

Argentina: Left Peronist Leaders Surrender to Coup in Cordoba



ETHIOPIA: Mass Upsurge Forces Selassie To Retreat

Solzhenitsyn's Letter to the Kremlin

IMG Campaign: Encouraging Gains

Prisoners Released

[The following article is taken from the March 1 issue of *Red Weekly*, the organ of the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International.]

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According to reliable reports, the Czechoslovak government has recently released a number of prominent oppositionists, jailed after the wave of trials in the summer of 1972. Although, in many cases, the prisoners were due to be freed in the coming weeks or months, sizeable reductions were made in the cases of, at least, Alfred Cerny, a leading Socialist Party member, and M. Silhan.

We must see in this decision a small, but very real victory for the broad international campaign that has been organised in defence of Czechoslovak socialist prisoners. If the Husak regime has not been able to step up the trials, this has been due in part to the maintenance of solidarity work by the Western left.

However, the repression goes on unabated in the sphere of 'everyday life,' where refusal to co-operate with the authorities brings dismissal from one's job, police surveillance, intimidation of relatives, and a whole series of other administrative measures. Equally disturbing are the reports that the five-year sentence of Dr. Jaroslav Sabata of Brno, former member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, has recently been extended as a result of his particularly firm stand.

Whilst a fresh wave of trials seems unlikely at present, the facade of stability constructed in Prague rests on the selective imprisonment of the most vocal opponents of the regime, combined with the maintenance of a bureaucratic vise on all channels of communication.

Information about the work of the British 'Committee to Defend Czechoslovak Socialists' can be obtained from 32 Belitha Villas, London, N.1. □

In This Issue

CZECHOSLOVAKIA	290	Prisoners Released
ARGENTINA	291	Left Peronist Leaders Surrender to Cordoba Coup—by Gerry Foley
ETHIOPIA	295	Mass Upsurge Continues as Selassie Retreats —by Ernest Harsch
	297	Students Seize Embassy in Moscow
SOVIET UNION	297	Solzhenitsyn's Letter to Kremlin Bureaucrats —by Allen Myers
	307	Sakharov Issues Appeal for Bukovsky
MARTINIQUE	302	Murder of Striking Workers
	302	Illmany, Marie-Louise: Martyrs in Struggle Against French Imperialism
MALI	303	Report Deliberate Starvation of Tuaregs
THAILAND	304	Troops Raze "Communist" Village
GREECE	304	Communist Party Members Arrested
INDIA	305	Mass Struggles in Gujarat and Maharashtra (Interview With a Trotskyist)
FRANCE	308	Thousands in Paris March Against Chilean Junta
AUSTRALIA	310	Victoria Right-Wingers Expel Socialists From Young Labor Association—by Jamie Doughney
BELGIUM	312	For a Working-Class Vote in Elections —by Eddy Labeau
CUBA	313	Canada, Argentina Plan Trade With Cuba
PARAGUAY	313	Charge Genocide Against Tribe
BRITAIN	314	IMG Campaign Scores Encouraging Gains —by Michael Baumann
SWEDEN	315	A Founder of Swedish Trotskyism Dies
WEST GERMANY	316	Committee to Defend "Prague Spring"
U.S.A.	316	Nixon Trying to Curtail Impeachment Hearings —by Allen Myers
	319	Nixon Still Popular—With Kremlin
NIGER	319	Twenty-eight Demonstrators Sentenced
DOCUMENTS	320	For Action Against the Murderers of Salvador Puig!
DRAWINGS	299	Joseph Stalin—by Laura Gray
	295	Haile Selassie; 305, Indira Gandhi; 317, John Ehrlichman; 318, Charles Colson; 318, Richard Nixon—by Copain

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Left Peronist Leaders Surrender to Cordoba Coup

By Gerry Foley

When the resignations of Ricardo Obregón Cano and Atilio López were confirmed March 7, virtually all the objectives of the right-wing Peronist coup in Córdoba seemed to have been achieved, although it is not yet clear how great a political price Perón has paid for this victory or how lasting it will be.

The surrender of the governor and deputy governor deposed by the February 27 putsch cut the ground out from under the parliamentary defenders of the legally constituted provincial government. The head of the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR—Radical Civic Union) parliamentary bloc, the largest opposition grouping in the national congress, was quoted in the March 8 *La Prensa* as saying: "The definitive resignations of Obregón Cano and López created an irreversible situation."

The UCR leader, Antonio Tróccoli, claimed the withdrawal of the legally elected officials left no alternative but the appointment of federal interventors to run the province.

Moreover, the abject capitulation of Atilio López, who is also one of the most influential union leaders in the province, seems likely to further weaken, confuse, and divide the combative wing of the Córdoba labor movement, which has been unable to respond to the rightist take-over.

Thus Perón has succeeded in ousting the government of Córdoba and getting congressional approval to appoint handpicked representatives to run the province according to his directives. There is little doubt that the main job of the interventors will be to crack down on the left, as well as the militant wing of the trade-union movement.

In his March 2 message to congress, which in effect endorsed the rightist putsch, Perón made two main charges against the ousted provincial government. The first was that it "tolerated and at times even fomented conflicts that were creating a state of public turmoil." The example given was the bus drivers strike, which the provin-

cial government, under pressure from López, who was head of the union, refused to break.

Second: "Both in the trade-union and student field, it was apparent that there was systematic activity on the part of subversive groups, but the provincial government was unwilling or unable to tackle this problem effectively."

In fact, the caudillo charged, Córdoba had become the "nationwide focus of subversive activity designed to advance violent revolution as an alternative to the peaceful change that the immense majority of the Argentine people have voluntarily chosen."

As for the "violent revolution" from the right that Córdoba was actually experiencing at the time, all that Perón thought it necessary to say was that "obviously the province is experiencing a complete institutional breakdown."

The fact that the right has been able to stage an armed take-over, lock up the provincial government, and more than 1,000 known leftists including prominent trade unionists, win the endorsement of the national government, and consolidate its victory, at least temporarily, is not likely to be lost on the waverers in the local labor movement. Under heavy pressure from the national CGT (Confederación General del Trabajo—General Confederation of Labor), supporters of the militant wing had already been deserting for some time to the rightist "Orthodox" bloc.

Just before the "normalizing" congress of the provincial CGT, which was held virtually under the guns of the putschist police and rightist gangs, the bloc of the "legalistas" (or left Peronists) and the class-struggle tendency controlled an estimated thirty-five unions as against thirty-three for the "Orthodoxos." Even if the militant wing continues to reject the authority of the rump congress, the example of the rightist triumph could tip the balance, especially if the left cannot develop a strong counterattack.

Perón's minister of labor, Ricardo Otero, who put the full weight of his

authority behind the "normalizing" congress, explained recently at a Metallurgical Workers meeting just exactly what was wanted from Peronist labor leaders: "My life for Perón. And I will tell you to trust me; I will be by him even if he orders me to clean latrines." The fact that a veteran of the illegal Peronist labor movement like Atilio López has apparently decided to follow this precept is not very hopeful for the other militant Peronist labor leaders.

As in the Chile coup, most of the resistance reported in Córdoba has been by snipers. It is not clear what role, if any, the guerrilla organizations have played. But as for the Peronist guerrillas the Montoneros (Irregulars), their political response so far has reportedly not been much firmer than that of the ousted provincial government.

"The Córdoba Montoneros called for 'resistance to the crime against the people' of this province yesterday in a document ending with their usual slogans: 'Free or Dead, Never Slaves,' 'Perón or Death,' 'Long Live the Fatherland,'" a dispatch reported in the March 5 *La Opinión*.

The guerrillas made a strong complaint: "We mobilized as never before to bring back Perón and win the elections, to defend the military and begin a process of social justice and liberalization, eliminating our economic dependence. And we won. The Peronists of Córdoba won a Peronist governor and a deputy governor from the working class who was in the struggles. And all of us Cordobeses, with the same drive that we showed in the Cordobazo [the insurrectional general strikes of 1969 and 1971], put our shoulders to the wheel to develop a revolutionary program of reconstructing Córdoba and our country; and suddenly everything has fallen through."

The Montoneros complained of rightist sabotage similar to what happened in Chile: "From the very day Obregón Cano took office, these obscure forces went to work . . . inside and

outside the movement. They never let him govern. They were continually creating disorder and promoting chaos in the province."

But the guerrillas were not very precise in identifying these "obscure forces." "Who are responsible for what has been happening? A minority encysted in the unions, in the movement, and in the government. Relying on arrogance and on goons, they have arbitrarily made themselves the lords and masters of the people's destinies."

The guerrillas also criticized Obregón Cano for not using more revolutionary methods: "Obregón's main weakness—what undermined his government—was that he did not appeal to the rank and file and did not base his government on a popular mobilization, that he believed in bureaucratic deals or in the duels in Buenos Aires."

But they were confident that if he were returned to power, he would not make the same mistakes. Miguel Bustos, one of the local Montonero leaders, explained: "He would return with experience and have accomplished an apprenticeship. He would have learned that his authority can only be maintained by the popular will and the power of the rank and file and not by any kind of a personal deal."

Two days after Perón's message to congress backing the rightist putsch, *La Opinión's* correspondent Enrique Raab asked Bustos if the Montoneros intended to reject the caudillo's authority. The guerrilla leader replied: "By no means. Our criticism of the general is this: We claim the right to disagree with him in the movement. What are the people of Córdoba thinking about General Perón at this moment? But he remains the leader of the Peronist people. We intend to stay within the Peronist movement. Perón's leadership must be based on the might of the ranks. Only then will he be able to carry out the project the people have decided he should carry out instead of the one he is advancing now."

The apparent passiveness of the people of Córdoba, Bustos explained, was due to "confusion" caused by the rightist blitzkrieg. But the Montoneros are likely to have a difficult time eliminating this confusion if they continue to call on the people to resist the effects of the coup, while at the same time relying on capitulationist politicians and pledging unalterable allegiance to the caudillo who legitimized the putsch

and utilized it to achieve his obvious ends.

The main non-Peronist leaders of the Córdoba labor movement, René Salamanca of the Sindicato de Mecánicos y Afines del Transporte Automotor (SMATA—Union of Automotive Machinists and Allied Trades) and Agustín Tosco of the Sindicato Luz y Fuerza (light and power union), escaped arrest by the rightist police or militia.

Salamanca talked to a *La Opinión* reporter on March 4 at the gate of the Kaiser plant, stressing the ineffectiveness of the strike called by the "normalized" CGT to back the rightist take-



ANTONIO DOMINGO NAVARRO

over. "About 45 percent went in at Kaiser on the third shift today. That is a very high percentage if you consider that Córdoba is without public transport and that the activity of the armed groups that are trying to frighten the population may have had an effect on the absenteeism rate." The automotive union leader said that the Córdoba workers were raising three demands: 1) restitution of the legal government; 2) failing that, immediate elections with no bar to Obregón and López running; 3) disavowal of the call for elections on September 1 issued by interim Governor Mario Agodino, who took office under the aegis of the putschist police chief, Antonio Navarro.

Salamanca also stressed that the "normalizing" congress was without any le-

gitimacy because at least 40 unions could not attend.

Tosco gave an interview to a foreign journalist somewhere on the outskirts of Córdoba city. In excerpts published in the March 5 *La Opinión*, he was quoted as saying:

"At this moment the 7,000,000 persons who voted for General Perón are divided into two groups. Those who approve of what Perón did and those—that is, the people—who are beginning to feel that the process [of national reconstruction] is being thwarted." Tosco did not mention that he was one of these 7,000,000, at least in the excerpts of the interview that were given, although he supported voting for the "people's general" in the September 23 elections, as did Salamanca.

People in Buenos Aires should not be discouraged by the lack of a popular response in Córdoba to the rightist take-over, Tosco said. "Popular responses can be rapid and violent, as in the Cordobazo, or slower and more measured, as is certainly occurring now.

"Moreover, the right has no alternative. If it opens the factories, there will be a popular response in forty-eight hours. If they don't open them, there will still be one."

Tosco's assessment of the mood of the workers in Córdoba will soon be tested. On one thing he was undoubtedly correct: "What is happening now shows once again that Córdoba is a testing ground for a project that will later be applied to the entire country."

Ever since Perón returned to the country, he has been slowly stepping up a campaign against the left and the militant unions. Until the Córdoba coup, most of the work was done more or less discreetly by goon squads. Despite more and more violent red-baiting, the caudillo did not throw his full political weight or the state machinery openly into his "war against Marxism."

But the "politico-military" blitzkrieg in the province of Córdoba marks a qualitative escalation in this regard. If it succeeds, as it seems to have done, in dealing a stunning blow to the morale of the most militant and battle-hardened workers in the country, Perón will have broken the major obstacle to a firm crackdown

on the entire labor movement. He can then move on to consolidate his hold slowly in order to maintain his political influence over the left wing of his own movement as long as possible, and not risk disillusioning the workers too sharply.

After achieving direct control of Córdoba by means of a rightist coup, the caudillo can regain some maneuvering room by appointing representatives not totally unacceptable to the left. On the other hand, the March 7 *Panorama* reported that some local Peronist leaders seem to want Jorge Osinde, who presided over the Ezeiza massacre, appointed as interventor.

The operation in Córdoba so far seems to have been kept carefully confined. It did not develop into an immediate general offensive against the provincial governments where left or liberal Peronists are still influential. It did not signal an immediate qualitative escalation of repression throughout the country.

Except for those caught carrying weapons, the 1,000 activists arrested were quickly released, most of them within twenty-four hours. The ousted governor and deputy governor themselves were released and allowed to go and regroup their followers.

On the other hand, the fact that there were no martyrs or massive persecutions undoubtedly helped to keep the situation under control. After the first day or two, the Argentine press tended to treat the rightist rebellion as a kind of mad carnival.

"Shots continued to sound in the distance, and eight politicians from the federalist party, six journalists, and some women were walking around looking for a night club," Enrique Raab wrote in the March 3 *La Opinión*. "We settled down finally in El Nacional . . . inside this giant deluxe pizzeria, the whole political world of Córdoba was drinking whisky and devouring giant olive, ham, and cheese sandwiches. They were discussing what was going on in the city that night:

"There is no confrontation; the civilian groups supporting Navarro are firing into the air throughout the city as a form of intimidation.' On Saturday morning, this version did not seem so crazy. Except for the cross fire on the Avenida Olmos, there was no fighting any time in the night; no one was killed, no one was wounded. Nobody chased anybody. But, if

someone had the patience to count, he probably could have counted 500 shots from 9:00 p.m. on Friday to 5:00 a.m. Saturday."

Raab reported some things that indicated that workers wanted to resist: "Returning to the Hotel Crillón, a taxi driver showed me a machine gun hidden under his back seat. 'Let the bully boys have their fun today,' he said, almost cheerfully, 'tomorrow night the people will go out and then it won't be any picnic.'"

Although the national government did not seem upset when armed rightist gangs took over the city, they expressed more concern when it looked as though Obregón might inspire some resistance. The prologue to the bill calling for federal intervention, which was submitted to parliament March 2, said:

"It must be noted that from the time Governor Ricardo Obregón Cano and Deputy Governor Atilio López regained their freedom of action, a climate of tense expectation began to develop in which seditious armed groups began to carry out maneuvers with the obvious aim of creating chaos."

The Peronist youth, Raab reported, were contemptuous of the "normalized" CGT: "A shadowy body made up of barbers, taxi drivers, and flour millers. The people of Córdoba will never accept it as representative." But what can they say now, when Perón has thrown his full weight behind the coup and the left Peronist leaders have surrendered?

With the bulk of the left and trade-union activists completely disarmed politically, as they seem to be, it is unlikely that the labor movement can offer much resistance, at least until this political weakness is overcome. Only the Argentine Trotskyists of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party) offered a political alternative to Perón. And in the conditions that prevail in Córdoba, the situation in the labor movement will almost certainly be determined for some time to come by the confusion and disarray of the larger tendencies.

Even non-Peronists like Salamanca, who is close to the ultraleft, and Tosco, who is close to the Communist party, supported Perón in the September 23 elections, and thus helped to give the caudillo the authority he is

using against them today. It is notable that even now they do not seem to have issued a call for the labor movement to break with the bourgeois demagogue Perón.

In a statement reported in the March 2 *La Opinión*, Communist party spokesmen Fernando Nadra, Rubens Iscaro, and Bension Curiel did not even mention Perón. They blamed the coup in Córdoba on the "extreme right," which, they said, "is working under the orders of the imperialists and the CIA to alter the institutions of the country and block the process of struggle for national liberation, either by seizing the key levers of government or through a bloody coup d'état."

Despite the default of the main left forces, Perón did pay a price for the Córdoba operation, although it is not yet clear when the full bill will be presented. In the first place, many parliamentary leaders were obviously shaken by seeing the constitutional rules of government suddenly overridden by Caesarist maneuvers and paramilitary goon squads.

This conclusion was expressed most clearly perhaps by Francisco Manrique, the leader of the rightist Movimiento de Afirmación Nacional (MAN—Movement of National Affirmation): "Today the police arrest a governor. Tomorrow the Boy Scouts will oust a president. Is this the way to maintain the image of authority?"

Under the pressure of the Córdoba events, the divisions in the main non-Peronist party, the "loyal opposition" Unión Cívica Radical came out in the open dramatically. The Young Turk element led by Raúl Alfonsín strongly criticized the coup in Córdoba and denounced the Balbin leadership for not opposing Perón more sharply.

