uses of the Shrewsbury precedent and other recent decisions for the British ruling class:

"But the police do at least have the whip hand. A picket may yet be perfectly peaceful and still end in court with workers charged with a variety of offences—obstruction, committing a public nuisance, behaving in a manner likely to cause a breach of the peace, or obstructing a policeman in the course of his duty, to name but some. And as the men in the Shrewsbury building site picket found out, the vague, all-encompassing charge of conspiracy, with its poten-

tial long sentences, hangs over everyone's head."

The Shrewsbury case involves twenty-four workers arrested as a result of their participation in the 1972 building workers' strike. Last December 19, after a twelve-week "conspiracy" trial, three workers were found guilty under the 1875 Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act. Des Warren was sentenced to three years imprisonment, Eric Tomlinson to two years, and John MacKinsie Jones to nine months. They had been charged with "conspiring to intimidate workers on building sites to abstain from work," unlawful assembly, and "causing an affray."

Three defendants have been given suspended sentences. The other eighteen are presently on trial.

The gaoling of the three is one more blow in the Tories' offensive against the rights and living standards of British workers. This time, the Tories intend to stamp out the militant "flying pickets" that won the 1972 miners' and building workers' strikes.

The 1972 strike by building workers was the culmination of years of growing anger. They had been suffering declining living standards for years, particularly since 1968, when the union bureaucrats signed an agreement that gave the workers a rise, spread over three years, of only £1.50. In 1972, building workers' basic rates were a mere £17-20 a week.

Building workers have also been faced by appalling safety standards that caused 221 insured workers to lose their lives in 1972. Counting uninsured building workers, who comprise at least half of the industry's

workforce, at least one worker is killed on a British building site every day.

In 1972 the Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians (UCATT) adopted a demand for £30 for a thirty-five-hour week. The militancy of the building workers won the strike that followed. The union leaders, who had done nothing over the years to fight for their members, were forced to tail behind the initiatives of the ranks and their local leaders.

When George Smith, general secretary of UCATT, appeared about to accept a settlement of a £2.40 rise offered by the National Federation of Building Trades Employers (NFBTE), 10,000 building workers rallied outside UCATT headquarters and forced Smith to refuse the deal.

The strike did not win the £10 demand, but it did win an increase of £6, the largest percentage increase won by any group of workers that year. Like the miners before them, the building workers smashed past Heath's "voluntary" incomes policy. Shortly after the strike ended in September 1972, Heath unveiled a compulsory wage-control programme, beginning with Phase I, to replace the battered remains of voluntary wage restraints.

One of the keys to success for the building workers was their adoption of the militant tactic—pioneered by the miners the previous February—of mass "flying pickets." Thousands of building workers travelled from site to site in cars and buses, ringing sites with huge picket lines and spreading the strike.

By mobilising their full strength and

reaching out in massive numbers to sites still at work, the strikers managed to overcome the perennial difficulties of organising in an industry that has a poor trade-union tradition because of widespread casual labour. In fact, over one-half of the industry's workforce are on the "lump," a system of labour-only subcontracting in which workers, self-employed to dodge taxes and insurance payments, move continually from one site to another. The flying pickets spread the strike like wildfire, shutting down dozens of lump sites.

The Tories were taken aback by the militancy and strength of the flying pickets and sought ways to prevent their use in the future.

They were hesitant to use the Industrial Relations Act after the uproar created by the imprisonment under the act of five dockers in the summer of 1972. At that time workers struck spontaneously in protest, forcing the Trades Union Congress (TUC) to call a general strike. The Tories backed down and released the five.

So the Tories began searching the statute book for a law with a less notorious reputation to launch their new attack on the right to picket. They came up with the long-forgotten Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act, which had been lying dormant since its enactment in 1875 to break a tin miners' strike.

The Tories hinted at their new approach in a speech to the House of Commons on October 11, 1972, by Robert Carr, home secretary and architect of the Industrial Relations Act. He said: "There is nothing wrong with the law. The real problem was enforcement. Following disturbing evidence of intimidation from many areas during the national strike, I intend once again to draw the attention of Chief Constables to the provisions of the law and discuss with them what further action they might take to defeat such violence and intimidation in industrial disputes.

"The law as it stands makes it absolutely clear that obstruction and intimidation are illegal. It makes it clear that the right to picket is not a license to intimidate." And, most significantly, he added that "sheer numbers attending can of itself constitute intimidation."

In the meantime, the NFBTE had been busily compiling a dossier of alleged acts of "illegal picketing," which

it presented to the police on October 25, 1972. Even the London *Financial Times*, a journal not normally known for its sympathy for union rights, felt compelled to comment on the phonicness of the charges, saying that the dossier read "more like a politically motivated pamphlet than a serious study."

But the police, egged on by Carr's appeal, began inquiries into the September 6-7 picketing in Shrewsbury, which had been described in the NFBTE dossier.

Shrewsbury was selected because, as a small rural town with a weak trade-union tradition, it appeared to be an excellent place for the Tories to get away with a frame-up without provoking a big outcry from the unions. There was another reason as well: The local police had been in the pocket of the building employers for years.

The Gwynedd police began the investigation, along with the West Mercia police. A major part of the Gwynedd police is based in Denbighshire, whose chief of law and order is the high sheriff. In April 1973, a new high sheriff was appointed: Peter Bell, a director of McAlpine's, Britain's most powerful building firm, and son-in-law of the late Sir Alfred McAlpine. In fact, all the last nine high sheriffs of Denbighshire have been members of the McAlpine family. It is little wonder that the Gwynedd police jumped to work at Carr's command. They paid particular attention to the events at McAlpine's Telford site in Shrewsbury on September 6-7, 1972.

In December the police sent the results of their investigation to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) and on February 2, 1973, the DPP informed the police that it would bring 210 criminal charges against twenty-four building workers. On February 14 the arrests were made.

The Shrewsbury 24 were victims of a conscious frame-up. It took the police five months from the time of the picketing in early September, when no arrests were made, to dream up the 210 charges. And it was not till the following October, eight months later, that the government was ready to start the trial.

More than £500,000 has been spent on the trial, and the court at Shrewsbury was reconstructed at a cost of £140,000 to handle the case. The po-

litical nature of the trial was most tellingly illustrated by the mobilisation of 1,000 police to guard the court on the first day of the trial.

Des Warren, in an appeal to the labour movement from the courtroom December 19, pointed to the building employers, who "by their contempt of the laws governing safety regulations, are guilty of causing the deaths and maimings of workers. Yet they are not dealt with by the court. The law is quite clearly an instrument of the state to be used in the interests of a tiny minority against a majority. The law is biased. It is class law, and nowhere has this been demonstrated more than in the prosecution case at this trial. Was there a conspiracy? Yes, there was. But not by the pickets. The conspiracy was one between the home secretary, the employers, and the police."

The Shrewsbury frame-up was designed to set the stage for an all-out attack on the right to picket if workers strongly challenge Phase III, the Tory freeze on wage increases above seven percent a year. As the reports quoted from the *Guardian* indicate, the Tories are preparing to smash any attempts by the miners to repeat their use of the flying pickets in a national strike.

The Tories may also try to use the Industrial Relations Act again, having succeeded in fining the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers £75,000 on October 22 for refusing to halt a strike. Under the act, it is an "unfair practice" to cause a breach of contract by picketing. If the miners try to block power stations as they did in 1972, the government may accuse them of causing a breach of contract between the Central Electricity Generating Board and the National Coal Board.

A further attack on the right to picket was contained in a December 21 decision by the Law Lords, who ruled in a case, *Hunt versus Broome*, that also arose from the 1972 building workers' strike. John Broome, a full-time organiser for UCATT, was on the picket line in Stockport during the strike and stopped a lorry to inform the driver that there was a strike on and that he should turn back. He was immediately arrested for obstruction under the Highways Act.

When Broome was acquitted in Stockport Magistrates Court, the home secretary stepped in and ordered the police to appeal against the mag-

istrate's judgment. The Appeal Court found Broome guilty. And when Broome appealed further to the Law Lords, the verdict was upheld. The Law Lords ruled that peaceful attempts to persuade a lorry driver not to cross a picket line are illegal.

The union leaders have done little or nothing to defend the Shrewsbury 24. For months, they accepted the Tory propaganda that the twenty-four had been arrested for criminal activities and that the case had nothing to do with unions. UCATT General Secretary Smith had this to say shortly before the start of the trial: "If these lads are innocent, then British justice, being what it is, will find them innocent."

UCATT refused to pay the costs of the defence and even attempted to stop trade unionists from contributing to a defence fund established by the Lambeth Trades Council.

The TUC gave these instructions in a letter to the Flint Trades Council in May 1973: "Trades Councils should not encourage delegates or affiliated branches to take part in any industrial action in support of workers before the Court on charges arising from the [Conspiracy and Protection of Property] Act unless requested to do so by the NECs [National Executive Committees] of the unions concerned."

The Communist party, tied to the "left wing" of the trade-union bureaucracy and its strategy of behind-the-scenes talks with the government, also dragged its feet for months and did nothing to defend the Shrewsbury 24. It was not till seven months after the arrests that the CP-dominated Liverpool Trades Council called a national conference to defend the twenty-four. Previously only rank-and-file workers, and particularly the International Marxist Group, the British section of the Fourth International, worked to mobilise support for the defence committee and its actions, especially two demonstrations held in Shrewsbury on March 15 and May 18.

The Liverpool conference, attended by 600 delegates, called for action on October 3, the first day of the trial. In response, around 10,000 workers joined marches in London, Shrewsbury, and Edinburgh.

The union leaders felt compelled to act only after the imprisonment of the three, some eleven months after

the original arrests. Then the building section of the Transport and General Workers Union called a one-day national strike and the general council of UCATT, while still holding back from calling any national action, authorised its regional councils to take whatever action they felt appropriate. Strikes and demonstrations, smaller than they would have been with adequate leadership, occurred January 15. About 4,000 persons marched through London to a lobby of Parliament.

The campaign to defend the Shrewsbury 24 must now be redoubled. Defence committees need to be set up everywhere possible to draw in wide support. A national conference has

been called February 2 by the Liverpool Trades Council. This should be an occasion to map plans for a national campaign to free the three, drop all the charges against the twenty-four, repeal the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act, and defend the right to picket.

The labour movement needs to heed Ricky Tomlinson's appeal from the courtroom: "It is hoped that the trade-union movement and the working class of this country will act now to ensure that another charade such as this will never take place again, and the right to picket or strike will be defended even at the cost of great personal hardship or individual freedom." □

Hunger Strikers Force-Fed

London Protest Defends Belfast Nine

London

JANUARY 21 — Nearly 300 persons marched through London from Hyde Park January 20 to protest the continued detention of Irish political prisoners in England's jails and the force-feeding of four young republican prisoners on a hunger strike since November 15.

The demonstration was organised by the Irish Political Hostages Campaign (IPHC—a committee recently set up by several Irish organisations and left groups in London). The central demands of the IPHC are the granting of political prisoner status to all Irish political prisoners in British jails and their transfer to Ireland to serve out their sentences among other republicans and near their relatives and friends.

The focus of the January 20 demonstration was the barbaric treatment currently being meted out by the British government to four of the "Belfast Nine," convicted November 14 of setting off car bombs in central London last March. (See *Intercontinental Press*, December 10, 1973, p. 1437.) Savage sentences were pronounced (life imprisonment *plus* twenty years in eight instances—a measure taken to ensure that the victims would not be released after fourteen years with remission for good conduct, as sometimes happens with "mere" life impris-

onment).

Seven of the nine republicans immediately declared a hunger strike demanding that they be immediately returned to serve their sentences in Ireland, that they be granted political prisoner status, the right to refuse to do prison work, the right to wear their own clothes, the right to an open visit and a food parcel each week, the right to send and receive any amount of letters, and the right to be together.

Four of the young Provisional republicans are still refusing all food. But they have been force-fed daily by the prison doctors since December 5. Civilian doctors have been refused access to the four. A leading London doctor, according to the January 16 *London Times*, said that "the mental effects of a prolonged hunger strike are likely to be as serious as the physical ones." The physical effects of their hunger strike, along with the daily torture of force-feeding, now threaten the lives of Dolours Price (23), her sister Marion Price (19), Hugh Feeney (21), and Gerard Kelly (19).

All four have lost over two stone (about 28 pounds) already, and are losing weight steadily. The two women, who are being held in the psychiatric wing of the all-male Brixton prison, were visited January 10

by Bernadette Devlin McAliskey, MP. She reported that Dolours Price had "changed beyond all recognition," and that Marion Price was "a shadow of her former self."

In forced feeding, a greased tube is pushed down the throat into the stomach while the mouth is kept open with a wooden clamp. The victim is held down while twenty-four ounces of fluid are forced down the throat.



BERNADETTE DEVLIN

The two women are suffering severe cramps and pains in the chest (the force-feeding tube sometimes enters the lungs by mistake), swollen jaws, and sore throats; they vomit at each feeding session. Marion Price has additional pain probably caused by kidney trouble. The two men have also had their heads shaved, and because they refuse prison clothing have been kept naked and denied visitors since November 15.

Gerard Kelly's father has said that the four "were sentenced to life imprisonment plus twenty years each, but the British government is clearly not satisfied with their sentences. [It] is bent on a slow agonising crucifixion."

The Home Office, challenged by a mounting campaign in support of the republicans' demands, has refused to discuss any of the cases in detail, and maintains that the health of all four is satisfactory. The Price sisters have

issued a summons against the Home Office, seeking a court declaration that the government has no legal power to carry out force-feeding in their cases. The Home Office is contesting the proceedings.

During the past month, activity in support of the hunger strikers' demand to be returned to Ireland has been stepped up. Organisations such as the IPHC, the Joint Action Committee, the Prisoners' Aid Committee, the Belfast 10 Defence Committee, women's liberation groups, and others have organised a number of pickets at Brixton and Wormwood Scrubs prisons; the Irish Embassy has been picketed; public meetings and demonstrations have been held; a doctors' committee has been formed to support the legal battle to end the force-feeding; appeals have been made to Home Secretary Robert Carr; further activities are scheduled by the various organisations.

A graphic demonstration of the barbaric nature of force-feeding was organised by the IPHC outside Wormwood Scrubs prison on Saturday

January 19. Three volunteers from a seventy-strong picket line were forced under doctors' supervision. The prison governor declined an invitation to join them to demonstrate his belief that force-feeding is not harmful. All three vomited before the tube even passed their throats, and one volunteer is currently in hospital.

