

# Intercontinental Press

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David, in Direct From Cuba

## Meir Cabinet Becomes Casualty of October War

### France

## Gaullists Seek Heir to Pompidou

### Uruguay

## Economic, Political Crisis Deepens

## On Streaking

Tentative explanations of the rise of streaking in the United States have been offered by two contributors to the Paris daily *Le Monde*.

Henri Pierre believes that it represents "group exhibitionism." He points out that while streaking began as a dash in public by a single individual, male or female, with nothing on but shoes, the exercise soon included groups of up to a thousand persons or more, who now no longer run but "parade ceremoniously, blocking traffic."

In the United States today, few sights are more picturesque, he claims. Some wear a hat, a necktie, or just beads. Others pull a nylon stocking over their heads. Many use lipstick to paint bright tribal insignia on their rear ends.

Streaking, in Pierre's opinion, has political connotations. It marks the end of violent campus confrontations.

Dr. L. Chertok sees something deeper in streaking. He is reminded of the case of group hysteria in ancient Miletus reported by Plutarch. The young women in the town fell victim to an epidemic of suicides, hanging themselves one after the other. A sage in the Senate found the antidote—the body of any young woman found hanged was ordered to be put on public display completely naked. The epidemic stopped at once.

The dilemma faced by the young women of Miletus *after death* invites reflection or "at least perplexity," Dr. Chertok thinks, if you recall the attitude of Virginia, the heroine of a book by Bernardin de Sainte-Pierre, who preferred to drown rather than take her clothes off *alive*.

At the bottom of it all, according to Dr. Chertok, is the body. The body has its own language. The classic definition of hysteria, for instance, is that it's a body language. So, has the wheel come full turn? Has nudity, a cure for a collective suicidal impulse twenty centuries ago, now become its opposite, an expression itself of collective hysteria?

Americans will say, Nuts. Streaking is only a part of Watergate. The kind of clothes worn by King Richard have set the fashion for the whole country. □

## In This Issue

U. S. A.	466	On Streaking
	471	Impeachment Bill May Include Tax Fraud, Contempt—by Allen Myers
ISRAEL	467	Meir's Cabinet Becomes a Casualty of October War—by Michael Baumann
	487	The October War and the Economic Crisis —by Arie Bober
FRANCE	468	Gaullists Seek Heir to Pompidou —by Dick Fidler
	469	"Rouge" Urges United Far-Left Candidacy
	470	"Rouge" Supporters Organize
ENERGY CRISIS	473	U. S. Senate Hearings: Oil Companies Created Shortage—by Ernest Harsch
ITALY	474	Government Shaken by Workers Upsurge (Interview With a Fiat Militant)
NEW ZEALAND	477	Labour Regime Helps Nixon Prop Up Thieu
LAOS	477	Coalition Regime Set Up in Vientiane
WEST GERMANY	477	Police Raid "Was Tun" Office
CHILE	478	Thousands in U. S., Canada Hear Edelstam
URUGUAY	479	Trotskyists Active in Underground —by Gerry Foley
	484	Economic, Political Crisis Deepens
ARGENTINA	480	Peronists Jail Prominent Trotskyist
SOVIET UNION	485	Dissidents Defend Grigorenko
INDIA	485	Set Up Antigovernment Front in Bombay —by Kailas Chandra
ZAMBIA	490	Kaunda's Regime and Colonized Southern Africa (Interview With a Trotskyist)
ETHIOPIA	494	Protests Spread Throughout Country
DOCUMENTS	495	On the Workers Offensive in Martinique
	496	Call for Day of Actions in Defense of Grigorenko
DRAWINGS	465	Golda Meir—by David
	467	Moshe Dayan; 472, Gerald Ford; 473, Edmund Muskie; 480, Juan Carlos Coral; 486, S. A. Dange; 491, Kenneth Kaunda—by Copain

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

EDITOR: Joseph Hansen.

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.

COPY EDITOR: Lawrence Rand.

EDITORIAL STAFF: Candida Barberena, Gerry Foley, Ernest Harsch, Allen Myers, Jon Rothschild, George Saunders.

BUSINESS MANAGER: Reba Hansen.

ASSISTANT BUSINESS MANAGER: Steven Warshell.

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

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PARIS OFFICE: Pierre Frank, 10 Impasse Guemeene, 75004, Paris, France.

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## Meir's Cabinet Becomes a Casualty of October War

By Michael Baumann

"The 'irrevocable' resignation of Premier Golda Meir is the direct result, somewhat delayed, of Israel's setbacks in last October's war," commented the editors of the *New York Times* April 12.

"... The losses [of Meir's Labor party] to the right-wing opposition in December's election reflected the national ferment set off by the October war and the weakened parliamentary posture of Mrs. Meir's followers, who struggled for three months to put together the Government that now has collapsed after only a month in office."

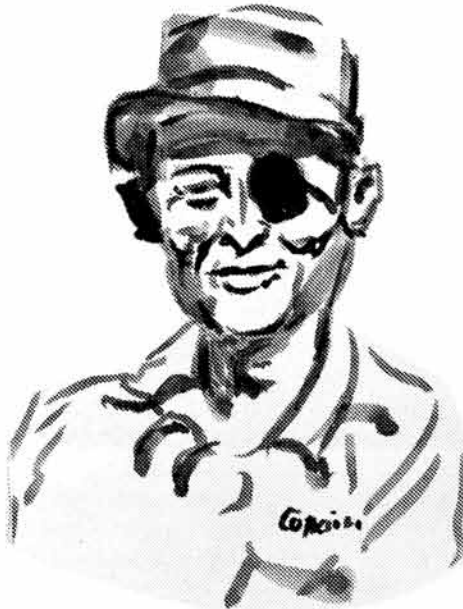
The immediate reason for Meir's April 10 resignation was the inability of her faction-ridden party to settle on a satisfactory scapegoat for the Egyptian and Syrian military successes that buried once and for all the myth of Israeli "invincibility."

A majority of the Labor party appeared to favor nominating Defense Minister Moshe Dayan, the target of frequent demonstrations by returning soldiers, for the role. He declined to accept, however, and no grouping in the party had sufficient strength to force his resignation.

When the December 31 election reduced the Labor party's representation in the 120-member parliament from fifty-six to fifty-one, Meir patched together a shaky coalition with a number of smaller parties to establish a majority of sixty-eight votes. The pro-Dayan faction inside the Labor party controlled enough of these votes, however, to rule out any attempt to dismiss him.

Publication on April 2 of the Agranat report only made matters worse. Prepared by Israeli Chief Justice Shimon Agranat, the report set forth the preliminary findings of an investigating body charged with determining who was responsible for the "lack of preparation" for the war. A remarkably racist document even by Zionist standards, the report attributed the early Arab success in the war to faulty decisions by the Israeli top military command.

The Agranat committee's findings succeeded in forcing at least one important resignation, that of Lieutenant General David Elazar. But it failed to restore confidence in Israel's political leadership. Widely regarded as a whitewash of Dayan and Meir, it



DAYAN: Target of demonstrations by returning soldiers.

did little to satisfy Israelis who felt they had been lulled into a false sense of security in the years following the 1967 war.

As one disillusioned Zionist told *Wall Street Journal* correspondent Felix Kessler a few days before the report was released: "Before the [October] war . . . we thought Israel was strong, that nothing could ever happen to us, the economy was booming. The war took us by surprise; it was a shock. Not that we lost—but a lot of our self-confidence is gone."

Unable to force Dayan to resign, and convinced, as one government official put it, that another cabinet reshuffle would mean no more than "a shot of morphine to a dying patient," Meir chose to resign. She will remain as "caretaker" premier until

another coalition is patched together or new elections are held.

It is clear, however, that none of the Zionist parties jockeying for office have much hope of reversing the mood of dissatisfaction evident in the search for a scapegoat.

The very existence of the Israeli state is based on its ability to withstand the Arab masses' aspirations to end imperialist and Zionist exploitation in the Arab East. The well-grounded fear, based on the experience of the October War, that this will become increasingly difficult to do is at bottom the source of the apprehension and frustration that is so apparent in Israeli society today.

It is clear, for example, that maintaining the huge Israeli military machine is going to become an even more expensive operation. And at a time when Washington's strategy calls for shifting an increasing part of the financial burden of playing world policeman onto the shoulders of its junior partners, it is the Israeli working class that will have to pay the added burden. The process, in fact, is well under way.

"Aside from the heavy toll in blood—and the obvious traumatic effects—the war also halted Israel's economic boom," reported the April 1 *Wall Street Journal*. "With military needs amounting to billions [milliards] of dollars—plus billions more in lost production—the country's new budget allots about \$3.5 billion, or 42%, for defense purposes. This means 'we'll have to tighten our belts, increase taxes and work harder,' says Shimon Peres, Israel's minister of information."

But since Israeli workers are already the most highly taxed people in the world—the current tax rate is equivalent to more than 60 percent of the gross national product—part of the increased arms budget is going to be financed by ending government subsidies on food, fuel, and other basic commodities.

The result, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, is that "in the first half

of this year alone, a 25% price rise is expected, mainly because of higher food and transportation costs. This would follow a 25% increase in the cost of living last year."

Other figures make even this assessment look optimistic. According to a report in the March 17 issue of the Israeli daily *Yediot Aharonot*, the rate of inflation in February hit 8.1 percent, the largest jump for a single month in twenty years. Israeli leaders no longer talk of improving the standard of living but merely of preventing the gap between the rich and the poor from growing larger. "If in the

next five years it doesn't get bigger, that will be a success," Aharon Yadlin, secretary general of the Labor party, told *New York Times* correspondent Henry Kamm April 4.

Meir's resignation, long debated in the Israeli press, solves none of these problems, and many Israelis know it. An opinion poll published in the daily *Ha'aretz* in March showed that one out of every ten adults is considering emigrating from Israel. The disenchantment is greater among young people—one out of five Israeli youths is considering leaving the country. □

West European statesmen; and, for the sake of television at home, he even plunged through police lines to shake hands in the crowds gathered to watch the funeral.

Nixon's antics galled the French bourgeoisie. "Why are we still debating the 'American presence' in Europe," the editors of *Le Monde* complained, "when the leader of the White House—under as heavy fire as he is at home—need only show his face here for the truth about the relationship of forces, the true relations of superiority and inferiority, to be plain for everyone to see?"

The French government indicated its displeasure by circulating a note through an unnamed "high official" charging that Nixon had "shamelessly substituted a publicity campaign for the mourning of an entire nation, introducing an atmosphere of loud feverishness, the discourtesy of which is equaled only by its clumsiness."

Taken together, Nixon's barnstorming and the disarray in Gaullist ranks served to underscore two key problems facing the French bourgeoisie: the increasing challenge on the economic front in a period of intensifying interimperialist rivalry; and their failure to come up with a demagogue able to rally the right wing against the left.

This last consideration was clearly

## Nixon Enjoys Politicking at Funeral

## Gaullists Seek Heir to Pompidou

By Dick Fidler

It was an unsettling week for the French ruling class. Within hours of the death of President Georges Pompidou on April 2, the leaders of the Gaullist "majority" were combining against Jacques Chaban-Delmas's bid for the presidency.

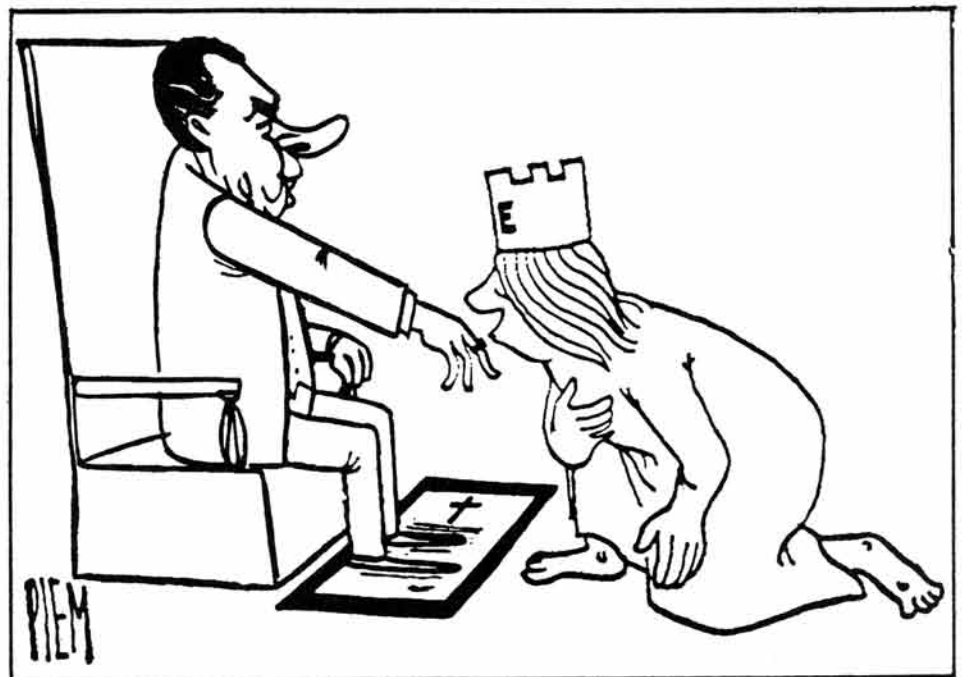
For several days, the majority of Premier Pierre Messmer's cabinet maneuvered frantically. On April 4, just as Messmer was about to declare his own candidacy as a representative of the Gaullist Union for the Defense of the Republic (UDR), Chaban-Delmas, also a UDR member and far more popular with the party's membership, announced he was running. A convention of the UDR on April 7 then "unanimously" declared its support for Chaban-Delmas.

Yet only two days later Messmer declared that he would run if the other leading candidates of the government majority, including Chaban-Delmas, Finance Minister Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, and National Assembly President Edgar Faure, would step down. Chaban-Delmas rejected this "offer," insisting that he was "the one best able to block the way to the single candidate of the left" (François Mitterrand of the Socialist party).

Messmer then dropped his attempt—while yet another minister, Jean Royer, threw his hat into the ring.