Some of the Alfonsín faction of the UCR have themselves been hit by Perón's terror campaign against the left. One of its leaders, Senator Solari Yrigoyen, was injured November 21 when a bomb exploded in his car. At the time, he was opposing the Peronist Ley de Asociaciones Profesionales (Trade-Union Law) that was designed to strengthen the position of the union bureaucracy. He also expressed his opposition to reintroducing the old repressive laws of the military dictatorship in the guise of a "reform" of the penal code.

In an interview in the February 14

issue of the Trotskyist weekly *Avanzada Socialista*, Yrigoyen said: "A new type of violence has appeared that did not exist before, the violence of fascist groups. . . . So this advance of fascist-type violence should disturb all men and women who regard human rights and full enjoyment of basic freedoms as their guiding principles.

"Furthermore, we maintain that the government cannot ignore this phenomenon. Just as it condemned the events at Azul [where guerrillas of the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (ERP—Revolutionary People's Army) raided a military base on January 18-19], it cannot fail to recognize that this other phenomenon is claiming many more lives and is an extremely grave threat to society because it is on the rise."

When the Córdoba coup occurred, Alfonsín himself made a similar statement.

"I have here the choice spot announcement that the government played repeatedly over the radio and TV [after the Azul raid]," Alfonsín said in an interview in the March 1- *La Opinión*. "It goes like this: 'When the people govern, resorting to violence means attacking the people. The government will respond to this organized violence.' I hope the response will be equally severe in the case of Córdoba. I hope we will see the same amount of official propaganda expressing horror over this violence exercised against the government elected by the people of Córdoba."

When Perón gave de facto backing to the coup in his March 2 message to congress, Alfonsín's presumed disappointment must have been increased by the fact that the statement was cast in a rather imperial form. It summed up the strengths and weaknesses of Córdoba going back to the wars of independence. In particular, Perón commented at length and with obvious distaste on the democratic university reform movement that started in Córdoba in 1918 and was associated with the golden age of the Radical party. He also noted that the military uprising that overthrew his government in 1955 started in Córdoba.

But the offensive of the Alfonsínistas seemed to reflect at least as much of a sensitivity to the mood of the country as to the historic principles of Radicalism and its sainted leader Hi-

pólito Yrigoyen.

"Fundamentally, it was the growth of an oppositionist attitude on the part of the rank and file that stiffened the attitude of the dissenting group in the UCR," an analyst wrote in the March 5 *La Opinión*.

"This marked hardening among the middle-level party activists is based on two circumstances that seem to reinforce each other:

"a. The national government is paying a high political price for booting out the Córdoba governor, Obregón Cano. For many Radicals, the losses resulting from these actions seem irreparable and thus encourage the tendency to want to see the party 'raise its head.'

"According to their calculation, Balbín's moderate policy, described as appeasement by the Alfonsínistas, seems to be losing points. As they see, this loss may be irreparable. But the Balbinistas think that the calling of elections in Córdoba (which the Alfonsínistas do not believe will happen) may offer unforeseen benefits, including attracting the Córdoba Radicals toward the line of the national party leader.

"b. The Radicals already fear that the Peronists may swing too far to the right and undermine the essential democratic process."

The decisive battle for the Peronist leadership in the fight to force through the intervention order was to get a two-thirds vote for emergency consideration of the legislation in the House of Deputies. (It was passed March 5 by the Senate, where the Peronists have a larger majority.) There seemed even to be some "nervous Nellies" in the Peronist electoral bloc. Some pressure was applied. It was leaked that Perón might intervene the province by decree if he could not get parliamentary approval. Around noon on March 6 Minister of the Interior Llambi showed up in parliament with an emphatic message from Perón.

"Later Señor Llambi left, avoiding reporters and visibly nervous," *La Opinión* reported March 7. "It was learned that several pro-leadership legislators were carrying on a sharp discussion in these moments, which culminated in blows."

When Obregón and López announced their resignations on the night of March 7, the resistance ended. The ex-governor's statement set a completely servile tone: "I am still a soldier of the

great hope of the nation and I do not plan to desert no matter what battle post I am assigned."

How fast and how far Perón pushes his crackdown probably depends essentially on the mass response. However, the rifts that this affair created in the unwieldy alliance of the "great national accord" may stay the caudillo's hand long enough to give the left an opportunity to draw the lessons of the Córdoba defeat and prepare a counterattack.

There is no telling how long it will take to overcome the confusion created by the opportunism of the Peronist left and of leaders like Tosco and Salamanca. But the left has gained one political advantage. The Peronist regime has dropped its mask as peacekeeper.

This was the main conclusion that emerged from the reports in two very astute capitalist publications, one in the United States and the other in Argentina.

"During the final days of his 18-year exile, Juan Domingo Perón's trump card was his ability to convince most Argentines that only his movement had the strength and substance to end the violent political divisions among them and give their potentially rich country a fresh start," Jonathan Kandell wrote in the March 6 *New York Times*. "Now, five months after he assumed the presidency, he has presided over a growing upsurge of political violence, most of which is exploding in his own heterogeneous movement."

In the March 7 *Panorama*, Fernando Lescano wrote: "What stands out above all the anecdotes and the chronology of the events is that the process that culminated in the decision of the National Senate to send in interventors to the province of Córdoba marks a new stage in the government of Juan Perón. It has changed the image of the ruling party on a national scale. The Peronist movement itself has put an end to expectations that the movement was capable of playing a stabilizing role."

Thus, after months of trying to portray the left-wing guerrillas and the radicalized youth in his movement as an obstacle to "pacification" and "national reconciliation," Perón and the Peronist leadership are now being cited even in the bourgeois press as the main authors of terrorism in Argentina. □

Mass Upsurge Continues as Selassie Retreats

By Ernest Harsch

Despite pleas by Ethiopia's new prime minister, Endalkachew Makonnen, to give the regime a "chance" and to return to "normality," students, workers, and mutinous troops have continued to voice their grievances and raise demands for sweeping changes. Under this mounting pressure, Emperor Haile Selassie, the "Lion of Judah," having already made a number of concessions, announced on March 5 that a constitutional convention would be convoked "to create a new system of elected democratic government," according to the March 6 *New York Times*. But the announcement failed to stop a general strike that began on March 7 and paralyzed Addis Ababa, the capital, thus further shaking Selassie's weakened throne.

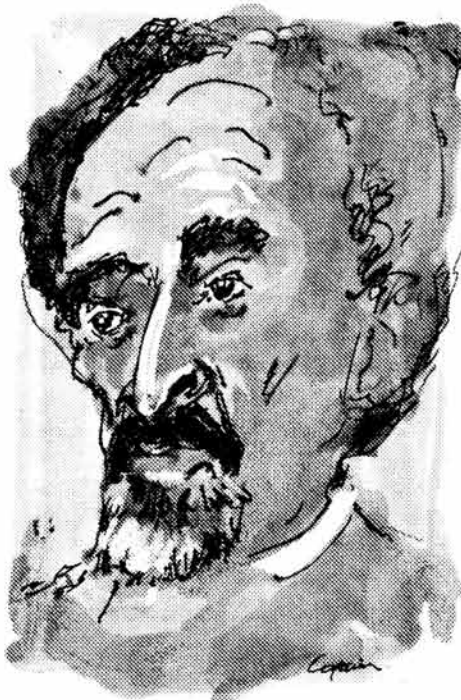
Although the ousting of the cabinet on February 28 and the increase in pay scales for the military dampened the mutiny somewhat, it was not long before dissident troops raised additional demands and promised to "take action" if Selassie did not act on them immediately.

On the afternoon of March 4 an air force helicopter flew over Addis Ababa and dropped mimeographed leaflets signed by some armed forces units. The leaflet noted that during the mutiny the regime and the newspapers had stressed the soldiers' demands for higher pay without mentioning their calls for social reforms.

The leaflet outlined eleven demands: freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, release of political prisoners, the right to form political parties, liberalization of labor legislation, free and universal education, increases in civilian and military salaries, imposition of price controls, land reform with "land to the tillers," trial of the previous cabinet ministers for corruption, and the formation of joint committees of soldiers and civilians. The leaflets ended by saying that if the demands "are not fully satisfied," then "we shall take action."

"The tone of the leaflets," Charles

Mohr reported from Addis Ababa in the March 5 *New York Times*, "was thus far more threatening to the Emperor and to traditional Ethiopia than anything that mutinous troops had said last week, when they demanded higher pay and the dismissal of the Cabinet."



HAILE SELASSIE

This explicit threat to the ruling elite also carries a potential for far greater struggles in the future. The demands raised in the leaflet cannot but fall on receptive ears.

Out of a population of about 25 million, only 4 million are allowed to vote, and then only for deputies to the lower house of parliament. The upper house is selected by the emperor. But even this restricted suffrage means very little, since all legislation passed by the lower house must be approved by the emperor himself before it can go into effect. In addition, all political parties are banned and the government keeps a very tight reign on the

news media.

The economic problems facing the peoples of Ethiopia have been exacerbated by the world energy crisis and by severe drought and famine, which have claimed more than 100,000 lives so far. The rampant inflation was one of the causes of the strikes and clashes that took place in Addis Ababa in mid-February. The poverty of the peasantry, and the backwardness of the archaic feudal landholding system, were tragically underlined by last year's famine. The corruption and mismanagement of famine relief did much to discredit the regime in the eyes of the students, workers, peasants, and soldiers. Since the church and the government officials are important landowners themselves (with Selassie being the biggest landlord of all), the calls for "land to the tillers" strike at the roots of the regime.

The military rebellion, however, threatened not only the civilian regime, but also the top leadership of the armed forces. While the different currents behind the mutiny are not yet clear, the impetus for the take-over of Asmara, Harar, Massawa, Debre Zeit, and parts of Addis Ababa did not come from the higher officers, who have always been an important prop for Selassie, but from the ranks and the junior officers. Writing in the February 28 *Le Monde*, correspondent Philippe Decraene observed: "While most of the officers belong to the Amhara ethnic group, which holds power in Addis Ababa, the troops are often of Galla, Somali, or Tigrean origin, tribes whose submission to the central state is far from certain. On the other hand, while the high command is principally from the aristocracy, the officers, notably the junior officers, come, in part, from the popular classes."

In the course of the mutiny dozens of officers, as well as civilian administrators, were arrested by the rebellious troops. The March 5 *Washington Post*

reported that although Selassie gave in to the mutinous sailors at Massawa and fired Rear Admiral Eskindar Desta, his grandson, as head of the navy, the dissident sailors at the naval base still held forty officers prisoner.

Mohr reported in the March 8 *New York Times* that "the recent mutiny, which began with demands for higher pay, has left diverse committees of enlisted men and lower-ranking officers with considerable influence in individual units."

The March 2 *Le Monde* reported that troops in Addis Ababa had begun to arrest various government officials, including former Prime Minister Akilou Abde Wold and other deposed cabinet members. "Finally, in Asmara," wrote *Le Monde*, "the mutineers also arrested a number of notables, high functionaries, and landlords."

Rebellion against Selassie's regime spread to Akaki prison in downtown Addis Ababa, where according to government officials at least thirty-six inmates and guards were killed in a March 3 prison revolt.

Faced with this upsurge, Selassie announced in a radio and television address on March 5: "We are instituting constitutional reform for the lasting benefit of the country." The reforms he mentioned would make the prime minister "responsible to parliament" instead of the emperor and would be aimed at "defining and clarifying the institutional relationships between different branches of the imperial Ethiopian government" and "guaranteeing further the civil rights of our people." He said that Prime Minister Endalkachew Makonnen was instructed "to have these constitutional changes and other relative matters studied in a constitutional conference and to have them submitted to us." While his speech contained no time limit on the drafting of a new constitution, "informed sources," according to a March 5 dispatch by Mohr, said that Makonnen had been given six months to complete the project.

Evaluating Selassie's reasons for putting forth this particular form of concession, Mohr continued: "The Emperor may hope that the constitutional conference can be contained and that it will make relatively conservative changes, but there was widespread belief here tonight that it could not do less than make him and his heirs



Neil Miller/LNS

Ethiopian students demonstrate in Washington in 1969. "Land to the tillers" is a major demand in present upsurge.

constitutional monarchs who reign but do not rule.

"In fact, there was speculation that one impulse that had motivated the Emperor was a determination to save the dynasty and to preserve the throne in some form."

But even this promise of a major concession proved inadequate to restrain the growing expression of discontent. As Mohr pointed out, "It was not certain, however, that the move toward a constitutional convention would guarantee peace. Many elements in the country are demanding quick and radical change now that the military mutiny has relaxed the hard grip of authority."

One sign of the relaxation was an unauthorized, front-page editorial in the Addis Ababa *Ethiopian Herald*, calling for greater freedom of the press. Signed by Tegegne Yeteshawork, the former deputy minister of information, it said that "the press should inform the public [about] not only what the Government wants to be made known but also what the people want to

know."

The Ethiopian labor movement has also taken dramatic action, contributing to the atmosphere of discontent. The Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Unions issued a call for a general strike for March 7. Among the sixteen demands raised by the union was an increase of the minimum wage to \$1.50 a day, about three times the average wage in Addis Ababa. Other demands included the right to strike, removal of restrictions on the right to join unions, the right to publish a labor newspaper that had been banned by the government, the establishment of a social security system and of pension plans, a "positive effort to solve unemployment," free education, and cost-of-living raises.

The confederation, which was originally set up by the regime eleven years ago, represents from 80,000 to 100,000 workers. The March 8 *New York Times* reported the labor confederation is split between militant and moderate leaders, "with the militants seeming to be in command at the moment."

On March 7 about 100,000 workers struck. There was no bus transportation in Addis Ababa. All the unionized industries were shut down. Hotels, banks, and other enterprises were crippled and the coffee-processing industry could not function because of the lack of trucks. Newspapers did not publish. By the next day the port of Massawa was closed, railroads did not run, and all international flights were crippled. Large farms shut down and the stores and restaurants in Asmara, the country's second largest city, were closed. This mass general strike was the first of its kind in Ethiopian history.

Students at Haile Selassie University staged demonstrations and marches on the first day of the strike. They attempted to march to the center of Addis Ababa to join demonstrating workers, but were turned back by the police who used tear gas. The students carried signs reading: "Down with Endalkachew!" and "Land to the Tillers!" When the riot police confronted them, they chanted: "Police, cooperate with us!" In clashes that occurred in mid-February a number of demonstrators were killed, but on March 7 the police, aware of the 100,000 striking workers, showed a little

more restraint in dealing with the students.

Although Makonnen said before the strike that he would make decisions on the labor demands "in three to six months," he was forced into an apparent compromise with the union leaders. Fisseha Tsion Takie, secretary general of the Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Unions, said on March 8 of the compromise, which had not yet been agreed upon: "On all matters there is a meeting of minds

between the negotiating committee and the government representatives." By Saturday, March 9, however, the strikers were still out. A March 9 Reuters dispatch from Addis Ababa reported: "Militants within the Confederation of Ethiopian [Labor] Unions are believed to have insisted on changes to the draft [agreement]." The next day, Reuters reported that union leaders and the government had agreed to an end of the strike, apparently after further concessions by the government.

Ethiopian Students Seize Moscow Embassy

The current unrest within Ethiopia has found a responsive echo among Ethiopian students studying abroad. On March 9, about eighty students in Moscow occupied the Ethiopian Embassy there and held Ambassador Yohannes Tseghe until he agreed to send a message to Addis Ababa forwarding the students' "support for the people's demands which have been going on in Ethiopia for the past week."

The students demanded that "the feudal monarchy that has been the cause of the age-long poverty and illiteracy" in Ethiopia be removed and

replaced by a democratic republic with a new constitution, land reform, and free political parties. Their statement said: "The Emperor, higher dignitaries, feudal lords and other civil and military personnel who have robbed the people and who have committed injustice should be brought to court." They also called for the ouster of the new prime minister. Some of the women protesters hung a poster in front of the embassy that read: "Ethiopian Women Struggle Against Feudalism, Imperialism and Male Chauvinism." □

Proposes Turning Calendar Back to Horse and Buggy Days

Solzhenitsyn's Letter to Kremlin Bureaucrats

By Allen Myers

The London *Sunday Times* of March 3 published a translation of the full text of a 15,000-word letter from Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn to the leaders of the Soviet government. Dated September 5, 1973, less than two months before the publication in the West of Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*, the letter ranges over wide areas of Soviet life and government policy, as the introductory note by the *Sunday Times* editors indicated:

"... Solzhenitsyn denounces the cardinal folly of pursuing an expansionist foreign policy when there is

nothing to fear from Europe and America. He calls for an accommodation with China. He deplores the mindless policy of economic growth which has despoiled the beauty of Russia's cities and ruined the tranquillity of her countryside. He reiterates that the real wealth of Russia lies in her own soil. He pours scorn on the dead creed of Marxism. He claims that the Russians drink far too much vodka. He advocates the end of national service, and says promotion should not depend on party membership. He pleads for kindness from Russia's rulers and peace for its citi-

zens."

Solzhenitsyn's letter does in fact range over all these areas and more. Its overall import, however, can be summarized fairly briefly. In the letter Solzhenitsyn announces his rejection of Marxism and proposes to substitute for it a religious, Great Russian nationalism based on a return to a romanticized vision of nineteenth-century Russian peasant economy. This reactionary utopian vision is mixed in a contradictory jumble with occasional proposals that in their own right are progressive and deserving of support.