Participants in the January 20 demonstration included Sinn Féin (London), the Irish Republican party (London branch), People's Democracy (London), the International Marxist Group (IMG—British section of the Fourth International), Workers Fight, and others. Placards read: "Release all Irish political prisoners!" "Stop this cruel torture of force feeding!" "Return the four to Ireland!"

Speakers at the Hyde Park rally preceding the march were Bob Purdie, press officer of IPHC; Paddy Lynch, People's Democracy, Dr. D. Costa, and the actress Siobhán McKenna. The speakers stressed the worsening condition of the four republicans, ascribing it to "deliberate torture by the Home Office." □

Reject Appeal From British CP

Polish Regime Shows Solidarity—With Tories

"Poland has rejected a request from the British Communist Party not to ship coal to Britain during the miners' dispute," Jonathan Steele reported in the January 26 London *Guardian*. A week earlier, he continued, 27,000 tons of Polish coal had been unloaded in England.

When the miners began their ban on overtime work in November, the British government's Central Electricity Generating Board contracted with the Polish government to purchase 500,000 tons of coal by the end of March.

In December, the British Communist party appealed to the Polish CP "to use its influence with the Polish Government" to halt coal shipments to Britain.

Steele quoted Bert Ramelson, the British CP's national industrial organiser, as saying, "When workers are

in struggle, we would expect solidarity from all over the world."

But the solidarity of the Gierek regime is limited to words. The prospect of bringing in some hard cash takes precedence.

"Polish television," Steele reported, "has reported the British miners' dispute. A fortnight ago, viewers were told that the miners were 'locked in ferocious combat with the Conservative Government for another rise.' But yesterday the Polish Embassy said that when a contract was signed 'normally we fulfil it.' If in future, exports of coal to Britain were not realised, it would not necessarily be a political decision: Poland might get a better price in other parts."

The Polish bureaucrats have displayed a similar attitude in the past. In 1970 and 1971, they sold coal to the Franco dictatorship during strikes by Spanish miners. □

'One Year of Watergate' Was Only a Beginning

By Allen Myers

It is well known that Richard Nixon likes to claim participation in historic "firsts," and on January 30 he achieved another, becoming the first U.S. president to devote a portion of his State of the Union message to denying speculation that he would resign because of overwhelming public belief that he was involved in a wide assortment of crimes.

"I want you to know," Nixon intoned near the end of his speech, "that I have no intention whatever of walking away from the job that the people elected me to do for the people of the United States!"

The "personal word" that Nixon tacked on to the end of his address was the portion of the speech awaited with the most interest. Despite White House denials, speculation had continued that Nixon would conclude by announcing his resignation. Such rumors were undoubtedly fueled in part by wishful thinking on the part of many members of Congress.

Instead, Nixon asked the Congress to help him cover over the scandal. He called for an end to the investigations, adding: "One year of Watergate is enough." This remark later drew from Sam Ervin, chairman of the Senate Watergate committee, the comment: "If the president hadn't spent so much time withholding information from the Senate committee, the committee would have completed its investigation months ago."

Nixon then went on to promise a "cooperation" with the House Judiciary Committee's impeachment investigation that sounded difficult to distinguish from obstruction:

". . . I will cooperate with the Judiciary Committee in its investigation.

"I will cooperate so that it can conclude its investigation, make its decision, and I will cooperate in any way that I consider consistent with my responsibilities for the office of the presidency of the United States.

"There is only one limitation: I will follow the precedent . . . of never doing anything that weakens the office

of the president of the United States or impairs the ability of the presidents of the future to make the great decisions that are so essential to this nation and the world."

This "limitation" clearly indicated that Nixon was considering trying to invoke "executive privilege" to hamper the impeachment investigation. As he made the remarks, R.W. Apple Jr. reported in the *New York Times* the next day, "hisses twice rang out across the packed chamber."

One day before Nixon spoke, the senior Republican on the Judiciary Committee served a diplomatic warning to Nixon not to try such an obstruction. Speaking at a press conference, Representative Edward Hutchinson of Michigan, who is regarded as a Nixon supporter, said that if the White House asked his advice, "I would tell them that executive privilege, in the face of an impeachment inquiry, must fail."

"Mr. Hutchinson's statement on ex-

ecutive privilege," Bill Kovach wrote in the January 30 *New York Times*, "the first conclusion on the matter publicly voiced by a Republican, would seem to serve notice on the White House that efforts to block access to documents and tapes in the President's possession could lead to an immediate confrontation.

"One Democrat on the committee, Jerome Waldie of California, had already announced a resolution that would call for an immediate impeachment vote if the President should seek that course in withholding evidence."

Albert Jenner, the minority counsel for the committee, said at the same press conference that if Nixon refused to honor a subpoena, "the committee could exercise its judgment and include the action in its consideration of whether articles of impeachment should be brought."

While there was clearly some bluster involved in these remarks, Nixon will be treading on very thin ice if he does invoke "executive privilege" in order to hamstring the investigation. This would constitute an admission of guilt similar to that involved in the firing of Archibald Cox last October, and might well touch off a similar public reaction, one that could persuade the members of the committee that it was necessary to make good on their threats.

On the other hand, it would be an act of self-destruction for Nixon to hand over complete and undoctored evidence to the Judiciary Committee or any other body investigating the scandal.

It is therefore likely that there will be prolonged fencing between members of the committee and Nixon, with the latter giving up only as much as he is forced to do. Even when he is eventually forced to yield, such disputes over access to the evidence can be useful to Nixon: His defense of "the principle of confidentiality" in White House conspiracies puts pressure on the investigators to keep all evidence strictly secret. The Judiciary Commit-

State Of The Union



The Washington Post

tee now apparently intends to collect most of its evidence and testimony in secret. This of course makes it easier to carry out a cover-up by voting Nixon "innocent" if the ruling class decides that that is the best way to conclude the Watergate crisis.

No End in Sight

At this point there is no prospect of Nixon getting his hoped-for speedy end of the Watergate investigations, with the possible exception of the Senate Watergate committee. After much hesitation, the Ervin committee had



SCOTT: Climbing farther out on a very shaky limb.

voted to hold public hearings on dairy industry contributions to Nixon's reelection and on the mysterious \$100,000 "campaign contribution" from billionaire Howard Hughes that allegedly was left unused in a bank vault by Nixon crony C.G. "Bebe" Rebozo. But the committee has agreed to postpone hearings until after a jury has been selected for the trial of former Attorney General John Mitchell and former Secretary of Commerce Maurice Stans, and there is some question as to whether the hearings will ever take place.

But there are a number of other con-

tinuing investigation and court cases, all of them representing potentially serious threats to Nixon's continuing in office.

The impeachment investigation of the House Judiciary Committee of course poses the issue most squarely. On February 1, John J. Rhodes of Arizona, the House Republican leader, said he would support the Judiciary Committee's request for full authority and subpoena power to conduct its investigation. The resolution obligates the committee to make an eventual recommendation for or against impeachment, thus making it very likely that the full House will have to vote on the question.

"In essence," Bill Kovach reported in the February 2 *New York Times*, "the resolution would confer on the committee all constitutional authority to inquire into impeachment, including the right to subpoena the presence of or evidence from anyone, including the President."

An unofficial but important factor in the committee's recommendation will be the extent of the indictments and charges coming out of the grand jury investigations headed by special prosecutor Leon Jaworski, and especially the investigation into the erasure of 18.5 minutes of a subpoenaed White House tape recording.

The proceedings before the grand jury are secret, but there is enough public testimony available to indicate—even leaving out of account the fact that Nixon was the only conceivable beneficiary of the erasure—that the possible culprits constitute a tiny circle centered around Nixon.

After studying the transcripts of the testimony of Rose Mary Woods, Nixon's personal secretary, Walter Pincus, the executive editor of the liberal weekly *New Republic*, concluded that Woods probably did not know of the erasure when she first testified before Judge Sirica on November 8. In two articles published in the February 2 *New Republic* and January 26 *Washington Post*, Pincus pointed out that when recalled and questioned on November 26 as to why she had not mentioned the gap in the tape during her earlier testimony, Woods said that she had been told that the subpoena did not cover the portion of the recording in which Nixon and H.R. Halde- man met, in the middle of which the gap occurs.

But in her November 8 testimony,

Nixon at New Low in Polls

Two public-opinion surveys released at the beginning of February show Nixon's standing at a new low.

A Gallup poll conducted January 18-21 found only 26 percent approving of Nixon's performance as president, a drop of 42 percentage points from the period just before his inauguration a year ago.

A Roper poll conducted in mid-December found 62 percent of those questioned in favor of Nixon's resignation or impeachment.

Woods several times referred to her efforts to transcribe the subpoenaed tape, and specifically mentioned Nixon's conversation with Haldeman as part of the material on which she worked. Pincus suggested the following explanation for Woods's contradictory testimony:

"The single answer, I believe, is that on Nov. 8 she did not know of any erasures, nor did she know that someone was later going to try to hold back the Haldeman portion of the tape because of the erasure on some theory that the subpoena didn't require it. The fact that Miss Woods later had to contradict much of what she first said in court Nov. 8 suggests she was not in on the original tape cover-up. Since the final erasure had to be accomplished prior to Nov. 12—when the Uher record button was locked—it is doubtful she participated in the event itself, unless it was done between Nov. 8 and 12.

"Since it is more likely the deed was done earlier—probably prior to Oct. 19, in preparation for the proposed tape review by Sen. John Stennis—Miss Woods, under this theory at least, could be removed from the list of suspects doing the actual erasing. That would leave the President and his assistant, Steve Bull, with access to the tape and the recorder, though either one could have handed them off to a third party. . . ."

A good question for the grand jury to ask Woods, Pincus concluded, would be: "Who suggested that you change your November 8 testimony?"

In the February 1 *Washington Post*, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein provided some clues as to what is contained on the remaining White

House tapes. Their story was based in part on an interview with John K. Andrews Jr., who was a White House speechwriter until last December.

"On Nov. 1," the reporters wrote, "after it was publicly disclosed that two of the subpoenaed Watergate tapes were missing or had never been re-



HAIG: Hear no evil.

corded, [White House chief of staff Alexander] Haig met with about 20 to 30 of the second and third echelon White House staff members.

"According to Andrews' notes of the meeting, Haig said: 'To (publicly) release a transcript (of the remaining subpoenaed tapes) would have been fatal . . . The tapes, while not confirming criminality, contain juicy tidbits which in the hands of the President's enemies' could be used to destroy him.

"Andrews quoted Haig as later telling him that for months the President wouldn't let Haig, White House Special Counsel J. Fred Buzhardt or anyone else listen to the tapes because the conversations revealed the nature of the 'political hard ball that was played.'"

The handling of the White House tapes is only one aspect of the in-

vestigations being conducted by Watergate grand juries, and wide-ranging indictments are expected in the next few weeks. This of course increases the pressure on members of the White House gang to make a deal with the special prosecutor, by promising testimony against higher-ups in exchange for being allowed to plead guilty to lesser charges than they would otherwise face.

On January 28, for example, Herbert L. Porter, the former scheduling director of the Committee to Re-elect the President (CREEP), pleaded guilty to a charge of lying to the FBI about the Watergate affair. During his appearance before the Senate Watergate committee last year, Porter admitted perjuring himself before the Watergate grand jury and trial jury.

Columnist Joseph Alsop reported January 28 that "it appears that Mr. Jaworski is near to harvest time, as you might call it. There is a lot more high level plea bargaining in prospect, or now going on, than has yet come out. One of those at the plea bargaining-table already, for instance, is the President's former lawyer, Herbert Kalmbach. In addition, all the main Watergate indictments should be handed down by mid-February."

Nixon is continuing a so far unsuccessful campaign to discredit one of those witnesses who has agreed to testify: former White House counsel John Dean. Senator Hugh Scott, the Senate Republican leader, is still pushing the story that he has seen "secret evidence" that Dean was lying when he testified before the Ervin committee about Nixon's role in the cover-up.

All that Scott has seen, according to most accounts, is a White House summary of some of the tapes, not a verbatim transcript of the relevant recordings. In any case, the idea that Nixon would withhold evidence in his own defense is so absurd that Scott has made himself something of a laughing-stock by advancing it. In the February 2 *New York Times*, David E. Rosenbaum quoted a Republican senator who is a friend of Scott as saying: "I'm afraid Hugh has gone out on a limb and, like so many others who got out there, he's going to be cut off."

Even presidential press secretary Ronald Ziegler admitted to reporters that Scott has not seen any evidence that is not available to the special

prosecutor's office.

The Watergate prosecutors, who have heard all of the subpoenaed tapes not destroyed by the White House gang, have now stated explicitly that there is no evidence of perjury by Dean. The subject came up January 31 during pre-trial hearings for former presidential appointments secretary Dwight Chapin, against whom Dean is scheduled to testify. Chapin's attorney asked that the prosecution be required to hand over any evidence that Dean "has lied even in matters extraneous to this case."

Richard Davis, an assistant special prosecutor, replied, "I can say now, insofar as the government is concerned, based on the evidence accumulated so far, we have no basis to believe Mr. Dean has committed perjury in any proceeding. There is no



HALDEMAN: Telephone chats with Nixon.

basis to bring any charge of perjury against him."

Scott met with Nixon the next day and emerged from the White House to tell reporters that he was not "backtracking one single inch" from his charge against Dean. Nixon's persistence in this campaign against Dean is probably to be explained not only by what Dean knows of Nixon's crimes. It is likely that his possible testimony against former Nixon aides H. R. Haldeman, John Ehrlichman, and Charles Colson is also an im-

portant factor.

Of all the White House conspirators, the three were the most intimately involved with Nixon—Colson perhaps somewhat less than the other two. Ever since last April 30, when Nixon announced Haldeman's and Ehrlichman's "resignations" and simultaneously called them "two of the finest public servants it has been my privilege to know," it has been evident that the four are conducting a joint defense, in which each is required to support the story of the others. Nixon is known to have met privately on several occasions with John J. Wilson, a lawyer who is representing both Haldeman and Ehrlichman. He is also believed to have met privately with Haldeman and Ehrlichman personally.

In the article quoted earlier, reporters Woodward and Bernstein wrote that Andrews and other sources in the White House had described unsuccessful attempts by Haig and Henry Kissinger to get Nixon to disassociate himself from his three co-conspirators.

"Instead," they wrote, "the President has continued to maintain his close association with former aides H. R. Haldeman, John D. Ehrlichman and Charles W. Colson, and has built his public and legal defense 'in concert' with them, the White House sources [said]. . . ."

"In addition, the sources said, Mr. Nixon has continued to meet and stay in regular telephone contact with Ehrlichman, Colson and Haldeman."