The point was painfully clear: The Gaullist "majority" was showing all the symptoms of a Bonapartist movement that badly lacked a Bonaparte.

Meanwhile Nixon took advantage of his attendance at Pompidou's funeral to score a few points on his French hosts. He engaged in a conspicuous round of diplomacy with Soviet and



'Le Figaro' cartoonist portrayed Nixon receiving homage of Europe while wiping his feet on Pompidou's death notice.

uppermost in the minds of the Gaullists as they debated who should represent them in the presidential election campaign. Interior Minister Jacques Chirac, one of the leaders of the attempt to block the Chaban candidacy, said: "I am very worried. Jacques Chaban-Delmas is the best man, but we must think beyond today. . . . Fifteen years after we held all the power we are nothing more than the challengers of François Mitterrand. I am very worried about the future of this election."

Mitterrand, leader of the Socialist party, is currently riding the crest of the growing opposition to the regime. Backing him is the coalition that made its electoral strength felt in the 1973 legislative elections: the Union of the Left, composed of the Communist party, the SP and the Left Radicals, a small bourgeois party.

Mitterrand's candidacy has been bolstered by support from the left Socialist Democratic Parti Socialiste Unifié, which had previously refused to support the Union of the Left, and from France's second-biggest labor federation, the French Democratic Confederation of Labor (CFDT).

The Communist party is doing all it can to keep a "low profile" in the elections. No sooner had Pompidou dropped dead, than the CP leaders were pressing Mitterrand to declare himself the "common candidate" of the whole left. CP General Secretary Georges Marchais had already made clear months earlier that the party had no intention of fielding its own candidate for president.

The Stalinist leaders see the Mitterrand candidacy as a means of making further inroads into traditional support of the bourgeois parties, specifically the "center" parties, the parties between the Gaullists and the left. For this, they are quite prepared to grant Mitterrand a free hand, asking only that the SP leader's electoral platform not renounce the "Common Program" of the Union of the Left, and that the CP be permitted to participate in his campaign.

Mitterrand has of course readily agreed to this, while insisting that he is not the "common candidate" of the left, but the "unitary candidate" nominated by the SP and supported by the other major left organizations and unions.

The bourgeoisie is obviously not prepared, however, to accept Mitterrand's contention that he is the most appropriate man to direct the destinies of French capitalism in the next period. They have no assurances that Mitterrand will not be outflanked on

his left—not by the CP but by others further to the left.

In the context of the increasing disarray among the bourgeois parties, the election campaign, whatever its outcome, may usher in a period of greater political instability in France.

## French Elections

### 'Rouge' Urges United Far-Left Candidacy

"In the midst of an important new rise of struggles by workers and youth, all the political formations and a section of the press are presenting the presidential race as a period of truce and national union. For the editors of the newspaper *Rouge*, on the contrary, this electoral period must be seen as an opportunity to develop the dynamic of these struggles, which are preparing the way for socialism. Within this perspective, *Rouge* favors a united campaign by the revolutionary forces, around a single candidate who will fight the bourgeoisie and defy the compromises that the various components of the Union of the Left are prepared to make with the ruling class."

So stated a communiqué published in the April 5 issue of *Rouge*, the French Trotskyist weekly. The statement continued:

"This united revolutionary candidate should be a worker militant, who represents an exemplary struggle illustrating the workers' desires to gain control over their own affairs. *Rouge* has already contacted the PSU [Parti Socialiste Unifié—Unified Socialist Party], Lutte Ouvrière [Workers Struggle], Révolution!, the AMR [Alliance Marxiste Révolutionnaire—Revolutionary Marxist Alliance], the PLC [Pour le Communisme—For Communism], and Cause du Peuple, with a view to reaching agreement on such a candidature. In the event that it is not possible to agree, *Rouge* will present Comrade Alain Krivine as its presidential candidate."

In response to this initiative by *Rouge*, representatives of these seven organizations met in *Rouge's* headquarters in Paris on April 3, within

twenty-four hours of Pompidou's death. The Paris daily *Le Monde* gave extensive coverage to the meeting in its April 6 edition.

"The members of the PSU, lacking enthusiasm for the proposal, confined themselves to an observer role, while the representatives of Lutte Ouvrière were very critical and rejected the initiative, having already announced that they would run their own candidate. But the other participants, particularly *Rouge* and Révolution!, proposed the nomination of Mr. Charles Piaget, the main leader of the Lip struggle.

"They described the numerous advantages of such a nomination: While not the leader of any organization, Mr. Piaget is already known by public opinion, and he would symbolize the new revolutionary movement and, by his very presence, bear witness to today's social struggles. There were other concerns in mind, although they were less openly stated: If Mr. Piaget, a member of the PSU, ran, he would force the PSU to demarcate itself from the signatories of the Common Program [of the Union of the Left]; since the PSU would have to put up a fight on behalf of its candidate, his candidacy would strengthen the electoral weight and political credibility of the far left; by its united character, it would cover over the differences within the far left. Moreover, it would be likely to give rise to a debate that could be the prelude to a regroupment of the various 'grouplets.' It was, in fact, understood that if Mr. Piaget could not run for the PSU, he would nevertheless be supported by a combination of groups and action committees, and his candidacy would be

accompanied by a platform reflecting the common thinking and proposals."

*Le Monde's* cynicism aside, there were some very good reasons for proposing the Piaget candidacy. The Lip workers' struggle against layoffs and

### 'Rouge' Supporters Organize

APRIL 15 — Supporters of *Rouge*, the French Trotskyist weekly, have formed a new organization, the Front Communiste Révolutionnaire (FCR—Revolutionary Communist Front).

The formation of the FCR was announced at the conclusion of a public meeting in Paris on April 10, called by *Rouge* in support of a revolutionary alternative in the current presidential election campaign. A keynote speaker was Alain Krivine, who reaffirmed that in the event that the far-left organizations could not agree on a common candidate, the new organization would present its own candidate.

The mass meeting issued a call for the organization "of federations and sections everywhere with the perspective of holding a first congress very soon."

Among the members of the "provisional leadership," according to the April 12 issue of *Le Monde*, are Alain Krivine, Pierre Frank, Pierre Rousset, Jean-Marie Vincent, Michel Field, and Michel Récati.

the dismantling of the watch factory, characterized by advanced forms of struggle and concepts of workers control, has inspired and encouraged large sections of the French working class. The role of the national leaderships of the major trade-union federations in undermining the solidarity movement and thereby preventing a definitive victory of the Lip struggle has underscored the need for a new, class-struggle leadership in the labor movement. At the same time, the exemplary role of the local leadership, including Piaget, signified the emergence of a new layer of advanced worker-militants, many of them taking

their place in the secondary leadership levels of the unions.

As *Rouge* has repeatedly pointed out, what is lacking above all in the major class battles is a generalized political alternative—a revolutionary workers leadership on a national scale. The election campaign, by focusing workers' interest on the political arena, even in the distorted form of electoral politics, provides a valuable opening to oppose the class-collaborationist policy of the traditional leadership of the workers movement by posing the principle of independent working-class politics in the elections. At the same time, it is important to challenge those militants recognized by the workers as outstanding leaders of their struggles to take a stand along these lines.

The tactic proposed by *Rouge* has many antecedents in the history of the revolutionary-socialist movement. A recent example was the offer made in 1972 by the Partido Socialista Argentino (Argentine Socialist party), now the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party), a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International, to leave open a position for Agustín Tosco, a leader of the Córdoba uprising, at the head of the Workers and Socialist Pole, which they had initiated. Tosco, who took an equivocal position toward the Peronist movement, declined the offer, and the PST then proposed its own candidate, Juan Carlos Coral, at the head of the slate. But the proposal itself helped to clarify to thousands of workers the PST's position of unremitting struggle for the principle of independent class politics against the Argentine "union of the left" that supported Perón.

Immediately following the April 3 meeting, a delegation composed of Alain Krivine of *Rouge*, Alain Geismar of Cause du Peuple, and Isaac Johsua of Révolution! traveled to Besançon to convince Piaget to run.

"That same day," reported the April 6 *Le Monde*, "the 'leftist' movements met with the PSU federations in several cities to convince them. At Lyon, for example, *Rouge*, together with trade-union militants and the local Groupe Ouvrier et Paysan [a left faction within the PSU], held a meeting and called for Piaget to run."

Piaget expressed agreement with the

proposal, as did the PSU and the CFDT in Besançon, but the Lip leader said he wanted to put the decision to the national committee of his party. The far-left organizations then sent a letter to the PSU leadership soliciting their support for the Piaget candidacy.

However, without waiting for the views of their national committee, the PSU's national bureau issued a statement April 4 rejecting the proposal, describing it as an "ultimatum" and calling instead for "assuring the victory of the left through supporting the popular unity [Union of the Left] and respecting the currents which it is composed of." The PSU, a "left" Social-Democratic party that in the 1969 presidential campaign polled 816,000 votes for its candidate Michel Rocard, has for some time been making overtures to the Union of the Left. Rocard argues that the PSU would represent a "workers self-management current" within the alliance of the Communists, Socialists and Left Radicals.

When the PSU's national committee met in Paris April 7, it divided sharply over electoral strategy, voting by 48 to 35 with one abstention to support the Mitterrand candidacy. Those opposed included Piaget. While the majority were uneasy over the Common Program's silence on workers self-management, the choice in the election, National Secretary Robert Chapuis told the press, is between the right and "capitalist oppression" on the one hand, and the left and "a transition toward socialism" on the other.

For his part, CFDT secretary Edmond Maire, already committed to supporting Mitterrand, issued a statement April 5 attacking "candidates of division." Although Maire claimed the main targets of his comments were Krivine and Lutte Ouvrière's candidate, Arlette Laguiller, he was clearly anxious about the possibility that Piaget might declare. "A rank-and-file militant, no matter how prestigious, is clearly not competent to become President of the Republic," opined the union bureaucrat.

Even after the PSU decision to support Mitterrand, local sections of the party and CFDT locals have continued to adopt motions calling for Piaget to run.

"The impact of the proposal to run

Piaget reflects the emergence of a powerful force that is wary of the reformist leaderships," Alain Krivine told a press conference on April 8, the day after the PSU decision. "From the Common Program, to the Five Proposals of the Left, to the Presidential Charter of Mr. Mitterrand, the leaders of the Union of the Left have gone from one capitulation to another, narrowing down the list of measures they promise to implement. They don't want to learn anything from Chile, but as for us, we have not forgotten.

"On the first round, we think it is absolutely necessary to present all

workers who are opponents of the capitalist system with a single candidate of the revolutionary forces. . . . This candidate should not be the representative of just one organization. He must above all symbolize the hopes of the new vanguard."

Krivine announced that he would run for president on the first round as the candidate of *Rouge*, in the event that an agreement could not be reached on "a single candidate for the revolutionaries." He added that "on the second round we will vote for Mr. François Mitterrand, provided he rejects any coalition with the bourgeoisie." □

he needs and would like to have genuinely puzzle Ford. The hours that he's had to spend with the President, mostly listening to Mr. Nixon talk about this and that, have on a few occasions driven the Vice President close to distraction. He's brought himself recently to break off their conversations; pleading that he's got to go some place or do something important right away."

Ford's lese majesty may, as Safire suggested, betray a certain lack of political finesse on the part of the vice-president. Nevertheless, Nixon is likely to suffer worse indignities before the ruling class succeeds in "resolving" the Watergate crisis.

It is far from excluded, for example, that Nixon may be forced out on the same charge used to get rid of Agnew: tax fraud. This possibility has not been significantly reduced by Nixon's prompt announcement that he would pay up the additional \$476,000 demanded by the Internal Revenue Service April 3.

On April 9, Attorney General William Saxbe told reporters that the investigation of possible fraud in Nixon's returns had been referred to Watergate special prosecutor Leon Jaworski. At least twelve persons are under investigation, with accountant Arthur Blech and tax lawyer Frank DeMarco being considered the prime candidates for scapegoats.

The April 3 White House statement left no doubt that a scapegoat was wanted. It concluded with the following declaration of Nixon's innocence:

"Any errors which may have been made in the preparation of the President's returns were made by those to whom he delegated the responsibility for preparing his returns and were made without his knowledge and without his approval."

But DeMarco and Blech have been vocally protesting the role assigned them. The *Los Angeles Times* reported April 5 that DeMarco "has frequently voiced concern that he and Blech ultimately could become scapegoats, if the President's returns were judged faulty." The paper said it had learned that in testimony to the Congressional committee that investigated Nixon's taxes, DeMarco had said that he did only what he was told to do by Nixon aide John Ehrlichman. DeMarco reportedly turned over to the committee

## Ford Lining Up His 'Shadow Cabinet'

# Impeachment Bill May Include Tax Fraud, Contempt

By Allen Myers

As Richard Nixon's impeachment or forced resignation becomes increasingly likely, politicians and reporters have naturally been led to speculate about the changes that might be instituted if Gerald Ford were suddenly to become president.

A somewhat unusual example of such speculation appeared in the April 13 issue of the liberal weekly *New Republic*, in an article by John Osborne. Osborne's report, which was devoted primarily to the question of which cabinet officers would be retained and which replaced by a President Ford, was remarkably assertive and unqualified by the usual attribution to "sources" when it discussed Ford's thoughts: If Ford became president, he would retain Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, Peter Brennan, Rogers Morton, and James Lynn in the cabinet; Melvin Laird would be brought back to the White House staff; press secretary Ronald Ziegler would be dismissed; etc.

Osborne declined to specify the source of his information, prefacing his remarks with the disclaimer: "This report is presented solely upon my authority, and readers will just have to assume and believe that I haven't made it up." Such an assumption was

easy to make, and it was only slightly more difficult to figure out that Osborne's source was Ford himself.

Just to make sure, *New York Times* columnist William Safire telephoned Ford, who confirmed that he was Osborne's source. Ford claimed, Safire reported, that when he spoke with Osborne he thought their conversation was "off the record."