Retreat Into the Past

Addressing the Kremlin, Solzhenitsyn states that the purpose of his letter is "to suggest to you what is, for the moment at least, still a timely way out of the chief dangers facing our country in the next ten to thirty years.

"These dangers are: war with China, and our destruction together with Western civilization in the crush and stench of a fouled earth."

Solzhenitsyn describes the Soviet bureaucrats whom he addresses as "total realists," and he therefore presents practical arguments against war with China:

"Don't reckon on any triumphant *blitzkrieg*. You will have against you a country of almost a THOUSAND MILLION people, the like of which has never yet gone to war in the history of the world. . . . Its army and population will not surrender *en masse* with Western good sense, even when surrounded and beaten. Every soldier and every civilian will fight to the last bullet, the last breath. . . . You will not, of course, be the first to use nuclear weapons; that would do irreparable damage to your reputation, which you cannot disregard, and anyway from a practical point of view still wouldn't bring you a quick victory. . . .

"A *conventional* war, on the other hand, would be the longest and bloodiest of all the wars mankind has ever fought. Like the Vietnam War at the very least (to which it will be similar in many ways) it will certainly last a minimum of ten to fifteen years. . . . If Russia lost up to one and a half million people in the First World War and (according to Khrushchev's figures) 20 million in the Second, then

war with China is bound to cost us 60 million souls at the very least. . . ." (Here, and below, emphasis is in the original.)

No defender of the Soviet Union and socialism can take issue with the fact that a war between the two workers states would be a monstrous and criminal folly. It is ironic, however, that Solzhenitsyn bases his argument on "Russian national interest" when it is precisely the two bureaucracies' defense of narrowly interpreted "national interest"—identified with their own caste interests—that has brought them to their present state of mutual hostility.

Solzhenitsyn cites two factors that he considers responsible for the threat of war between the Soviet Union and China. One is the competition between the two bureaucracies to pose as the true defenders of "Marxism-Leninism." The second shows how far the novelist has gone in embracing reactionary notions; he cites "the dynamic pressure of a China 1,000 million strong on our as yet unexploited Siberian lands." Solzhenitsyn thus puts himself in the camp of the racists who attempt to drum up fears of a "yellow peril."

There are elements of Solzhenitsyn's letter besides the warning to avoid a Sino-Soviet war that deserve at least a qualified endorsement. Certainly it is possible to share his disgust with destruction of the environment by carelessly planned industrial projects, even though his explanation of its causes and his proposed remedies are worse than useless.

Solzhenitsyn also calls for an end to Russian control over the workers states of Eastern Europe and over national minorities in the Soviet Union. He urges the Soviet leaders "sooner or later to withdraw our protective surveillance of Eastern Europe. Nor can there be any question of any peripheral nation being forcibly kept within the bounds of our country."

(The March 3 *New York Times* translated what would appear to be the same passage as follows: ". . . our trusteeship from Eastern Europe, the Baltic republics, Transcaucasia, Central Asia and possibly even from parts of the present Ukraine. . . .")

However, here too Solzhenitsyn motivates his proposal by a supposed Russian national interest that in this case is described as switching "atten-

tion away from distant continents—and even away from Europe and the south of our country" in order to make Siberia "the centre of national activity and settlement and a focus for the aspirations of young people."

Solzhenitsyn's proposals are all based on a viewpoint that bears little or no relation to reality. He asserts, for example, that neither European nor U.S. imperialism represent any threat to the Soviet Union. In fact, he seems to regard U.S. imperialism (Solzhenitsyn does not call it that) as a beneficent force: He does not criticize the United States for its aggression in Indochina; but seems to disparage the "internal dissension and spiritual weakness" that kept it from winning the Vietnam war! And he criticizes past Soviet leadership for having "bred Mao Tse-tung in place of a peaceable neighbor such as Chiang Kai-shek."

Solzhenitsyn's proposal to isolate Russia from the rest of the world sets the stage for an impossible retreat into a romanticized past. He proposes that the Russian economy be reconstructed on a primitive agricultural basis:

"The construction of more than half of our state in a fresh new place [Siberia] will enable us to avoid repeating the disastrous errors of the twentieth century—industry, roads and cities for example."

Solzhenitsyn justifies his argument for a "zero growth" economy by combining a glorification of peasant backwardness with neo-Malthusian worries about overpopulation.

"How fond our progressive publicists were, both before and after the revolution, of ridiculing those *retrogrades* (there were always so many of them in Russia): people who called upon us to cherish and have pity upon our past, even on the most god-forsaken hamlet with a couple of hovels, even on the paths that run alongside the railway track; who called upon us to keep horses even after the advent of the motor car, not to abandon small factories for enormous plants and combines, not to discard organic manure in favour of chemical fertilisers, not to mass by the million in cities, not to clamber on top of one another in multi-storey blocks. How they laughed, how they tormented those reactionary 'Slavophiles.' . . .

They hounded the men who said that it was perfectly feasible for a colossus like Russia, with all its spiritual peculiarities and folk traditions, to find its own particular path; and that it could not be that the whole of mankind should follow a single, absolutely identical pattern of development.

"No, we had to be dragged along the whole of the Western bourgeois-industrial and Marxist path in order to discover, at the end of the twentieth century, and again from progressive Western scholars, what any village greybeard in the Ukraine or Russia had understood from time immemorial and could have explained to the progressive commentators ages ago, had the commentators ever found the time in that dizzy fever of theirs to consult him: that a dozen maggots can't go on gnawing the same apple *forever*, that if the earth is a *finite* object, then its expanses and resources are finite also, and the *endless, infinite* progress dinned into our heads by the dreamers of the Enlightenment cannot be accomplished on it. . . ."

From Stalin to Solzhenitsyn

Solzhenitsyn's vision of a utopia of peasant hovels and mud roads is not likely to win much of a following either inside or outside the Soviet Union. Despite the letter's protestations to the contrary, it seems very improbable that Solzhenitsyn expected the Soviet leaders to give his suggestions serious consideration.

It needs to be kept in mind that although political themes are important in his novels, Solzhenitsyn is not a politician but an artist. And while both the Soviet bureaucrats and the capitalist press, each for their own reasons, will attempt to portray him as a *representative* of the Soviet dissident movement, that movement in fact encompasses a broad range of views, from the reactionary nonsense of Solzhenitsyn's letter to demands for a return to the norms of Leninism, advanced by such a figure as Pyotr Grigorenko.

The differing views of the various dissident currents do share a common origin, however. This is the reaction against the abominations of Stalinist rule. Solzhenitsyn considered himself

a Marxist before he was arrested for the "crime" of criticizing Stalin in a letter. His present views were not adopted under the influence of capitalist propaganda: They were taught to him by the bureaucrats who herded millions of Soviet citizens into concentration camps, who crush with arms any movement for socialist democracy in Eastern Europe or the Soviet Union, who live lives of luxury rivaling that of capitalist plutocrats while mismanaging the Soviet economy.

Some of Solzhenitsyn's most reactionary positions are borrowed more or less directly from the bureaucrats themselves. His Slavophilism, for example, is justified with an appeal to Stalin himself, as in the following passage ("ideology" is the term Solzhenitsyn uses for Marxism):

"When war with Hitler began, Stalin, who had omitted and bungled so much in the way of military preparation, did not neglect *that* side, the ideological side. And although the ideological grounds for that war seemed more indisputable than those that face you now (the war was waged against what appeared on the surface to be a diametrically opposed ideology), from the very first days of the war, Stalin refused to rely on the putrid, decaying prop of ideology. He wisely discarded it, all but ceased to mention it and unfurled instead the old Russian banner—sometimes indeed, the standard of Orthodoxy—and we conquered! (Only towards the end of the war and after the victory was the Progressive Doctrine taken out of its mothballs.)"

There is still another way in which the bureaucratic caste has contributed directly to the development of the sort of views expressed in Solzhenitsyn's letter. Soviet physicist Andrei Sakharov described this contribution in another context, explaining why many of the dissidents seem unwilling to take stands on events outside the Soviet Union. His explanation, which was translated in the March 5 *New York Times*, referred to "the Western liberal intelligentsia" that expects the dissident movement to reciprocate its interest in Soviet affairs:

"These people look to Soviet dissenters for a reciprocal, analogous international position with respect to other countries. But there are several important circumstances they do not take into account: the lack of informa-

tion; the fact that a Soviet dissenter is not only unable to go to other countries, but is deprived, within his own country, of the majority of sources of information; that the historical experience of our country has weaned us away from excessive 'leftism,' so that we evaluate many facts differently from the 'leftist' intelligentsia of the West; that we must avoid political pronouncements in the international arena where we are so ignorant (after all, we do not engage in political activity even in our own country); that we



STALIN: Marched to war under the banner of Orthodoxy and Russian chauvinism.

must avoid getting into the channel of Soviet propaganda, which so often deceives us."

The enforced isolation described by Sakharov does more than deprive actual and potential opponents of bureaucratic rule of reliable information on which to base their political judgments. It also prevents those judgments from being tested in practice. In this artificial atmosphere, reasonable and irrational ideas can and do exist side by side.

If there were free public discussion of political issues in the Soviet Union, Solzhenitsyn's proposals to replace motor transport with horses, and Marxism with religion, could only provoke laughter and little else. The absence of such a competition of ideas grants them a life they would not otherwise have.

What Does the Kremlin Fear?

Can the Soviet bureaucrats really be so frightened of Solzhenitsyn's proposals that they had no recourse but the forced exile of the novelist? Did the bureaucrats fear that Solzhenitsyn might touch off a mass movement in favor of a primitive agricultural utopia—thirty-eight years after Stalin decreed "the final and irrevocable triumph of socialism" in the Soviet Union? Are they really *incapable* of answering Solzhenitsyn?

Part of the bureaucrats' difficulty is, as Solzhenitsyn observes in his letter, that they don't believe in their own "Marxism." But beyond this problem, it seems clear that the bureaucrats fear Solzhenitsyn's answers far less than his questions.

In this respect there is a certain parallel between Solzhenitsyn and another great Russian novelist who also turned to religion and a romanticized peasant existence—Leo Tolstoy.

"Tolstoy did not consider himself a revolutionary and was not one," Leon Trotsky wrote on the occasion of Tolstoy's death in 1910. "But he passionately sought the truth and, having found it, was not afraid to proclaim it. Truth in and of itself possesses a terrible, explosive power: once proclaimed, it irresistibly gives rise to revolutionary conclusions in the consciousness of the masses. Everything that Tolstoy stated publicly: about the senselessness of rule by the czar, about the criminality of military service, about the dishonesty of landed property, about the lies of the church—in thousands of ways all this seeped into the minds of the laboring masses, agitated millions in the populist sects. And the word became deed. Although not a revolutionary, Tolstoy nurtured the revolutionary elements with his words of genius. In the book about the great storm of 1905 an honorable chapter will be dedicated to Tolstoy.

". . . no matter how sincere are the tears that liberal society sheds on the grave of Tolstoy, we have the indisputable right to say: liberalism does not answer Tolstoy's questions; liberalism cannot absorb Tolstoy; it is helpless before him. 'Culture? Progress? Industry?' says Tolstoy to the liberals. 'The devil take your progress and your industry if my sisters must sell their

bodies on the sidewalks of your cities!"

"Tolstoy did not know or show the way out of the hell of bourgeois culture. But with irresistible force he posed the question that only scientific socialism can answer. And in this vein one might say that everything in Tolstoy's teaching that is lasting and permanent flows into socialism as naturally as a river into the ocean."

It seems likely that history will make a similar evaluation of Solzhenitsyn's role, at least up to the present. Now that he has been artificially cut off from Soviet society, there is a real danger that his views will serve exclusively to promote reactionary, anti-socialist causes. But his attempt within the Soviet Union to discover and portray the truth about Stalinism will contribute to the eventual overthrow of the bureaucrats and the restoration of socialist democracy despite all the limitations of his outlook.

The Soviet bureaucracy could not tolerate Solzhenitsyn because it is impossible for the Kremlin to permit artistic, scientific, or cultural freedom while denying the political rights of the majority of the Soviet population. Solzhenitsyn's September 5 letter eloquently describes the cost of these restrictions to Soviet society:

"... there was another special feature of the old Russian towns, a spiritual one which made life there enjoyable even for the most highly educated. . . . Many provincial towns — not just Irkutsk, Tomsk, Saratov, Yaroslavl and Kazan, but many besides — were important cultural centres in their own right. But is it conceivable nowadays that we would allow any centre of independent activity and thought to exist outside Moscow? Even Petersburg [sic] has quite lost its lustre. There was a time when a unique and tremendously valuable book might be published in some little place like Vyshni Volochek — could our *ideology* conceivably allow that now? The present-day centralisation of all forms of life of the mind is a monstrosity amounting to spiritual murder. Without these sixty or eighty towns Russia does not exist as a country but is merely some sort of inarticulate rump."

Near the end of the letter, Solzhenitsyn returns to this theme:

"Allow us a free art and literature,

the free publication not just of political books — God preserve us! — and exhortations and election leaflets; allow us philosophical, ethical, economic and social studies, and you will see what a rich harvest it brings and how it bears fruit — for the good of Russia. Such an abundant and free flowering of inspiration will rapidly absolve us of the need to keep on belatedly translating new ideas from Western languages, as has been the case for the whole of the last fifty years — as you know.

"What have you to fear? Is the idea really so terrible?"

The answer is that the bureaucrats can imagine few things more terrible. The truth in "philosophical, ethical, economic and social studies" would discredit the parasitic bureaucracy as much as any number of political leaflets.

It is simply illogical for Solzhenitsyn to concede, as he does, the "right" of the bureaucrats to rule while asking them to permit intellectual freedom.

"Everything depends," he wrote, "upon *what sort* of authoritarian order lies in store for us in the future. It is not authoritarianism itself that is intolerable, but the ideological lies that are daily foisted upon us."

The bureaucracy, because it is a parasitic growth on the Soviet workers state, requires "ideological lies" to maintain its authoritarian rule. The bureaucrats realize that, even if Solzhenitsyn does not.

In *The Revolution Betrayed*, Trotsky in 1936 described, as follows, the connection between the bureaucracy's political dictatorship and its stunting of artistic and scientific development:

"In the process of struggle against the party Opposition, the literary schools were strangled one after the other. It was not only a question of literature, either. The process of extermination took place in all ideological spheres, and it took place more decisively since it was more than half unconscious. The present ruling stratum considers itself called not only to control spiritual creation politically, but also to prescribe its roads of development. The method of command-without-appeal extends in like measure to the concentration camps, to scientific agriculture and to music. The central organ of the party prints

anonymous directive editorials, having the character of military orders, in architecture, literature, dramatic art, the ballet, to say nothing of philosophy, natural science and history.

"The bureaucracy superstitiously fears whatever does not serve it directly, as well as whatever it does not understand. When it demands some connection between natural science and production, this is on a large scale right; but when it commands that scientific investigators set themselves goals only of immediate practical importance, this threatens to seal up the most precious sources of invention, including practical discoveries, for these most often arise on unforeseen roads. Taught by bitter experience, the natural scientists, mathematicians, philologists, military theoreticians, avoid all broad generalizations out of fear lest some 'red professor', usually an ignorant careerist, threateningly pull up on them with some quotation dragged in by the hair from Lenin, or even from Stalin. To defend one's own thought in such circumstances, or one's scientific dignity, means in all probability to bring down repressions upon one's head."

Stalinism and Leninism

Solzhenitsyn's explicit rejection of democracy and his willingness to accept continued bureaucratic rule provided only that it behave in a slightly less brutal fashion are the more disappointing in that the novelist once showed an awareness of other alternatives to the Kremlin's mismanagement. While he now accepts the bureaucrats' claim that their ideology is "Marxism-Leninism," in his brilliant novel *Cancer Ward* Solzhenitsyn had his characters pose the conflict between Leninism and Stalinism.

In one of the most dramatic passages of the book, the political prisoner Kostoglotov and the bureaucrat Rusanov engage in a debate touched off by the latter's remarks that a scandalous case of official corruption can be traced to the culprit's "bourgeois social origins."

"Why do you keep cackling on about social origins like a witch doctor?" Kostoglotov replies. "You know what they used to say in the twenties? 'Show us your callouses! Why are

your hands so white and puffy?' Now that *was* Marxism!"

Kostoglotov brushes aside Rusanov's objections and continues: "All right, maybe I *am* the son of a merchant, third class, but I've sweated blood all my life. Here, look at the calluses on my hands! So what am I? Am I bourgeois? Did my father give me a different sort of red or white corpuscles in my blood? That's why I tell you yours isn't a class attitude but a racial attitude. You're a racist!"

Another character intervenes to ask if Kostoglotov knows the phrase "a hereditary proletarian."

"It makes no difference if you had ten proletarian grandfathers, if you're not a worker yourself you're no proletarian," boomed Kostoglotov. 'He's not a proletarian, he's a son of a bitch. The only thing he's after is a special pension, I heard him say so himself.' He saw Rusanov opening his mouth, so he decided to give it to him straight in the guts. 'You don't love your country, you love your pension, and the earlier you get it the better.' . . .

"I don't need any pension,' shouted Kostoglotov, finishing what he had to say. 'I haven't got a bean, and I'm proud of it. I'm not trying to get anything, I don't want a huge salary, I *despise* such things.'

"Sh-sh,' hissed the philosopher, trying to stop him. 'Socialism provides for differentiation in wage structure.'