Testimony by Dean that could convict any of those three would thus threaten to explode the "concerted" defense and leave Colson, Ehrlichman, and Haldeman with no real defense except to implicate Nixon. The fact that Nixon, through Scott, continues to push the absurd story of "secret evidence" indicates that the Dean threat is taken very seriously.

For Nixon, the second year of Watergate seems likely to be even worse than the first. □

Fitting Wanted, Low Wages

"When is a man not a man? When he's a fixture or fitting, of course. A South African company has explained that its payroll does not include any African names, because Africans do not come under the heading of 'manpower'. They are listed under 'fixtures and fittings'."

—*Anti-Apartheid News*

Congressional Hearings: A Slap on the Wrist

Oil Profits and the Tax Game

By Ernest Harsch

"It seemed truly an embarrassment of riches. Just as U.S. oilmen were telling Congress last week that they were innocent of a series of accusations—including profiteering from the energy crisis—the companies began reporting results for 1973 that seemed to bolster the case against them," wrote the February 4 *Newsweek*.

The figures announced by the oil companies for the fourth quarter of 1973 should add to the growing skepticism about the role of the oil trusts in the energy crisis. Exxon, the world's largest oil company, reported on January 23 that its profits for the fourth quarter of 1973 were 59 percent higher than for the same period the previous year. This brought its total profits for 1973 to \$2.44 thousand million—the highest profits ever made by any industrial corporation in history. Both Mobil and Texaco chalked up similar gains for the fourth quarter, a 68 percent rise in profits for Mobil and 70 percent for Texaco.

Despite the oil giants' Project Candor—full-page advertisements with charts and graphs claiming that oil profits are really not high enough—many more people will begin to see through the hollowness of the oil-industry claims in the light of such staggering figures. As the January 21 *Wall Street Journal* put it: "Exxon, as well as other oil companies, has a sneaking suspicion that big oil-company profits during the energy crisis aren't going to be considered commendable by Americans who have lowered their thermostats and waited for hours at gasoline stations to get their cars' tanks filled."

A few senators and congressmen—with an eye toward quick and easy political gains—have questioned various aspects of the oil companies' methods of functioning: their verticle control within the oil industry from extraction through distribution, their growing control over other sources of energy, their secrecy, their use of various tax write-offs.

The hearings conducted by Senator

Henry Jackson have received the most attention so far. "The proceedings started amicably enough," wrote the February 4 *Newsweek*. "Seven representatives of the most powerful oil companies in the land solemnly took the oath in the big marble Senate Caucus Room and prepared to tell Sen. Henry Jackson's investigations subcommittee about the oil shortage. But it quickly developed that this wasn't going to be just a dry recitation of petroleum statistics. Instead, for the next three days, the American public was treated to an often acrimonious, finger-wagging, paper-waving spectacle in which the giant oil firms were under the gun as never before."

The officials of the oil trusts, so used to operating in unchallenged secrecy for years, reacted sharply to what some of them called a "damn vendetta." "There is a stench of McCarthyism in the air," one of them said. Rawleigh Warner Jr., Mobil's chairman of the board exclaimed, "For God's sake, we're being treated like criminals."

Although the members of Congress and the bourgeois press tried to make it appear as though they were really going after the oil trusts, none of the measures proposed so far in either the House or the Senate would substantially affect the petroleum companies' profits or methods of operation. While the sudden congressional and journalistic interest in tax legislation does mirror to a certain extent the anger aroused by the energy crisis—and the oil monopolies fear that this anger might get out of hand—the schemes themselves pose only a slight inconvenience to the continued drive for profits.

The most publicized and debated of the tax proposals is the so-called "windfall profits tax." While the numerous variants differ in some details—the tax rates, the date on which legislation would come into effect, the definition of "excess" profits—almost all of them include a "plowback" pro-

vision, which would exempt the oil monopolies from any taxation on income that is reinvested in the development of domestic energy sources. Representative Wilbur Mills, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, said: "I want to be sure that the tax will not limit investment in developing [domestic oil] reserves. If they increase spending, they should avoid the tax."

Since the profitable development of domestic energy sources—now made more competitive by the rise in world oil prices—is one of the major goals of the oil giants, they have every intention of "plowing back" most of their profits, thereby expanding their control of alternate energy sources and laying the basis for even higher profits in the future. As Eileen Shanahan noted in the January 22 *New York Times*: "Since the major oil companies spent more than \$6-billion [thousand million] on exploration and development in 1972, the latest year for which figures are available, any windfall profits tax would have to exceed that amount before the oil companies would actually pay out any tax, under a plowback arrangement."

"Most of the tax proposals that are being discussed would yield considerably less than \$6-billion—around \$2-billion in most cases." In fact, in the full-page advertisements the oil giants put in the major newspapers to justify their astronomical profits, they mentioned that they were planning in the next few years to increase even further their expenditures for the development of domestic energy.

Even without such a plowback provision, the effectiveness of any "excess profits" schemes would be highly questionable. Since the oil majors are multinational corporations, with many subsidiaries, that control operations from extraction through shipping and refining, and finally to marketing and distribution, they have so many opportunities to distort and falsify their statistics and to confuse investigators that it would be virtually impossible to determine what their real profits are.

Thomas F. Field, a lawyer for Tax Analysts and Advocates and director of the tax lobby Taxation With Representation, charges that the multinational oil monopolies are the corporations that are best equipped to avoid "excess profits" taxation, since they can easily transfer their proceeds

from taxed to untaxed operations. He has pointed out, as reported in the January 27 *Washington Post*, that some of the oil giants have entire shipping subsidiaries, which provide "the first and best pocket to hide from the tax collector and the Securities and Exchange Commission."

The *Washington Post* went on: "The shipping subsidiaries fly the flags of countries—Panama, Liberia, Honduras—that neither require financial statements nor impose corporate income taxes."

"For the parent companies, it is no trick at all to funnel profits in and out of the subsidiaries so as to manip-



JACKSON: Finger-wagging dispute with oil executives.

ulate the amounts of taxes owed in the United States, if they care to, Field says.

"More opportunities for similar manipulations exist, Field says, in the companies' foreign refining and marketing operations and in their 'offtaker' ventures—'strictly paper' intermediaries that take title to crude oil and hold it until a sale will yield the desired profit."

Because the oil trusts can manipulate their declared incomes and make use of numerous tax breaks that they receive from the U.S. government, they pay lower taxes to Washington than any other industry. In 1972, for example, Gulf paid only 1.2 percent of

its corporate income in taxes and Texaco paid 1.7 percent.

One of the tax breaks that has come under great scrutiny in the congressional investigations is the 22 percent depletion allowance for the oil industry. It allows the oil companies to simply exempt 22 percent of their income from any taxation whatsoever. In his message to Congress on the energy crisis, Nixon said: "U.S. companies that produce oil overseas have been granted the same 22 per cent depletion allowance abroad that is granted to U.S. companies producing oil in the United States. Both allowances provide an incentive for oil production."

"As we move toward U.S. self-sufficiency in energy, however, we want to encourage greater development of U.S. energy resources rather than foreign resources. I am therefore asking the Congress to eliminate these foreign depletion allowances, while retaining the depletion allowance for domestic oil production."

Since the depletion allowance, plus the "intangible drilling costs" deductions, are the major tax breaks that can be applied to domestic oil extraction, the retention of the depletion allowance on domestic production will continue to aid the oil trusts. The elimination of the foreign depletion allowance, however, in no way signifies an attack on the oil profits.

Washington Post correspondents Peter Milius and Stuart Auerbach spoke with a number of tax lawyers, both within and outside the Treasury Department, about the likely effects of Nixon's proposal to eliminate the depletion allowance on foreign oil. They reported in the January 24 issue: "The tax lawyers interviewed, however, said the industry makes little use of the depletion allowance abroad because it has other means of reducing its U.S. taxes on foreign earnings—chiefly the credit that oil companies get for taxes paid to foreign governments."

This credit allows the oil companies to subtract the royalties and taxes they pay to foreign regimes from the taxes they owe to Washington on a dollar-for-dollar basis. As a result of the increase in crude oil prices—which were basically a reflection of the increase in the amount of taxes and royalties paid to the Arab-Persian Gulf regimes—even more of the oil com-

panies' taxes to Washington were eliminated. In effect, the taxes that the oil trusts would otherwise have paid to the U. S. government were simply transferred to the Gulf regimes. Undoubtedly there are a number of officials in Washington who would like to see this dollar-for-dollar write-off modified to allow more taxes to flow into the Treasury Department.

Nixon's message to Congress proposed that part of the oil companies' royalties paid to foreign regimes continue to be subtracted from their U.S. taxes, while the rest be considered simply as an "operating expense" that could be deducted from their before-taxes income. One Treasury Department analyst told the *Washington Post* (January 24) that the reduction of the dollar-for-dollar credit would be "relatively small." The January 31 *New York Times* reported: "Stanford G. Ross, a Washington tax lawyer and former Treasury Department official, said that Mr. Nixon's proposal to convert some of what are now tax credits into deductions could actually permit some oil companies to pay lower taxes than they do now."

What final form the various tax schemes will take cannot yet be determined; the details are still being ironed out. An emergency energy bill sponsored by Senator Jackson was sent

back into committee by the Senate on January 29. "The Senate vote," wrote the January 30 *New York Times*, "reflected the dissatisfaction of conservatives and some liberals with an excess-profits provision that was strongly opposed by the Administration as unworkable. It would have let anyone challenge wholesale or retail fuel prices before the Renegotiation Board, which normally reviews profits on Government contracts."

Recognizing that some of the less mild congressional proposals stand little chance of being passed without being watered down, the January 25 *Wall Street Journal* gloated: "Don't bet, not just yet, that the oil industry will suffer a legislative cataclysm.

"Despite the hostile climate generated by high prices and high profits and skepticism about oil shortages, the industry may well stave off the worst, or anything close to it, with help from strategically placed congressional allies and from a fairly friendly Nixon administration.

"In fact, Capitol Hill insiders predict the industry could even emerge with a few favors."

One favor the *Journal* may have had in mind is the White House proposal that Congress authorize guaranteed prices for shale oil and coal-produced oil. Another could be the tax break which would allow the oil

companies to deduct their drilling expenses on domestic wells in the first year of operation, instead of spreading the cost deduction over several years as they do now.

Apparently in an effort to convince members of Congress of the necessity of such favors and of high profits, an editorial in the January 24 *Wall Street Journal* reminded those representatives of the ruling class of capitalism's need to expand: "A petroleum corporation, like all others, is not a person but a mechanism. Its aim is not simply to make profits, but to do so in a way that will enhance its longevity, i.e., its ability to earn more profits 10, 20 or 30 years from now. This means it can not spend current profits on champagne baths, bubble dancers and high living. It must spend those profits, directly or indirectly, to rebuild itself and to expand itself if those goods it produces are meeting increasing demand in the marketplace."

But should such lectures fall on deaf ears, the oil giants would not hesitate to further aggravate the energy crisis. C. Howard Hardesty Jr., executive vice-president of Continental Oil, gave a clear warning in the February 2 *Business Week*: "If they are going to put the screws to us, the development work we are planning won't be done," he said. "That's not a threat—it's economic realism." □

Ruling Class and Labor Bureaucracy Try to Close Breach

Cordoba Workers Punch Hole in Argentine 'Social Pact'

[The following article is from the January 16 issue of *Avanzada Socialista*, a weekly published in Buenos Aires by the PST (Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores—Socialist Workers party, a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International). The article was written before January 20, when Perón launched his latest witch-hunt against the left, following a guerrilla raid on an army base. But it helps give the background of the caudillo's operation.]

* * *

The 40 percent raise won by the

compañeros at UTA-Córdoba [Unión Tranviarios Automotor—Bus Drivers Union, Córdoba local] has had profound repercussions and a significance going far beyond that of a "labor dispute." Everyone, from the government, the bosses, and the bureaucracy on one side to the compañeros on the other, is realizing more and more that "with raises of 100,000 pesos [approximately 1,000 old pesos equal US\$1], you can't have a Social Pact." They have perceived very clearly that the first big hole has been punched in the Pact.

Thus, the main preoccupation of General Perón, the capitalists, and the bureaucracy has become to close this breach, to keep the workers' victory in Córdoba from turning into an example for the whole country, which would mean purely and simply the end of the Social Pact and the Three-Year Plan. This explains a good part of the political developments in the last weeks.

This intention appeared with crystal clarity in General Perón's speech to a general meeting of management last Friday [January 12] at the Olivos

estate. "The Social Pact that has been established in the country," the president said, clearly referring to Córdoba, "must not be broken for any reason, and the government is firmly determined to enforce observance of it over the resistance of any of the forces that presently oppose it."

This "firm determination" is the background of a series of measures and positions taken both by the government and by the leadership of the 62 Organizations [the Peronist trade-union federation].

Among the immediate repercussions is the campaign against the Córdoba provincial government and especially Atilio López. López has been expelled from the 62 Organizations, and it was assumed that the province would be taken directly by the federal government. The president seems to have ruled out such a drastic measure, opting instead to step up the slow strangulation of the provincial government and the encirclement of López and the class-struggle sections in the unions.

Another response by the government was the ruling that the cost of any direct or indirect wage increase would have to be covered entirely by the bosses involved and could not be deducted from their tax liability. In this way it was trying to close the ranks of management against the possibility that militant actions in some sectors might force increases, as happened in Córdoba.

Over and above these immediate measures, the government has adopted other, more general measures in order to "force firm observance" of the Pact. We are referring to the reform of the Penal Code and the restoration of "compulsory arbitration." As we have explained, even though at first the revised code may be directed against the guerrillas, it can very easily be applied to labor conflicts, to trade-union and political activists and their organizations.

Finally, one of the biggest projects that will mark the new political year is the Constituent Assembly. There will be an attempt to establish constitutional mechanisms that can prolong the Social Pact beyond the term of General Perón, who now serves as the unchallenged arbiter among the parties to the Pact. The whole grouping of bourgeois parties, sections of management, the armed forces, and the trade-union bureaucrats who have

come together around this "great accord" want to write its "rules" into the Constitution as another guarantee of stability. That is the significance of this assembly.

Committed to supporting the Social Pact, the bureaucracy cannot help but feel the impact of the conflicts, especially in Córdoba. As the dam on the workers movement, the bureaucrats are the ones who are now feeling the pressure of wage demands most directly. Unable, within the limitations of the Pact, to get good contracts or even an emergency raise, the bureaucracy knows that it is paying for this in terms of its credit with the people, that their anger is increasing at its expense. This explains the bureaucrats' hysterical reaction to the victory in Córdoba. On the one hand, it was a reflection of Perón's determination to close the breach opened in the Pact. But on the other hand, they went much further in demanding extreme measures against Córdoba. The fact is that the UTA winning a 40 percent raise put the bureaucrats in an indefensible position vis-à-vis the rest of the workers movement. But this situation also provoked differences in the bureaucracy itself and with the economic policy makers. This is the origin of the infighting around the Comisión Nacional de Precios e Ingresos [National Price and Incomes Commission].