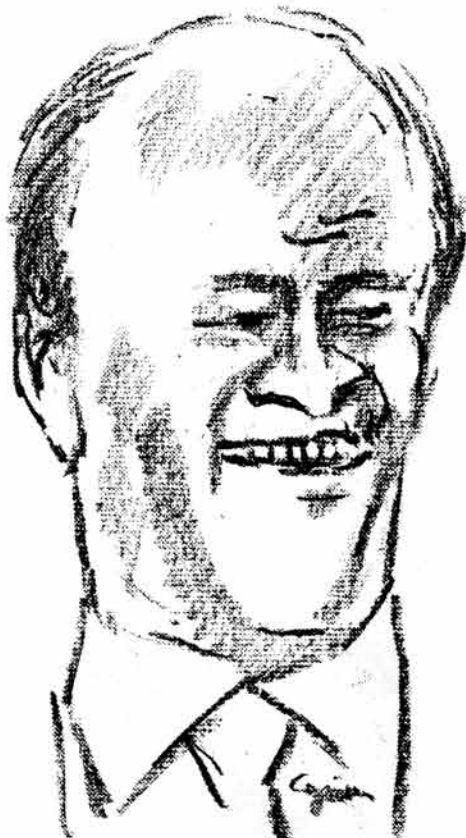
Safire, a former White House speechwriter who has remained doggedly faithful to Nixon, found it "hardly in good taste" for Ford to engage in such discussions, even when they were not meant for publication. Either through a continuing inside line to the administration or perhaps just through simple logic, Safire reported that Osborne's article caused "dismay and outrage" in the White House.

Some of the dismay and outrage, it seems certain, would have been occasioned by Ford's obviously irreverent attitude toward his chief. Not only is Ford discussing his presidential plans with reporters; in the process, he is portraying Nixon as a long-winded bore unable to concentrate on business, to judge by Osborne's account:

"Recent reports that he doesn't get as much time with the President as

copies of White House directives that "make it clear that he and Blech were operating on White House instructions in claiming deductions." DeMarco was said to have told the committee that he went over the returns with Nixon "page by page."

Blech gave an interview to John M. Crewdson of the *New York Times*.



FORD: A yawn in the president's face.

who in an April 7 dispatch quoted the accountant as saying that he was given instructions to "take 100 per cent of that and take 50 per cent of that" by Nixon's assistants. "Any illusion that we had options is crazy," Blech said. "The pattern was set in 1969 and the deductions for 1970, 1971, and 1972 just followed suit."

Nixon's tax evasion has added to the pressure on Congressional Republicans to desert him. This has become especially evident in the maneuvering over Nixon's attempts to withhold evidence from the House Judiciary Committee's impeachment investigation. In the April 12 *Washington Post*, Saul Kohler of Newhouse News Service reported:

"The Republican leadership of the Senate has issued a unanimous warn-

ing to President Nixon that unless he produces promptly all materials being sought by the House Judiciary Committee, he is 'aching for impeachment.'

"The leadership split openly with White House policy at a meeting with presidential assistant Dean Burch late Tuesday [April 9], it was learned, and told Burch to warn the President that 'the first article in the bill of impeachment very well could be contempt of Congress.'"

Nixon and his lawyers have followed a strategy of attempting to divide the committee along party lines, which would then permit them to portray impeachment as a "partisan" conspiracy by Congressional Democrats. But when the committee decided on April 11 to subpoena tapes and documents that Nixon has so far refused to hand over, the vote was 33 to 3.

This near unanimity of the committee members was one more indication of how Nixon's chances of survival are rated in Congress. If Nixon's impeachment by the House and conviction by the Senate are not yet judged absolutely inevitable, they are at least sufficiently probable that almost no one in Congress is willing to lead his defense.

This Congressional mood will be further strengthened by the results of a Harris poll reported April 13. For the first time, the survey found a majority of those expressing an opinion—43 percent to 41 percent—agreeing that "Nixon should be impeached by Congress and removed from office."

## Sri Lanka JVP Leader Sentenced

The first of the forty-one defendants in the regime's main trial of leaders of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP—People's Liberation Front) has been sentenced to prison, according to the April 1 *Far Eastern Economic Review*. Chandra Jayanthi Perera was charged by the special Criminal Justice Commission with having been a leader of the JVP and with having kept bombs and ammunition at her home at the time of the April 1971 insurrection. The Criminal Justice Commission was set up to try those JVP leaders whom the regime has accused of "plotting" the insurrection.

Harris found that the percentage favoring impeachment would rise if Nixon refuses to comply with the Judiciary Committee's subpoena:

"A clear majority agrees, by 55 to 33 per cent, with the statement that if President Nixon fails to turn over the information the House Judiciary Committee wants, then that committee should vote to bring impeachment charges against the President.

"A substantial number, 67 to 19 per cent, do not expect the President to turn over all the evidence the committee wants from him. And the public gives him overwhelmingly negative marks, 72 to 21 per cent, on the way he is cooperating with the impeachment proceedings."

The committee's subpoena gave Nixon until April 25 to respond. Neither of the alternatives Nixon faces can be very attractive: Either he turns over additional evidence of his guilt or he risks adding contempt of Congress to the impeachment charges. There has been speculation for some time that Nixon might prefer the latter choice: Presumably he would rather go down fighting for the "Constitutional principle" of "executive privilege" than be removed on charges of conspiracy and obstruction of justice.

Another possibility is that Nixon will try to confuse the issue by handing over less incriminating portions of the material and retaining others. And, of course, the most damaging tapes could again turn out to be "non-existent" or to have mysterious erasures at important points. □

Most of those detained after the 1971 insurrection have been released on parole. About 1,400 received two-year suspended sentences. In separate trials in the provinces, about 100 "ringleaders" have been sentenced to terms ranging from two to eight years.

The trials of the other JVP national leaders are continuing in Colombo. The head of the JVP, Rohana Wijeweera, completed his defense on January 30, contending that he had not ordered the insurrection. The prosecution claims that he planned it from the prison where he was being held at the time. □



## Senate Hearings: Oil Companies Created Shortage

By Ernest Harsch

Hearings in Washington of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations have revealed that the major petroleum trusts deliberately cut back oil production and purposely limited the construction of new refineries.

*Washington Post* Correspondent Morton Mintz, reporting on the Senate hearings, wrote in the March 28 issue: "The subcommittee produced an array of new evidence intended to show that in order to maximize profits the major oil companies fine-tuned worldwide demand, supply and pricing to restrict competition and to deter construction of refineries by small and independent rivals."

Remarking on some of the documents unearthed by the Senate subcommittee, Jerry Landauer wrote in the March 27 *Wall Street Journal*: "During most of the past decade . . . some oilmen were actually worrying in private not about impending shortages but about oil surpluses that could depress prices and profits. And some international operators were considering or taking action to head off such surpluses—action that may have contributed to today's shortages. Evidence for this conclusion comes from secret U. S. government reports on activities of various oil companies and from the files of Standard Oil Co. of California, known as Socal."

The Socal document, which was written in 1968, predicted a "large potential surplus" of available crude oil through 1973 and, according to Landauer, "urged cutbacks in most of the foreign lands where U. S. companies operate." The Socal economists who wrote the report proposed slashing total 1969 output in Egypt, Nigeria, Venezuela, Libya, and Indonesia. Since the Arab-Persian Gulf regimes were at that time pressing for increased crude oil production to raise their income from taxes and royalties paid by the oil companies, cutbacks in those countries were considered more difficult.

James E. O'Brien, a Socal vice-president, denied that Socal actually

cut back production and claimed that the document was merely a contingency proposal that was never put into effect. "This was only one assessment by one company," O'Brien said. "There were no collective determinations. . . . There is no international oil cartel. . . . So it would be a big mistake to salivate too much over this piece of paper. . . . Dammit, we think we've done a darn good job of bringing oil to the American people."

Nevertheless, in the period since the Socal document was written, the major international oil companies have re-



MUSKIE: Accuses Aramco of freezing out competitors by hoarding oil.

duced their spare production capacity—designed to meet sudden demands for crude oil. This reserve fell from 6 million barrels a day in the early 1960s to about 4 million in 1968-69. In 1973 this spare oil production capacity had fallen to zero.

Landauer noted another fact that indicates that the Socal document was more than a "contingency proposal": "The [Socal] oil economists also assumed that all the major international companies would act concurrently to hold production down rather than see

prices drop. And their prediction of industry production behavior in 1969 was remarkably prescient. Though they missed wildly in a couple of countries, their error for the Eastern Hemisphere and for the entire non-Communist world was roughly 1%."

An executive of Continental Oil Company, an independent oil company chronically short of crude oil, testified at the hearings that Socal, Texaco, and Mobil joined with Gulf in Iran to hold down production and production capacity, especially from 1962 to 1968.

Senator Edmund S. Muskie charged that the Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco) had enough crude oil to sell to independent oil companies, but refused to do so, thus preventing them from building new refineries.

Other data revealed that Aramco did not set aside large amounts of capital for expansion—building new refineries, exploring for new oil fields—until 1970. Now that the world prices of crude oil have been inflated to their present levels, such expansion becomes much more profitable than before.

Exxon Vice-President George T. Piercy told the Senate subcommittee that the oil companies had formerly used their idle production capacity as a lever in price negotiations with the oil producing states, but that with a lack of such idle capacity they were at the mercies of the oil producing states and could not oppose the crude oil price increases announced by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

The oil trusts, of course, had no intention of opposing the price hikes. The price increases, and the deliberately contrived oil shortages, were used by the major oil trusts to strangle the independent oil companies, who are partially dependent on the majors for their crude oil supplies. This was designed to strengthen further the oil cartel's monopoly on the world's energy resources. They simply used the Arab oil embargo

as a smokescreen for their maneuvers.

The benefits of these maneuvers for the oil giants were substantial. All the major oil companies chalked up record profits during 1973. The Senate subcommittee hearings revealed the gains made by Aramco over the past few years.

A few documents relating to Aramco's finances were made public on March 27 at the Senate hearings. Aramco is composed of Exxon, which owns 22.5 percent of the consortium, Texaco, 22.5 percent; Socal, 22.5 percent; and Mobil 7.5 percent. The remaining 25 percent is owned by the Saudi regime.

The documents revealed that in the five years ending in December 1973, while royalties and taxes paid to the Saudi regime rose 350 percent, Aramco's dividend payments also rose by 350 percent. Its profits per barrel of crude oil rose from \$0.62 in 1963 to about \$1.25 during the Arab oil embargo in 1973. By the end of 1973, this figure rose to almost \$2.00 and by the end of March 1974 had skyrocketed to about \$4.50 per barrel. Aramco paid dividends totaling \$2,590 million to Exxon, Socal, Mobil, and Texaco in 1973.

Commenting on the Aramco profits and the Arab oil embargo, Senator Frank Church said at the hearings: "The tighter the energy squeeze, the higher Saudi Arabia jacked up its prices and the higher dividends Aramco paid its stockholders."

While Aramco's cash flow for 1973 was around \$8,700 million, the largest cash flow in history for any single international firm, its taxes to Washington in 1973 were only 0.1 percent of its total profits. Senator Church contrasted Aramco's tax rate with that of the average U.S. worker—a minimum of 20 percent. Joseph J. Johnson, a senior vice-president of Aramco who testified at the hearings, replied that the tax rates paid by his company to Washington were "very equitable," since Aramco now paid higher taxes and royalties to the Saudi regime. Church pointed out that these tax and royalty expenses are deducted from Aramco's U.S. tax bill on a dollar-for-dollar basis. Church also noted that the profits of the oil companies in Aramco enabled them to conduct other operations at lower profit rates, giving them a competitive edge over their rivals.

Just a month before the Senate subcommittee revelations, an illustration of the oil monopolies' ability to manipulate supplies and prices was provided by a report in the February 22 *New York Times*. "Some of the nation's major oil companies," wrote correspondent Michael C. Jensen, "are deliberately reducing their imports of crude oil because they are unhappy with the Government's allocations program for crude, according to Administration sources close to the energy situation."

Washington's oil allocation pro-

gram requires refiners in the United States to share their crude oil with competitors who are short on supplies. Rather than do that, the major oil companies have cut back imports to U. S. refineries and have refined their crude in European or Caribbean refineries instead. The American Petroleum Institute, an oil company-controlled body, announced on February 21 that crude oil imports had fallen during the previous two weeks by 30 percent.

At a press conference in Washington on March 19, William E. Simon, the head of the Federal Energy Office, indicated that even if oil imports rose again to their preembargo levels the energy crisis would be far from over. The March 20 *New York Times* described an exchange between Simon and one of the reporters at the press conference:

"A newsman asked Mr. Simon if the arrival of greater supplies of petroleum from the Middle East would cause prices here to fall in response to the usual relation between supply and demand.

"It's just the reverse this time," Mr. Simon replied.

"He said that as additional supplies of high priced oil were imported, these high prices would cause domestic prices of gasoline and heating oil to increase still further.

"Gasoline is going to cost more and so is heating oil," he said, but he declined to estimate how large future price increases might be." □

## Interview with a Fiat Militant

# Italian Government Shaken by Workers' Upsurge

[The following is an interview with a member of the Delegates Council of Fiat-Mirafiori, who is also a member of the Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari (GCR—Revolutionary Communist Groups), Italian section of the Fourth International. It is reprinted from the March 14 issue of the Swiss Trotskyist fortnightly journal, *La Brèche*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

*Question. Can you describe the development of the struggle for a contract at the Fiat plant, from the beginning of February?*

*Answer.* There has been a very important development since the beginning of February. First of all, in the preceding weeks, the struggle for the renewal of contracts throughout the Fiat group had reached its culminating point. Then last Friday [March 8] the trade union leaderships and the

Fiat management reached an agreement. Before going into the problems posed by this agreement, I think it is important to describe the type of struggle that we have seen develop during recent weeks.

After the mobilizations of the first week of February, the bosses had made some concessions: They had offered an overall increase of 30,000 lire on the basic wage [100 lire equals U. S. \$0.16]. After these concessions the trade-union leaderships and the man-

agement engaged in very intensive discussions. Once agreement had been reached with the union leadership on the issues of investments in the South and investments in social infrastructures, the Fiat management again proposed the wage offer of 30,000 lire.