"To hell with your differentiation!' Kostoglotov raged, as pigheaded as ever. 'You think that while we're working toward communism the privileges some have over others ought to be increased, do you? You mean that to become equal we must first become unequal, is that right? You call that dialectics, do you?'"

The librarian Shulubin then intervenes in the debate:

"He stood in front of the philosopher, raised a finger and waited till the room was silent. 'Are you familiar with the April Theses?' he asked.

"Why, aren't we all?' The philosopher smiled.

"Can you list them point by point?' continued Shulubin, interrogating him in his guttural voice.

"My dear sir, there's no need to go through them one by one. The April Theses discussed the methods of transition from the bourgeois-demo-

cratic revolution to the socialist revolution. In this sense . . .'

"There's one point I remember,' said Shulubin, moving the bushy brows above his unhealthy, tired, tobacco-colored, bloodshot eyes. 'It runs, "No official should receive a salary higher than the average pay of a good worker." That's what they began the Revolution with.'

"Is that so?' said the professor in surprise. 'I don't remember that.'"

Lenin's fullest explanation of the character of government in a workers state was made not in the April Theses but in *The State and Revolution*, in which he rescued the nearly forgotten lessons that Marx and Engels had drawn from the experience of the Paris Commune.

"It is still necessary," Lenin wrote, "to suppress the capitalist class and crush its resistance. This was particularly necessary for the Commune; and one of the reasons of its defeat was that it did not do this with sufficient determination. But the organ of suppression is now the majority of the population, and not a minority, as was always the case under slavery, serfdom and wage-labor. And, once the majority of the nation *itself* suppresses its oppressors a 'special' force for suppression is no longer necessary. In this sense the State begins to disappear. Instead of the special institutions of a privileged minority (privileged officials and chiefs of a standing army), the majority can itself directly fulfil all these functions; and the more the discharge of the functions of the State devolves upon the masses of the people, the less need is there for the existence of the State itself.

"In this connection the special measures adopted by the Commune and emphasized by Marx, are particularly noteworthy: the abolition of all representative allowances, and of all special salaries in the case of officials; and the lowering of the payment of *all* servants of the State to the level of the *workmen's wages*. Here is shown, more clearly than anywhere else, the *break*—from a bourgeois democracy to a proletarian democracy; from the democracy of the oppressors to the democracy of the oppressed; from the domination of a 'special force' for the suppression of a given class to the suppression of the op-

pressors by the whole force of the majority of the nation—the proletariat and the peasants. And it is precisely on this most obvious point, perhaps, the most important so far as the problem of the State is concerned, that the teachings of Marx have been forgotten."

If Marx's teachings were forgotten by the Second International, the parasitic Soviet bureaucracy, in order to maintain its authority, deliberately suppressed them. The revolutionary program of Marx and Lenin was preserved only by Trotsky and his followers, preserved not in mothballs but as a living program of struggle for the restoration of Soviet democracy.

"A fresh upsurge of the revolution in the USSR," the *Transitional Program*, the founding document of the Fourth International, proclaimed in 1938, "will undoubtedly begin under the banner of the struggle against *social inequality* and *political oppression*. Down with the privileges of the bureaucracy! Down with Stakhanovism! Down with the Soviet aristocracy and its ranks and orders! Greater equality of wages for all forms of labor!"

"The struggle for the freedom of the trade unions and the factory committees, for the right of assembly and freedom of the press, will unfold in the struggle for the regeneration and development of *Soviet democracy*."

It is this program, based on the preservation and expansion of the gains of the October Revolution, that provides a way forward for the Soviet working class to recover the powers usurped by the bureaucracy. Solzhenitsyn's retreat into the dead end of mysticism and a romanticized past is in some ways a victory for the bureaucrats who fear him, for his proposals are a diversion from the real tasks facing the dissident movement.

Within that movement, those currents searching for a Marxist program have, unlike the bureaucrats, shown no fear of confronting Solzhenitsyn's ideas. The historian Roy Medvedev, in his review of *The Gulag Archipelago*, concluded:

"Marxism will certainly not perish for loss of one of its former adherents. We even think that Marxism will only benefit from debate with such an opponent as Solzhenitsyn." □

Murder of Striking Workers in Martinique

[The following statement, issued February 18 by the Groupe Révolution Socialiste (GRS—Revolutionary Socialist Group), the Antilles section of the Fourth International, was reprinted in the February 22 joint issue of the French Trotskyist weekly, *Rouge*, and *Libération Antilles-Guyane*, the fortnightly published by GRS members living in France. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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Following the events that occurred February 14 in Martinique, a fierce campaign was launched to present the Groupe Révolution Socialiste (Antilles section of the Fourth International) as the instigator of, or at least the chiefly responsible agent behind, the clashes between the forces of order and the strikers.

This police version of the situation, namely, that a few troublemakers supposedly provoked the cops, is in reality intended to conceal the cause of the crisis in the Antilles: French colonial domination and its consequences: low salaries, high cost of living, and forced emigration to the metropolitan center. Through this campaign the colonial regime intends to justify in advance the repression that is opening up.

These "explanations" downplay the strikes and the powerful demonstrations that have unfolded over the last three months in the Antilles. It is within the context of this growing mobilization of the workers of Martinique that the GRS accepts its responsibilities. Our camp is that of the proletariat in opposition to the class enemy: the colonial bourgeoisie. We are not "anarchic elements" but rather revolutionary militants in the service of the workers of the Antilles, struggling for independence and socialism, for the complete liberation of our country from the imperialist yoke. The Antilles working class recognizes that; the reelection of a GRS candidate, Edouard Jean-Elie, to the municipal government of Ajoupa-Bouillon in the north of Martinique January 17 is a recent proof of this.

As a component of the workers movement, we have participated in all the struggles—in particular, in the massive response to the murder of two agricultural workers in Lorraine. We have likewise signed—along with

Illmany, Marie-Louise: Martyrs in Struggle Against French Imperialism

[The following article appeared in the February 22 joint issue of *Rouge/Libération Antilles-Guyane*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Renor Illmany, father of seven children, agricultural worker: shot to death. Georges Marie-Louise, 19, resident of Marigot: beaten to death—forearms burned, wrists marked from being bound, entire body covered by bruises, tongue cut out, testicles severely swollen.

Both took part in a march of striking banana workers in the north of Martinique February 14. Without warning, the police fired, charged, clubbed, and carried out cold-blooded assassinations.

Illmany and Marie-Louise—two names to be added to the list of martyrs of the Martiniquan working class. Two names that will remain engraved alongside that of [André] Alikier, the leader of the Martiniquan Communist party assassinated by the colons' goons in 1934. Two names that will reverberate with all the anger of a people, like those of the victims of December 1959 in Martinique, like those of the dozens who died in May 1967 in Guadeloupe.

They are dead because for three centuries the Antilles have been French colonies. They are dead because for three centuries a few hundred colons and French imperialist corporations have oppressed an entire people, enriching themselves from their sweat, plunging them into misery. They are dead because for three centuries the only rights they had were to exhaust

all the other organizations of the left in Martinique—a united declaration against the repression.

The GRS strongly protests all the slanderous allegations against it. Along with all the anticolonial organizations in France and the Antilles, it will do everything in its power to assure that the working masses in France become fully informed of the extortions being carried out by the colonial system. □

their bodies and cast ballots in fixed elections.

Descendants of slaves, the slaves of capital themselves, they went out on strike simply to continue to live. Because today in Martinique 65 percent of the working population is either partially or totally unemployed. Because in these last remnants of the colonial empire the price of rice has increased 125 percent in the last nine months, the cost of living is 30 percent higher than in France, an agricultural worker earns less than 450 francs [approximately US\$90] a month, and a banana worker earns scarcely 28 francs [approximately US \$5.60] a day, the days on which there is work.

They did not die during an obscure confrontation, provoked by "anarchic groups." To the contrary, their murder was the unambiguous response of legionnaire [French Prime Minister Pierre] Messmer to the vast strike movement propelling the entire Martiniquan working class. The strike—called by the trade-union confederations and widely observed across the island February 12—became total after last Thursday's [February 14] repression. The colonial regime still refuses to enter into any overall negotiations on the basic demands of the Martiniquan workers.

Its sole response, for the moment, is to promise a few crumbs, to raise the specter of a "conspiracy," and threaten the most combative elements. The central target of these threats is our comrades in the GRS, Antilles section of the Fourth International. They have been denounced for their active—and sometimes leading—role in the present struggles, but above

all because of their desire to bring this initial offensive to victory in order to continue the battle that will liberate the French colonies in the Americas from the colonial yoke.

Here, in the heart of the imperialist metropolitan center, our responsibilities are overwhelming. France stands second only to fascist Portugal on the imperialist presiding committee of colonial domination. It continues to impose the tricolor flag and direct colonization on 1.5 million persons around the world. The armada that secures these possessions has the means to destroy the popular movements at any moment in a torrent of blood. It is up to the anticolonialist militants in France to stay the criminal hand of imperialism and force the colonial regime to nego-

tiate the demands of the Antilles workers. It is also our responsibility, in opposition to the chauvinism promoted by the reformists, to affirm the right of self-determination of the peoples of the Antilles and to support the call for independence and socialism raised by the Antilles revolutionary Marxists.

In the past, when French colonialism tortured the Algerian revolutionaries in the silence of the mountains, it also counted on the silence of the youth and working class of France. Today, it will no longer be the same! In this battle for independence and socialism, we stand at the side of the workers of the Antilles and our comrades of the GRS until the final victory! □

Mali

Report Deliberate Starvation of Tuaregs

The military regime in the West African country of Mali has been using the famine there as a weapon in its attempts to beat the Tuareg tribespeople into submission, according to *Le Monde* correspondent Philippe Decraene in a report published in the February 6 issue.

Decraene noted the secretive actions of the government and its attempts to prevent him from gathering firsthand knowledge of the situation in Mali. But he learned enough to draw some conclusions: "Everything leads one to believe that the Mali government is seeking to take advantage of the famine to reduce to its mercy the final vestiges of resistance of the Tuaregs, as well as the final manifestations of Tuareg particularism."

The nomadic Tuareg warriors, who numbered about 240,000 in Mali before the famine, have always resisted any attempts to absorb them into the "national culture" of the regime in Bamako, the capital.

In 1963, following a dispute between the Tuaregs and the military in the l'Adrar des Iforas region in northern Mali near the border with Algeria, some of the officers who are today governors, commanders of military regions, and ministers in Bamako,

carried out a harsh, repressive campaign against the Tuaregs. The campaign was under the direction of President Modibo Keita, who was deposed by the military in 1968. The Tuareg camps were burned and pillaged, the men summarily executed, and the women taken captive as "wives" for the soldiers.

The famine now gives the regime an opportunity to finish off the Tuaregs and drive the survivors out of the country. To do this, it has systematically attempted to block any foreign relief aid from reaching the tribes, a simple matter since the president of the national commission in charge of distributing the aid to the starving nomads and peasants, Captain Kissima Doukara, is also the minister of defense and of the interior. The Bamako regime has also tried to underplay the seriousness of the famine among the Tuaregs and the rest of the population, by barring representatives of the international relief organizations from gaining any accurate knowledge of the situation and, in some cases, even expelling them from the country for being too inquisitive.

Occasionally a foreign official is allowed to make a carefully guided visit

to one of the refugee camps. A representative of one of the relief organizations told Decraene: "The Mali government thinks that too many foreign missions have come to visit this country. . . . It does not permit impromptu visits to the refugee camps without prior notice. . . . When, after much red tape, the request is approved, the disaster victims—as if by mere chance—are carefully lined up and are surrounded by the nurses and doctors dressed in white. . . . Nevertheless, in spite of the evident care taken in staging the scene, it is easy to ascertain that there are no men between the ages of fifteen and forty in the camps, only women and old people."

Attempts by journalists and foreign officials to get information from the authorities in Bamako or from military commanders were usually greeted with silence. Occasionally someone would say that the situation was "excellent." One high official in Bamako described what Decraene called the official doctrine: "Send us the maximum aid possible. We ourselves will take care of the distribution to those in need." Decraene noticed that in some shops in the city, the grain that was supposed to be distributed free to the famine victims was actually being sold.

Apparently in reply to criticisms of the regime's handling of the famine situation, Colonel Moussa Traoré, the president of Mali, told a representative of Agence France-Presse on July 12: "Some newspapers and a certain group of individuals and organizations have seized on the situation, as if it were a windfall, in order to exploit it in a dishonest and disgusting manner. . . . We are not taken in by this. Because of what we already know, this scandal we are witnessing hardly surprises us. We regret that the sufferings of our people are being used so cynically and exploited so basely."

Thousands of Tuaregs have fled across the borders into Niger and Upper Volta to escape the famine and the repression, yet the situations there are little better. In one shantytown called Lazareth, just outside of Niamey, the capital of Niger, there were 6,000 Tuaregs at the end of November, along with 1,200 graves that had been filled in the previous four months. □

Thai Troops Raze 'Communist' Village

For the first time since the split in the student movement following the overthrow of the old military regime in October, the two main student groups, the National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT) and the Federation of Independent Students of Thailand (FIST) have united in action. Both pledged to support the People for Democracy Group's campaign to expose the terror tactics of the Thai counterinsurgency forces. This campaign recently culminated in a rally of 10,000 in Bangkok.

Although the Thai regime had previously announced, as a concession to the students and workers, that the Communist Suppression Operations Command (CSOC) would be dissolved, the organization is still very much alive and active. On January 24, four villagers in the border village of Ban Na Sai in northeast Thailand were shot to death, the houses looted, and the entire village razed.

The military at first claimed that the massacre had been carried out by "communist terrorists." But an investigation conducted by student leader Thirayudh Boonmee brought out the truth. (Thirayudh was one of the thirteen activists arrested by the old regime just before its downfall and is now a coordinator of the People for Democracy Group, which led the demonstrations against U.S. Ambassador William Kinter and the CIA in January.)

Thirayudh brought back to Bangkok six villagers from Ban Na Sai, including the village headman, to give their account of the massacre to Premier Sanya Thammasak. They said that forces of the Border Patrol Police, the "village defense volunteers," and the Special Armament Force were responsible for the killing, looting, and burning. Thirayudh charged that units under the control of the CSOC were responsible for the massacre. Premier Sanya promised an "official inquiry" into the affair.

Thirayudh's condemnation of the massacre apparently went too far for some government officials. Province officials and figures involved in the counterinsurgency operations seized on

a report that Thirayudh had met with a representative of the Pathet Lao to charge that he had been trying "to incite the northeast to an uprising."

The villagers who testified about the massacre were also accused of being "hard-core terrorists" and everyone in the village was called an "insurgent sympathizer." Three Bangkok newspapers, while not going so far as the other attacks, also condemned Thirayudh. One of the newspapers, *Siam Rath*, is published by M.R. Kukrit Pramoj, the Speaker of the National Legislative Assembly.

The exposure of the massacre touched off fears that the military might be planning a prompt return to open management of political affairs. The February 25 *Far Eastern Economic Review* said of the destruction of Ban Na Sai: "What is called Thailand's My Lai aggravates the nagging fear that military rule could be reimposed." Some of the Bangkok newspapers carried the headline: "Will Democracy Survive?" Rumors of a coup by some factions of the armed forces became more widespread than

at any time since the October events. The *Review* reported that some military officers were discussing the possibility of a coup after the general elections or during the summer, when students would be dispersed throughout the country for their vacations.

"Some former close associates and followers of ousted field marshals Thanom Kittikachorn and Prapas Charusathira," the *Review* observed, "still hold top posts in the present Government. It is feared they are only quietly licking their wounds and waiting for the 'right time' to come."

In response to the right-wing attacks against Thirayudh, Sombat Thamrongthangawong, president of the NSCT, and Seksan Prasertkul, the president of FIST, pledged to support the People for Democracy Group on the issue of the massacre charges. At the rally in Bangkok, they and other student leaders brought a large group of villagers from Ban Na Sai to give their firsthand accounts of the incident.

The March 4 *Far Eastern Economic Review*, reporting on the rally, said: "Towards the end, Thirayudh got up and startled the public by announcing that if a coup d'état took place, everybody should gather at the Phramaine Ground [a popular rally site] to join forces and fight to the end." □

Greek Communist Party Members Arrested

The Gizikis regime has announced the arrest of thirty-five members of the Greek Communist party. The announcement, made public February 19, came on the third day of a four-day student boycott commemorating the November student revolt.

According to the February 21 *Le Monde*, those arrested included thirteen leading members of the pro-Moscow tendency of the Greek CP and twenty-two members of the Communist Youth of Greece and the Greek Antidictatorial Youth. Three of those arrested — Tony Ambatielos, Nicolaos Kaloudis, and Assimina Yannou — are reported to be members of the party's central committee.

The regime, which has been at pains to portray the widespread opposition to its dictatorship as a "Communist plot," had earlier handed down a stiff

sentence to another leading Communist party member. A secret military trial February 11 sentenced Leonidas Tzepronis, a member of the central committee of the "Bureau of the Interior" tendency of the CP, to eleven years in prison on a twenty-year-old "espionage" charge.

Gizikis has also reopened the Yarmos concentration camp, despite the fact that its sanitary conditions have been denounced by the International Red Cross. Some 120 prisoners are now being held there. □

Maybe He Went Home

Prison authorities in Italy transferred Andrea di Nicola from a prison in Sardinia after a protest demonstration. But now no one in the prison system knows where he was transferred to.