In this context in which the Pact and the three-year economic plan connected with it are beginning to be put to the test, the JP [Juventud Peronista — Peronist Youth, one of the left-wing branches of the Peronist movement] is in no better position than the bureaucracy. In order to hold the support it has won in the middle class as well as the support of workers, the JP has to take the front line in the struggles against the bureaucrats and the bosses. But, on the other hand, in order to maintain the "principle of centralized command" and "obedience" to General Perón, the JP has no choice but to act as "the left leg" of the Pact, to which it gives its explicit support.

As a result, every struggle against the bosses or the bureaucrats brings out this contradiction, providing elements for a crisis in the JP. The JP cannot blandly accept the reform of the Penal Code without getting burned. But if it wants to stick to the "principle of centralized command," it is going

to have to vote for the reform. The JP has to come out verbally against the bureaucracy. But in the bankworkers union, where it could take over the leadership in ninety days if it agreed to join in a united front against the bureaucracy, the JP is trying to avoid taking up the fight and is being torn apart in the process. While in Córdoba it had to put out a leaflet in support of the UTA, on the national level the JP has to try harder than the bureaucracy itself to discourage all wage demands. If the labor conflicts increase, the JP compañeros' function as "the left leg of the Social Pact" can end up being a loser's role.

With the new year, we are entering what may be the most crucial phase of the Social Pact. The previous government likewise had their plans, some of which had almost total support from the bosses. But for some time the bourgeoisie has been unable to accomplish any of the plans it has adopted. They have all been sunk, one way or another, by the workers movement. While it has not been able to take power, the workers movement has been strong enough to put up a fight against any number of very different plans that always had one thing in common: They tried to reduce the crisis at the expense of the workers.

The events that we have been reporting indicate that the same fate can befall the present plan. What is to blame for this is not "agitators," or "the oligarchy," but something vaster and more massive: We workers are not ready to make a pact with hunger. And we are right not to.

So, at this moment, the central task of the workers movement is to call on the CGT first to repudiate the union contracts and then summon the arbitration boards into session to order a wage readjustment on the basis of a minimum of 250,000 pesos, which is needed to make ends meet. And this raise should come out of the superprofits of the monopolies so that it won't be lost through inflation.

As steps toward this objective, partial struggles like the one in Córdoba, which serve as examples to all workers, and terrify our exploiters, are extremely important. The question is not "order" or "chaos," as they would have us believe. It is whether what we produce goes into our pockets or those of the big capitalists who met a few days ago in the presidential mansion of Olivos. □

Russell Foundation Sponsors Probe of Military Juntas in Latin America

"After Vietnam, we have centred our attention on Brazil, because these two countries provide two different models of U.S. imperialism. In the case of Vietnam, it was and still is the most violent and brutal aggression which has ever been waged in history. In Brazil, we confront the subjection of an entire people through a military take-over and the exploitation of its resources in a new subimperialist development. *We want to demonstrate* that behind the face of Brazilian economic growth, which offers huge profits to American corporations, we find a situation of misery and oppression are a necessary consequence of the imperialist exploitation and of the military regime which imposes it. Discontent and resistance on the part of the people, police repression with its record of assassinations, and tortures

on the part of the authorities are in their turn necessary consequences of this misery and oppression. The Brazilian 'model': aggression, invincible popular resistance, massacre, genocide, ecocide. The rule is that those who do [not] accept the role of slave imposed by U.S. imperialism must be mercilessly eliminated; this applies to the Brazilian people as well as to the Vietnamese."

Italian Senator Lelio Basso wrote the statement above in asking the Bertrand Russell Tribunal to organize an inquiry into the crimes of the military regime in Brazil. This was prior to the military coup in Chile. Following that event the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation decided to extend the scope of its inquiry to include Chile and other Latin American countries.

In 1967 the first Russell Tribunal

tried the U.S. government and found it guilty of a series of war crimes, including genocide. The hearings, initiated by the eminent philosopher the late Bertrand Russell, convened under the title International War Crimes Tribunal. Jean-Paul Sartre presided over the hearings whose volumes of testimony and verdict were particularly damaging to U.S. prestige and the Johnson administration.

Although the Russell Tribunal cannot impose sentences on those found guilty, its moral standing is unquestioned. The verdict it brought against U.S. war criminals was recognized by the overwhelming majority of humanity.

In setting up the "Russell Tribunal II," the sponsors hope that it will serve in a similar way to uncover the truth about the crimes of the military juntas in Latin America.

Contributions to the Russell Tribunal II can be sent to post office savings account: c/c 1/64816, Oberti, Dott, Armando Via di Porta Cavallegeri 107, Rome, Italy. In England the address is: Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, Bertrand Russell House, Gamble Street, Nottingham NG7 4ET. □

While Food Exports Soared 92 Percent in 1973

Hundreds of Thousands Perish in Ethiopia Famine

By Candida Barberena

"Are there fifty thousand dead? One hundred thousand? The figures are still abstract. One sees no faces or stares. Small bundles of dust-colored rags are scattered about on the sidewalks of Dessie, the provincial capital at the center of the famine, as they are along the entire 1,200 kilometers of Ethiopia's 'historic road'—rag piles that move sadly as travelers pass, holding out a hand. Wordlessly," wrote Jean-Claude Guillebaud in *Le Monde's* January 16-18 series on the 1973 Ethiopian famine.

There are thousands of graves. "Everywhere. These big, hastily arranged heaps of stone are to be found by the dozens in every village in Wollo or Tigre a day's journey or so off the 'historic road.' This is all one finds in some villages among the deserted *toukous* (huts). In other

places the bodies of those who had made their way to the 'relief camps' only to die there were randomly thrown into a common grave. At the end of November in Kobo—a large village to the north of Dessie—in one camp alone more than 2,000 corpses were buried."

Equal to the horror of the stories related by the survivors of the famine is Emperor Haile Selassie's outrageous concealment of the famine, which goes so far as to include arrant denials that a critical situation even exists. The comment of a young Ethiopian doctor on Addis Ababa's attitude to the famine reveals this unpardonable cynicism: "Yes, the situation has stabilized, as they say, because everyone who was to die is dead."

The story of Akalé Yimir from the

village of Wadla echoes the fate of thousands of families.

"It hadn't rained in nearly three years. In 1971 the harvest was very bad. In 1972 we had to eat some of the seed grain and even borrow grain in order to survive. In 1972 the 'February showers' didn't come. What could I do? I myself had two plots of land. I had mortgaged the first plot so that I could buy two sacks of seed, but since I couldn't pay back the grain, I lost my field. I had to sell the second plot for ten Ethiopian dollars [about US\$4.40] to keep going. By June I had nothing left. So I left my wife and two children in Wadla while I went to look for work and something to eat. It took my brother and me four days to get to Dessie, and we found nothing. I have learned that my wife and my

children have long since died."

Or the tragedy of Ali Legasse from Bornea village: "In my home everyone had already been hungry for a long time. Especially my parents, who were older and weaker. To sustain them I little by little sold everything I had: a mare, a yoke of oxen, a donkey, and a piece of land. It was no use. In June both my parents died, and I buried them myself. Then, in July, I left my wife and children to go to Dessie, a three-day walk.

"There I found hundreds of peasants like myself who were looking for food. I worked in the street carrying packages for women or else helping shopkeepers. I was paid 45 centimes [about US\$0.20] for a half day's work. Just enough to keep me alive. But I got sick. In September the police picked me up half dead on the street and brought me here to the relief camp. I know that at the village all my family has passed away."

Some officials blame accidents of nature for the staggering number of deaths. However, American experts estimate that if reorganized, Ethiopian agriculture could provide for a population of 100 million. It is held that the Ethiopian empire could become a "granary" for the whole of Africa.

Insufficient and substandard transportation, underdeveloped water resources, and poor management are not the only hindrances to alleviating the situation. A bigger obstacle is the systematic injustice of the medieval social order. The multiple injustices call into question, Guillebaud observed, "the archaic society where a tiny landed oligarchy possesses hundreds of thousands of hectares of land undercultivated by serfs who still must pay them 60 to 70 percent of the crops. And the frightening indifference of a westernized ruling class in the capital that divides its time between its black Mercedes Benz automobiles and the wordly pleasures of the Casino-Ghion, which is personally owned by the emperor."

"Especially shocking," continues Guillebaud, "is something that is more subtle, almost undefinable. A kind of immanent, absolute injustice. Staggering inequality, the keystone of a strict social order and Paragraph 1 of the Ethiopian catechism. Indifference is the by-product of this 'institutionalized' inequality, this 'natural' injustice. A heavy, artless indifference.

It's not a matter of 50,000 or 100,000 Ethiopians dying in 1973 because of starvation. More precisely, 50,000 or 100,000 paupers died because of the indifference of the wealthy."

However, this was not the limit of capitalist arrogance. Feudal landowners have been hoarding stocks for years, waiting for the famine to become acute enough to make prices jump. In some villages timorous revolts protested the speculation. Hidden hoards of stock were burned by villagers. But such action was exceptional. The wealthy profited from the famine in another way: by buying up lands sold off for a pittance by the poor along with their remaining livestock; and by lending at a rate of 100 to 200 percent. "Yet at the peak of the famine," wrote Guillebaud, ". . . traders never stopped resupplying, in the most distant villages, those who could pay."

Furthermore, to justify a 1973 first-quarter increase of 92 percent in exports of grain and other foodstuffs, the National Bank of Ethiopia reports that the country can now meet demand. This type of boasting has only drawn the suspicion of numerous agencies participating in the relief program. If a reexamination of the Ethiopian bank assessment of the situation and of the regime's own export statistics results in a finding of mismanagement, a cutback in aid for disaster-stricken Wallo and Tigre provinces could result.

Signs of the famine are visible everywhere. Three months after massive aid was poured into the provincial capitals of Dessie and Makale, groups of peasants continued to arrive every day at the entrances to the main relief camps. "At Dessie for example," reported Guillebaud, "we saw five living skeletons crouching in the dust, two men and three women, their faces bloated by the edema of malnutrition. They're from Jedjou, a four-day walk. 'We held out as long as we could by rationing grain. . . . We didn't want to leave our parents. Now they're dead and there isn't a soul left in our village.'"

Addis Ababa appears to give little priority to its "long-term rehabilitation plan." For instance, the three bridges between Dessie and Makale that were washed away last July by torrential rains have yet to be rebuilt. When the wet season returns in a few months the only road between Dessie and

Makale could again become untraversable.

There is also the problem of rehabilitating refugees. Guillebaud described it in this way: "Thousands of peasants temporarily saved from the famine cannot be kept indefinitely in relief camps. Ethiopian authorities clearly do not envisage that, and they have already begun to encourage peasants to 'return to the villages,' sometimes making brusque statements. A minister told us: 'The people quickly have begun to get lazy.'"

But a policy of "coercive" relocation as a solution to a famine exacerbated by negligence implies serious problems. Many families no longer have any land. Furthermore, in the worst-stricken regions much of the livestock has also died off. The vast Ethiopian herds (26 million cattle) furnished the only draft power available.

"Replenishing the livestock is a precondition to returning the peasants to their villages. The West German government just loaned Ethiopia 1.5 million marks for the purchase of 7,000 pairs of cattle. A question arises: What will be used to feed this cattle to be sent at great expense to the villages? 'Sometimes we seem to be going around in circles,' a Dessie relief worker modestly said."

If dying cattle has posed a problem for settled villagers in the famine areas, it has practically become an irreversible catastrophe for the 125,000 Danakil nomads who wander the deserts of the Northeast. "Rejecting agriculture, living from the milk of their camels or goats, and bartering their daily products for grain when the need arises, today the Danakils are totally deprived." A representative of one of their tribal chiefs described the situation confronting his tribe: "We had 8,000 people in our group. Now there are only 2,000 living. We had 55,000 goats and cows. All are dead. All we have left is 71 camels."

One relief worker, a young Ethiopian doctor, asserted that the most they could hope for was to return the population to the standard of living that prevailed before the famine.

However, for millions of Ethiopians a return to the previous standard of living means ". . . an uncertain existence bordering on underdevelopment and famine. With an annual per capita



Ethiopian peasants driven from their homes by hunger wait in refugee camp.

income of sixty dollars (less than India), Ethiopia contains some of the most impoverished peoples in the world."

A totally mismanaged feudal sharecropping system is the perennial cause of a standstill economy. It is the main obstacle to recovery from the current famine, as was the case during three earlier droughts. In the January 18 *Le Monde* Guillebaud depicted Ethiopia's agrarian society.

"While 90 percent of Ethiopians are peasants, only 10 percent of the land, which is very fertile, is cultivated. One third of the land belongs to big landowners, who in some provinces, such as Wollo, Choa, and Godjam, received the land from the emperor in return for their political loyalty. Another third is owned by the church or monasteries bound up in a formal, medieval obscurantism. For example, in the Kobo region one can drive for hours without leaving the same property. Huge fiefdoms! Some are as large as 300,000 to 500,000 hectares, and the tenants who plow the land with wooden swing-ploughs have to turn over to the landowner up to 75 per-

cent of their crops, as well as costly traditional holiday gifts, taxes, land rent, etc.

"Although paltry, the produce of an archaic agrarian system, multiplied by vast properties, has always enabled a tiny landholding aristocracy to lead a good life in Addis Ababa."

Delicately balanced, the fragile equilibrium of Ethiopia's subsistence economy seems to be failing. As one foreigner observed: "How do you expect to convince the peasant to improve his crops, to work harder, when he knows that only the landowner will profit?"

Although there are other obstacles blocking Ethiopia's evolution from a feudal agrarian economy—exorbitant military spending leaving the agricultural sector only 6 percent of the national budget, and the lack of a coherent and systematic policy for economic development—the salient problem naturally is that of agrarian reform. Ethiopia's third five-year plan foresaw little hope for agricultural development in view of the present farming methods and small area under cultivation. "The immediate goal of the agrarian reform is to overcome

the apathy of the rural population that results from the harmful effects of the traditional farming systems, the concentration of landed property in the hands of a few, the peasants' insecurity, and the exorbitant share of the harvest that must be given to the landowner."