For the union leaders, it was clear that while this offer represented an enormous step forward on management's part, it was still unacceptable to the ranks. Consequently it was very difficult for the bureaucrats to accept the proposal. In fact, during these discussions, the workers had continued to engage in hard-fought struggles in the corporation's various factories. The union leaderships therefore demanded more significant concessions on the wages issue, but Fiat management refused, and negotiations were broken off.

On the same day, that is, Wednesday, February 20, the government announced a new increase in the prices of consumer goods, first of all gasoline, which was increased by 30 percent, and then a whole series of food products (butter, cooking oil, etc.). These two elements—the breaking off of negotiations with Fiat, and the government's price increase decree—served to transform Thursday, February 21, into a day of very militant struggles throughout the whole of Italy, not only in Fiat, but in a whole series of firms: Olivetti, Alfa Romeo in Milan and Naples, Italsider in Taranto, and so forth. On Thursday morning, when the workers learned of the breaking off of negotiations and read about the government measures in the newspapers, there was an explosion of spontaneous strikes.

There was no "official" strike at Fiat, but several hours after work began, the two main Fiat factories, Mirafiori and Rivalta, were blockaded. Rivalta was completely blockaded; in fact, it was the beginning of an occupation. And the same kind of action was proposed at Mirafiori. But there the trade-union bureaucracy immediately intervened, trying to prevent that. The bureaucrats called a big meeting of all departments at Fiat, in which two of the main leaders of the trade-union "left," Trentin of the FIOM [Federazione Impiegati e Operai Metallurgici—Federation of Blue-Collar and White-Collar Workers in the Metal Industry] and Carniti of the FIM, participated.

They wanted to discuss the forms of

struggle and the kind of action to take. Two processions formed up, blocking the operation of the whole factory, and they made their way to the meeting. The majority of the workers called for the occupation of the factory to force management to give in, and even demanded that the date of the general strike set for the following week be advanced.

More than 10,000 workers participated in the meeting. Carniti and Trentin spoke, as did many workers. The bureaucrats had a lot of difficulty presenting their position, for there was great distrust toward them, the workers having seen the real role of the union bureaucracy, which had just blocked their struggle. When the union leaders came out against the occupation, the workers reacted very violently, booing them and preventing Carniti from continuing. Many workers spoke up, but they made no concrete proposals for the occupation. Then Trentin intervened, to repeat what Carniti had said: that it would be an error to occupy the plant, that there would have to be a very long struggle to make the bosses give in on all the demands, instead of rushing toward an agreement that would be unsatisfactory. After this meeting, the strike continued until the next shift. The afternoon shift also went on strike and tried to organize an occupation. But the bureaucrats were very energetic, and they succeeded in preventing the occupation from spreading at Mirafiori, while at Rivalta the occupation continued throughout the day.

*Q. You said that the strikes didn't develop only at Fiat. Could you explain the situation in the rest of the country?*

A. In fact, on Thursday, February 21, which was later called "Red Thursday," there were strikes in the main Italian factories. The workers at Alfa Romeo held a march that blocked the express highway between Milan and the Swiss border. The workers from all the Olivetti factories held a big march in the city. At Italsider there was an occupation and there were, as I said, a whole series of strikes in other factories.

The workers were expressing their revolt against the government's attack on their living standards. They were expressing their desire to set off

a general strike. But the bureaucracy was trying to control and demobilize the struggles. One of the reasons why we didn't succeed in carrying out an occupation at Mirafiori—I didn't emphasize this before, but it is very important—is the policy of some far-left groups. The CUB (which is linked to Avanguardia Operaia) had a very tail-endist position with respect to the union bureaucracy. When they spoke in the meeting, they said the same things as Trentin: "We want the whole platform of demands; these demands include things that it will be very hard to win; therefore we need to prepare for a very long struggle and not an occupation." We have already shown (in a previous issue of *La Brèche*) that the demands were a complete fake and didn't respond to the real needs of the workers. As for Lotta Continua, which is very weak at Fiat as a result of the layoff of several comrades, it hardly intervened at all.

*Q. What happened after Thursday?*

A. After Thursday [February 21], the unions called three-hour strikes at Mirafiori and Rivalta during the day. The workers immediately went beyond these union directives. From the beginning of the day, Rivalta was blockaded, as well as the majority of departments in Mirafiori. The strike lasted eight hours, and in all the factories the workers tried to organize an occupation. But once more, the bureaucracy succeeded in preventing this from happening, with the support of the most backward sectors of the Fiat workers. For example, the members of the Italian Communist party openly boycotted the struggle.

But even if we didn't succeed in carrying out an occupation, the bureaucracy was largely outflanked, and the meetings voted for a strike lasting a whole day and not three hours. Workers marched through the factory calling out those who were working and the foremen. The delegates' council met the following Saturday. The bureaucrats violently attacked the delegates who had not followed the union's instructions but had followed the mass movement or even placed themselves at its head.

We defended the following position: It was necessary to carry out this kind of struggle and to organize the occupation before the general strike scheduled for the 27th, and above all

it was necessary to go beyond the union's list of demands and to develop a generalized struggle of all the workers in Italy against the incomes and employment policy of the government and the bosses. In that framework the occupation of Fiat could be taken as the starting point to develop a general strike, which imposes a different relationship of forces between management and the working class.

On the following Monday, there was a repetition of what had happened in the preceding week, with strikes, meetings, etc. We intervened in these meetings to advance our proposals. We succeeded in organizing the blockade of a series of factory gates. That kind of struggle continued until the day of the general strike. Later, the unions managed to regain control of the situation, systematically boycotting these struggles; they even used blacklegs and the most backward elements in the meetings to make them vote against more militant workers, etc.

*Q. Could you explain how the general strike developed on the twenty-seventh of February?*

A. The February 27 general strike had mass participation, certainly the biggest participation of any strike in recent years. Between twelve and thirteen million workers can be said to have participated. In a number of cities, a large portion of the strikers were service-sector salaried and wage workers. This strike demonstrated the militant readiness for struggle of broad sectors of the workers. But the union bureaucracy failed to respond to this combativity. It advanced only very general demands, and no concrete demand. At a time when such a desire to struggle exists, this policy is extremely negative. Following this strike, the Rumor government fell.

*Q. Can you explain the meaning of the governmental crisis?*

A. This crisis comes at a time when the government has experienced profound internal tensions, and above all when it is becoming more and more unpopular in the eyes of the working class and other layers. A growing distrust has developed toward the government, and the working class has increasingly responded to its policy through direct action.

This crisis shows the deep division

within the bourgeois camp, and underscores the fact that it absolutely does not know how to respond to the present situation. We can expect that new crises will break out within it, perpetuating the governmental instability. In general we can say that in the next period, the new government (also formed by Rumor) will be very similar to the preceding government, even if it must show more flexibility in its attack on the workers. In fact, today the working class is increasingly sensitive to government actions and increasingly ready to reply to them on a broad scale. I think there will be no major change, but that the government will be an unstable one, representing a bourgeoisie that is very divided.

The bureaucracy and the bosses have taken advantage of this crisis to move quickly toward reaching an agreement at Fiat. Trentin told us February 21 that we should not occupy the factory but prepare for a very long, hard struggle. Two weeks later, he signed an agreement with the management! Strikes developed throughout the week before the agreement was signed, and the very day of the signing there was a total strike in all departments of Fiat with very militant, powerful demonstrations. This shows that the workers were not limiting themselves to the trade-union demands but wanted to struggle against the overall attack on their standard of living, even if this was not clearly expressed.

*Q. What are the terms of the agreement at Fiat?*

A. The agreement is not yet very clear, for we only know the general things that the newspapers have published. On investments in the South, there is a promise that if the market situation is not unfavorable, Fiat will invest in the automobile industry in the South! If the government makes proposals for developing public transport and railways, Fiat will build factories in the South for these sectors. Similarly, on the question of the organization of work assignments, there are only promises, as in the case of "social measures" (on public transport, etc.). On the central issue, wages, the agreement is the following: an 18,000-lire increase is granted, but it is not a direct wage increase and it is not an across-the-board raise. In effect,

part of this 18,000 lire will be paid in the form of a yearly bonus, which means, for example, for me, that my basic wage increase is only 14,000 lire.

Besides, not everyone receives the same thing: Some get more, others less. This is clearly less than the real needs of the workers. Finally, there is a 200-lire decrease in the price of meals in the cafeteria, from 550 to 350 lire.

*Q. What do you think of this agreement?*

A. It is a bad agreement. It is inadequate compared to the workers' real requirements today, and also compared to the type of struggle that has developed and the militancy that has been demonstrated. But we don't reject this agreement because we wanted "to get all our demands." The demands themselves were unfavorable and the agreement is the result of this kind of demands. What is needed is to struggle around other objectives. And in the meetings to come, we will intervene to show that the agreement must be rejected, in order to struggle essentially around three objectives: (1) major wage increases (40,000 lire); (2) a real sliding scale of wages; (3) no taxes on working people.

Finally, there is the issue of jobs, with the sliding scale of hours. But these demands affect all Italian workers and the struggle must therefore be extended toward a general strike, which is the only way to get these demands. While we may succeed in getting these positions adopted in the sectors where we work, we can say that in most sectors the bureaucracy will be able to maintain the upper hand, mainly because of the position of other groups, like the CUB of Avanguardia Operaia, which accepted this agreement.

March 10, 1974

### **Making Marxist Theory More Concrete**

Shanghai, November 2, 1973 (Hsinhua) — "Thirteen third-year students of the Department of Building Material at Tungchi University spent five months working in a cement factory. They did research into three kinds of cement and made advances which have been applied by cement factories. The summary of their research was commended for its rich content and good theoretical standard."

Intercontinental Press

## Labour Regime Helps Nixon Prop Up Thieu

[The following article appeared as an editorial in the March 29 issue of *Socialist Action*, a revolutionary-socialist fortnightly published in Wellington.]

\* \* \*

"What the Prime Minister suggests is unthinkable," replied Jack Marshall [a National party politician] when [Norman] Kirk threatened to publish the secret government papers on Vietnam. "His advisers know that any proposal to publish confidential documents relating to important security arrangements with our allies would undermine their confidence, and that of other friendly nations, in New Zealand."

Marshall's immediate fear was that it would be shown that [National party] Prime Minister Holyoake had lied when he said that Washington had nothing to do with New Zealand's decision, in 1965, to send an artillery battery to Vietnam.

The Pentagon Papers have already disproved the National government's contention, as the *NZ Truth* reminded us in its March 19 issue:

"Mr Holyoake's assurance was made:

"— Six months after the United States Government decided to press New Zealand for support and 'further contribution.'

"— About seven weeks after the Pentagon recorded President Johnson's approval of the 'urgent exploration' of a New Zealand troop commitment.

"— And six weeks after General Maxwell Taylor reported to Washington that he was confident New Zealand would send an artillery battery to South Vietnam."

Marshall knows that Kirk will not carry out his threat to publish the Vietnam Papers because his own government is playing the same behind-the-scenes game.

On October 16, 1973, New Zealand attended a top-secret meeting of Western nations called specifically to work out the best way of aiding the Thieu regime. The meeting was held in Paris

and New Zealand was represented by a local embassy official, D.G. Holborow. Details of the gathering appeared in the January-March 1974 issue of *Vietnam International*.

A World Bank official at the meeting described the question of multi-lateral aid to Saigon as "a terribly delicate matter that could easily be upset by undue publicity." It is "very political," he said.

The meeting chairman, I.P.M. Cargill of the World Bank, warned that unless sufficient aid was forthcoming in the next year or two, "the prospects of lasting peace and stability" in Indochina would be endangered. He re-

minded the delegates of Indonesia (presumably referring to the period after the military coup), where "large infusions of external aid" prevented the economy from disintegrating.

What was New Zealand doing at this U.S.-inspired conference? And how have such secret discussions affected the nature and quantity of the aid New Zealand gives to the Saigon dictatorship? Just how independent is Labour's new foreign policy?

Kirk should tell the public what he is up to. He should add his own secret documents to those from the Holyoake era and send the lot down to the Government Printer. This would let the New Zealand people know what is being negotiated and agreed upon in their name, as is their right.

No more foreign policy deals behind the backs of the people. End secret diplomacy now! □

## Coalition Regime Set Up in Vientiane

The naming of a new cabinet on April 5 completed the formation of the third Laotian coalition government in twenty years.

The new government is headed by Prince Souvanna Phouma, the U.S.-backed prime minister of the Vientiane regime. His half-brother, Prince Souphanouvong, leader of the Lao Patriotic Front (LPF) or Pathet Lao, is chairman of the National Political Council, which is supposed to organize elections and to "advise" the cabinet.

Under an agreement signed last September 14, each side is to retain control of the territory it holds until after general elections are held. Vien-

tiane and the royal capital of Luang Prabang have been "neutralized" by the presence of some 2,500 police and troops from each side.

Each side received six ministries in the new cabinet. The Vientiane administration controls justice, public health, education, defense, interior, and finance. The LPF holds the ministries of foreign affairs, economy and planning, information, public works, communications, and religion. All decisions of the new cabinet are supposed to be reached by unanimous agreement.

Each side is assigned sixteen of the forty-two seats on the National Political Council. The remaining ten seats are reserved for "neutralists." □

## German Police Raid 'Was Tun' Office

Dozens of armed police raided the Frankfurt offices of the newspaper *Was Tun* on the evening of April 3. For three hours the police searched the offices and adjoining printing and archive rooms. *Was Tun* is published by the Gruppe Internationale Marxisten

(GIM — International Marxist Group), German section of the Fourth International.

The official justification of the police raid was a search for allegedly "slandereous and defamatory" leaflets and the equipment used in their printing.

"The items mentioned," the GIM's political bureau said in a statement the next day, "have nothing to do with *Was Tun* or the GIM, and naturally were not found on the premises. But the search warrant was so filled with phrases like 'among other things' and 'et ceteras' that practically anything could be searched and confiscated."