The Mass Struggles in Gujarat and Maharashtra

[The following interview with a leader from Gujarat of the Communist League of India, Indian section of the Fourth International, was obtained in Europe for *Intercontinental Press* by Malik Miah in early February.]

* * *

Question. What is the general political and economic situation in India today?

Answer. Well, the Indian bourgeoisie is confronted with a crisis of a structural nature which is unprecedented in its magnitude. The crisis is predominantly in the economic sphere. Prices are skyrocketing and production has gone down as a whole. The fifth five-year plan is in doldrums. The targets set in the fifth five-year plan have already been upset by the oil crisis and the rampant inflation. But the bourgeoisie has still not exhausted its democratic possibilities and potentialities. The Indian bourgeoisie, except for that of Japan, is the most mature and stable bourgeoisie in the whole of South and Southeast Asia. It has in the person of Indira Gandhi a very suitable leadership.

Since 1969, when the classical party of the Indian bourgeoisie split, Gandhi has had the leadership of the Indian bourgeoisie. She had some important advantages in lulling the masses' consciousness, on account of certain external events, such as the refugee problem, the crisis of Bangladesh, war with Pakistan in late 1971. And then she made scapegoats of the reactionary and vested interests in her own organization prior to the split.

She said that she wanted to usher in socialism in India. But by maintaining relations based on the right of private property, which is assigned as a fundamental right in the constitution of India, there is a contradiction. Without abolishing the right of private property, she wanted to establish socialism in India. This was just phrase mongering on the part of Gandhi's leadership and organization to catch votes and get a landslide victory in Parliament.

But after a span of about a year and a half, this strategy has failed to work. The standard of living of the masses has gone down considerably, prices have registered a tremendous rise, the public distribution system has miserably failed to work, and people suffer on account of a scarcity of essential items of food.

So, at present, even the Indian bourgeoisie itself is aware that this crisis is deepgoing and of a structural char-



INDIRA GANDHI

acter. But it has still not found the solution to this crisis, and various sections and various spokesmen of the Indian bourgeoisie are trying to find out the solution at present.

Unfortunately, we in India do not have a genuine Marxist leadership of the mass upsurge that is erupting everywhere. And therefore the situation does not get converted into a pre-revolutionary situation as such, whereby the masses can take a decisive leap toward a socialist solution of these problems.

Q. Recently there was a general strike of three million workers in Bombay

and mass demonstrations of workers and peasants in the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat. Could you explain the significance of these mobilizations and the main features behind them?

A. At present two of the most conservative and orthodox states in India are witnessing gigantic mass struggles. They are Maharashtra and Gujarat, which are in the western part of India, while West Bengal and Kerala, which are traditional leftist strongholds, are comparatively quiescent now.

In Gujarat we recently had food riots, violent agitation, and a gigantic mass upsurge, wherein no particular organized party—whether of the right or the left—had complete hold over the movement. And ultimately the students and workers, especially in cities like Ahmadabad, Baroda, and Surat, came to the fore and took charge of the movement. They formed committees of students and workers to lead this movement.

The immediate aim of the movement was to oust the state ministry in Gujarat, on the charge that it was corrupt. But some of the slogans were not radical enough. They have still not come to that stage where they realize that it is not a question of ministry, but a question of social system that has to be overthrown. Our own comrades of the Communist League, the Indian section of the Fourth International, were very active in this movement in Baroda, Surat, and Ahmadabad.

In Maharashtra, the textile workers have gone on a strike which has lasted more than fifty days. And before I left India, I learned that a general strike of all workers in Maharashtra was to be staged within a couple of days in support of the textile workers. In Maharashtra there was already one general strike protesting against the spiraling rise in the prices of essential commodities. There was a complete stoppage of work in the entire state of Maharashtra for the whole day.

There is another significant develop-

ment in the state of Maharashtra, especially in Bombay, where some of the younger, more militant and radical elements from the scheduled castes [untouchables] have decided to bypass the traditional leadership represented in the Republican party and have formed a group called the Dalit Panthers. It's very militant and it has recently protested against the regional chauvinism represented in the reactionary policies of groups like the Shiv Sena. The Panthers are pressing some very radical demands in the state of Maharashtra.

Q. The ruling Congress party appears to be in a crisis because of the rising inflation caused by the world energy crisis and the grain shortages. What steps do you think Gandhi's government will take to gain more support for the government's policies and alleviate the present crisis?

A. If you take into account the entire political and economic situation in India, then Gandhi is still waiting for the results of the elections in the largest state, Uttar Pradesh, which are scheduled to be held on the twenty-fourth of this month. There is a great erosion of the so-called popularity of Indira Gandhi, to such an extent that she can't address public meetings now in several places. Not to talk of lesser leaders of her own organization, that is, the ruling Congress party.

There is a trend toward increasing authoritarianism in India, but still the bourgeoisie has not resorted to any dictatorial measures as such. Perhaps in India the bourgeoisie, without resorting to naked military dictatorship and within the framework of the constitution, can also impose a sort of president's rule [direct federal rule] for the entire union of India, just as it has done so many times in the cases of several constituent states of the Indian federation.

Q. I understand there are thousands of political prisoners in the country. What is their present situation?

A. There are about 30,000 political prisoners, mainly those suspected of Naxalite activities, who are still languishing in the jails of the Indian bourgeoisie without any hope of trial. The Supreme Court just declared void certain provisions of the MISA Act, the Maintenance of Internal Security Act,

and ruled that the prisoners detained under this MISA Act will soon be released. But to date the government has still not released them. In my view, it is a very important question that we in India should launch a struggle for the release of these political prisoners or for their early trial and also for better conditions in jails for these political prisoners.

Within the Naxalite movement itself a controversy is going on as to where their strategy of armed struggle failed and what should be done to develop the struggle on a mass basis, on a large scale, by the masses themselves.

Q. There are two Communist parties in India: the CPI [Communist party of India] and the CP(M) [Communist party of India (Marxist)]. What is their attitude toward the government and what strategies do they advocate for the toiling masses?

A. So far as the right Communist party, which is Moscow-oriented, is concerned, it has throughout supported Gandhi's organization, the ruling Congress, on the basis that it represents the "progressive" wing of the Indian bourgeoisie that is capable of fulfilling the democratic, bourgeois-democratic, tasks that confront India.

So far as the CPI(M) is concerned which was formerly Peking-oriented but has adopted a more independent stance since then, it has extended "critical" support to Gandhi's government. Still, along with its theory of the four-class bloc, to a very great extent its politics is based on class-collaborationism and opportunism and subordination of independent proletarian and working-class struggles and politics to that of achieving bourgeois-democratic tasks in India. At the moment, none of these left parties pose the question of a socialist revolution being on the agenda in the case of the Indian subcontinent.

We, the Communist League, the Indian section of the Fourth International, basing ourselves on the teachings of Leon Trotsky, on the theory of permanent revolution, believe that the question of socialist revolution is directly posed and that the crisis that confounds the Indian society can be resolved only if the proletariat takes the reins of power into its own hands, by making a socialist revolution under its leadership in alliance with the landless peasantry and by overthrow-

ing the social relations based on private property.

Q. Were the committees of students and workers formed in the universities and factories in Gujarat independent of the trade unions and traditional left parties and organizations?

A. Yes. The student committees were formed independently by the students themselves, including the women students. And they were very active in their university campus areas in Ahmadabad, Baroda, and Surat, and they generally bypassed the traditional leaderships.

The workers committee was composed of members from all the trade unions run by the various left parties. But in Gujarat we don't have very strong left parties, neither the CPI nor the CPI(M). The movement developed such a momentum that it just bypassed this traditional leadership. Another notable feature was that the cities dominated this struggle in Gujarat and took the lead, and the villages only followed later on, especially in one district of the Surat region.

Because the government of Gujarat imposed a procurement levy for grain, the rich kulaks from that area organized a strong protest movement. The government simply allowed this movement to develop and later tried to channel it. The landless laborers could not get anything to eat because of the hoarding by the kulaks, so a miniature class war developed between the landless laborers and the landlords in this particular area. Ultimately the government succumbed to the pressure of the landlords and backed away from the measure of compulsory grain procurement. There were some murders of landless laborers by the landlords in this particular region.

Q. In Gujarat the Congress party was in control and then presidential rule was imposed . . .

A. Yes. It was led by the ruling Congress. But when I came here, I read in the newspapers that on February 9 president's rule was imposed and the ministry was removed. So one of the major demands of the students and workers spearheading this movement was complied with by the government of India.

Q. One of their major demands was

the overthrow . . .

A. Of the ministry. Because their main charge was that it was corrupt. Later they will realize that the evils of which they complain flow from the system and not from a minister or a ministry. But the steps were in the right direction.

Q. In Bombay, in Maharashtra, the ruling Congress was also in charge when the demonstrations broke out.

A. Yes. In Maharashtra it was the Congress party that ruled the state. In fact, it is one of the most important bastions of the ruling Congress in all of India. The finance minister is from this region.

Q. Isn't it true that recently there were parliamentary elections in Maharashtra, and the Communist party of India won a majority? What is the significance of this?

A. Yes. There was a by-election in one of the constituencies in the city of Bombay, where the ruling Congress, despite its proclamations to the contrary, joined hands with the regional chauvinist Shiv Sena, to fight the election. It was opposed by the Jan Sangh, a communalist reactionary militant organization that supports the Indian bourgeoisie. Against both of these parties, the Communist party of India, Moscow-oriented, fielded Roza Deshpande, the daughter of Mr. Dange, chairman of the CPI, as its candidate. She won by a comfortable majority and the CPI held it as a victory of the working class. In this election the Dalit Panthers refused to vote for the candidates proposed by the traditional leadership, that is, the Republican party.

Q. The Republican party is the traditional leadership of what social layers?

A. The scheduled castes and tribes. It is not an all-India party as such. And the scheduled castes are the most oppressed castes in the caste hierarchy of India.

Q. What other activities has the Communist League of India been involved in and what are its perspectives?

A. Well, we still don't have an all-

India character, because we are very small in numbers. But we do have some concentrated influence in some provinces of India, mainly in Gujarat and Maharashtra, and some in Uttar Pradesh and Kerala. Still, the Indian section is engaged in the task of making a primitive accumulation of cadres and training them intensively and equipping them theoretically as well as practically. We have some important developments in Gujarat, especially in Baroda and Surat, where we have a sizable group of young cadres, both from the student community and the working class.

In Baroda we have a very good institution called a workers council, which stands above all traditional trade unions and traditional leaderships, where our working class cadres, who are party members, are very influential and where rank-and-file working-class members of all the trade unions come to agitate their grievances, to decide on common struggles, and so on. Our contacts go regularly to the factory gates to address meetings of the workers, take part in study circles, discuss problems confronting India, and organize summer and winter seminars.

In Surat our young student cadres are also very active on the campus, to organize meetings. We have recently started a fortnightly newspaper in Gujarat which has much influence and has a wide circulation.

In Maharashtra, and especially in Bombay, we have some cadres who are trained to organize along these

lines. The main problem for us is still to gather cadres and develop them. Because of our small size, we are not in a position yet to influence the ongoing and developing mass struggles in a big, decisive, and crucial way. That is simply not possible because of our size. To the extent that our cadres can integrate themselves into these movements, they do so. But still the primary task for us is to gather cadres.

In the area of press, we have one English-language magazine called *Red Spark*. In Gujarat we have one fortnightly, which was recently started. In Uttar Pradesh there are two papers published by us. In Kerala there is one paper, which is being published by the Kerala unit of the Communist League. In West Bengal we have one paper, *Larai*.

We have also translated and published several works of Trotsky, including the Transitional Program, into Gujarati. We are having a very good sale of Trotsky's literature published by Pathfinder Press, and the magazines *Intercontinental Press*, the *Young Socialist*, and other journals in India.

There is a very growing demand for the works of Trotsky in India and much can still be done in that area. For the last several years one of our comrades has done a lot of work in making available this literature, which was not available before in India, or was available only at great cost. So on this front we have been able to do some work. □

Soviet Union

Sakharov Issues Appeal for Bukovsky

Soviet physicist Andrei Sakharov has issued a statement demanding information on the fate of Vladimir Bukovsky, a dissident activist sentenced to seven years imprisonment in 1971.

Bukovsky has previously served a three-year term for protesting the closed door trial of Aleksandr Ginzburg and Yuri Galanskov; he is currently in prison for his public protest against the confinement of Soviet dissidents in mental hospitals.

In a letter attached to the appeal, Bukovsky's mother calls for support

in the campaign to save her son from "physical extermination," pointing out that he suffers from a heart ailment and a kidney disease contracted during his first imprisonment.

Another dissident, Viktor Khaustov, has just been sentenced to four years detention in a Soviet labor camp by a court in Orel, 200 miles south of Moscow. Khaustov is accused of "anti-Soviet activities" in connection with the distribution of samizdat literature. He too had served an earlier three-year sentence for protesting the Ginzburg-Galanskov trial. □

Thousands in Paris March Against Chilean Junta

The head of the French Communist party youth organization had some objections to *Le Monde's* coverage of the February 22 demonstrations in Paris against the arrival of the Chilean junta's ambassador.

In a letter in the February 26 issue of *Le Monde*, Jean-Michel Catala, general secretary of the Mouvement de la Jeunesse Communiste de France (Communist Youth Movement of France) accused the Paris daily's reporter Dominique Pouchin of "thinking he had to mount a little political operation against the Communist Youth and the French Communist party. This is regrettable but undeniable. Both in the introduction and in the body of the article he speculated about a so-called conflict between the Communist Youth and the French Communist party.

"Pouchin chose his ground badly. Everyone knows that our movement, side by side with the Communist party and eighteen other big organizations, has played an important role in developing solidarity with the Chilean people. . . .

"What characterized the demonstration Friday, February 22, organized by the 'Nineteen' was broad participation of the youth, behind the banners of our organization in particular.

"After that, trying to directly link the positions of our movement and the resolute antifascism of its members to the little groups of helmeted and armed persons who deliberately provoked the incidents on the Avenue du Montparnasse reveals bad faith."

The events of February 22 that stirred such controversy seemed complicated enough, and they apparently reflected tactical experimentation on the part of more than one of the forces participating, including the police.

In particular, since the mass high-school student demonstrations against bourgeois military conscription in the spring of 1973, where the Trotskyists took the lead, the Communist party has been experiencing more problems in the youth field. The peculiar weakness among the youth of the second-largest party in France was reflected

in the February 22 demonstrations.

In the March 1 issue of *Rouge*, the weekly that reflects the views of the French Trotskyists, Gérard Filoche explained the background of the demonstrations this way:

"Long in preparation, the demonstration against the arrival of Pinochet's ambassador was the occasion for an exceptional mobilization by the Comités-Chili. Beginning February 10, assemblies . . . started to be held to organize the participants. It was assumed at first that the demonstration would be banned. The government would be afraid of any public hue and cry over the exchange of compliments between Pompidou and the representative of the Chilean torturers.

"Posters, leaflets, speeches, press communiqués, every means was used to get the word out. Some 6,000 to 8,000 persons signed up in the local groups to go to the demonstration.

"Day by day from February 10 to 19 this campaign developed with spectacular success. Many organizations and papers supported it. The Jeunesses Socialistes [Socialist Youth], the PSU [Parti Socialiste Unifié—United Socialist party, a centrist organization], the ORA, the JEC [Jeunesse Etudiante Chrétienne—Christian Student Youth], the AJS-OCI [Alliance des Jeunes pour le Socialisme—Alliance of Youth for Socialism; Organisation Communiste Internationaliste—International Communist Organization], *Politique-Hebdo*, and many sections and locals of the CGT [Confédération Générale du Travail—General Confederation of Labor, the CP-dominated federation] and the CFDT [Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail—French Democratic Confederation of Labor] called on their members to come out on Saturday, February 23.

"The 'current' ran through the high schools. The JC [Jeunesse Communiste—Communist Youth] maintained an embarrassed silence. In the neighborhoods, the members of the CP, the SP, the CGT, and the CFDT waited, astonished and confused by the silence of their leaderships. Why were the 'Eighteen' [apparently there is a dif-

ference of opinion about how many organizations there are in the CP coalition—IP] quiet, why were they 'tail-ending'?"

The bureaucratic organizations did not want to participate in a united, democratically organized mass demonstration. On the other hand, they had to prevent their own followers from being swept along by the momentum of the Comités-Chili campaign.

"It was then that the Paris federation of the CP yielded," Filoche continued. "Under this pressure, it suddenly decided to call for a demonstration [on Friday, February 22!] at the Chilean Embassy. It did not even have time to consult the 'Eighteen,' or the CFDT, or the FEN [Fédération de l'Education Nationale—National Federation of Teachers]. There wasn't even a common leaflet. There was only one text, which each organization then had to adopt. There were no posters. The only thing was that *l'Humanité* published a solemn editorial on its first page; and the Chile section, which had fallen into neglect, suddenly regained an unexpected importance. The SP supported this move, along with the CGT. The PSU flip-flopped and in turn issued a similar call, creating divisions in its own ranks."

But the leaders of the Comités-Chili were determined to do everything possible to insure a united demonstration.

"A joint meeting of the leadership of the Comités-Chili and the organizations supporting them took place Wednesday afternoon [February 20]. Sticking to the Saturday date would have meant letting the CP divide and sabotage the demonstration, letting the police 'authorize' a 'peaceful' march and then ban the 'demonstration of the provocateurs.' The CP had come around to supporting the project, calling for a demonstration at the embassy: That was the essential thing.