Guillebaud's account described the apparent political opposition to carrying out an agrarian reform that would notably reduce the landowner's share of the crops and would provide for a new land survey and the establishment of cooperatives. "Proposals for reform . . . clash with the hostility of the landowners who control the two chambers of the legislature, sharing a fraction of the political power with the emperor. Religious fanatics, devout reactionaries, and often tied to the emperor by the strings of family alliances and services rendered, they won't accept any change that would one day strip them of their privileges."

But, in reality, the emperor is not so much blocked by a political opposition as his own unwillingness to carry out an efficacious agrarian reform. Emperor Haile Selassie is after all the biggest landowner in Ethiopia. □

Where Ireland's Freedom Struggle Stands Today

[The following interview was given to Gerry Foley in Dublin during the first week of January by Dara Mac Dara, the editor of the Provisional republican paper *An Phoblacht*. Unless otherwise specified, the terms "republican" and "republican movement" refer to the Provisionals. The same names are used by the Provisionals and the Officials to identify their organizations. Identification is often by the address of their offices after the split: Kevin Street for the Provisionals, Gardiner Place for the Officials. The address of *An Phoblacht* is 44 Cearnóg Pharnell, Baile Atha Cliath, Eire.

[Mac Dara has not been able to check the transcript of this interview.]

* * *

Question: Where do you think the fight against British imperialism in the North stands at the moment?

Answer: I don't know what the British government will do next, but I would say that within the next six months public opinion will force them to withdraw the troops. They, as much as everyone else, are in ignorance of what is going to happen in the Six Counties politically with the Loyalists, the so-called Loyalists, the *colon* element.

Q. Could you explain your characterization of the Loyalists?

A. The Loyalists are a *colon* element, the descendants of the Planters, people on whom the British have relied from time to time to divide Ireland. The Unionists were originally active all over Ireland. The Orange party was founded from Dublin Castle [the seat of British administration] and was used to divide the people. The "Orange card" has been used repeatedly to divide the Irish people. The Brits have used this community as an enclave, a social, economic, and political bridgehead.

But now Faulkner [the former Belfast premier] has been humiliatingly defeated by eighty votes in the Union-

ist party council. But he says he is going to stay on in the new assembly. The question is whether there is going to be an open conflict between two wings of Unionism. The Unionists have already attacked the British army on a number of occasions. Will this thing open out into a second front? And if so, can the Irish liberation forces come to an understanding with the Loyalists; that is, not to attack each other but to attack the common enemy? I would imagine that would be the big problem of the next few months.

Q. Isn't there a contradiction in saying that the Unionists are a "colon" element and that at the same time it may be possible to have an alliance with them against the British?

A. Well, I think that there are always certain elements among a *colon* group that the national liberation forces can ally with. I would hope so anyway. It doesn't always turn out that way. In Algeria, while most of the *colons* quit the country, there were some—working class people—who sided with the FLN.

Q. So, you think that there is a possibility of an alliance with some elements at least of the Unionist community as such?

A. Well, I would hope so. Not with the Unionist community as such, at least not if that meant watering down our principles. But we might be able to unite on the basis of being workers. I don't know if it is possible, but I would like to see it happening.

Q. Do you foresee, as you seemed to say, joint military operations against the British forces by the Protestant vigilantes and the IRA?

A. Yes, it could happen. When or how, I don't know. But already the council of the UDA, the Ulster Defence Association, has seen the murder of one of their leaders as an act of British intelligence. It has also seen

the creation of the so-called Ulster Freedom Fighters as a counterinsurgency group of the type recommended by the British army expert Kitson.

So they are becoming aware of a number of things that they didn't understand last year. So I would be hopeful without being too optimistic.

Q. You would be hopeful of an actual military alliance between the IRA and the UDA?

A. On the basis of a common front against the common enemy, yes. I wouldn't be terrifically optimistic. But I think such a possibility should be explored and I think it will be explored.

Q. What has the IRA achieved over the last year?

A. The most important thing has been the defense of the people. The bombing campaign was started, as you probably know, for two reasons: The first reason was the economic reason; it was a direct attack on capital. The second reason was that the British troops were in nationally minded areas harassing the people, and the objective was to force the British army command to pull them out and have them guard installations, premises, factories, power plants, and all this sort of thing. In this way they couldn't be concentrated in the nationally minded areas upsetting the people.

I was in Belfast and Derry recently, and I was curious to find out what effect the SDLP* maneuvers with the

*Social Democratic and Labour party, the old Nationalist party plus some independent civil-rights leaders and some local left nationalists. As the successor to the old parliamentary Nationalist party, the SDLP has been a key element in the British government's attempts to achieve a political settlement in the North of Ireland that could reconcile the nationalist-minded population to continued imperialist domination.

The elections for the new provincial as-

Unionists had on our supporters. As far as I could see, our support has not diminished at all. On the contrary, I found that in some working-class and middle-class areas where a few months ago they were interested in the SDLP they are now becoming disillusioned.

The republican movement did not contest the elections. It could not, because there was no recognition of the rights of Sinn Féin as a legal party. So it might be thought that we achieved nothing politically, since the SDLP was able to come in. But still about 20 percent of the nationally minded vote was unaccounted for. The SDLP often claims to speak for the "minority." But if you add up their vote, you find that 20 percent is missing. It didn't go to the Unionists; it didn't go to the Official republicans. It apparently represents people who abstained. That is a substantial percentage, and that 20 percent does not seem to have been affected. There were also many people who voted SDLP because they thought they had to vote for somebody and they couldn't vote Unionist, Alliance, or anything else, so they thought voting for the SDLP was the best they could do.

But I would be willing to forecast, although I don't like making predictions, that the SDLP will lose a considerable part of its support within the next few months. That should create a new political situation within the Six Counties. On the one hand, the Unionists are splitting up, and on the other, I think, the SDLP will lose considerable support.

To go back to the original question about our gains. I would say that we have held on, and the attack

sembly in June were a major step in this strategy. The Official republicans ran candidates. The Provisionals called for a boycott. Outside of some republican strongholds, the overwhelming majority of the nationalist-minded population voted, giving most of their votes to the SDLP, the traditional party of "negotiation."

Since the elections, the SDLP and the Unionist party leadership have agreed to a joint executive that is supposed to involve nationalists in running the government of the area and thus overcome the historic disadvantages of the Catholics. — IP

on capital has continued. A few months ago John Taylor [former Unionist minister of the interior] said that the bombing campaign had already cost the Brits £300,000,000. This is at a time when the Brits are really up against it, when the capitalist system in Britain is being challenged from all sides. Obviously, it's a good thing to hit that economy as hard as we can and keep on hitting it. This is the only attack on capital that is going on in Western Europe at the moment, and in my opinion, an attack on capital can only be socialist.

Q. There have been many wars in the last thirty years or so and they have resulted in destroying a lot of property without bringing socialism. What do you think gives the campaign in the North a specifically socialist direction?

A. The republican movement claims to be a socialist movement. Our objective is to destroy capitalism in Ireland and restore power to the people.

Q. But how are these aims related to what your movement is doing in the North?

A. The primary question in the North is the national question. It started off as defense of the people in 1969. Now it is no longer a question just of defense but of throwing the Brits out and ending the connection between Ireland and Britain, and British interference in Irish affairs, to achieve complete and utter Irish freedom. We would hope that the socialist policies of the movement would be accepted by the people, but the primary objective is to end British imperialism in the North, end British interference in Irish affairs, and start a new era of independence. And on that basis we ally ourselves with anybody who will work toward that end with us. And we have People's Democracy, the Revolutionary Marxist Group, and others in alliance with us at home and abroad.

Q. But what's the specific relationship between the national struggle in the North and your socialist aims? How do you see the two coming together?

A. In 1969, an attempt was made to improve the situation in the North, on the basis of reformism, that is, roughly on a civil-rights basis. It was similar to the Black civil-rights movement in America. It is interesting to note that the revolution of 1798 also began as a movement for civil rights and that it was also inspired from America. It was inspired first from America and then from France, by the French Revolution. This idea penetrated, and Belfast became the focus. You have a parallel situation today.

When the civil-rights movement was started, many groups and people came together hoping that they could change things by demonstrations and protests. Well, the people were attacked. The people defeated the RUC [Royal Ulster Constabulary]. It was then that the British army was called in, because the RUC had been beaten. It then bit by bit became an armed struggle. The people who were involved in it were very politically unaware. The Irish people are the most conservative people in Europe, maybe in the world. They are a very, very conservative people. If they hadn't been so conservative a people, they would hardly have survived.

I am speaking in historical terms. I don't mean that they should be conservative today. Every time change was suggested to them, or urged upon them, they examined it very carefully and went very, very slowly. If they had accepted change quickly, they would have abandoned their language far sooner, and would have been assimilated to the Anglo-Saxon thing.

As I said, in 1969, the people were unaware. You had a conservative people driven to despair by the lack of civil rights and trying to get civil rights on the streets by peaceful demonstrations. These were attacked. The people fought back. This was also the time of the split in the republican movement, because some wanted to go one way and others another.

One of the problems at that time was that the Irish Republican Army was completely run down because of the policies of the republican movement. This was one of the main reasons for the split. An army had to be built up very, very quickly. And it was built up quickly, within about a year. So, when the change of government came in Britain and Maudling ordered the attack on the Falls Road,

some resistance was possible. The army has been building up since; the movement has been building up since.

But the movement is largely evolving because of the military struggle and the political struggle, with people learning from life. At the same time, there has been a cross-fertilization between the traditions of republicanism and the ideas of People's Democracy, the Revolutionary Marxist Group, and various other radical groups of that nature. We also have our own policies but they are not final words. We have positions on cooperatives and governmental decentralization which have been adopted by our *ard fheis* [convention] but are not the final blueprint and perhaps have not been properly discussed. To my mind, the whole thing is in flux and will remain in flux.

National liberation comes first, but we should be working, and the republican movement is working, if slowly, to make the people more politically aware; so that when liberation is achieved, we will have some standing with the people, and we would hope that our policies would be accepted.

Q. Over the past year in particular An Phoblacht, which you edit, has shown an increasing interest in political questions. How do you see the role of the paper in the present struggle?

A. More than anything else, the paper is the organ of the army [i.e., the IRA] and the function of the paper is to reflect the activities of the army. Outside of that, as I see it, and as many other people in the movement see it and are increasingly seeing it, the movement is not entirely a military movement. One could perhaps compare it, in very general terms, with the movement in Cuba. The people revolted against the terrible cruelty of the Batista regime. They came together and formed a military group, and from this the political thought came. This, I think, is true of the present, although we have many branches of the movement.

There is an army, which is carrying on the physical force struggle, with guns and bombs and all the rest of it. There is also the political part of the movement, which is suggesting political concepts for the New Ireland,

where power will be returned to the people. We have the civil-rights movement, that is, the Irish Civil Rights Association, which exists more or less on a reformist basis but which plays a role in the political education of the people, trying to get them out on the street, to get them protesting. It aims to bring together as broad an alliance as possible of people who believe in democracy, justice, and social justice.

And then you have the Cumann na mBan [Women's Association], which



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looks at the struggle mainly from the point of view of the liberation of women. Then there is the Fianna Eireann, which looks after the political and national education of the children. You have Cumann na gCailini, which looks after the girls. Then there is An Cumann Cabhrach, which looks after the prisoners' dependents. Fianna Eireann has girls and boys in it at the moment. Cumann na mBan has only women in it.

Q. You say that Cumann na mBan is concerned with women's liberation; do you mean that it has demands for women's liberation?

A. I regard women's liberation as

a middle-class, bourgeois gimmick. That's what it is in England. When I say women's liberation, I mean equal rights. In the army at the moment we have men and women fighting together. I wouldn't say the men are better than the women or that the women are better than the men. Both are doing tremendous work. As I understand about Cumann na mBan, and I don't know an awful lot about it, to be frank, it aims to educate women about their rights and get them to fight for their rights.

To go back to the paper. As I said, it primarily reflects the military struggle. All the time we realize more and more that the political and the military struggle are tied together. This was not realized very clearly in 1969, but it is becoming increasingly obvious. People may have read Connolly because he was a patriot and a martyr, canonized, as it were. Now they are beginning to see the connections between Connolly's writings and Pearse's *Sovereign People* and the present problems, such as the National Wage Agreement [a compulsory arbitration package overseen by the government]. We support the fight against it, the right to strike. We are against productivity agreements. This is a policy I am putting forward gradually. I have had no opposition, no criticism, from any elements of the movement. In fact, I have had full support.

What I would like to stress is that we are evolving. We are learning from life. We look at every problem that comes up from the national and social standpoint and in the context of national liberation. I am trying to do this so that the people will understand it, without resorting to clichés and slogan-mongering.

Two years ago, the paper was narrow, from the point of view that it would not tolerate anything but assent. Over the past year, I have been encouraging people to criticize the movement, to say what they agree with, what they disagree with. I have been publishing controversial articles. On a few occasions, I've been rapped gently on the knuckles, but I have been allowed to continue.

People have been writing in and complaining about the socialist content of the paper since I took over. We have published these letters and the replies to them. Unfortunately, the

controversy did not continue. But I would welcome that. I would welcome complete and open discussion. I would not say that I don't have a great deal to learn or that the paper hasn't got a great deal to learn. A lot of work has to be done in educating the people. The ideas I have may have to be revised in the light of experience; some of the movement's ideas may have to be revised in the light of experience.

The paper is an open forum; it welcomes discussion. It hopes to bring the various radical elements together; give them a common platform, and let them thrash it out logically.

Q. Since you say that the movement has been learning from experience, what do you think is the most important thing the movement has learned from experience over the last year?

A. I think the most important thing, what even the dullest of us are beginning to understand, is that you cannot depend on the middle class for progress. Progress must come from the working class. That may sound like a cliché. Many socialist thinkers have said it. But if you look at the occupations of the people who are being imprisoned in the North and in the South, they are plasterers, builders, unemployed, carpenters, and so forth; they are working-class people.

It's very seldom you find a bank clerk, or an insurance salesman involved. There are a few of them, and they are good people, very good people. They do good work. But the vast majority are working-class people. The middle-class mentality is to damp things down, to accept everything; it is a cowardly attitude. The working class is more militant, more courageous, and manly. That is the most important thing that has been learned over the last year.

This applies to the middle-class politicians North and South who have been ganging up on the workers, the church leaders who have been ganging up on the workers. I am speaking as a convinced, if a bad, practicing Catholic. But I would still criticize the Church in Ireland as being completely dominated by the middle class with common middle-class attitudes.