When they left, the police took with them two sacks filled with confiscated materials. None had anything to do with the official justification for the raid. Most consisted of material in-

tended for the next issue of *Was Tun*.

"This arbitrary measure," the GIM statement said, "is one in a series of repressive police measures that have recently become common, especially in Frankfurt. It is a matter of attacks not only . . . on particular Communist and socialist organizations but on all anticapitalist and democratic movements. We call on all democrats and socialists to protest these measures and to organize a broad united defense against all forms of police repression and interference with freedom of the press and organization." □

## Former Ambassador Describes Reign of Terror in Chile

### Thousands in U.S., Canada Hear Edelstam

Harald Edelstam, the former Swedish ambassador to Chile, spoke directly to thousands of persons in New York, Boston, Minneapolis, Montréal, Toronto, and Ottawa during the first part of his tour through Canada and the United States, which began February 27. Giving firsthand accounts of the slaughter and repression carried out by the Chilean junta and appealing for international support to the thousands of political prisoners facing death and torture in the junta's jails, Edelstam reached many thousands more through radio, television, and newspaper coverage and interviews.

Edelstam played an important role in aiding the victims of the junta's terror before he was expelled from Chile on December 4. In his remarks at one of the public meetings he addressed in New York, he described how he and his staff rescued and protected hundreds of refugees after the coup. The refugees were often picked up in the ambassador's car and brought to the Swedish Embassy under the guise of being Swedish Embassy aides. "During three months I transferred in this way about 400 persons. We managed to get about 800 refugees over to Sweden," he said.

Two and a half months after his expulsion from Chile, Edelstam began the tour of the United States and Canada to build support and get aid for those who were unable to flee the terror. In the United States, his tour was

organized by the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA). Other groups helping with the tour included Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, Chile Refugee Committee, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Chile Solidarity Committee, and the Medical Committee for Human Rights. In Canada, the tour was initiated by the Canadian Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (CLA) and was cosponsored by a wide range of other groups and individuals.

Just a week before Edelstam's arrival in the United States, the Chilean Embassy in Washington, D. C., issued a statement attacking his visit because of his activities in Chile after the coup. His actions, the statement said, "were not in any way compatible with the world diplomatic tradition." The representatives of the junta asked: "Has he any authority to give an opinion on the ending of the Marxist government of Salvador Allende? Is he duly prepared and is he impartial enough to take up this matter?"

Upon his arrival, Edelstam immediately replied: "I can only answer that my authority stems from my personal experience, from what I witnessed before, during, and after the coup. Anyone who was an eyewitness of the events that happened in Chile at that time has the right and the responsibility to speak out against the atrocities and the violations of human

rights perpetrated by the junta."

One of the high points of his tour in New York was an appearance at a meeting of Drug and Hospital Union Local 1199. The 500 predominantly Black and female union delegates gave Edelstam a standing ovation and passed a resolution calling for the release of four trade unionists imprisoned in Chile. Nearly 300 persons attended a citywide rally on March 6 at which Edelstam and Abe Feinglass, international vice-president of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters Union and part of a Commission of Inquiry recently returned from Chile, spoke. Edelstam also addressed meetings at Columbia University, Brooklyn College, Rutgers University, and Old Westbury College.

He told a Boston meeting of more than 400 that since the coup thousands of political activists have been murdered and many more are in prison. "Workers previously involved in any left political activity are left to starve as they are denied jobs," he said. "Twenty-five thousand students are not being allowed to return to school, and 30,000 orphans remain."

Toby Lapakko, secretary of American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Council 6, brought greetings from her union, as well as from the Minnesota AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organizations) to a meeting of 250 at Macalester College in Minneapolis-St. Paul, which was the highlight of Edelstam's tour there.

Writing in the April 1 Toronto *Labor Challenge*, newspaper of the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière, Canadian section of the Fourth International, Jon Cole reported: "The cross-Canada speaking tour of Harald Edelstam, former Swedish ambassador to Chile, is a major success. Meetings held for him in Montréal, Ottawa, and Toronto have been the largest gatherings on Chile since last November's tour by Hortensia Allende [Salvador Allende's widow]."

In Montréal Edelstam spoke in French to a meeting jointly sponsored by the CLA and the Québec-Chile Solidarity Committee, and in English to a meeting of more than 300 at McGill University. In Ottawa he ad-

dressed a gathering of 250 at Carleton University on March 20, and the next day he met with members of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, emphasizing to them the plight of the thousands of refugees who have still to find new homes. Ottawa has so far rejected the applications of thousands of Chilean refugees seeking asylum in Canada and has accepted only a handful.

In Toronto March 22, about 650 persons packed the auditorium of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education to hear him, at the largest meeting to have been held to that date on

the tour. "The overflow crowd gave Edelstam two standing ovations," wrote Cole, "and interrupted his speech with applause, as he described his efforts to save people destined for death by the military."

In his article, Cole noted that the Communist party-influenced Committee for Solidarity with Democratic Chile had been repeatedly invited to participate in the planning and organizing of the meeting, but did not do so.

In his speech, Edelstam described the events leading up to the coup. "Allende was a peaceful man," he con-

tinued, "who hated violence. I visited him eleven days before the coup and asked if he expected trouble from the military. He said no, that the military had sworn to be loyal and would defend the government. This was his fatal mistake. He believed in the army, so he did not arm the workers. This was why the coup was completed so quickly."

Throughout the tour thousands of dollars were raised for the Chile Appeal, a fund established to aid black-listed workers, orphans, political prisoners, and Chilean refugees. □

## Publish Clandestine Journal

# Uruguayan Trotskyists Active in Underground

By Gerry Foley

In June of last year Juan María Bordaberry, the president of Uruguay, declared the constitution null and void, dismissed Congress, and instituted decree rule backed by the military.

As Bordaberry moved toward his coup, the working class responded with a general strike of such potential force that it could have ended the capitalist system in Uruguay, had a revolutionary-socialist party stood at the head of the masses.

Unfortunately the dominant force on the left is the Communist party, one of the two mass CPs in Latin America. (The other CP masterminded Salvador Allende's suicidal strategy in Chile.)

The line of the Uruguayan CP was to block the general strike from developing into a struggle for governmental power. Instead, the CP held out the perspective of a "nationalist wing" emerging in the military that would set up a "progressive" regime on the model of General Velasco's government in Peru. Because of the role played by the CP, the general strike petered out.

Since then, the Uruguayan CP, an organization of tens of thousands of members, has been unable to put out even an underground paper. The only organization on the left that has succeeded in publishing a clandestine

journal on a regular basis has been the Trotskyists of the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers party), a sympathizing group of the Fourth International.

Although its forces are small, and its organ, *Prensa Obrera*, is produced with considerable difficulty under the repressive Bordaberry regime, the PRT has pointed up the contrast between its active role and the lethargy of the CP by offering to open its pages to all tendencies to discuss how to organize a counterattack against the dictatorship.

The PRT's own views have been expressed in a clear and forthright way. Some extracts from recent issues of *Prensa Obrera* will indicate the orientation of the Uruguayan Trotskyists.

In the February 18 issue the editors discussed the lessons of the general strike mounted by the Uruguayan workers last June:

"The general strike was a colossal demonstration that the workers are sick of hunger, poverty, and repression. By occupying the factories they tried to save the democratic freedoms won through years of struggle from being crushed. Despite the heroism of the thousands of strikers, the strike was defeated.

"In the pages of *Prensa Obrera*, we

have noted our differences with the line the Communist party imposed on the strike through the CNT [Convención Nacional de Trabajadores—National Convention of Labor, the CP-controlled national union federation]. In our opinion this line was one of the causes of the defeat because it led the striking workers to expect a solution from the 'progressive' civilians and military.

"Many workers began to believe at that time that Ferreyra would cross the river, or that the navy was going to rebel. The Communist party claimed that this was what was needed because the Uruguayan workers were not ready to govern. They believed that in our country a 'progressive' bourgeois figure would appear, such as in Peru, or Chile, or, as they say, such as Perón today in Argentina.

"But the workers know about the tragic events in Chile, as well as the continual rebellions of the Peruvian workers and peasants against the arbitrary policies of their military rulers, and the successive rightward turns of Peronist policy.

"On the basis of these experiences as well as the one the Uruguayan workers themselves have gone through, it disturbs us very much that the CP, which has a strong influence in the working class, is continuing

today to put forward the same orientation it did during the strike. It is very hard for us to understand how the CP leadership, which has seen its party outlawed, its press closed, and its members arrested, can still call on people to believe that the authors of communiqués 4 and 5 will quickly come forward to solve the present crisis.

"Don't these officers agree with their colleagues about the need for suppressing Marxism? Have the authors of these communiqués promised to restore the legality of the Communist party? Can we trust the word of officers, knowing their interests and their actions?"

"For our part, we are going to rely exclusively on the strength and mobilization of the masses, because this is the only sure way to end hunger and unemployment and to build a socialist Uruguay."

In the period of demoralization that followed the failure of the general strike, the PRT has analyzed the deepening crisis of the Uruguayan ruling class in issue after issue of its underground publication, putting forward a concrete program that incorporates the demands of the various sectors of the mass movement into a concerted strategy for overthrowing the dictatorship.

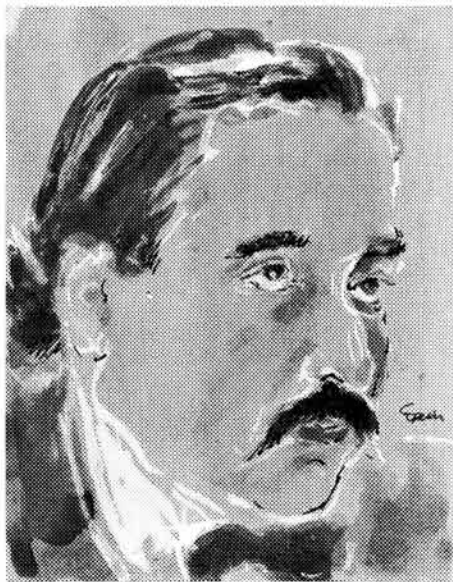
"In our last issue," the February 18 *Prensa Obrera* said, "we explained that a new crisis was brewing at the top levels of the government, since the dictatorship has been unable to come up with a concrete economic plan that meets the demands of the various bourgeois sectors.

"Since the only valid law for the bourgeoisie, whether they are civilians or military, is the law of profit, the changes that are beginning to be carried out in the government in the name of the 'highest patriotic purposes' in fact reflect the development of a fight among the various sectors of the capitalist class to see which one can get the biggest slice of the pie.

"These various interests have their hands freer for this fight, since the workers are still suffering from the blow they were dealt by the defeat of the strike. But at the same time, the strike was a demonstration of the power of the working class and it forced the bourgeoisie to take this into account before making any more

## Peronists Jail Prominent Trotskyist

Juan Carlos Coral, the presidential candidate of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores [Socialist Workers party, a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International], was ar-



JUAN CARLOS CORAL

rested March 25, the Buenos Aires daily *La Opinión* reported, "for participating in a rally held by the striking workers at the Banco de la Nación."

It was not clear what law Coral was accused of violating, but he was reportedly sentenced to two weeks in the Villa Devoto prison.

Major political figures quickly protested Coral's imprisonment. He was visited March 26 by Ricardo Balbín,

Enrique Vanoli, and Rafael De Stéfano of the main opposition party, the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR—Radical Civic Union). Balbín called Solano Lima, Perón's secretary, demanding the Trotskyist candidate's release.

Balbín's intercession increased his political prestige, the authoritative bourgeois daily *La Nación* indicated in its April 1 weekend summary. Elections are coming up in the UCR, in which Balbín is facing a challenge from Raúl Alfonsín, the leader of a more left-oriented faction of the old bourgeois liberal party. By these moves Balbín had stolen the "cause and banner" of the Young Turks. *La Nación* seemed to marvel at the actions of the veteran parliamentary leader.

"As if it were nothing special, Balbín went to search the jails for Juan Carlos Coral, the best-known member of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores, in the days when he was imprisoned in connection with the conflict in the Banco de la Nación."

But the PST is a legally recognized party, and Balbín could correctly think that the arbitrary arrest of one of its main representatives could set a bad precedent in a country where even the bourgeois opposition party leaders, including himself, have spent time in prison on political charges. He would also be correct to think that the attacks of the Peronist government on workers' leaders and their supporters are becoming more and more unpopular with the Argentine masses. □

plans."

*Prensa Obrera* argued that only independent mobilization by the workers and other popular strata could bring the contradictions in the ruling classes and the regime to a head. In its March 11 issue, it asked: "How can the dictatorship maintain itself in these conditions? We think that it is because of a combination of two factors. On the one hand, the contending forces are roughly equal, and no single sector feels strong enough to push the others aside and take the reins of the situation in its own hands. But the fundamental factor is the state

of disorganization and demobilization in which the working class has been left after the defeat of the general strike. This has enabled the dictatorship to reconcile its internal differences free from the pressure of the mobilized masses.

"Nonetheless, the more reactionary sectors have been gaining strength. The new CONAE [Consejo Nacional de Enseñanza—National Council of Education], the new minicouncils in basic education, the closing down of the EPU, and the proposed rules for trade-union elections are indications of this.



"But it cannot be excluded that despite its weaknesses this government can, by taking advantage of the demobilization of the masses, achieve a momentary respite with the help of Argentina and Brazil. The concrete fact, however, is that our rulers have no plan that can offer even temporary satisfaction to the minimum immediate demands. . . .

"In the meantime, the crisis of the government is not only persisting but growing worse. Bordaberry explained this in his speech to the country, and we have to admit that his talk had the merit of making quite clear that under this system there is no solution for the problems of the exploited masses.

"The only thing that they can offer is to tell us to have 'patience' and 'faith' in our rulers. But these words have a very concrete meaning for us workers. When they tell us to have patience, we know that they mean that we must continue to suffer hunger, unemployment, and the gallows. When they tell us to have faith, they mean that we should not revolt, that we should stay quiet and wait for a miracle.