"We had to maintain the principle of a single central demonstration that would force the government to back down and let a mass demonstration march on the embassy. In the eve-

ning the general assembly of the Comités-Chili met (145 committees were represented—36 from the suburbs, 10 from neighborhoods in Paris, 47 from high schools, 16 from factories, and 36 from the universities). There were 15 votes against the leadership's proposal and 11 abstentions. About 280 voted for a call to assemble on Friday at the Ségur subway station."

But there was another obstacle. "The next day, another maneuver by the Communists came to light. They dropped the plan, of their own accord, to march toward the embassy. Although the police had taken out only one injunction (banning demonstrations in the immediate area of the embassy, while it was possible to form an enormous demonstration marching toward the embassy) and although the government, facing a united demonstration, could be expected to limit itself to defending the embassy alone, the CP and the SP themselves proposed a march route heading in the other direction.

"Relieved, the police banned any other route. They set up a 'demonstration corridor' heading away from the embassy and prepared to take advantage of the division that had been created to separate the marches and stage a deliberate provocation against the Comités-Chili."

On the day of the demonstration, as is obvious from the report in the February 24-25 *Le Monde*, the police did stage a concerted provocation against the Comités-Chili:

"The Comités-Chili had planned to assemble at the Ségur station but the forces of order did not give them the opportunity, thus creating a certain confusion among the participants and forcing the leaders of the demonstration to improvise.

"The police tried a new method,' one of the leaders said; 'they temporarily closed the subway stations in the area one after the other. The activists were thus dispersed over a fairly large perimeter and we had to send runners out to reassemble them.'

"It took about an hour, in fact, to regroup the demonstrators. And during this time, the police posted at the exits of the subway stations 'netted' all the young people coming out whose appearance attracted too much attention or who were carrying plastic bags that too poorly camouflaged a motorcycle helmet. Nonetheless, many

got through the police filter and managed finally to gather at the corner of the Rue Lecourbe and the Boulevard Pasteur. There, flanked by detachments of CRS [Compagnies Républicaines de Sécurité—Republican Security Companies, riot troops], they waited for the left organizations that had begun their march from La Motte-Picquet to join them."

But the Communist party and its allies were determined not to have a united march: "They didn't like the idea of marching behind the 'ultra-leftists' at all," *Le Monde* continued. "At 7:20, in order to prevent a linkup, they swung to the right, and through little side streets reached the Rue Lecourbe. The demonstration, several thousand strong and headed up by banks of tricolors, moved . . . toward the Place de la Convention, where it dispersed without incident."

So, the Comités-Chili demonstration, made up mostly of youths, was exposed to police provocations, just as its organizers had feared. The cops' harassment of young people on the way to the demonstration had been building up the atmosphere for outbreaks. It was not long after the march of the "Eighteen" moved a safe distance from the Comités-Chili demonstration that clashes occurred, which Pouchin portrayed as a typical "ultraleftist" explosion.

"Shortly after 8:00 p.m., the first contingents moved onto the Avenue Montparnasse. Helmeted, and in some cases armed with iron bars or various tools picked up at the Maine-Montparnasse building site, the demonstrators were cut off at the Vavin subway station by a cordon of local police.

"Before the forces of order could get their cordon well organized, the first Molotov cocktails were thrown in their direction. Surprised by the suddenness of the confrontation, the police retreated, trying to protect themselves by firing as many tear-gas grenades as possible. But the wind blew a large part of the gas back toward them; and a police car that burst into flames after the explosion of an incendiary device threw off smoke that reduced the visibility. Motorists caught in the middle of the traffic circle abandoned their cars, many of which were damaged.

"The bulk of the march had already broken up but many demonstrators were hauled in for questioning by the police who were combing the area.

(One of those picked up was Jean Le Garrec, deputy national secretary of the PSU; he was released at around 11:00 p.m.)

"Another group of youths went back up the Boulevard Raspail to the Place Denfert-Rochereau, where the forces of order very quickly dispersed them. The last demonstrators regrouped on the Boulevard Saint-Jacques and broke several windows in the Japanese restaurant in the PLM Hotel, where a woman was hurt. A sudden charge of the district police, firing a heavy barrage of tear gas, finally drove them away."

But Pouchin also wrote that, unlike other "ultraleftist" demonstrations, the Comités-Chili march included "several groups of Communist Youth . . . who seemed by their presence to express a disagreement with their party over the question of Chile." It was this comment, apparently, that upset the Communist youth leadership and provoked Catala's letter. Such a split was probably widened by the Stalinists' crude attacks on the Comités-Chili demonstration.

"This time, the CP and SP and the like paid the price," Filoche wrote in *Rouge*. "They were barely as numerous as the united march of the Comités. The Socialist Youth, many members of the Socialist party, the PSU, the Christian Student Youth, and many members of the Communist Youth and the Union of Communist Students joined the march.

"These activists could see for themselves how *l'Humanité* lied when it talked about 'a few hundred ultraleftists who provoked the clashes on Montparnasse.' Some 10,000 demonstrators marched from Ségur to Denfert-Rochereau. If there were clashes at Vavin, it was entirely due to systematic police obstruction. It was the police who started things by firing tear gas and thus provoking a reaction from the demonstrators. But this did not prevent the demonstration from getting through the blockades and moving on without any losses, to dissolve officially at Denfert-Rochereau.

"The police had done everything possible to provoke a clash. They closed many subway stations and carried out searches in advance of the demonstrations. They combed the Quartier Latin after the march broke up. They constantly followed the marchers, with

their grenades and clubs at the ready.

"The military array was almost unprecedented. By their obvious hostility, the CRS and Gardes Mobiles [riot police] could not help but provoke what were later portrayed by the press as 'clashes' and 'ultraleftist violence.'

Throughout the demonstration, the leadership of the Comités-Chili strove to maintain the decision to march toward the embassy, protect the demonstrators against the brutalities of the CRS, and above all to maintain the mass character of the mobilization."

The determination of the authorities to provoke "clashes" was made completely obvious by the police pogroms the day after the demonstrations.

"Violent clashes between the forces of order and groups of youths occurred in the night of February 23-24," the February 26 *Le Monde* reported. "Some 82 persons were pulled in for questioning, and five of them were charged with carrying weapons and throwing incendiary devices."

Here is how the incidents developed, according to the liberal daily *Libération*: "At 8:00 p.m., a person was playing a guitar in the Rue Saint-Séverin. Plainclothes cops arrived and brutal types in uniform. The plainclothesmen discreetly kicked a few people in the crowd that had gathered to listen. The guitarist was taken away. The crowd was irritated; it followed the police to the cars. There was no violence.

"Then it started. Blue-coated and helmeted men charged. It was 8:30; the pogrom had begun.

"Tourists, movie buffs, neighborhood people, activists selling revolutionary newspapers, everybody young, get 'em!"

But, *Libération* noted, the provocation was not notably successful: "After all this, they failed to turn up enough 'super-commie punks' to lose their heads and break a few windows; it was terribly frustrating."

The Communist party youth leadership also had reason to feel frustrated and apprehensive after the February 22 experience. In his reply to Catala's complaints in the February 26 *Le Monde*, Pouchin pointed to a process that could not help but worry the general secretary of the Mouvement de Jeunesse Communiste. It goes much deeper than any momentary rift in the CP youth or a passing attraction that the 'siren songs of the ultraleft'

might have on some of its members:

"The presence of these Communist youth [in the Comités-Chili march] was no doubt explained by the fact that in some high schools in the Paris region, young Communists participate in the Comités-Chili, where the influence of the far-left groups is considerable."

That is, the Communist party youth themselves are being drawn into united

democratic committees that offer more activity and a richer political experience than their own inert, bureaucratic organizations. This is a tendency that, once started, can grow rather quickly, especially when such democratically organized united action wins victories, as it did in the antimilitarist demonstrations last spring. □

Australia

Victoria Right-Wingers Expel Socialists From Young Labor Association

By Jamie Doughey

[The following article is reprinted from the February 23 issue of *Direct Action*, a revolutionary-socialist fortnightly published in Sydney. The article has been condensed for reasons of space.]

* * *

Sometimes, although not often, the capitalist press gets to the heart of the matter. One of these occasions was when John Hamilton, writing in the Melbourne daily *Herald* of February 18, described the events of the February conference of the Victorian Young Labor Association and the subsequent action of its newly elected right-wing executive in expelling thirty-four socialists from the association:

"... in the greatest bit of house stacking to get the numbers since they first put chairs into Festival Hall, the Victorian Young Labor Association last night:

"—got itself a new chairman and new executive.

"—got rid of 34 left-wingers in a purge—including three members of the newly elected executive.

"—threw out a left-wing move to adopt a pro-Palestine and anti-Hawke [Bob Hawke, federal president of the ruling Australian Labor party] policy after a furious debate interspersed with the odd brawl."

The blatantly undemocratic action of the state executive after the conference in moving against its socialist opposition has precipitated the largest confrontation in the ALP and YLA

since the federal executive of the ALP intervened into the Victorian branch of the party to oust its left-wing executive in August 1970. Already, the active ranks of the YLA are up in arms over the decision and the left of the ALP is mobilising strongly against it.

The undemocratic conduct of the conference—which was shown in the recruitment by the right wing of about seventy Zionist students in the preceding weeks with the sole purpose of voting down a motion supporting the rights of the Palestinian people and voting for the present right-wing majority on the executive—and the "expulsions," culminated a period of continued attacks against socialists in the YLA. At the previous conference a motion was presented to proscribe the Socialist Youth Alliance and Socialist Workers League. The motion was defeated, but it served as a warning of further witch-hunting attacks which continued in branches up to the time of the February conference. In response to this, a Committee to Defend Socialists was set up in the Victorian YLA and its strength grew in opposition to the efforts of the right wing.

Speaking on behalf of the committee after the "expulsions" were announced, Andrew Jamieson, one of the "expelled," was quoted in the *Age* of February 18 as describing the action as "a cowardly act done without the approval of the rank and file and a flagrant violation of democratic rights."

"We will be fighting this all the way." He went on to explain that those named

in the motion regarded the "expulsions" as illegal, would refuse to recognise them, and would continue their defence as YLA members.

Going into the background and nature of the expulsion proceedings gives an idea of just how undemocratic the action was. The motion to expel the thirty-four was moved in a last item of the first meeting of the state executive, just hours after the conclusion of the conference. Hence the YLA members, who had only just left their highest decision-making body, the conference, were denied any say in the matter.

The basis of the motion was that the thirty-four people listed for expulsion have their membership "terminated due to their support of the Fourth International and its political organisations which are patently disloyal to the ALP and contrary to the platform of the organisation."

Their disloyalty was said to be demonstrated in that they had advocated a No-No vote in the December 1973 prices and incomes referendum, in opposition to the officially stated ALP position of Yes-Yes. Also, they "supported revolution."

When endeavoring to oppose the motion in the executive meeting, the three executive members included in the list, Jenny Nielson, senior vice-president, Jenny Eastwood, assistant state secretary, and Barry Simpson, vice-president, were subject to obstruction and were even eventually gagged. Only Jenny Eastwood was able to present a case against the motion. They presented points of order on the illegality of the action, but were ignored.

A similar fate awaited their procedural motions to defer consideration of the expulsions to allow a defence to be prepared, and to present the motion to all YLA members before considering it.

A vote was then taken under the extremely undemocratic Article 8 of the YLA constitution, which gives the executive almost unlimited power to "expel from membership of the association any member who does not faithfully uphold to the best of his ability the association's constitution and platform," and was passed 10 votes to 3, with one member of the executive walking out in protest and the chairman, Deane Wells, declining to vote.

For the executive the matter was then resolved — the thirty-four were "expelled."

However, it didn't rest there. Although immediate defence work was made difficult by the refusal of the state executive to release the names, preferring to stall by informing each by individual letter, press releases and statements issued by the known "expelled" challenged the illegal decision and demanded that it be rescinded.

In a press conference on February 19, Nielson, Andrew Jamieson, Eastwood, Simpson, and Bill Slater said that the Committee to Defend Socialists [CTDS] would be organising vigorously among the YLA membership to have the decision overturned. They called upon the state executive to resign and face the rank and file at an extraordinary conference.

In an open statement signed by most of the "expelled," which is being widely distributed in the labor movement, the nature of the political reasons for the victimisation were taken up:

"Is it incompatible with membership of the YLA to say that we think that the big business rulers of the existing social system will not allow us to reform away their economic and political power and privilege and that we think that the workers will have to overthrow capitalism before they can have social justice? Is it a crime to oppose the official policy of the ALP by advocating a No-No vote as some other party members and unionists did? Didn't leading party members and unionists support Yes-No as against the party's Yes-Yes and isn't Federal ALP president, Bob Hawke, publicly advocating a Middle-East policy which is not that of the ALP?"

"As to being 'supporters of the Fourth International,' we say: why shouldn't organisations of the labor movement have their ideas supported and their views put forward in the ALP and the YLA which at present represent the political organisations of the great bulk of Australian working people?"

"The justification of the 'expulsions' by the YLA leadership amounts to no more than a revelation that the present leadership of the YLA believes that it has the right to victimise socialists because of their political ideas."

On February 20 the Committee to

Defend Socialists held its first meeting after the conference to plan its course of action against the expulsion motion. It was a confident and enthusiastic meeting with an emphasis on getting down to organising the defence campaign and making the committee's presence felt.

As the CTDS secretary, Jenny Nielson, put it in her opening remarks: "We want to reach out and involve the YLA members, who in their bulk support us, and mobilise them against the present leadership and its activities." She explained that the campaign perspective went further than just this motion, and was a fight for the long-term rights of socialists, "who were not only under attack in Victoria, but in other states as well."

On the night after the conference the Scullin branch of the YLA met and passed a motion deploring the action as highly undemocratic and called for its rescission. Further, it demanded the resignation of the state executive and the convening of an extraordinary conference.

Support for the "expelled" was coming in from other areas in the labor movement as well. Federal Cabinet ministers Cairns, Cass, and Enderby expressed their support, along with prominent leaders of the Socialist Left of the Victorian ALP, Bill Hartley, a member of the Federal executive of the party, Jim Roulston, vice-chairman of the Victorian ALP, George Crawford, Joan Coxsedg, Bob Hogg, Ken Carr, and Kevin Healy.

The state council of the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union voted to condemn the "expulsion" in its meeting on the weekend of February 23-24. In South Australia, Bill Hartley spoke to the state executive of the ALP about his opposition to the move and the state secretary of the YLA, Bruce Hannaford, wrote a letter of protest to the Victorian state executive.

A motion condemning the action was even passed by the Public Affairs Committee of the Monash University Association of Students.

A petition is being circulated in the ALP and unions and in the interstate branches of the YLA. The CTDS aims to establish links with activists in other states with the view of promoting its activities on a national scale and forming a national organisation to defend the rights of socialists. □

For a Working-Class Vote in Elections

By Eddy Labeau

[The following article is reprinted from the February 28 issue of *Rood*, the Flemish newspaper of the Revolutionary Arbeiders Liga (RAL—Revolutionary Workers League), Belgian section of the Fourth International. The translation for *Intercontinental Press* is by Russell Block.]

* * *

March 10 [the date of parliamentary elections] is approaching. The working class is in the process of choosing among the parties.

The Revolutionaire Arbeiders Liga maintains that elections cannot bring about any fundamental change for the working class. The capitalist class, which monopolizes economic power, also holds political power, whatever regime is "in power."

Whenever a regime comes to power that does not break with capitalism but is nevertheless unable to keep the working class under control (e.g., the Blum Popular Front regime in France in 1936, or the Allende regime in Chile) the bourgeoisie consciously organizes economic chaos to set the petty bourgeoisie and the less conscious layers of the working class against the regime and, above all, against the workers in struggle. The bourgeoisie has at its disposal a state apparatus that in the final analysis is (in Engels's words) a band of armed men who uphold capitalist interests. No matter what government is formed, as long as the army, the national guard, and the legal justice system are not dismantled, the bourgeoisie is far from defeated!

For this reason, the workers' position can only be improved in a fundamental way when they use direct action to bring a government to power that completely breaks with the capitalist system, smashes the capitalist state apparatus, and expropriates the large capitalists.

We are aware that the RAL is a minority organization within the workers movement and that most workers still believe in parliamentary democracy. For this reason a revolu-

tionary organization must utilize elections and parliaments that are at the center of attention to make its revolutionary views known. Thus the RAL will run in elections in *all* major cities whenever we have the forces to do so. In our judgment, this was not possible in the present elections without disrupting our other campaigns (against the professional army, in defense of trade-union rights).

But the workers will be going to the polls on March 10, and a revolutionary organization has a responsibility to issue a clear call to its supporters on how to vote.

The RAL calls for a vote for any one of the workers parties—BSP [Socialist party], KP [Communist party], or Amada [a Maoist group], where running—for the following reasons:

1. We wish to make it completely clear that in the fight between the bourgeois parties on the one hand and the BSP and KP on the other, we stand on the side of the latter. Whenever the capitalists attack the BSP, they have as their goal to strike a blow against the working class and the gains it has made in struggle. When the PVV [Partij voor Vrijheid en Voortgang—Peace and Progress, Party] issued its call for a "center bloc" (against the BSP), one of the measures proposed was a privatization of health insurance!

This position will also refute all the malicious gossip spread by the BSP and trade-union leadership to the effect that we are "the enemies of the organized workers movement." With this we can lay the basis for long-range activity.