I would like to contrast the attitude of the Catholic church in Spain with

that of the Catholic church in Ireland. I am speaking of the comisiones obreras, where you have Catholic Action and socialist groups working together for the good of the people. I am also thinking of Latin America, where even the aristocracy of the Church, the bishops, are working with the people. It is a very discouraging thing for a convinced Catholic to see the Catholic church in Ireland, and the churches in general, adopting the attitude that force may be used only by the forces of oppression, that the people have no right to defend themselves.

Q. What possibilities do you see for cooperation between the Official republicans and your own movement?

A. The only possibility for cooperation between us and Gardiner Place [the Official republicans] at the moment is an agreement to avoid armed clashes between us in the North, or anywhere else. This arrangement, at the moment—thank God—is working reasonably well. Outside of this, our experience has been that when a genuine attempt from our side at cooperation has been made, it has been sabotaged. Indeed, the peace pact, which we have adhered to very sincerely, has been broken in the South by elements of Gardiner Place. I am not suggesting that the authorities, the top leadership, are opposed to this peace, but I would doubt their discipline, their ability to control certain elements in certain places.

There is a place for different elements to come together to fight repression, in the Irish Civil Rights Association. But as far as I know, Gardiner Place has told its members not to join the Irish Civil Rights Association. So, if they don't take this opportunity of joining an open organization, I don't know on what basis they would want to work together with us. I don't understand it.

I personally would welcome cooperation from everybody, with no conditions and no strings attached. And I think this is the policy of the republican movement. We want as broad a front against monopoly capitalism as possible, against repression and all its other forms. The only way I can see this occurring now in Ireland is through the Irish Civil Rights Association.

Q. What is your strategy for fighting repression?

A. I can only speak from the standpoint of the paper. What we are trying to do is get the members of Sinn Féin out onto the streets to protest on every possible occasion. We have had very disappointing results. I don't think that there is any member of the leadership of Sinn Féin who would say that the results have been absolutely satisfactory. There is a small hard core who devote sixteen hours, maybe twenty-four hours on occasion; but this is not true of the country. What the paper is trying to do is spur the inactive, to shame them, to make them aware of the power of the people on the streets, to get them to go out to do something to publicize the conditions of the prisoners.

Q. What do you think explains the apathy that exists in the Twenty-Six Counties, or do you agree that there is general apathy?

A. I mentioned before that the Irish people are a very conservative people, who change very slowly. At the moment we have all the forces of publicity, the radio, the television, and newspapers almost completely against us. We have plans to bring out a daily paper when we have enough experience in bringing out a paper and enough people trained. The circulation of *An Phoblacht* is 35,000 at present. In the last three months we have had an increase in circulation of 28 percent. That meant that we have a readership of 100,000 out of a population of four and half million people. That is an indication of how far we have gotten.

The people in the Six Counties have become aware because of the harassment they have suffered from all sides. The people in the Twenty-Six Counties are just beginning to become aware. One sign of this is the increasing opposition to the National Wage Agreement. Their disillusionment with Common Market membership is another indication. The energy crisis has made them aware that we are virtually totally dependent on Britain for our oil supplies; we get our oil by the grace of the British. This is also bringing the point home. The people are beginning to question. But there is general apathy. People are slow to change.

Possibly with the increased repression in the South, they will be brought more face to face with the reality.

Q. Do you think that the republican movement has come to think more about the international context of the struggle against British imperialism in Ireland?

A. As many of us see it in the republican movement increasingly, the cause of the Irish worker is the cause of the worker in Scotland, Wales, and England; as well as Brittany, the Basque Country, and the Provençal area of France; and of workers generally all over Western Europe, especially where they are oppressed. Everywhere that workers are oppressed, we are increasingly seeing this as part of the common struggle.

My own hope is that the Irish liberation struggle will be the launching pad for the liberation struggle in England, Scotland, Wales, Brittany, and elsewhere. We would certainly support these struggles. There is a phrase in Irish: *An gad is goire don scornach*, "the rope that is closest to your throat" is the one that worries you the most. But we certainly sympathize with these struggles.

I have pointed out in the paper that the forces that are being used to suppress the nationally minded people in the Six Counties, and in fact all over the Thirty-two Counties, are the same forces that will be used if necessary, when the time comes to suppress strikers in England and France. The same methods of interrogation and assassination will be used against strikers.

We would be glad to share our experience with people struggling in other areas and help in every possible way to export our revolution and assist in the liberation of working people everywhere.

Q. How do you see the development of support for the Irish struggle internationally? In particular, the republican movement has affiliates in Britain and the United States. What perspective have you set for them?

A. British imperialism finds itself in enormous economic difficulties. There is a saying that England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity. If a massive boycott of English goods could be

organized internationally, in North and South America and elsewhere, demanding the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, it could get those troops out within six months. I am convinced of that. And the biggest problem we have at the moment is to get the troops out.

When the British are out, the bribery will be ended that has divided the Irish people. Once one section stops getting their three hundred thousand or four hundred thousand pound subsidy, ordinary working-class people will realize that they have to live together, no matter what their former traditions were. Their common sense will dictate peace and tranquillity on the basis of whatever compromises are necessary in religion, morals, or anything else.

There is another way people abroad could help us. They could send us money for the military campaign. And, more important than anything else, money is needed for the dependents of the prisoners. There must be something like 3,000 people detained or imprisoned at the moment. This means in effect enforced emigration, because they can't get relief in Ireland. This is part of the traditional policy of the Free State government to force republicans to emigrate. An *Cumann Cabhrach* is strained to the utmost to care for these dependents.

If a person is looking for a job today in the Twenty-six Counties in public employment, his background is screened. And if there is any political question, he doesn't get the job. The repression goes far deeper than it might appear.

I would like to point out, too, that there are many people in Ireland and abroad who support us but do not realize all the social implications of the struggle. We have been painted by some as fascists, and by others as Communists. We use the broad term "socialist" in the sense that our objective is to bring power to the people and find our own path to socialism.

We do not think this can be gotten by some blueprint from the thinkers of the past or the present. It's something we have to work out for ourselves. But its objective is to bring freedom to each individual and its objective is not to introduce a new tyranny or a new class like what hap-

pened in the Soviet Union or others of the so-called socialist countries.

Our objective is to bring real peace and tranquillity to the people, and this cannot be accomplished under monopoly capitalism. We have seen this over the years, with the overlordship of British capital and of American capital operating against us. The interests of the American monopoly capitalists and the British monopoly capitalists are the same.

We don't like labels. In its origin "socio" means a member. And what we mean by socialism is everyone coming together and working for the common good without one person dominating another. That is why the emphasis in the *Eire Nua* program is so much on cooperativism, genuine cooperativism, not capitalist cooperativism.

Q. When you speak of support for national liberation struggles abroad, does that include support for the oppressed nationalities in the Soviet Union who are struggling against the Great Russian chauvinism of the Soviet bureaucracy?

A. I understand that there are some nationalities in the Soviet Union that have been completely uprooted, expelled from their homelands and settled in different areas, forced to live in unfamiliar regions under state oppression. That would be completely against our ideas. We would not want to take any section of the people in Ireland and put them in ghettos or subject them to any kind of oppression. We would encourage the people in the Liberties [a section of Dublin] to continue to live where they have always lived and according to their traditions instead of letting themselves be rooted out to serve the interests of monopoly capitalism. They are being moved out so that office blocks can be built where their homes are.

We are interested in consolidating communities where people understand each other and know how to live together, such as the Bogside and the Creggan [in Derry city], Connemara, or the Donegal Gaeltacht [Irish-speaking area.] We want to encourage these local loyalties, these ties between neighbor and neighbor. And so we are against forced deportations in the Soviet Union or anywhere else, as in America, where groups of Spanish-

speaking people and Blacks have been broken up, where attempts have been made to destroy nationalities, the feeling of identity. We think that identity, the ego-integrity of peoples is very important and should not be threatened.

Q. That brings to mind the Irish-language movement in Ireland. One of the notable changes in Ireland over the last year has been a rapid abandonment of even the token support to the language that has been given by the government and capitalist institutions. Does this reflect a decline in interest in Irish and the Irish-language movement?

A. Well, I think that the identity of the Irish people is mainly in the language, because the language enshrines the memories and the traditions of the people, their forms of thought. The language restoration movement is also important because at the moment most people depend on the media, which are controlled and operated in the interests of monopoly capitalism, and alien ideas in general.

Up till the war began in the North, the language movement was controlled by Fianna Fáil. A few years ago, Conradh na Gaeilge [the Gaelic League] had a complete internal revolution. They declared themselves for socialism. That led to clashes with Fianna Fáil and actions by the party against the language, directly and indirectly. They moved to reduce the importance of the language in the lives of the ordinary people. I myself was in prison for a while because I could not get a form in Irish, which is something that I am entitled to according to the law. I eventually won my case, but I had to go to prison to win it. Other people have had to do the same. They have had to go to prison for their language rights.

In Conradh na Gaeilge, the people have opted for socialism in general terms, but I don't think they have worked it out in detail. Conradh na Gaeilge is neutral in the clash between Gardiner Place—which to my mind is nothing more than a reformist organization—and Kevin Street [the Provisionals], which is a revolutionary organization. I don't see how one can adopt a neutral attitude. To be neutral

in such a case is really to be against us.

At the same time, Conradh na Gaeilge is helping the people in prison with textbooks and in every other possible way to learn the language. There has been tremendous interest in the language in the last two years. And the biggest problem has been (I am a member of Conradh na Gaeilge; I'm on the Coiste Gnothaí [Executive Committee])—has been to find enough teachers. The people have not been taught Irish properly in the schools, and they come out with the same knowledge that most people in Western European schools come out with of a foreign language.

The only possible way of acquiring a good knowledge of Irish is to go to an all-Irish school. And the government has put up one obstacle after another to this. On one side they say that they are in favor of this idea. But on the other they don't provide textbooks in Irish. So that the teachers have to translate the textbooks and mimeograph them. This causes tremendous problems. So the number of all-Irish primary and secondary schools has been decreasing. And there is no university in which one can do a complete course through Irish.

There are documented cases of Irish speakers in Connemara being refused admission to the University College Galway because they didn't know enough English. There are also cases of people trying to join the Garda Síochána [police] and being refused because they didn't know enough English. English is the compulsory language under monopoly capitalism in Ireland. The Irish language is one of the tools of the revolution. As a Fenian said, "the Irish language is a time bomb."

Q. What specific political task are you asking the language movement to take up? What do you call on it to do?

A. What I would call on the language movement to do is to immerse itself completely in the struggle against monopoly capitalism on all fronts, one of the most important fronts being the cultural front. Irish speakers must abandon this so-called neutrality and throw themselves completely and absolutely into the struggle.

Q. In other words, they should join Sinn Féin (Kevin Street)?

A. Yes, or the other parts of the movement. There is one very important way Irish-language workers could help. And that's to bring the language out onto the streets and let it be seen. Every time we have a demonstration at least some of the posters should be in Irish. The slogans that are shouted should be in Irish. Some of the songs that are sung should be in Irish. The language should be made more of a public thing. People who try to do this will find sympathy in the republican movement.

There is a tremendous interest in the language in Long Kesh prison camp and Port Laoise jail. In Port Laoise at the moment, 65 percent of the political prisoners are learning Irish. The Irish classes in Long Kesh have been successful for years. People who went into Long Kesh with no Irish have come out fluent Irish speakers. □

Hungarian Writer Sentenced

A Budapest court on January 10 gave an eight-month suspended sentence to Miklos Haraszti, a young poet and writer. Haraszti was convicted of "incitement" against a "fundamental institution" for having written a book, *Piece Rates*, that criticized a new system of wage incentives and differentials as inconsistent with socialist goals.

The book was based on Haraszti's own experiences working in Budapest factories. It had been commissioned by official publishers but was rejected because of its attack on the new wages system.

Haraszti was arrested last May 22 after he had circulated several copies of the manuscript privately. His subsequent trial was interrupted by several postponements after prominent intellectuals testified in his defense. The last postponement, after a court session on October 15-16, had led to hopes that the charges against Haraszti might be quietly dropped.

The January 11 issue of *Le Monde* wrote of the trial: "Even the widows of Communist leaders like Mme. Laszlo Rajk attended. It was believed when the trial was postponed to allow [the prosecution] to gather further information that the case would finally be dismissed."

While convicting Haraszti on the one charge, the court acquitted him of an accusation of "conspiracy" to circulate his manuscript because he showed it only to persons who already agreed with him or who were "unsusceptible" to his views. □

New Constitution, Elections Proposed in Thailand

Just three months after the overthrow in October of the Thanom military regime in Thailand, the committee chosen to draw up a new constitution announced that the draft had been completed. The proposed constitution called for a bicameral legislature, the lower house to be elected in nationwide balloting. The lower house would then select the 100 members of the upper house from a slate of 300 candidates picked by the king.

The draft constitution is scheduled to go before the National Legislative Assembly for discussion and approval. Three months after the National Assembly approves the constitution, national legislative elections are scheduled to be held.

The completion of the draft constitution—along with the selection in December of a new Assembly—marks another step in the new regime's efforts to stabilize itself. Although it is not yet clear what the details of the electoral process will be—the extent of the franchise, the eligibility requirements for candidates, the length of office, the number of seats in the two houses, or the relationships between the various posts—some idea of what the Thai ruling class means by "democracy" can be seen in the way they chose the new National Assembly.

The "election" of the National Assembly took place on December 18-19 at the Royal Turf Club stadium in Bangkok. The 2,343-member national convention, which had been established by King Phumiphol Aduldet in November, chose 299 of its number to form the National Assembly. Although a few students were appointed to the national convention by the king, none were elected to the Assembly. At first everyone under 35 years old was disqualified from running for the Assembly, but the restriction was dropped at the last moment. By then it was too late for the youthful student delegates to organize potential support in the convention delegation.

"According to some accounts," wrote the December 31 *Far Eastern Economic Review*, "many of [the] rural members had been told to vote for high-ranking provincial officials such

as governors and district officers; in all probability they did just that."

The two strongest and best organized blocs within the convention were the military and the old bureaucracy, a factor which had much to do with the composition of the new National Assembly. The police and military had made up 85 percent of the old Assembly appointed by the ousted Thanom. Of the 164 former members participating in the convention, 53 were returned to the Assembly.

Among the delegates who received the most votes were Kukrit Pramoj, the publisher of *Siam Rath*, an influential Bangkok newspaper; Puey Ungphakorn, an important bourgeois politician and a former governor of the Bank of Thailand; Sagna Kittikachorn, a police major general and Thanom Kittikachorn's brother; Thanat Khoman, a former foreign minister and prominent figure prior to the October events in the movement for a new constitution; Lieutenant General Saiyud Kerdphol, head of the Communist Suppression Organization; and Teprit Tevakul, an agricultural adviser to the king and a well-known rainmaker.