"But the heroic struggles of the working class have shown us that we must rely on our own strength, and that the only kind of patience that is needed is the patience to reorganize and rebuild our forces to overthrow our class enemies. For this, we workers cannot wait for the 'progressive bourgeoisie,' or the 'left military officers.' We must act independently, and by our mobilization we will take the lead of the rest of the exploited masses.

"Only a government of the workers themselves setting out to build socialism in Uruguay can get the country out of the crisis in which it is mired and end exploitation once and for all.

"Since this is clear, the problem now is to find the most appropriate ways to reverse the decline in our level of organization and struggle and to move ahead to overthrow the dictatorship and call free elections in which all parties can participate."

The way to achieve this, *Prensa Obrera* said, was for the left organizations and the trade-union movement to unite behind the immediate democratic objectives on which they all agreed and to mobilize the workers and the masses to fight for these de-

mands, the ones most deeply felt at the present time.

"We think that today more than ever the fight for higher wages, for reorganizing the trade unions and electing new leaders, for jobs, and for the release of the prisoners is indissolubly linked to the fight for democratic rights, which, in turn, means the liquidation of the dictatorship. Workers cannot fight for higher wages unless they have the right to assemble and to organize, as well as the right to freedom of the press, all of which have been abolished by the putschist government. These rights in turn will make it easier to reorganize the unions and the national federation and enable the mass movement to advance to new gains.

"For all workers, then, the need for ending these starvation wages and winning a better standard of living is becoming more and more acute. But any step they try to take will immediately run up against the barriers imposed by the dictatorship, first of all against the obstacles that have been placed in the way of their reorganizing.

"In view of this situation and the way the consciousness of the working class has advanced as a result of the colossal general strike it fought in defense of the last vestiges of its democratic rights, which were wrenched away by the putschists, we think that the struggle begun in June must continue. It must go forward to overthrow the dictatorship by raising a program that sums up the most urgent demands of the workers and draws behind it the entire people's movement, including sectors of the bourgeoisie itself that are opposed to the dictatorship. We think this program . . . is summed up in the demand for free elections in which all parties can participate."

The essential purpose of campaigning for free elections, the March 11 *Prensa Obrera* explained, was to mobilize the workers and popular strata in a process that would go beyond the old bourgeois democracy, whose limitations had been revealed so starkly by the establishment of a dictatorship under the auspices of an elected president. The democratic issue took on a particular importance in a country where the masses are still strongly influenced by bourgeois democratic traditions, which have gone

into decline only recently, and where even the dictatorship and the top military officers still claim to be restoring the conditions for "healthy democracy."

"Some compañeros with whom we have discussed the previous issues of *Prensa Obrera* have asked us if we put our confidence in elections. They have told us that only the bourgeoisie or the reformists can raise such a slogan, not a revolutionary party.

"First of all, we want to make clear that we have one constant aim: to mobilize the masses to take power and build a socialist Uruguay. Because of this, during the general strike we were the only party on the whole left that did not look to a counter-coup by the military or civilian 'left' but called on all popular sectors to defend and extend the strike. We were the only ones who raised the slogan of a Provisional Government of the CNT and the workers and people's parties. We relied solely on a mobilization of the masses led by the working class.

"Given the present demobilization and disorganization of the mass movement, a similar call now would be criminal. Appealing for a general strike or an armed insurrection at this time would amount to an adventure whose consequences would only deepen the momentary decline through which the mass movement is passing.

"The duty of the revolutionary vanguard at all times is to mobilize the masses, and for this it is essential to start from the concrete conditions in which the masses find themselves and, at first, propose obtainable goals. That is why we raise the program we do. We believe it reflects the immediate needs of the workers and people's movement, and that the objectives of bringing down the dictatorship and calling free elections sum up these needs.

"In the second place, there is no such thing as a reformist or revolutionary demand in the abstract. The character of a demand depends on the concrete circumstances in which it is raised. If in the midst of a general mobilization like the strike last June and July we had proposed elections, we would in fact have had a reformist line. But today we are faced with a dictatorship that is oppressing and

suffocating a mass movement that has not yet recovered from the defeat it suffered.

"On the other hand, the means by which the masses freely choose their rulers—elections—is the greatest concession the working class has won by its struggle within the framework of the capitalist system. And by raising this banner, the workers movement has a chance in the immediate future to win to its struggle enormous sectors of the radicalized petty bourgeoisie, including even some sections of the bourgeoisie that oppose the dictatorship.

"In the third place, we have been asked in what sense elections sum up the body of democratic freedoms. We think they do in two senses. The first is that there can be no free elections for all without freedom of the press, freedom of association, and full legality of all parties and political and trade-union organizations, etc. The second is that elections mean the end of the dictatorship, whose essence—the restriction of freedoms—will have ceased to exist.

"In the fourth place, the struggle for elections itself means putting into practice the most elementary freedoms, such as those mentioned above, which in turn will enable us to move toward reorganizing the workers movement and the mass movement in general, thus preparing the way for raising the struggle to new levels.

"At this point, readers might say that this is all very nice, but in the last analysis the important thing is the kind of elections. They would be right. Furthermore, unless elections are brought about by the struggle of the workers movement, the only force consistently defending democratic rights, as well as by the struggle of the white-collar workers and the students, they will not be free elections in which all can participate. Also, no matter how broad the eventual elections are, they will not be able to solve the fundamental problems of the masses, because only socialism will do that.

"However, by forcing the bourgeoisie to hold elections, the workers movement will experience a new political leap forward, developing its morale and its organization for more deepgoing struggles. And if elections are held, we will fight for the political independence of the working class in

the electoral field as well, opposing the bourgeoisie, its program, and its candidates, and taking on the bosses to win the leadership of the rest of the popular sectors away from them."

In its January 31 issue, *Prensa Obrera* made some specific suggestions for developing a united campaign against the dictatorship:

"Let us begin by unifying our slogans. Instead of writing 'The CP lives' or 'Resist the dictatorship' on walls in Montevideo, let's cover them all with 'Down with the dictatorship; immediate free elections!' In this way we will show not only that the left still exists, despite the reactionary decrees, but that it is pointing out the way to overthrow the dictatorship and that it is ready to lead the masses in a fight for democratic rights they themselves won by their sacrifice at other stages of the class struggle."

One of the most important layers that could be mobilized against the dictatorship by democratic demands, *Prensa Obrera* said, were the students. In its March 11 issue, it wrote:

"Since 1968, the sectors linked to education, primarily the students, have constituted a serious threat to the stability of the system. Because of their access to knowledge and because of the way they reflect society as a whole, students make up a highly sensitive layer. They can respond rapidly to critical situations and assume a revolutionary role, acting often as a detonator of big mobilizations.

"Moreover, the students have already demonstrated their overwhelming repudiation of the dictatorship in the free elections held in September 1973, whose results were overturned by the putschists when they intervened the universities. In turn, the high-school students have shown a capacity to resist the intervention of the dictatorship in their centers of study. They waged a massive struggle against intervention, going to the point of challenging the leadership of the interventors by setting up people's high schools and student control. These arose spontaneously in various institutions.

"Not only did sections of teachers, administrators, and parents join in the fight, but it was fundamentally in the heat of these struggles that effective worker-student solidarity de-

veloped. This led the more advanced sections of the student movement to realize that an alliance with the working class was decisive, since the workers hold the country's production in their hands, and that therefore the educational centers should be put at the service of the workers and the people's struggles."

In the schools and the universities in particular, the demand for democracy could have a powerful effect in drawing broader and broader sections of the youth into the struggle against the decrepit capitalist system in Uruguay:

"The classical liberal system, which was already questioned by the students, does not suit the purposes of the putschists either. Thus, the Penadés project, with its famous essential curriculum based on some vestiges of liberalism, was rejected by Narancio [minister of education], who found it too wishy-washy and incompatible with the repressive needs of the dictatorship. The project also required a bigger budgetary appropriation, and the dictatorship does not intend to assign one peso more to education, because what is vital for them is the military budget, which is devoted to repression. If the 'democratic education' they claim to offer does not do its job, they have prisons and torture ready to pacify the rebel youth.

"But the new CONAE, which is more in line with the policy of the minister, has not been able so far to offer any more of a solution than to postpone the start of classes on all levels. It has not said a word about solutions for the lack of buildings or supplies, or about study plans, etc. But it has devoted itself to getting its representatives to publish stricter and stricter regulations inside the schools, drawing up blacklists of teachers and students, trying to impose order by making it obligatory to wear uniforms, forcing students to cut their hair short, and banishing the pernicious cigarillo from the halls of learning.

"By these arbitrary and constricting measures, in fact, they are trying to convince the youth of the virtues of the parliamentary democratic system. For this purpose, they are waging a furious campaign against the 'infiltration' into education of ideas they claim are foreign. The presence

of such notions is supposed to be the reason youth go astray when they learn about exploitation and the class struggle and about the capitalist system concentrating the wealth of society in the hands of a few 'generous men' like Pereina, Gari, Ferrés, etc.; and when they see that bourgeois democracy is only a formality that the capitalists themselves throw out when they see their profits being threatened.

"But while they are not yet ready to come over en masse to Marxism, the thousands of university students will certainly begin their courses wondering in the name of what democratic principle the free elections were annulled in which they elected their own leaders, who are now under arrest. Surely also the high-school students will begin to wonder about the professional and moral qualities of the officials who are trying to imprison them in the musty principles of a repressive and stifling educational system. These questions will also be raised by the teachers, when they see themselves forced to throw their scientific and educational training into the garbage can in order to give the kind of education the system demands.

"The common task facing the left organizations is to answer these questions and organize the struggle of the students and teachers to regain their rights. For the purposes of this struggle they will have even to make alliances with the radicalized sectors of the traditional parties.

"In resuming the struggle to defend their democratic traditions, the sectors linked to education, especially the students, will understand the need to demand respect for the decisions they make democratically. In the heat of the struggle, they can become the spearhead of the mobilization that will overthrow the dictatorship."

As for the workers movement, *Prensa Obrera* argued in its January 31 issue, the importance of democracy as an issue was shown concretely by the immediate tactical problems facing the trade-union movement. Especially since the coup, the regime has been seeking a democratic pretext for "reorganizing" the unions along lines more favorable to the political and social needs of the ruling classes. The latest attempt was a new set of "regulations" for the

functioning of the trade-union movement.

"The trade-union regulations include a requirement to call elections very rapidly.

"These elections were conceived of by the dictatorship as a way of starting to exploit the effects of the strike defeat by putting pressure on the more conservative sectors, and, if possible, setting up yellow unions, or unions under the control of 'non-political' leaderships, which would prevent the workers from continuing to wage a political struggle through their unions. In any of these variants, the most active and militant sectors would be pushed out and the trade-union movement deprived of its vitality and effectively disarmed in the face of the continuing crisis of the economy and the dictatorship itself. All this was covered up with pompous phrases about democracy and the need for keeping politicalized cliques' from continuing to dominate the workers, who should be the ones to decide things by secret ballot.

"But if any capitalist had any doubts left about the workers' opposition to the dictatorship and their determination to defend their unions, the workers' reaffiliation to the component organizations of the CNT demonstrated both clearly. Despite the CNT leadership's initial vacillations in undertaking a campaign, and despite the confused position adopted on this question by both the Corriente and the ROE [Resistencia Obrero-Estadantil — Worker-Student Resistance], the workers massively backed their unions, demonstrating in practice that they are not losing the political consciousness they have acquired in years of struggle—and most of all in the general strike.

"Reaffiliation represented a great defeat for the government. It confirmed the regime's lack of a social base. But the problem is that unless we are able to take full advantage of our victories, the dictatorship can adjust to and absorb the blows.

"The defeat of the dictatorship in the campus elections showed clearly that if a vote were held in the unions, the government would suffer a crushing defeat. Therefore, it postponed these elections indefinitely.

"But nothing could be more wrong

than to think that this postponement means that the government has given up its plan to control or break the trade-union movement. Just as its defeat in the universities did not force it to give up intervening them, this suspension of the trade-union elections is not a truce but the preparation for a new escalation of the attack against the workers movement. The outlawing of the Marxist and people's organizations is bound up with this objective. Therefore, nothing is more suicidal than thinking that this suspension removes the problem, as long as we stay 'quiet.'

"Both the sharpening economic crisis and the dictatorship's lack of social support will lead the government to 'tighten the screws' on the trade-union movement to try to stop it before it can get very far in mobilizing for its demands and in overcoming the situation in which it presently finds itself."

*Prensa Obrera* explained precisely how democratic demands could be used to reorganize the union movement for fighting the dictatorship.

"The dictatorship itself has carried out a propaganda campaign to convince the people of the need for 'democratizing' the unions, trying to take advantage itself of the democratic feeling that exists among the population in order to isolate the working-class tendencies they call totalitarian. We must turn this campaign into a boomerang against the dictatorship.

"The workers have shown that they are the only ones who can consistently defend democratic rights at the national level. They must do the same in the trade-union movement—show the people that the workers not only defend democracy but practice it in their unions and that, unlike the dictatorship that talks about 'democratizing' the trade-union movement but suspends elections indefinitely, the workers have nothing to fear from a vote.

"We must increase the social isolation of the dictatorship and broaden the social support for the union movement through a campaign explaining the need for elections without outside interference.

"We must make it clear to the entire population that while the govern-

ment says it is defending the workers' right to express themselves democratically, the government is precisely the force that is blocking the trade-union elections that the workers want. We must say that we not only advocate democracy for the country but that we practice it in our unions.

"We must say that we are not afraid of the workers freely expressing themselves because we know that just as they did in the strike, they will demonstrate their defense of their unions and their repudiation of the dictatorship in a massive way. We must say that these people who claim to be defending democracy are the ones who are outlawing it in the country and in the unions and that we workers defend democracy and practice it on both levels.

"Waging a public campaign using all the possible legal opportunities is, we think, one of the most urgent tasks of the moment. This sort of campaign should be taken up immediately by the leadership of the CNT, in combination with a struggle against higher prices and for wage increases.