2. When we say that we defend the BSP and the KP (naturally Amada as well) against the capitalist parties, we are also saying to the workers in these parties that they must burn all their bridges to the capitalist parties. If not, they will suffer defeat.

If the BSP had not participated in the government, the embarrassing scandal over the RTT, which the VU [Volksunie—People's Unity] eagerly

seizes upon, would not have taken place! The workers parties cannot defend themselves against the VDB, Declerq, Tindemans, and Company by sitting in the same cabinet with them! The sole hope lies in the politics of *class against class*. And in this context we oppose the politics of the BSP, which has brought the working class to the edge of the abyss with a systematic policy of *class collaboration*, and of the KP, which does not carry out any systematic opposition to class-collaboration politics—especially in the ABVV. Thus we defend these parties against the bourgeoisie despite their politics and class-collaborationist programs, and only because the bourgeoisie in attacking them wishes to strike a blow against the working class.

3. In the context of our conception of *class-struggle* politics, we have concrete proposals for the activists of the workers movement. The first is that all workers organizations unite to work around concrete issues: against the professional army, for the preservation of trade-union rights, for solidarity with the Chilean resistance.

Moreover, in addition to working together around the concrete issues mentioned above, all organizations, groupings within organizations, and individual activists declaring their support for an anticapitalist program of struggle must also discuss what is the proper program and road to socialism. And they must harness their forces in order to win the whole workers movement and especially the trade unions to an anticapitalist fighting line, in order to implement this program in struggle!

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Canada, Argentina Plan Trade With Cuba

Efforts by the U. S. government to maintain the twelve-year economic blockade of Cuba are running afoul of economic and political realities: Cuba has money to spend, and heightened national consciousness is making it increasingly difficult for other governments to explain why Washington should be allowed to continue to block trade with the island nation.

Sizable holes have already been punched through the blockade in the last few years as Japan, Peru, Argentina, and a number of West European countries have defied the ban and initiated trade with Cuba. Canada is about to join the list.

While there is no legal basis on which Washington can prevent Canada or any other nation from trading with Havana, there is a U. S. regulation forbidding U. S.-owned companies — including U. S.-owned subsidiaries — from taking part in such trade. It is this regulation, the cornerstone of the blockade, that is now in question in the Canadian dispute.

According to a dispatch from Ottawa in the March 9 *New York Times*, the MLW-Worthington Company of Montréal, more than 50 percent owned by the U. S. firm Studebaker-Worthington Inc., has decided "to go ahead with plans to sell 25 locomotives to Cuba, although the transaction violates the United States Trading-with-the-Enemy Act."

Furthermore, the dispatch continues, the Canadian government is preparing "legislation to prevent the operation of United States law here in future cases of the same kind."

The U. S. attempt to force Canadian participation in the blockade at the expense of Canadian jobs and millions of dollars in export income has raised sharp protest in the Canadian parliament. "On what basis," demanded New Democratic party leader David Lewis, "is it necessary for the Canadian government to request the intercession of a foreign government in an export deal between a Canadian company and some other company?"

Another measure of the erosion of support for the blockade was the visit

by more than 200 Argentine businessmen and government officials to Havana at the end of February. The purpose of the delegation's trip was to oversee the arrival of the first Argentine goods to be shipped under the \$1,200 million trade agreement signed by the two countries last August.

The agreement is the largest the Cuban government has ever been able to negotiate with another Latin American country, dwarfing by far the previous purchase of \$35 million in fishing boats from Peru. Under the terms of the agreement, Argentina will provide Cuba with \$200 million in credits each year for the next six years. Goods already ordered in the first year include, according to the February 23 issue of the Buenos Aires daily *La Opinión*, badly needed tractors, railway equipment, and motor vehicles.

Particularly vexing to Washington is the fact that three U. S. automobile subsidiaries in Argentina — General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler — are among the companies hoping to sell to Cuba. The three U. S. subsidiaries

Paraguay

Charge Genocide Against Tribe

The International League for the Rights of Man has charged the Paraguayan government with complicity in the enslavement of and genocide against the Aché Indians of eastern Paraguay. The League, a nongovernmental organization that has consultative status at the United Nations, accused the Paraguayan government of being in violation of the United Nations Charter, the Genocide Convention, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In a protest to UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim documented by four annexes, eyewitness accounts, and photographs, the League listed the following violations leading to "the

are negotiating contracts for the sale of 44,000 cars, trucks, and buses valued at more than \$130 million.

The problem again is that such a deal would require U. S. approval, which the companies have not yet been able to obtain. Argentine officials, on the other hand, see no reason why U. S. regulations should apply to a company operating in Argentina and have declared that an adverse ruling by Washington will be interpreted as an infringement of Argentine sovereignty.

According to the February 26 *La Opinión*, Argentine Finance Minister José Gelbard repeated the warning just before he boarded the trade-delegation flight to Havana, stating that "everything the Cubans want to buy will be made available to them. Argentina is a sovereign nation and will remain one."

Additional pressure for ending the blockade stems from the fact that the radicalization in the United States has resulted in a much friendlier attitude toward the Cuban workers state. A Harris poll released last year found a majority of 51 to 33 percent favoring U. S. recognition of the Castro government. A poll taken today in the climate of détente with the Soviet Union and China would undoubtedly show even more support for scrapping the U. S.-imposed blockade.

wholesale disappearance of a group of human beings," the Aché:

1. Enslavement, torture and killing of the Aché Indians in reservations in eastern Paraguay.

2. Withholding of food and medicine, resulting in their death by starvation and disease.

3. Massacre of their members outside the reservations by hunters and slave traders with the toleration and even encouragement of members of the government and with the aid of the armed forces.

4. Splitting up of families and selling into slavery of children, particularly girls for prostitution.

5. Denial and destruction of Aché

cultural traditions, including their language, traditional music, and religious practices.

The complaint calls upon the United Nations to conduct an investigation of the "slavery, physical extermination,

starvation, torture and related conditions of inhumanity" against the Aché with a view to improving their situation. The complaint was also sent to the Organization of American States. □

Sales of 'Red Weekly' Go Up

IMG Campaign Scores Encouraging Gains

By Michael Baumann

The International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International, ran three candidates in the February 28 general election: Tariq Ali, Bob Purdie, and John Ross.

Ali, a revolutionary journalist and longtime activist in the movement against the war in Vietnam, ran in Attercliffe, Sheffield. Purdie, a former shop steward at Singers in Clydebanks, Scotland, and an activist in the Irish solidarity movement, ran in Queens Park, Glasgow. Ross, a member of the IMG's National Committee, contested the seat in Newham, East London. All three districts were considered safe Labour constituencies.

In announcing the campaign, the IMG stated in the February 15 issue of its newspaper, the *Red Weekly*. "We stand in parliamentary elections in order to gain a platform from which to put forward our policies for the working class struggle. These policies are designed to step up the extra-parliamentary struggles so that organs of working class power can arise which will be able to brush parliament aside."

The central issues the candidates raised were support for the striking miners and the struggle against wage controls. "We have been campaigning for months for total victory in the struggle against Phase 3," Tariq Ali told a *Red Weekly* interviewer. "We stand for complete solidarity with the miners, for a miners-engineers-railwaymen's alliance, and for a general strike."

"We think these struggles must be won through mass picketing and mass action. This is a key point in the platform we are standing on in the election."

Other issues the candidates raised included abolishing all antiunion leg-

islation, withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, ending all restrictions on immigration, equal pay for women, and free abortion and contraception on demand.

Ali launched his campaign with a number of successful meetings, including one of 300 at Sheffield University and another of eighty at the Shadlows engineering works. He was also invited to address the Yemeni Workers Union, was interviewed by London Broadcasting, and held several meetings in the mining area around Sheffield.

Ali's candidacy was particularly well received in Attercliffe's large immigrant ghettos. "Despite the attempt of the local Labour Party to mobilise support for their candidate amongst the immigrant community," the February 22 *Red Weekly* reported, "'Vote Ali' posters are given prominent display in a number of immigrant cafes. These cafes are also distributing Urdu and Bengali translations of his election address."

Sales of the *Red Weekly*, an important part of the campaign, more than doubled in Sheffield in the first week, and the IMG won a number of new supporters in the area.

John Ross's campaign also won considerable support in the immigrant community. *Jung*, the Urdu-language paper of the Pakistani community in London, ran a special article on the Newham North-East race and called for immigrant workers to vote for Ross. The same issue also contained a statement of support for the IMG candidate signed by leaders of the Pakistan Peoples' Front, the Pakistan Socialist Society (London), the Pakistan Bangladesh Friendship Society, and Tahrik-I-Istiqlal (Britain).

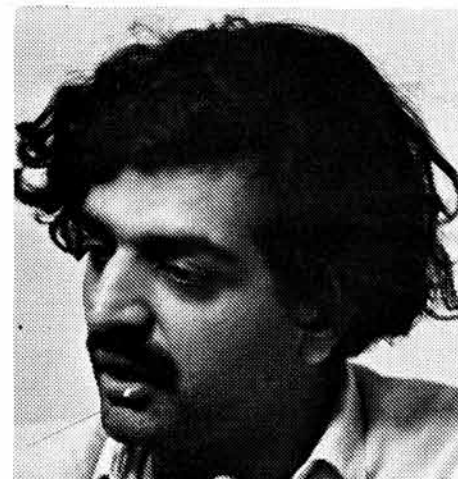
More than 20,000 pieces of election

literature were distributed during Ross's campaign, and 1,000 copies of *Red Weekly* were sold at street meetings and through door-to-door sales.

Workers at the McLaren plant in Glasgow, scene of a twelve-week sit-in, gave Bob Purdie a warm welcome, the February 22 *Red Weekly* reported. "The other candidates have been here once—to get our vote," the strikers told him. "The IMG is here every day helping our struggle." Purdie's meeting at the factory was attended by more than 70 percent of the workers sitting in.

The March 1 *Red Weekly* reported that Purdie's campaign had resulted in a large increase in sales of the paper, and that many of the new readers had asked about the IMG and its activities.

In the February 15 *Red Weekly*, Purdie explained how the IMG viewed the elections. The decisive struggle,



Hermes/Militant

TARIQ ALI

he said, "is that outside Parliament—the mass struggle. We judge elections from the point of view of the mass struggle, not in terms of the Parliamentary game."

"Thus, where there is no revolutionary candidate, we call for a vote for the Labour Party. We don't do this because we place any reliance whatever on the reformist Labour leaders to defend the interests of the working class, but because of the effect the outcome of the election will have on the mass struggle. A victory for the Tories would be seen by the mass of the working class as a defeat, and would lead to a decrease in the confidence and combativity of the working class."

A Founder of Swedish Trotskyism Dies

[The following is reprinted from *Mullvaden*, newspaper of the Revolutionära Marxisterna Förbundet (Revolutionära Marxist League), Swedish section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

Our comrade Kent-Ake Andersson has died after a long illness. His passing is a loss not only for us who had



KENT-AKE ANDERSSON

the privilege of knowing him personally but also for many others.

Kent-Ake was one of the founders of the Trotskyist movement in Sweden. In the discussions that were carried on in 1967-69, his arguments played a very important role in the decision to set up a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Sweden.

In the years since then, he was a mainstay in the work of building a Swedish section of the International. Whether it was drudgery or political struggle that was called for, he always did his assignment with the same precision and persistence.

Kent-Ake was able to give the movement his extensive skills. He con-

tributed especially by his literary work, writing in a language that was as pungent as it was effective. Polemics were his favorite genre. He always took pleasure in cutting through confusion and clarifying the issues, regardless of whether the style or the argument had any intrinsic merit.* As a fighting Communist, he strove to win more and more people to the struggle against the capitalist system. Kent-Ake fought for a classless society, a society where repression, oppression, and destruction would be replaced with cooperation, solidarity, and collective construction.

No one was ever able to answer Kent-Ake's arguments. His articles and pamphlets are still all unanswered.

At the same time, we know that many people were convinced by them. Many of us who are working in the Trotskyist movement today were influenced by him.

While we are saddened to know that he is no longer struggling alongside us, we know that Kent-Ake's fighting words will live on. Many people will continue to be won to socialism thanks to his contributions. Therefore, we go forward in the conviction that his place in the struggle will not be left empty.

We go forward. But we will not forget our friend and comrade Kent-Ake Andersson.

We call on comrades who want to honor Kent-Ake's memory to do so by contributing to support the journal *Fjärde Internationalen*. Kent-Ake played a major role in the development of this magazine. By remembering him in this way, we can help advance this work that he considered so important.

Those who want to contribute to the magazine can do this most easily by sending their money to RMF's Kampfond, pg. 39691-1, Stockholm, Sweden. □

*With the growth of Maoist currents in Sweden, the crudest Stalinist slanders of Trotsky and Trotskyism were repeated in a pious imitation of the Moscow trials language. Andersson replied in a pamphlet entitled *The Rebirth of the Lie*. — IP

"A victory for the Labour party, on the other hand," he said, "would be seen as a victory and would increase confidence and combativity. We therefore put forward the slogan 'Vote Labour but rely on your own struggles.'

"By the same reasoning we also call for a vote for the candidates of the revolutionary left where they are standing, rather than the Labour Party, even though we know that the revolutionary left cannot as yet defeat the Tories at the polls—a vote for a candidate standing for the revolutionary left is the clearest call of all in favor of continuing the struggle, no matter what Government is returned at the election."

This position contrasted with the electoral stance taken by two other groups in the British workers movement, the International Socialists and the WRP (Workers Revolutionary party, formerly the Socialist Labour League).

IS did not put up any candidates of its own and called for a vote for Labour across the board, even against the candidates of the WRP and the IMG.

The WRP fielded nine candidates but called for a vote for Labour in all other districts, refusing to support the candidates of the IMG in two districts it was not contesting.

The IMG, however, called in the February 22 *Red Weekly* for a vote for the candidates of the WRP in constituencies where no IMG candidate was running, stating that "a big vote for the revolutionary left candidate would strengthen the fight of all socialist organisations against the disastrous policies of the Labour leaders."

Summing up the gains of the campaign, the March 1 *Red Weekly* stated that it had "certainly achieved its main objects. Firstly, it ensured that the revolutionary alternative to reformism was raised, and that the decisive issues such as the Pay Laws, racism, equal pay and the need to fight and break the laws of the ruling class were given a real hearing. Secondly, it has enabled the International Marxist Group to win new members and supporters as well as extend the influence of the *Red Weekly*. . . ."

"The need to continue the struggle and the need to rely only on the independent strength of the working class have been firmly driven home." □

Committee to Defend 'Prague Spring'

[The following article has been taken from the February 1974 issue of *Listy*, a journal published by exiled supporters of the Prague Spring. One-year subscriptions to the publication cost 16 Deutsche Marks (US\$5.94) for Western Europe; 21 DM (US\$7.80) for North America, Israel, and the rest of the Northern Hemisphere; and 23 DM (US\$8.54) for Latin America and the countries of the Southern Hemisphere. The translation from the Czech is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

On the initiative of some representatives of the West German left, a committee was formed in Hamburg on December 14-15 to oppose repression in Eastern Europe. Among the personalities that supported the idea of forming the committee were Ernst Bloch, Margherita Brentano, Rudi Dutschke, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Ossip Flechtheim, Helmuth Gollwitzer, Ernest

Mandel, Franz Marek, Oskar Negt, Sibylle Plogstedt, Steffen Jochen, and Manfred Wilke.

The committee took as its objective to publicize the concept of the Prague Spring and defend it against the distortions of official CP as well as right-wing propaganda, and to arouse public opinion, particularly on the left, against the repression in Czechoslovakia and the other East European countries. To this end, the committee will do publicizing and informational work, organize discussions and demonstrations, and support the victims of the repression in a material way.

However, the committee does not wish to limit itself to raising the topical questions. It wants to direct attention to the causes of the "deformation of socialism" that exists today in the Eastern European countries, and thus to the roots of the repression, new solutions, and a real socialist alternative in these countries.

In particular, the committee wants to explain to the Western left the connection between their struggle and the struggle of the socialist opposition forces in Czechoslovakia, the USSR, and the other East European countries, and thus to develop real political solidarity between the left in the West and in the East European countries. The newly established German committee will collaborate with similar solidarity committees in France, Austria, England and Belgium, and with other left political groups and parties in West Germany.

On the occasion of the founding of the committee, a teach-in was held at Hamburg University in which the trade-union leader Heinz Brandt spoke, as well as Franz Marek, a former member of the Political Bureau of the Austrian CP; Jiri Pelikan; and many other participants. The discussion showed not only an interest on the part of young people in the various aspects of the Prague Spring but also many unclear notions resulting from insufficient knowledge of the problems of the East European countries. The new committee got many suggestions for its publicizing and informational work. □

Another Defense Becomes 'Inoperative'

Nixon Trying to Curtail Impeachment Hearings

By Allen Myers

Writing in the March 8 *Wall Street Journal*, John Pierson provided one of the most concise summaries of Nixon's present Watergate defense strategy:

"President Nixon thinks the House impeachment inquiry ought to be limited to the Watergate break-in and subsequent attempts to cover up the involvement of Nixon aides in the break-in.

"In other words, Mr. Nixon believes the House hasn't any business looking into activities of the White House 'plumbers' for which some of his former aides were indicted yesterday, or into dozens of other allegations of improper conduct that the staff of the House Judiciary Committee has al-

ready begun investigating.

"At the same time, the President is apparently withholding from the committee some evidence concerning the Watergate cover-up."