The *Far Eastern Economic Review* gave a partial breakdown of the new Assembly by profession: "civil servants 94, professors and teachers 37, politicians 33, armed forces 23, police 13, businessmen and bankers 21, sub-district and village chiefs 11, lawyers 8, journalists and writers 13, farmers 2."

Such was the outcome of this "major exercise in Thai democracy." The students and workers who actually overthrew the dictatorship did not even receive token representation. Unless the workers, students, and other poor sections of the population organize their own independent parties before the coming elections, those results will probably be similar.

While the workers movement is at this point still very unorganized and the largest student group, the National Student Center of Thailand, has aligned itself to some extent with the regime, the discontent that toppled the

dictatorship is still quite visible, the student protests against Tanaka and the CIA being the most spectacular examples.

The skyrocketing inflation, which has been aggravated even further by the world energy crisis, has led to hoarding of scarce goods. The January 15 Tokyo English-language *Mainichi Daily News* reported that thousands of residents and truck drivers staged demonstrations against high oil prices in the provinces of Khong Khaen, Lampang, Chiang Mai, and Uttaradit. The January 18 *Le Monde* reported that vocational-school students, who had been in the forefront of the student actions against the old regime, had protested a hike in bus fares in early January. These actions led to the destruction of about ten buses, the sacking of a police station, and the death of one student.

The continued unrest throughout the country gives the new regime much to worry about. While it has made many concessions, trying to defuse the mobilizations, some sections of the Thai ruling class have begun to threaten harsher measures, should the unrest continue to spread. One morning daily exclaimed: "This senseless violence cannot continue. The government will use all means to maintain respect for the law." The January 18 *Le Monde* reported that Kukrit Pramoj, speaker of the National Assembly, had made an appeal for greater "firmness in restoring law and order." □

One Year Before 1984

Unemployed former Vice-President Spiro Agnew is reported to be spending his time working on a novel. Agnew submitted a sample chapter and synopsis to Random House publishers, which rejected the manuscript as "not suitable."

The hero of the novel is a vice-president of the United States. According to the *New York Times*, "the plot is set in 1983, and . . . the Vice President is deceived by militant Iranian nationalists who wish . . . to force a confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union in the Middle East."

It would never sell. Everyone knows that happens to all politicians.

Liga Comunista Position on Carrero Assassination

[The following statement on the assassination of Spain's Prime Minister Carrero Blanco was issued in January by the Political Bureau of the Spanish Liga Comunista (Communist League, a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International). For the point of view of the LCR/ETA(VI) (Liga Comunista Revolucionaria/Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna—Revolutionary Communist League/Basque Nation and Freedom [Sixth Congress]), the other sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Spain, see *Intercontinental Press*, January 21, 1974, pp. 62-64. The translation of the Liga Comunista statement is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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The assassination of Carrero Blanco on December 20, 1973, by members of the organization ETA(V) can only be characterized as an act of individual terrorism.

Except in conditions of civil war, Marxists are opposed in principle to individual terrorism.

Marxists oppose individual terrorism because it sows illusions among the masses, lowers their level of consciousness, demobilizes them, and reduces them to passivity.

In the last analysis, terrorism springs from the same source as reformism, which it also promotes. Both terrorists and reformists look to changing the capitalist superstructure, either through deals or by bombs, as a substitute for mass action. "A terrorist is a liberal with a bomb in his hand."

At the present time, needless to say, there is no civil war going on in the Spanish state; and terrorism does not promote, but rather has negative effects on, the struggle of the workers and the oppressed masses against the bourgeoisie and its dictatorship.

The LCR/ETA(VI), an organization that claims to be Marxist and Trotskyist, has given total support to the terrorist action carried out by the ETA(V), justifying this with the clas-

sical arguments and terminology of petty-bourgeois terrorism: "The disappearance of Carrero Blanco weakens the regime. . . ." "accelerates the crisis of the dictatorship. . . ." and "will constitute an encouragement to extending the struggle against the dictatorship."

In taking such a position, the LCR/ETA(VI) has clearly broken with the Marxist principles and conceptions regarding terrorism.

In opposition to the position adopted by the LCR/ETA(VI), in opposition to terrorism and reformism, the Liga Comunista as a Marxist organization declares its disagreement with the terrorist act carried out by the ETA(V) and its support for mobilizing the masses in direct action, which was always the line of the revolutionary party led by Lenin and Trotsky and has always been the line of the Fourth International.

Between terrorist action and the arguments of its defenders on the one side and the road of mobilizing the masses for direct, independent action on the other, the difference is not one of opinion or tactics; it is one of principle, of class. Terrorism is a petty-bourgeois method; mass action, a proletarian one.

Against the dictatorship, against the Francoist repression and terror, the Liga Comunista calls for unconditional defense of all people's militants. □

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[The following is an editorial from the Liga Comunista journal *Combate* published after the assassination of Carrero Blanco. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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The workers movement, and along with it the movements of the other popular strata struggling against the dictatorship, entered the new year in a situation rather more unfavorable

than the one existing only two months ago. The causes for this are not limited to the repercussions of the December 20 assassination.

On previous occasions, we have pointed out the breadth of the counteroffensive undertaken by the broad masses in the past months, the possibilities it opened up, the limitations it had not overcome, and the needs it raised.

The breadth of the counteroffensive was shown above all in a wave of struggles by blue- and white-collar workers throughout the Spanish state for economic demands and against the repression. Asturias, SKF, La Seda, Super-Ser, and Indecasa are only some of the high points of the workers' resistance. Its power was shown by a more pronounced tendency to break out of the channels of the CNS [Central Nacional Sindicalista—National Trade-Union Federation, the official fascist industrial organization] and by the use of direct action in scattered battles, and also by the high level of consciousness attained in many of the mobilizations.

This wave of workers struggles was complemented, moreover, by militancy in other strata. The multiplying actions by peasants and stockmen were unprecedented since 1939. At various points, sectors of the new middle strata resumed their struggle. And, in particular, despite the disorientation of the student movement due to the predominance of narrow student-interest politics and legalism, important sections of the student youth once again demonstrated their militancy. And mass resistance of such power was able to occur despite an intense concentration of all the various mechanisms of repression by the bosses, the academic authorities, and the police.

Innumerable times, we Trotskyists have repeated that it was essential to promote and organize a counteroffensive of the entire working class and all the oppressed against the assault on wages and working conditions, against the general attack on

social standards and in particular against the General Education Law, and against repression and all forms of oppression. We explained and stressed that the leaderships of the workers movement had to promote a general plan of defense in all areas and that they should begin by pushing for the unification of all the comisiones obreras [workers commissions] and of the all-inclusive organs of struggle in other social strata, and for coordination between the comisiones obreras and these other bodies on all levels. Other initial steps, we explained, should include developing subsidiary plans for every locality, or zone, as well as district plans; struggle against the dictatorship's bargaining policy and against the CNS; promoting methods of direct action, which alone would make possible united and effective action; centralizing actions and giving an important role in these actions to central actions and days of protest, which should be organized by direct-action methods and focused on mobilizing people in the street.

In these conditions, this scattered counterattack could have easily been transformed into the most powerful chain reaction ever faced by the dictatorship. It could have forced the regime to retreat and thereby aggravated its contradictions and its crisis at the very time when it most needed cohesion and strength in order to carry forward the offensive plans of the Carrero government. Even despite all the previous refusals to try to achieve these conditions, December 12 and 20 could have been big steps forward toward accomplishing this, as the Political Bureau of the Liga Comunista noted at the time.

Important steps forward were carried out at scattered points, especially in certain areas of Euzkadi. If, in contrast to the general situation in the rest of the state, there was on December 20 a solid general strike in the factories of Pamplona and a milk strike in the valleys of Navarre, Guipúzcoa, and part of Vizcaya, this reflected the fact that the bypassing of the leaderships had gone beyond the level of isolated factories and schools. As a result, some of the fundamental requirements for organizing a broad action had been met, if only partially.

In fact, the workers in ten of the most important plants in Pamplona,

as well as the workers in some localities in Guipúzcoa, agreed to present a joint list of demands. This was only an incomplete step, since the leadership of the comisiones obreras continued to refuse to back it up with a more complete plan of action, and to refuse to make a clean break with the CNS and to extend the unity to include a multitude of smaller plants



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that were precisely the ones that most needed to incorporate themselves into a general struggle. But despite this and despite the divisions reopened by the timing and the responses of the bosses, this step was a positive one for the workers, and the Indecasa struggle was able to serve as the starting point for a new convergence of efforts.

While the Navarre comisiones obreras severely limited the scope of the December 12 day of struggle, in the following week the Indecasa workers broke with the CNS and adopted a line of direct action, organizing pickets that brought the workers out at key plants like Super-Ser and Imenasa. The strike in the industrial areas, the demonstration of the Super-Ser workers in the center of the city, and the organized self-defense of the workers against the repressive forces led up to the general strike of December 20.

The lessons of the milk strike were similar. Committees uniting a broad vanguard proved their effectiveness, impelling the peasants to organize themselves in assemblies and elected committees, constantly and openly confronting the liquidationist line of the Hermandades de Labradores y Ganaderos [Brotherhoods of Laborers and Stockmen], and calling on the comisiones obreras for support. The only thing that was lacking was precisely what could not be provided by the stockmen—the general political conditions, the broad struggle, that would have made it possible to block the deliveries of imported and powdered milk.

Nonetheless, except for these and some other cases, while the workers more and more frequently overrode the divisive attitude of the PCE [Partido Comunista de España—Communist party of Spain], the comisiones obreras, and the other opportunist leaderships, this occurred only on the level of individual plants and isolated centers. This divisive line was expressed in the consistent failure to draw up general plans for the different industries and localities. Instead of doing this, these leaderships supported the CNS bargaining policy and its arbitrators. This line resulted further in the failure to prepare the way for, and give impetus to, a real struggle against the General Education Law. In the working class, these leaderships abandoned this struggle. In the student movement, instead of a real struggle, they carried on a sectoralist and legalist struggle that made the movement incapable of uniting with the workers and confronting repression.

At certain moments, this policy led to giving up the struggle against concrete, selective repressive measures that posed an acute and immediate danger. At the same time, this line was reflected in separating the struggle in the places of work and study from the general struggle against repression, thereby undermining both. As for the fight against repression, on some occasions and in some places these leaderships openly rejected it; on other occasions they transformed it into remote appeals, sometimes physically far removed from the centers of struggle. They also approached it with methods that could not effectively organize it or maintain it.

Above all, when these leaderships

found themselves forced to call some days of struggle, they put no serious effort into the preparations or building. The December 12 day of struggle was a "clandestine" one as far as the broad masses were concerned. Although in some respects, there was more preparation for December 20, it also was not built with sufficient coordination, adequate agitation, or effective methods. Now these opportunist leaderships will blame the limitations on the assassination of Carrero. Of course, this event played a large part in diminishing the actions.

Nonetheless, how many workers, how many students, how many people went to demonstrate at and around the court building on the morning of December 20? (At that time very few people knew of Carrero's death.) How long had strikes been planned in the plants? This also cannot be blamed on the assassination. Moreover, even with this event, if consistent preparatory work had been done, the working class would have had a far greater capacity for putting up strong resistance against 1,001 [the trial of the leaders of the comisiones obreras].

But what is indisputable is that the leadership of the PCE and the comisiones obreras preferred to stand in the way of the needs of the workers and people's movement at every point for the sake of "broadening the front of struggles" through an alliance with "democratic" bourgeois politicians and the Church hierarchy, who in reality are sworn enemies of independent mass action and whom we were very soon to see weeping inconsolably over Carrero.

Thus, the policy of the "Pacto para la Libertad" [Freedom Pact] and other class-collaborationist policies helped the dictatorship keep the counterattack of the masses dispersed. Thereby they created the conditions that permitted the Carrero government in its last month to mount concentrated attacks on the masses. And even before this, these leaderships sabotaged the general struggle that they themselves had called, so that the government was able to impose its decree-laws and sentence Camacho and his companions without encountering any serious resistance from the masses. When, after postponing the case out of fear, the authorities decided to try the representatives of the comisiones obreras, these organizations did not throw one

hundredth of their weight into the scales.

This was what was decisive in our black December. The working class and the people held the stage; not the crisis-racked dictatorship, and still less the petty-bourgeois terrorists. But while the proletariat could barely stammer, the petty-bourgeois politicians expressed their incapacity eloquently and big capital spoke with a commanding voice. We are suffering the results and will continue to for some time to come.

If the workers and popular movement had not been reduced to such impotence by the refusal to push for an overall plan of defense and concretely to build the December 12 and 20 actions in a serious way, the bourgeoisie would not have found it so easy to close ranks after Carrero's assassination, and the new cabinet would have had to take over in more difficult conditions.

II

Marxists are not opposed in principle to using terror at any time or in any circumstance. To the contrary, recapitulating a long experience of the workers movement, the Communist International declared in 1921 in its Third Congress:

"Against the acts of white terrorism and the fury of white justice, the communist party must keep alive in the minds of the proletariat the idea that at the time of insurrection it must not let itself be deluded by the enemy's appeals to its clemency. It will set up people's courts, and with proletarian justice settle accounts with the torturers of the proletariat."¹

To the accusations of the renegade Kautsky against the Russian revolution, Leon Trotsky replied:

"The man who repudiates terrorism in principle—i.e., repudiates measures of suppression and intimidation towards determined and armed counter-revolution—must reject all idea of the political supremacy of the working class and its revolutionary dictatorship. The man who repudiates the dictatorship of the proletariat repudiates the Socialist revolution, and

digs the grave of Socialism."²

We Marxists reject any "moral" judgment of acts such as the assassination of Carrero Blanco. It was Leon Trotsky also who said in *Their Morals and Ours*:

"Is individual terror, for example, permissible or impermissible from the point of view of 'pure morals'? In this abstract form the question does not exist at all for us. Conservative Swiss bourgeois even now render official praise to the terrorist William Tell."³

So, we denounce the vile hypocrisy with which the bourgeoisie and their spokesmen hide their class interests behind allegedly humanitarian scruples against violence "from whatever source."

We Marxists sympathize completely with the just anger of the oppressed against their oppressors, with the anger of the Basque, Irish, and Palestinian terrorists against the national and political oppression suffered by their peoples.

III

Our judgment of terrorist acts, on the other hand, does not depend on the subjective motives or revolutionary intent, but on their relationship to the needs of the mass struggle. In this sense, we consider that the assassination of Carrero Blanco was a clearly negative act from the standpoint of the workers and people's movement.