"These objectives cannot be attained by a single union. The reactionary decree that outlawed the CNT prevents it from formally assuming this task. We must coordinate the greatest possible number of individual unions to carry this campaign forward, to decide on its forms and tempo. The summer ebb has to be taken into consideration. The problem should be studied of how to unite this campaign with one on wages and prices. And first of all it is necessary to develop a discussion involving all the workers so that whatever measure is decided on will have the massive support of the working class."

Maintaining an underground paper has been costly for a small organization like the PRT, which has suffered some brutal blows at the hands of the dictatorship. But for the Uruguayan workers movement to regain its rights and solve the problem of the country's prolonged economic decline in the only way possible—by taking full power in the society into its own hands—it is essential for it to develop the kind of clear and constructive discussion exemplified in the pages of *Prensa Obrera*. □

## Economic, Political Crisis Deepens

In mid-March, the *New York Times's* major Latin American correspondent, Jonathan Kandell, reported that the situation in Uruguay was continuing to deteriorate. Despite assuming dictatorial powers in June with army backing, the conservative president, Juan Maria Bordaberry, had failed miserably to halt economic decline and disorganization, which in fact seemed to be accelerating at a dangerous rate.

There was a sour, frustrated mood in ruling circles, Kandell said. Anti-Communist obscurantism and various kinds of conflict were blocking any attempt to come up with a realistic answer to the problems facing the country. Trapped in a blind alley, the dominant interests seemed capable only of plunging further down the road of military dictatorship.

"Now the military hierarchy is chafing once again," Kandell reported in the March 13 *Times*, "and every Uruguayan expects the armed forces to push Mr. Bordaberry aside soon and take absolute power."

But strong-arm solutions seemed to offer only diminishing returns:

"With the failure of even radical attempts to solve the staggering economic problems, conservatives and anti-Marxists are concerned that the military is fast becoming as discredited as the traditional politicians they replaced."

Kandell's article in one of the more farsighted organs of American imperialism, one generally quite sensitive to political developments in the U. S. "sphere of influence," seemed to reflect serious concern in top U. S. circles over the state of affairs in one of the smallest countries in South America:

"Uruguay, with only 2.8 million people, was once the citadel of the good life in Latin America—a staunch democracy, a welfare state, with healthy trade surpluses from sales of beef and wool abroad, a standard of living that rivaled several European countries.

"The decline began more than two decades ago, but has accelerated during the last four years, and no solution appears in sight."

Kandell described the failure of

"even radical attempts" to solve Uruguay's economic dilemma: "... despite a ban on strikes—which last year cost the country 75 per cent of its annual growth, or about \$47-million—there has been no noticeable economic surge.

"'Before, everybody was blaming the workers for not working hard enough,' said an employe at a sugar refinery in the capital. 'Now how are they going to explain what is happening?'"

No one could accuse the military-backed regime of failing to establish "order":

"No one seems to know how many political prisoners there are now. They numbered about 1,500 about a year ago. Several politicians and diplomats think that the figure has doubled. There are Tupamaros among them, to be sure, but the list also includes such leading politicians as Liber Seregni, a retired general, who was the presidential candidate of a leftist coalition in the last elections. Mr. Seregni has been held for seven months, accused of offenses 'against the constitution,' even though that document has been largely ignored by the Government in the last year."

In addition to the political ironies, the economic contradictions were acutely obvious:

"The oil crisis has hit Uruguay harder than any other Latin American nation. Gasoline, which sold for 50 cents a gallon last year, now costs \$2.30 a gallon, and may soon rise again. . . .

"In an effort to increase beef exports, President Bordaberry decreed a three-month ban on local consumption. But an overabundance of meat supply in Europe this year has left Uruguay with a sizable excess in cattle, and has incurred the wrath of farmers and city dwellers."

In all, Uruguay seemed to be suffering from the same sort of problems that affect most countries. What has changed is that the exceptionally favorable situation it enjoyed for many years no longer exists. But since for many years the country had seemed

to be a model of the progress that an "energetic" and "literate" people could make under capitalism, the decline stemming from the general ten-

dencies of the international capitalist system seemed to be particularly disheartening for a correspondent like Kandell. □

## Solzhenitsyn, Shafarevich Issue Statement

### Soviet Dissidents Defend Grigorenko

Several Soviet dissidents, both within the Soviet Union and in exile, have come to the defense of imprisoned oppositionist Major General Pyotr Grigorenko. Among them are Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Igor Shafarevich, Pavel Litvinov, and Andrei Sakharov.

A statement released in Moscow April 8, signed by Solzhenitsyn and Shafarevich, a mathematician, noted, as Robert G. Kaiser reported in the April 9 *Washington Post*, that "Gen. Grigorenko's case has already been the subject of repeated protests, both from within the Soviet Union and from abroad. The former Red Army general, who is 66, began to speak out on political issues in the early 1960s, defending Soviet minority groups and civil rights, and attacking Stalinism.

"He was last arrested," Kaiser continued, "in 1969 because of his repeated attempts to help the Crimean Tartars, a minority group which Stalin expelled from its native lands. He has been in mental hospitals since."

The Solzhenitsyn-Shafarevich statement begins: "No, these are not Stalinist times. Stalin was much too crude, too much of a butcher. He couldn't understand that you don't need so much blood and terror to achieve fear and obedience. It is only necessary to be methodical, and in only a few cases—but methodical to the end.

"Now they [the Soviet bureaucrats] understand this perfectly well. In order to keep people afraid to talk and afraid to breathe, it is sufficient to have only a few examples—but methodical examples, carried to a conclusion. Pyotr Grigorenko is one of these examples. There, they say, we've arrested him and we won't release him even if the whole world bursts with protest.

"And, they say, each of you, little ones, should understand that as long as such a fate exists, you may end up sharing it . . . and the obedience of millions is guaranteed."

The statement observed, according to Kaiser, that the Soviet authorities have never even pretended that Grigorenko was really mentally ill, and that they have repeatedly promised to release him if he would pledge not to engage in political activities. Grigorenko has consistently refused, however, to make such a deal and, as the statement added, "after each refusal he has been punished—brutally, as befits their [the Stalinists'] prison mentality."

Kaiser observed that before Solzhenitsyn's expulsion from the Soviet Union he never signed joint statements with other Soviet dissidents, preferring to make his own individual protests. "His willingness to join with Shafare-

vich to protest Gen. Grigorenko's fate," wrote Kaiser, "suggests that Solzhenitsyn has decided to play an active role in dissident politics from his exile.

"If so, this will be welcome news to the tiny band of dissidents here [Moscow], who realize that Solzhenitsyn's fame has always been one of their best assets."

Pavel Litvinov, another Soviet dissident recently exiled from the Soviet Union, released a statement in Amsterdam April 3 calling for a day of protest on May 7 in defense of Grigorenko and other Soviet dissidents. Co-signed by Soviet physicist Andrei Sakharov, exiled Czech oppositionist Jiri Pelikan, and Ken Coates and Chris Farley of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, the statement also called for days of protest on November 27, 1974, in defense of two imprisoned Czech oppositionists, and on March 29, 1975, the anniversary of Vladimir Bukovsky's imprisonment. (The full text of this statement appears in the Documents section of this issue.) Although Litvinov released the statement both in Amsterdam and on April 9 in New York, the bourgeois news media have so far chosen to ignore it. □

## Five Parties Involved

### Set Up Antigovernment Front in Bombay

By Kailas Chandra

Bombay

Five left parties called a conference in Bombay on March 17 of representatives of trade unions, organizations of white-collar employees, women, and rural poor from all over Maharashtra. They defined their objectives in the following words:

"In the context of the present worsening economic crisis the main struggle of the masses is directed against profiteers, capitalist landlords and hoarders, and against the Congress rulers who protect and encourage them. The main objective is to build an organized mass movement to defeat the anti-people policies of the Congress government and create conditions for the implementation of alternative pro-people policies so that the

demands of the people are quickly realized. To achieve this, it is necessary to raise an alternative leadership of left parties and democratic forces in Maharashtra that can prepare a programme of action for the working people in collaboration with the mass organisations in the coming period."

The parties that have convened the conference are the Peasants and Workers party (PWP), the Socialist party (SP), the Marxist Communist party (CPI-M), the Communist party of India (CPI), and the Lal Nishan [Red Flag] party (LNP). In a joint declaration, the five parties have stressed the need to resort to various forms of mass action, including marches, gheraos [the surrounding and sequestering of bosses or government officials], gen-

eral bandhs [general strikes], and indefinite strikes to achieve their objectives. An eleven-point charter of demands affecting different layers of the community has been evolved as the basis of their agitation. The demands include:

1. A guaranteed minimum ration of twelve kilograms of foodgrains a month to every adult person in both rural and urban areas.

2. Prices of all essential commodities to be brought down to the level prevailing in 1969-70.

3. A guarantee of work to every person seeking a job in Maharashtra.

4. A minimum wage of 8 rupees [1 rupee equals approximately US \$0.13] a day for all unorganized workers.

To the extent that the left parties have come together under the pressure of the massive struggles of the workers, students, white-collar employees, women, and farmworkers, the forging of a common front is indeed a welcome development. All the constituents are pledged to mobilise the masses in a common struggle against the capitalist state. What they are seeking to build is a united front of the mass organizations and not an electoral alliance. To that extent it is a positive step.

For this reason, a meeting of various revolutionary-left parties, trade unions, and youth organizations held in Bombay March 14 voted to support the conference. The meeting, which was jointly convened by the Revolutionary Socialist party and the Communist League (Indian section of the Fourth International), set up a committee to coordinate the activities of the participating groups.

It must be acknowledged, however, that the March 17 united-front conference has only a limited perspective before it. The joint declaration issued by the convenors creates the illusion that their demands can be realized within the present capitalist system. What the left front poses is the question of an "alternative leadership" as opposed to the Congress party, not the question of rule by workers and peasants to replace the present capitalist state.

Worse still, the left front does not present national perspectives for its struggle against the capitalist states. It does not seem to take into consideration the massive popular upsurges that are taking place in even the neighboring states of Gujarat and Madhya

Pradesh, not to speak of other states. If a mass movement in Maharashtra is not supported by the masses in other states, it can easily be crushed by the bourgeois state, which has a powerful, centralised punitive apparatus at its command.

The joint declaration does, however, recognise that it is capitalist rule that has generated India's problems of inflation, unemployment, shortages, and corruption. It also recognises that the capitalist rulers have mortgaged the country to international monopolists



S.A. DANGE: CP head favors alliance with Gandhi against "kulaks."

and imperialist powers in order to safeguard their class interests.

Although the front calls for nationalising seventy-five monopolies that have "established a stranglehold over the nation's economy," it seeks to create an illusion that the capitalist state can bring down prices by reducing taxes on some essential commodities and by reducing deficit financing. It thus disregards the basic fact that the bourgeois state cannot reverse the laws on which its own economic system operates.

Furthermore, the front says that socialism is not an immediate aim but an "ultimate objective." The immediate task, it says, is to end the domination of imperialism over the national

economy by nationalising foreign capital. But it is obvious that the capitalist rulers of India will not terminate their alliance with foreign capitalists when the very survival of capitalism depends on imperialist support.

The five constituents of the front have found it convenient to ignore the existence of other left political tendencies, including the Communist League, the Revolutionary Socialist party, and the Communist party of India (Marxist-Leninist).

Two of the national parties in the front—the CPI and the CPI(M)—believe there will be two stages in the Indian revolution: first a "national" or "people's" democratic revolution, then a "socialist" revolution. In pursuit of its line of forming an alliance with the national bourgeoisie, the CPI has entered into alliances with the Congress party in the states of Kerala, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, and Orissa. The CPI is prepared to fight the "kulak" regime of V.P. Naik in Maharashtra, but not the "progressive" regime of Indira Gandhi.

The CPI(M) is opposed to the "capitalist-landlord" regime of the Congress but it rejects the immediate perspective of an anticapitalist socialist revolution. Its stress is more on building a "really independent" people's democratic (capitalist) economy in an India free from foreign imperialism—not on building a socialist revolution.

The Socialist party, on the other hand, is wedded to achieving socialism through parliamentary means. As part of its "anti-Congressism," it is prepared to ally with even the most reactionary bourgeois parties, such as the Jan Sangh.

The other two parties—the PWP and the LNP—are regional parties. The PWP claims to be Marxist but is dominated by middle-peasant and kulak elements in rural areas. The LNP appears to be too inhibited by its regional character to think in terms of an independent initiative in mass struggles.

Although the danger of the new front's degenerating into another opportunist electoral front cannot be ruled out, it has emerged under the impact of mass struggles. The basis for a real radicalisation of the working-class movement has been laid by the struggles of the agricultural workers and poor peasants in the famine areas in Maharashtra in 1972 and

1973, the spectacular statewide general strike of more than 30 lakh [3 million] industrial workers last January over high prices, and the prolonged strikes in the Bombay textile, chemical, and metallurgical industries. There have also been strikes of teachers, insurance employees, doctors, nurses, handloom

workers, sugar workers, adivasis [landless peasants], and agricultural workers in different parts of the state.

Above all there has been the upsurge of the scheduled caste ["untouchable"] youth under the leadership of the militant Dalit Panthers. Their attack against Hindu upper-caste hegemony

has lent a militant character to the entire left challenge to the Congress regime.

The March 17 conference thus has an excellent opportunity to give a new impetus to the struggles of the working class and other sections of the exploited masses in Maharashtra. □

## Who Will Pay?

# The October War and Israel's Economic Crisis

By Arie Bober

[This is the second installment of an article on Israel's economic and political prospects in the wake of the October war. The first installment appeared in the April 15 *Intercontinental Press*.]

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The following are the direct results of the October War on the Israeli economy:

1. There is an additional burden of at least 40,000 million Israeli pounds.

2. The balance-of-payments deficit has doubled, reaching more than \$3,000 million.

3. The economy is at the beginning of a deepening recession.

4. Prices rose in the first nine months of 1973 by 25 to 30 percent and are expected to hit record levels in the immediate future.