Typically, Nixon's position on the House Judiciary Committee investigation emerged only gradually from a series of distortions and misrepresentations designed to make it appear that obstruction was really cooperation.

On March 6, when Judge John Sirica held hearings on what should be done with the secret report submitted to him by the grand jury at the time of the indictment of seven Nixon aides in the Watergate cover-up conspiracy, Nixon's lawyer James St. Clair surprised many observers

by not calling for suppression of the report. The White House, he said to Sirica, would take no position: "We leave the matter in your hands."

But then St. Clair went on to reveal the motives behind this seeming concession. In the matter of a briefcase reportedly containing evidence against Nixon, which the grand jury submitted to Sirica along with the report, St. Clair warned that the judge would have to balance the "conflicting interests" of the House committee and the seven defendants. Perhaps it would be "helpful" to the judge, St. Clair continued, to know the following:

"The president is prepared to turn over to the House committee all the material he furnished to the grand

jury without limitation, and he will submit to written interrogatories and oral interviews, if desired."

This seeming concession, it soon became apparent, was only one more move in the continuing effort to cover up Nixon's involvement in the Watergate conspiracy. St. Clair's announcement was designed to create the impression that the House Judiciary Committee had no need for the grand jury report and that Nixon was cooperating with the committee. This was untrue for at least three reasons:

1. There are indications that the report contains information that the committee has not requested from the White House, which the grand jury, however, thought should be called to its attention.

2. Special prosecutor Leon Jaworski has stated publicly that the White House has not turned over all the tapes and documents that he requested for presentation to the grand jury.

3. The House committee, in a letter a week earlier, had requested documents that were not requested by Jaworski.

Thus if Nixon were to get his way in the matter, it would mean that he would decide what charges against him the committee could investigate and what evidence it could examine in its investigation of those charges. St. Clair spelled this out quite clearly in a letter to the committee:

"In the President's opinion, the Watergate matter and widespread allegations of obstruction of justice in connection therewith are at the heart of the matter. By making available to the committee without limitation all of the materials furnished to the grand jury . . . he feels that he will have provided the committee with the necessary materials to resolve any questions concerning him."

It was probably unnecessary for St. Clair to have added that under those conditions Nixon was "confident" that "the committee will be satisfied that no grounds for impeachment exist."

"In his letter," Pierson reported, "Mr. St. Clair didn't mention six other pieces of evidence—records of Nixon conversations—that Mr. [John] Doar [the committee's chief counsel] had requested and that weren't included in the things the White House turned over to the grand jury and has promised the committee. Those all

relate to the cover-up, Mr. Doar told the committee. He said there was 'no question' but that the President had rejected the request for these six items."

During its March 7 meeting, the committee nevertheless decided, at least for the time being, not to subpoena the evidence Nixon had refused to provide. Representative Peter Rodino, the committee chairman, urged that any subpoena be put off until after the committee had examined the docu-



EHRlichMAN: Charged with conspiracy organized in the White House.

ments that Nixon agreed to supply. Doar was instructed to consult with St. Clair in the meantime in order to make sure there was no "misunderstanding" about Nixon's intention to withhold the evidence.

At a press conference the night before, Nixon had made it perfectly clear that there was no "misunderstanding" involved. Asked if he was not preventing the "speedy conclusion" of the impeachment hearings by withholding evidence, Nixon asserted that it would delay those hearings "if all that is really involved in this instance is to cart everything that is in the White House down to a committee and to have them paw through it on a fishing expedition."

His offer to give the committee the documents already in the hands of the grand jury he called "a very forthcoming offer."

The conference was Nixon's second

telecast meeting with the press in a period of only nine days. It has evidently been decided in the White House that with the belief in his guilt already nearly universal, Nixon has little to lose and might even gain some support from such appearances. The March 10 *New York Times* reviewed his performance:

". . . when the questioning turned to the indictment of seven of his former aides for conspiring to cover up the White House involvements in the Watergate break-in, Mr. Nixon turned nervous and grim, and there were times when his lips quivered. Asked if the charges of perjury and obstruction of justice brought against the seven were impeachable offenses if brought against a President, he snapped, 'Well, I've also quit beating my wife.' He seemed under the greatest pressure, however, when dealing with what he had said at a meeting on March 21, 1973, with H.R. Haldeman, then his chief of staff."

John Dean also attended that meeting, at which, he later testified to the Senate Watergate committee, the payoffs for the silence of the Watergate burglars were discussed. When Haldeman testified before the same committee, he quoted Nixon as saying then that the money could be raised for additional payoffs, but that it would be "wrong" to do so. The grand jury indictment accused Haldeman of lying when he attributed that remark to Nixon. Nixon's attempt at the press conference to defend himself against the obvious conclusion that he had participated in obstruction of justice only succeeded in exposing still another of his lies.

"On that occasion," Nixon said, "Mr. Dean asked to see me and when he came into the office soon after his arrival he said that he wanted to tell me some things that he had not told me about the Watergate matter, and for the first time on March 21 he told me that payments had been made to the defendants for the purpose of keeping them quiet, not simply for their defense. . . ."

This admission, plus two earlier statements by Nixon, provided the *New York Times* with an editorial for its March 9 issue. Under the headline "Something's Inoperative," the editors quoted from Nixon's May 22, 1973, statement on Watergate:

"Neither did I know until the time of my own investigation of any efforts to provide [the defendants] with funds."

This was followed by a statement that Nixon made in a press conference last August 15:

"It was on March 21 . . . I was told then that funds had been raised for payment to the defendants. . . . But I was only told that the money had been used for attorneys' fees and family support, not that it had been paid to procure silence from the recipients."

After quoting Nixon's directly contradictory remark from his most re-



COLSON: His "dirty tricks" begin to catch up with him.

cent press conference, the *Times* concluded the editorial with a relevant passage from the federal criminal law:

"Whoever, having knowledge of the actual commission of a felony cognizable by a court of the United States, conceals and does not as soon as possible make known the same to some judge or other person in civil or military authority under the United States, shall be fined not more than \$500 or imprisoned not more than three years, or both."

The day after Nixon's press conference, one of the Watergate grand juries indicted six members of the White House gang in connection with the September 1971 burglary of the office of Dr. Lewis Fielding, Daniel Ells-

berg's psychiatrist. The six accused of conspiracy to violate Fielding's civil rights are John Ehrlichman and Charles Colson, who were indicted in the Watergate cover-up conspiracy six days earlier; convicted Watergate burglars G. Gordon Liddy, Bernard Barker, and Eugenio Martinez; and Felipe de Diego, a Cuban counterrevolutionary who had not previously been formally accused in any Watergate-related case but was reportedly involved in such undercover White House projects as the burglary of the Chilean Embassy.

The same indictment charged Ehrlichman on four additional counts: three of lying to the grand jury and one of making a false statement to the FBI.

The March 7 indictment indicates that the conspiracy was still operative in the White House after the Watergate scandal had already begun to break open:

"On or about March 27, 1973, John D. Ehrlichman caused the removal of certain memoranda related to the entry into the offices of Dr. Lewis J. Fielding from files maintained at the White House in which such memoranda would be kept in the ordinary course of business."

March 27, 1973, was ten days after the date on which Nixon says he first learned of the Fielding burglary. It was not until April 25, when Assistant Attorney General Henry Petersen threatened to resign over the matter, that Nixon permitted information about the break-in to be transmitted to the judge in the Ellsberg trial. During the intervening weeks, Nixon had ordered Petersen, who was then in charge of the Watergate investigation, not to investigate the Fielding burglary because it was a matter of "national security." Also during that period, Nixon and Ehrlichman met with the judge in the case to discuss appointing him as director of the FBI.

It is evident, therefore, that any conspiracy in which Ehrlichman was still involved would have had to include Nixon as well.

Still another area of Nixon's criminal activities that he would like to exclude from the impeachment hearings seems about to catch up with him. This is the investigation by the Joint Congressional Committee on Internal Revenue Taxation into Nixon's failure

to pay any significant amount of income taxes despite the fact that he has become a millionaire during his time in the White House.

On March 8, Democratic Congressman Wilbur Mills, who was chairman of the committee during the previous session of Congress, told reporters that he believes "very strongly" that Nixon will have to resign. Mills said he was in favor of a resignation.

Asked the reason for his prediction, Mills answered: "That will come out later. You will know about it in thirty or forty days." Roy Reed explained



NIXON: Confident he'll be acquitted as long as he controls the evidence.

in the March 9 *New York Times*:

"That is when the [committee] is expected to report on its investigation into Mr. Nixon's income tax difficulty, he said. He would not say what the report would contain but he hinted that it would be so damaging that it would increase the pressure for Mr. Nixon's resignation."

"There are strong indications," Reed added, "that the joint committee believes it has proof that Mr. Nixon paid far too little in taxes during the first four years of his Presidency. Senator Russell B. Long, chairman of the joint committee, said recently that the President's back tax bill might be \$325,000 to \$350,000. Another committee source says it might run as

much as \$500,000. Mr. Mills said that some Republicans in Congress had told him that they would urge Mr. Nixon to resign if he was still in office by June. They fear that the President will be 'a chain around their necks' in the November elections, he said."

One Nixon tax "difficulty" concerns the falsification of the date on which he donated some of his vice-presidential papers to the National Archives.

"It has been learned," Eileen Shanahan reported in the March 6 *New York Times*, "that Frank Demarco Jr., the Los Angeles lawyer who prepared Mr. Nixon's 1969 tax return, has on two occasions invoked the lawyer-client privilege against testifying to what he and the President talked about on April 10, 1970, the day that Mr. Nixon signed his 1969 tax return. . . ."

"Mr. Demarco has reportedly admitted, in testimony before a California state investigation and also to the joint committee, that the deed of the papers to the archives, dated March 29, 1969, was signed in April, 1970. He has reportedly testified that there was an earlier deed, but that it has been misplaced.

"Both the California investigators and two Internal Revenue Service agents who took testimony from Mr. Demarco last month reportedly asked him what he told Mr. Nixon about the deed on the day that the tax return and the back-dated deed were signed. It was to this question that Mr. Demarco pleaded the attorney-client privilege."

The *Wall Street Journal* reported March 4 that "members of the panel examining the President's tax returns say they probably will recommend that the House Judiciary Committee investigate whether the President may have been involved in tax fraud in claiming some deductions."

Thus it is virtually excluded that Nixon will succeed in limiting the scope of the impeachment investigation as he desires. The same *Wall Street Journal* article reported that Congressional Republicans and Democrats alike are increasingly being forced to confront the possibility that they will have to play a role in getting Nixon out of the White House:

". . . it is a measure of the Republicans' disillusionment with the President that resignation talk continues.

Indeed, within recent weeks Republican leaders of the House have discussed a 'contingency plan'—involving a possible private demand by party leaders for the President's resignation, accompanied by rather vague threats to 'cut relations' with Mr. Nixon if he refuses.

"In any event, the mood in Congress contrasts sharply with displays of White House confidence that the

House won't vote to impeach Mr. Nixon. Among Congressmen, there is a mounting feeling that, unless Mr. Nixon can offer convincing evidence of his innocence, events will lead inexorably to impeachment by the House. 'By May, when a vote may occur, I think there will be a national consensus in favor of impeachment so there can be a trial in the Senate,' a liberal House Democrat says." □

Nixon Still Popular—With Kremlin

Richard Nixon may find it difficult to appear publicly in the United States without meeting demonstrators demanding his impeachment, but he can still count on a friendly reception in Moscow.

"The Soviet leadership," reported a dispatch from Moscow to the March 8 *New York Times*, "has conveyed to the United States that despite the latest legal developments in the Watergate affair the Kremlin is still counting on a visit from President Nixon this summer, a United States Embassy source said today.

"In conversations this week with Ambassador Walter J. Stoessel Jr., Soviet leaders were understood to have

shown no concern that the Watergate case or even possible impeachment proceedings might force cancellation of plans for Mr. Nixon's visit in June."

The Kremlin's hospitality even extends to the point of prettifying Nixon's situation, the dispatch indicated: "A Washington dispatch of Tass, the Soviet press agency, reported . . . [Nixon's March 6] press conference in a light favorable to Mr. Nixon, not stating the degree of pressure he faces. It reported Mr. Nixon as being willing to turn over documents to the House Judiciary Committee . . . to bring the Watergate investigation 'to an end,' without reporting that the committee was considering impeachment." □

Niger

Twenty-eight Demonstrators Sentenced

Twenty-eight of the students, professors, and civil servants who were arrested in October for participating in antigovernment demonstrations received prison sentences in early February. Tried in secret by the State Security Court in the small town of Tillabery in western Niger, they were accused of "attempting to create an illegal political party" and carrying out "unarmed subversion."

The only legal party in Niger is the ruling Parti Progressiste Nigérien (Progressive party of Niger).

Three of the political prisoners were sentenced to ten years: Brah Mamane, an agricultural engineer; Mahamane Issoufou, a professor; and Adji Kir-

gam, also an engineer. One student and one professor were each sentenced to seven years in prison, and the others drew terms ranging from three months to four years.

Commenting on the trials, the March 4 issue of the Paris weekly *Afrique-Asie* wrote: "The fact that there were no observers at the trial obviously prevents an appraisal of the seriousness of the charges against the accused. . . . By not observing the elementary rules [of justice], the Security Court of Niger has fed serious doubts about its real motivations and justifies those who, both within the country and without, continue to protest the verdict and call for the freedom of the prisoners." □

For Action Against the Murderers of Salvador Puig!

[Despite demands for clemency from all over the world, the Franco dictatorship on March 2 executed by garrotting the young anarchist Salvador Puig Antich. The following statement on the execution was issued the same day by the Political Bureau of the Spanish Liga Comunista (Communist League), sympathizing organization of the Fourth International.]

* * *

Ten years ago, two anarchist militants, Joaquín Delgado and Francisco Granados, were executed by the infamous garrote. Three months later, after being savagely tortured, the Communist leader Julian Grimau was shot. At that time, the Director General de Seguridad in charge of all the repressive forces was Carlos Arias Navarro.

Today the "liberalizing" government presided over by this same hangman, taking up the legacy of the Carrero Blanco cabinet that preceded it, has committed a new crime, a crime for which the masses will make the Franco regime pay.

The murder of Salvador Puig is central to a brutal repressive offensive that has involved numerous prosecutions, persecution of the Central Térmica workers, and the arrest of 200 activists in the first two months of the new government. The aim of the crackdown is to forestall new widespread mass struggles against the Arias government's onslaught on the working class, of which the new price increases and the sharpening of the L. G. de E. attacks, which were announced the same day as the murder of Salvador Puig, are only examples.

By this new "exemplary" crime, the dictatorship sought to demobilize the masses in order to make it easier to shift the cost of the capitalist crisis onto them, to block the development of large-scale actions, and to open the way for a succession that will permit a continuation of the dictatorship, a continuation of the denial of all demo-

cratic rights and liberties to the masses, a continuation of the unmitigated oppression and repression. The infamous garrote is the ideal symbol for the monarchy of Juan Carlos under whose aegis they want to perpetuate the dictatorship.

All the sermons of the "post-Vatican Council" bishops, the speeches of "liberal" personalities, and the telegrams from bourgeois institutions did not save Puig's life. The workers can expect nothing from this sort of thing. Today the proletariat and the people are learning that they were lied to by those who, instead of promoting direct struggle by the masses, entrusted Salvador Puig's defense to the "progressive" sectors of the bourgeoisie, the church, and the army. They can also see that the heroic actions of four isolated individuals did not help.

Only a united mass mobilization of the proletariat, independent of the bourgeoisie, a mobilization taking the lead of the struggle of all the oppressed, can push back the murderous boot of the dictatorship. This was the method that saved the lives of Izco and his compañeros in December 1970. This is the road we must continue to follow to overcome the partial ebb in the workers and popular movement brought on by the reformists and the terrorists.

After the murder of Salvador Puig what is needed is a broad mass movement throughout the Spanish state and the greatest possible international support. *Unless there is a response of this type, the dictatorship will be left with its hands free for new and worse crimes, free to increase exploitation and oppression by shifting the present crisis onto the shoulders of the proletariat and the people.*

What is needed is for *all the workers parties and organizations to form a united front to put their weight behind a mass counterattack against the repression and in support of full democratic freedoms.*

In order to achieve this task, *all parties and fighters must pool their*

efforts in the comisiones obreras [COs—workers commissions]. All the various COs must join together at every level in order to give impetus to the action. The Coordinadora General de CCOO de España [All-Spain Coordinating Committee of the Workers Commissions], the CO Nacional of Catalonia, and similar organizations must assume their responsibilities by promoting and centralizing this mobilization on the scale of the Spanish state as a whole.

The COs should become the coordinating center for the existing student commissions or for all-inclusive committees of the students and youth in general, for peasant committees, for the neighborhood committees that exist, and for other such groups, in order to block the criminal barbarism of the Franco regime by mass action organized in the centers of work and study.

Strikes and assemblies should be called to bring the people out of these centers and onto the street. The demonstrations should move on to other factories and schools. They should all converge in central demonstrations including all the workers and all the oppressed under the protection of self-defense picket squads. *On to a day of struggle that will mark a step forward in a counteroffensive against the aggressive plan of the Arias government, a step forward on the road to destroying the dictatorship through the action of the masses in a general strike.*

Release all the political prisoners! Full political and trade-union rights! Dissolve the special repressive tribunals! Dissolve the special repressive forces! Forward to a general strike! Down with the murderous dictatorship! □

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