In the statement it made public taking "responsibility for the attack that caused the death of Señor Carrero Blanco, chairman of the present Spanish cabinet," the ETA(V) said:

"Throughout the struggle in south Euzkadi [the part of the Basque country within Spain's boundaries] and throughout the Spanish state, the repressive forces have clearly demonstrated their fascist character, arresting, jailing, torturing, and murdering those who have fought for the liberation of their people. In a very short period, the criminal fascist forces in the service of the Spanish big bourgeoisie have murdered nine of our compañeros: Txabi, Txapela, Xenki,

1. "Theses on Tactics," *The Communist International: Documents*, edited by Jane Degras, London: 1971, Vol. 1, pp. 253-254.

2. *Terrorism and Communism*, London: 1935, pp. 23-24.

3. Leon Trotsky, *Their Morals and Ours*, New York: 1966, p. 38.

Mikelon, Ibarra, Txikia, Jon, Beltza, and Josué. Likewise, they have murdered other worker militants simply for defending their most elementary rights."

The motivation of ETA(V) is clear — anger against the capitalist terror, against the criminal repression by which the Spanish state maintains its oppression of the Basque people. But this repression is seen only from the narrow point of view of a small group. On this basis, the struggle against the dictatorship might come to mean a "duel" between the mercenaries of the Spanish state and this group, the ETA. On the contrary, the struggle against the capitalist terror requires a clear strategy, capable of sustaining effective action. Clear strategic aims and a fruitful approach are, however, both incompatible with the general political line of the nationalists in ETA and specifically with such terrorist actions.

"The operation the ETA has carried out against the state apparatus of the Spanish oligarchy in the person of Luis Carrero Blanco must be seen as a just revolutionary response by the working class and the entire Basque people to the death of our nine compañeros and of all those who have helped or who are helping to bring about the final liberation of humanity from all exploitation and all oppression.

"Luis Carrero Blanco, a 'hard-liner' with a brutal, repressive attitude, was the kingpin that guaranteed the stability and continuity of the Francoist system. There is no doubt that without him the tensions within the regime (between Opus Dei and the Falange) will mount dangerously.

"We believe that the action we have carried out against the premier of the Spanish cabinet will unquestionably represent a fundamental step forward in the struggle against national oppression, for a socialist Euzkadi, and for the liberation of all oppressed people in the Spanish state.

"Today the workers of all peoples in this state, of Euzkadi, Spain, Catalonia, and Galacia, and all anti-fascist and revolutionary democrats throughout the world have been freed from a major enemy.

"The struggle continues. Forward for national independence and socialism! Long live a free and socialist Euzkadi!"

This triumphal manifesto is based

on a conception of political action always applied by petty-bourgeois politicians to the struggles of oppressed peoples and the working class. Here we have a small organization deciding to sharpen the contradictions in the regime. In other cases, it might say that its aim was to wear out the state, pick off its personnel, and provoke social changes by means of its own conspiratorial activity outside of the mass struggle.

We find the same logic here that inspires the liberal, parliamentarist



CARLOS ARIAS NAVARRO: Franco's new premier.

conceptions of those who claim to act "on behalf of" the proletariat and the people by intervening "directly" in the political superstructure of bourgeois rule, who claim to represent the masses, which they regard as incapable of rising to such lofty tasks. This basic conception stands in complete contradiction to promoting direct and independent mass action, on which Marxist politics are based. In the two cases, violence and legal work are subordinated to completely different dynamics. Terrorist attacks have no more in common with organizing the revolutionary violence of the masses than the "parliamentary struggle" of the liberals has with a Marxist party using parliament as a platform.

Unlike the liberals, reformists, and

terrorists, we Marxists regard the state as the guarantor of the relations of production on which one class bases its rule over other classes. For the ruling class the state is an instrument for systematic oppression of the other classes. Only because of their failure to understand this reality can terrorists overestimate actions against state officials as such, in isolation from the conflicts between the classes.

Thus, the greatest naïveté is revealed in ETA's arguing that Carrero "guaranteed the continuity of the regime." This is really incredible! It is clear that even many spokesmen for the regime did not believe this when they proclaimed it. In the face of the rise of the mass movement (which is a secondary factor for the terrorists), Franco himself could not guarantee the "continuity of the regime," even if he lived forever, as he promises.

Lack of confidence in the ability of the masses to carry their action through to insurrection is common to terrorists, liberals, and reformists (in the last case, contempt for the masses combines with fear). Likewise common to all these is prostration before the stability of the bourgeois order. The ETA(V) communiqué claimed that, thanks to its action, "the tensions within the regime will mount dangerously." As if the crisis of capitalism did not create enough tensions and contradictions! As if you had to help it along! There have been and are more than enough contradictions in the Francoist regime so that if these were decisively aggravated by the blows of the mass struggle, the masses could destroy it. On the other hand, no tension inside the regime will be of any help unless the workers and the people are in a position to exploit it. As long as they are not, the conflicts in the bourgeois apparatus will remain within the framework of the play among the various political forces of capitalism and their agents, of the continual process of greater or lesser readjustments in the front against the working class and the oppressed masses.

IV

What were the real effects of the assassination? For Marxists this is the same as asking: What consequences did it have on the developments of mass action? This is what counts. For a group that wants to be

effective, this alone is what is worth working for.

The masses, and first of all the workers, have been condemned to the role of spectators. Some may claim that the assassination had positive aspects because of its "popular impact," or the "sympathy" with which the masses viewed the killing of a prominent figure in the hated regime. We will not even discuss the emotional reactions of the people. Such an effect has no relevance when it comes to judging the supposedly positive political results of the action. At best, it did not help in any way to promote mass action but rather encouraged passivity on the part of the masses.

There is no question but that, despite the hamstringing policy of the reformist leaderships of the workers movement, the mobilizations on December 20 and successive dates would have been larger were it not for the assassination. There was every reason to think that they would have been bigger than the mobilization of December 12; and, in fact, they were smaller.

This retreat by the masses was not the result alone of the opportunist leaderships of the workers movement using the assassination to demobilize the people, which, of course, they did. In large part, this retreat reflected the immediate reaction of the masses, on which the reformist apparatus in turn based themselves. Of course, large-scale mass mobilizations would not have been stopped by Carrero's death. In such a context, the effects of the assassination on the mass movement would have been much less. And therefore, the fundamental responsibility for the failure of these mobilizations still falls on the leaderships of the PCE and the comisiones obreras and their direct collaborators, and not on ETA (V). But the latter organization also cannot wash its hands of responsibility.

What is more, let us suppose that the "popular sympathy" won by the assassination had been a hundred times greater. This would only mean that Marxists would have to make a hundred times greater effort to explain what was wrong with terrorism and discredit it in the eyes of the masses, because it would have a much greater deleterious influence on them. For such an "impact" only sows illusions that later on often bring demoralization that can be capitalized on by legalist reformists.

It is lamentable to have to note once again what the whole history of the workers movement has shown more than abundantly: "Individual acts of terrorism, clear symptoms of revolutionary indignation though they are, and however natural when employed against the lynch justice of the bourgeoisie and their social-democratic lackeys, are in no way fitted to strengthen proletarian discipline and militancy, for they arouse among the masses the illusion that individual acts of terrorism can take the place of revolutionary struggle of the proletariat."⁴

"Whether or not a terrorist attempt, even if 'successful,' introduces confusion in the ruling circles, depends upon the concrete political circumstances. In any case, this confusion can only be of short duration. The capitalist state does not rest upon Ministers, and cannot be destroyed together with them. The classes whom the state serves will always find new men—the mechanism remains intact and continues to function. But much deeper is that confusion which the terrorist attempts to introduce into the ranks of the working masses. If it is enough to arm oneself with a revolver to reach the goal, then to what end are the endeavors of the class struggle? If a pinch of powder and a slug of lead are ample to shoot the enemy through the neck, where is the need of a class organization? If there is any rhyme or reason in scaring titled personages with the noise of an explosion, what need is there for a party? What is the need of meetings, mass agitation, elections, when it is so easy to take aim at the ministerial bench from the parliamentary gallery? Individual terrorism in our eyes is inadmissible precisely for the reason that *it lowers the masses in their consciousness*, reconciles them to impotence, and directs their glances and hopes toward the greater avenger and emancipator who will some day come and accomplish his mission." (Emphasis in the original.)⁵

4. "Theses on Tactics," *The Communist International: Documents*, Vol. 1, p. 254.

5. Quoted, from an article by Leon Trotsky in a 1911 issue of *Der Kampf*, the theoretical organ of the Austrian Social Democratic party, in *The Case of Leon Trotsky: Report of Hearings on the Charges Made Against Him in the Moscow Trials*, New York: 1969, p. 259.

V

One of the most immediate consequences of the retreat and confusion of the masses is that they are in an unfavorable position to face the increased repression that has come in the wake of the terrorist actions.

On this point also, the judgment that we make as Marxists is diametrically opposed to that of both the reformists and the terrorists. The reformists' argument tends to be the following: "The terrorists are provoking repression, unleashing a chain reaction strengthening the influence of the 'hard-liners' and shutting off the openings for the dialogue that we are working for." The reformists are worried that their bourgeois allies will be frightened, and so the PCE has an interest in passing off the assassination as the work of "experienced professionals with powerful protectors." (Statement of the Plenum of the Executive Committee of the PCE, December 1973.)

The terrorists follow the opposite line of reasoning: "By the blows we are dealing the reactionaries, we are sowing disarray and demoralization in their ranks, creating a situation that in the long run will lead to the disintegration of the enemy. This benefits the masses, who are inspired by seeing the hated regime suffer blows. So it doesn't matter if the bourgeoisie reacts by stepping up the repression. On the contrary, this enters into the logic of the spiral of action-repression, repression-action, which in the long run is going to bring us victory."

Once again, equally bourgeois conceptions guide both those who claim that the way to fight repression is by subordinating the mass movement to fawning on bourgeois politicians and those who claim to fight repression by blowing these same politicians sky-high. Both the blandishments and the bombs directed at the hired killers of the bourgeoisie leave out what from a working-class, Marxist, point of view is essential in the struggle against repression (as in all other questions)—impelling the masses to mobilize independently in direct struggle.

We Marxists say that the increased repression for which terrorist acts open the way is important. The stepped-up repression that follows terrorist attacks, unlike that which comes as a response to a rise in the mass struggle, usually has disastrous con-

sequences.

The bourgeoisie does not decide whether or not it will resort to repression on the basis of the pretexts available to it, although it takes advantage of whatever it can use as an excuse for repression and it looks for such pretexts. Nor does this depend on the reformist leaders' "desire for dialogue," although the bourgeoisie exploits such attitudes and seeks to encourage them. What "provokes" repression is the bourgeoisie's need to beat back the workers and people's movement. The only thing that can put a brake on repression is fear of this movement, which in 1970 saved the lives of Izko and his compañeros.

If there is a major strike, the bourgeoisie has a "pretext" for repression. But by their action in such a struggle the masses have raised their fighting spirit to a new level, closed their ranks, and are in a position to wage a vigorous counterattack against repression. As a result, the bourgeoisie weighs its steps, sometimes deciding not to take the "opportunity," and if it does turn to repression, it has to face new onslaughts by the masses.

In the case of terrorist acts, this all changes. The masses are more divided and confused (insofar as they are affected by what the terrorist do), the more vacillating sectors listen to the pacifist whines of the "democrats", and this creates better conditions for big capital to marshal its forces against "disorder," "violence," and "savagery," and in reality to conduct its repression with greater ease.

Thus, in the balance of forces between the classes the weight of individual terrorism comes down on the side of the bourgeoisie. As we have already indicated, this weight may be more or less, depending on the political context. Coming at the time it did, added to other much more decisive factors, Carrero's assassination has had an eminently negative effect.

VI

The consequences of the attack against Carrero have, thus, been graver than in any previous case of this type. It obstructed the fundamental fight for the release of Camacho and his compañeros. A more ambitious terrorist action than the earlier ones, it occurred at a critical moment, at the very culminating point of a series



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of setbacks for the workers movement. Thus, it complemented the work of the reformists and served to initiate a closer tightening of bourgeois ranks. Taking advantage of all this, the dictatorship of big capital is stepping up its repression in order to launch still more severe attacks on the standard of living of the masses in all areas.

But the struggle of the masses is undergoing an unquestionable revival. If they are incorporated in systematic work to develop concrete struggles applying the methods of direct action

that saved the lives of Izko and his compañeros—the methods of the *Térmica* and *Pamplona* strikes—agitating and mobilizing against the repression can and must renew the strength of the workers' counteroffensive so that it can overcome the obstacles that in recent months have kept it dispersed. However, reformism and terrorism can only hold back this development, which we Marxists seek to promote in the most deep-going way through a fight to open up the way for a generalized struggle. To advance the actions in all sectors and localities, a nationwide struggle is more essential than ever. It is more essential and more urgent because there is no other way an effective fight can be put up against all the attacks of the Arias government. Unless such unity is achieved, the actions that are springing up at scattered points with renewed strength will exhaust themselves more quickly than in the past.

At the same time, in order, among other things, to make this work effective, it is essential to develop the most vigorous debate inside the militant vanguard on the grave lessons of the past months. The confusionism prevailing among the fighters continues to be a serious handicap to carrying out the urgent tasks that face us.

Both through this work and through this debate, we will strive to promote the construction of a revolutionary party that can channel the revolutionary energies that today are being diverted by reformism and terrorism. □

Washington Religious Revival Steams Ahead

Prayer is reported to be increasingly popular in Washington these days, to the point that it is probably second only to wiretapping as the favorite recreation of government officials. At the twenty-second annual National Prayer Breakfast in Washington January 31, it (prayer) was even publicly endorsed by Richard Nixon.

Nixon recommended prayer as a cure for arrogance, which must have struck the assembled faithful as a bit like a bald man selling hair restorer. He then spent fifteen minutes discussing Abraham Lincoln's praying habits, a fact which disturbed one clergyman present, the Reverend John Huffman. Huffman told the *New York Times* that he thought Nixon's talk should have been more personal:

"This was a great opportunity for him to state whether he is a Christian or not. For five years, by his silence, he has said that he is not."

This is not the first time that Nixon and Huffman have engaged in theological disputes. Last April, Nixon attended Huffman's church in Key Biscayne, Florida, and heard a sermon widely interpreted as a call to come clean on Watergate. Nixon did not attend church again for months afterward, and Huffman found himself transferred to Pennsylvania.

Another speaker, Senator Harold Hughes, had some words that may have been intended as future solace for Nixon. "No prison," Hughes said, "can contain the spirit of Christ."