Stronger economies than the tiny and deformed Israeli capitalist economy would have found themselves in a most severe crisis if they had had to sustain a military burden equal to all their available economic resources (GNP plus import surplus) for a year while their balance-of-payments deficit doubled at a stroke and reached about 50% of GNP. Therefore, the statement that Israel is plunging into its worst crisis is far from an exaggeration.

## Sapir: The Workers Will Pay

The present period resembles the aftermath of the 1967 war in one respect: the huge jump in military expenditures. But the analogy between the two periods ends there.

Israel was able to finance the 1967 war—the long mobilization before the war and the added military expenses in its wake—at a very low cost in real terms because the war broke out in the midst

of a deep economic recession. (At the middle of 1967, more than 100,000 workers, approximately 13-15% of the labor force, were unemployed.) Thus it was possible to activate the idle production facilities and put the unemployed to work.

The October War, on the other hand, broke out with the economy at full employment (including an additional Palestinian labor force of more than 100,000 workers).

The implication of this is obvious: The cost of the October War and the added military expenses would have to be financed at the expense of existing economic uses, that is, at the expense of public expenditure other than military, private consumption, and investment. In other words, the problem boils down to how to shift human and material resources into financing the cost of the war.

The different methods employed by the government to do this will determine how this economic burden is spread among the different strata of society. Therefore, we should try to evaluate the government's policy and first ask ourselves what measures the government actually has used.

The answer is simple enough. The government is employing two main measures: deficit financing covered by loans from the Bank of Israel—more commonly known as "money printing"—and taxation on expenditure, as opposed to taxation on income.

The government is printing money at a mad pace. Up to the middle of November, new additional budgets were presented to the Knesset totaling 3,000 to 4,000 million pounds. Add to this the fact that because of the "national emergency" the liquidity restrictions on commercial banks have been eased, and it becomes clear that the money supply (cash plus checking accounts) in the economy has greatly in-

creased—probably 20-25%—since the outbreak of the war. This of course feeds intense inflationary pressures. (It should be mentioned that in the preceding nine months—January to September 1973—the money supply had already increased by more than 21%.)

The situation in this respect is evidently very serious, since the government imposed tight censorship and forbids publication of all relevant data: the money supply, the extent of government loans from the central bank (money printing), the amount of foreign currency reserves, the increase in the national external debt, etc.

The second method employed by the government is taxation on expenditure. Sales taxes and customs duties on most commodities were raised by more than 10%. Government-controlled prices of water, electricity, and fuel have been increased, and subsidies for basic goods (mostly food) have been canceled.

Besides this increase of indirect taxation, a compulsory "Defense Loan" has been decreed at a rate of 7% on income up to 40,000 pounds a year, 9% on incomes of 40,000 to 60,000 pounds, and 12% on incomes over 60,000 pounds. This compulsory loan was brazenly described by Finance Minister Sapir as a form of progressive tax—and this when the average annual income in Israel is in the neighborhood of 10,000 pounds.

In addition to this "progressive" Defense Loan, the government publicly launched a "Voluntary Defense Loan" that is collected by compulsory means—sometimes going so far as the firing of those who refuse to "donate." Generally, the local bosses of the Histadrut decide how much the worker will "donate." The sum is usually a month's pay, and the money is deducted in monthly installments by

the employer. Very few workers dare refuse "volunteering" in this way, and a few who did were fired.

As a first step in paying the immense price of the October War, Sapir is collecting—"absorbing" is the official term being used—5,000 million pounds from the public. This constitutes approximately 15% of the national income, or about 25-30% of "available income" (net income).

At the same time, the increase in sales taxes, customs, and other indirect taxes, together with the cancellation of government subsidies of basic commodities, is expected to kick up consumer prices by at least 55-60% in the next few months.

What makes this policy so comforting and reassuring is the fact that it is only the beginning. Sapir himself had to admit as much in a public statement. "This is only the first phase in the 'absorption' process," he said, adding that "should there be a second phase [sic], it would be linked to the debate on next year's budget and to the negotiations of next year's labor contracts." (*Yediot Achronot*, September 11, 1973.)

The economic and social implications of the government's measures so far are not difficult to comprehend. "Money printing" is in reality nothing but extremely regressive indirect taxation. Soaring prices—the usual outcome of printing money—have the worst effect on wage earners and other weak strata of society, whose wages and salaries, even if not frozen by administrative and institutional measures, lag far behind prices.

In view of the fact that in the nine months preceding the October War the price index had already gone up 25-30%, extensive "money printing" might lead to a complete collapse of the price system. Moreover, the decline in effective demand, intended to free the resources necessary to finance the war—the stated aim of the "exercise"—occurs slowly, while galloping inflation negatively affects exports because of rising production costs. (Besides, when faced with soaring prices locally, why should anybody bother to export?)

The economic and social significance of the government's other method, taxation on expenditure, is equally clear. Generally it is recommended that direct progressive taxation be used to finance war costs because indirect taxation (taxation on expenditure) is extremely regressive and places the economic burden on wage earners and other weak layers of society.

Moreover, in the structural and conjunctural conditions of the Israeli economy, indirect taxation will raise production costs and exert an upward pressure on prices. But since it would be difficult for this upward pressure to be fully realized, because of the declining effective demand, the outcome would be a further

slowing down of production, more layoffs, and a lower GNP. Consequently, the problem of paying for the war would be further aggravated because this load had become even bigger in comparison with the smaller GNP. And this does not take into account the negative effect on the balance of payments.

Evidently, the government's economic policy has grave flaws and many drawbacks. It will result in extreme inflationary pressures on the one hand and in a decline of the GNP on the other.

The question, therefore, is why the government employs such a policy. In answering this question it is necessary to state, once again, a very simple truth. The government is not using deficit financing and indirect taxation because there are no other available economic measures for financing military expenses. It didn't choose this method out of concern for the "good of the national economy" (whatever that might be) nor because of its declared aim of spreading the load equally over the "whole nation." The government's policy is derived from political considerations and is aimed to answer the interests of the class it serves.

The Israeli government does not represent the workers, and it is not their class interests that it is trying to defend. The outcome of the government's economic policy is obvious: It is the workers—who do not earn their living from profits, nor receive government loans, tax exemption, fat expense accounts, export incentives, investment incentives, etc.—who will pay the price of the October War.

But this simple truth is not yet widely understood. Many still believe the myth of "national unity" and the legend that "the whole people" is paying in blood and money for the Zionist war.

The press of course played up and gave wide coverage to all the "patriotic" millionaires raising money for the "Voluntary Defense Loan." But the same papers had to admit by implication that what the millionaires donated came from the immense profits made possible for them in the past by their patron Sapir and that the donations were given with the understanding that even fatter profits would flow back into their pockets in the future.

Moreover, this "patriotism" operates only as long as it does not interfere with business and profits. Why else would the editor of *Ma'ariv* have warned the Israeli public against a "very destructive" joke making the rounds, a joke saying that the only things left standing on the Bar-Lev Line were the villas of the contractors who built it?

"This joke and similar ones," lamented the editor, "are very destructive when the unity of the people must be maintained in time of emergency." And he added: "It should not be said, even as a joke, that those industrialists who answered the call

of the finance minister and were very active in raising money for the 'Voluntary Defense Loan' are continuing amidst this public activity to disrupt the government's economic policy by tricks stemming from greed and by cheating on the government's price controls." (*Ma'ariv*, November 18, 1973.)

It's high time to face reality. The show presented by the papers, radio, and television—the millionaires donating money, the optimistic statements of government officials, the learned discussions of the need to "fully realize the economic potential while dividing the economic burden equally," etc.—are nothing but a smoke-screen meant to hide the simple truth that it is not the "whole nation" but the workers who will be made to pay the price of the war.

Those who still refuse to accept this fact should ask themselves a very simple question: Why is it that in all the emergency economic measures employed by the government there wasn't even one small measure aimed at making the bourgeoisie pay too? Nothing was done to expropriate, or even limit somewhat, the immense speculative war profits; there is no plan to raise taxes on high incomes nor on corporation and capital profits; and there is no intention of cutting the extensive tax exemptions and the various incentives to local and foreign capitalists.

For the bourgeoisie, war is always good business, and despite the "national emergency," it's business as usual. It wasn't an exception to the rule—as the reformists of the "Zionist left" tried to maintain—on the contrary, it was highly symbolic that while Sapir called on the "whole nation to tighten its belt," the Knesset quickly approved yet another special law granting full tax exemption (even from inheritance tax) to "capital intensive corporations" for thirty-five years(!).

In other words, the Israeli government's solution to the present crisis follows bourgeois interests and is aimed at making the Israeli proletariat pay the economic costs of the war. Together with this, however, the bourgeoisie intends to utilize the "national emergency" to liquidate the social gains and elementary rights the workers still enjoy as a class.

## Liquidating Social Gains and Rights of the Workers

Even before the cease-fire, newspapers were filled with declarations, editorials, forecasts, etc., revealing the bourgeoisie's intentions. All these spokesmen of course justified their statements with the "emergency situation," but their aim was nevertheless crystal clear.

The director of the Bank of Israel, for example, called for prolonging the present labor contracts to the end of 1975.



The director of Coor, the huge industrial complex owned by the Histadrut, was campaigning energetically for longer working hours without extra pay; this demand was then taken up by the Government Minister's Committee for Economic Affairs. The vice-director of the Ministry for Industry and Commerce stated that the main task before the Israeli economy is greatly to increase productivity (that is, increase the rate of exploitation), and the minister for posts and communication declared, "We must cut drastically the standard of living . . . and we must work more hours, more days, and freeze all labor contracts and wage levels." (*Ma'ariv*, October 28, 1973.)

Others came out against paying an increased rate for overtime and opposed paying unemployment security payments, etc. But the most explicit of them all was the economic editor of *Ha'aretz*, the mouthpiece of the Israeli bourgeoisie, who wrote:

"The sacred principle in Israeli economy and society, that the working conditions should be worsened, a principle that is regarded as a first-rate social achievement, might turn into the main obstacle in the way of labor mobility, which is the essential precondition for utilizing the full potential of the Israeli economy and adapting it to the war effort. Only upward mobility is known in the Israeli economy, a movement for more social gains and better working conditions. From now on, we will have to get accustomed to downward mobility as well.

"These days are not suitable for crusades for new social gains, nor for the maintenance of the present ones if they become an obstacle to realizing the whole potential of the economy. Among the first 'holy cows' that must be sacrificed in the national emergency effort is the link between the worker and his place of work, as well as between the worker and the conditions and social gains he has now.

"This wouldn't be the only difficulty the workers would have to bear. Wage freeze, cancellation of tax exemption to workers [granted to low-income groups and families with a large number of children] and perhaps even increased working hours per day, are all possibilities that should be explored. . . ."

The editor then invoked again the "national emergency" and paid lip service to the "unity of the people," saying that perhaps not "everything" should be loaded on the shoulders of the workers and that the economic burden should be divided equally. He then summed up:

"But no real progress toward the reorganization of the economy and its adaptation to the war effort would be achieved if it were necessary to conduct constantly a defensive war on the flanks against elements that will insist on raising, even in the period of national emergency, the

sanctity of social struggles." (*Ha'aretz*, November 5, 1973.)

The intentions of the bourgeoisie are openly stated. After getting the government, with the tacit agreement of the Histadrut, to load the price of the October War on the workers, the bourgeoisie is now demanding that the impending workers struggles be crushed and that their gains and rights as a class be liquidated. In this way the bourgeoisie could reorganize the Israeli economy—"rationalize" it—and solve the crisis on the backs of the workers.

The bourgeoisie must solve the chronic problems plaguing the economy (the balance-of-payments deficit, inflation, low productivity, etc.) and simultaneously extend the protectionism and economic "hot house" conditions enjoyed by foreign and local investors. The bourgeoisie is using demagogic slogans like "national emergency" and "the need to adapt the economy to the war effort" to mask its aim of drastically cutting the workers' standard of living, liquidating their social gains and elementary rights, and containing and crushing their struggles in the future.

The bourgeoisie wants to freeze wages, forbid strikes, and use administrative decrees and "labor courts" to intimidate the workers and prevent them from striking and struggling. It demands downward mobility, and it refuses to pay cost-of-living escalator payments and unemployment insurance to laid-off workers. And it urgently needs partial unemployment so that a substantial industrial reserve army will be available as an added factor in crushing workers struggles.

Those aims are openly stated. The bourgeois motives are also open and obvious.

Faced with a recession and diminishing markets, the Israeli bourgeoisie strives to maintain its profits by rationalizing the economy so as to raise the rate of exploitation of the proletariat. It believes it can get away with that because of—*you guessed it*—the "national emergency."

The bourgeoisie doesn't take seriously the government's declarations promising an imminent economic boom. Those are for internal consumption only—to put to sleep the workers and the petty-bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie understands perfectly well the fact that there isn't any possibility of turning declining industries and laid-off workers to military production, simply as a result of quantitative considerations—unless all of Israel becomes a department of the Pentagon and its population divides itself between those serving in the army and those who serve them and produce the military equipment.

Similarly, the bourgeoisie doesn't take seriously the possibility of producing for export; that is just another myth. Everyone still recalls the pre-1967 economic recession. Then also, the stated aim was to improve the balance of payments by

a significant increase in exports. But that, of course, was not achieved, and then there were no "bottlenecks," no large-scale military mobilization, and no immense military expenses, as there are today.

Furthermore, the pre-1967 recession took place in a completely different international context: in the course of a world economic upsurge. Today, even if we ignore for the moment the complete political isolation of Israel (a fact detrimental to exports, trade agreements, and access to foreign markets) the world imperialist economic system is in the first stages of a general recession and is periodically shaken by monetary crises. Interimperialist competition has greatly intensified and all countries are implementing protectionist measures.

But despite all the advantages that existed in the pre-1967 recession, no increase of exports was realized. The only achievement then was the "improvement of the discipline and morale of labor" (to use the cynical formulation of the bourgeois economists), that is, the crushing of worker militancy and the raising of the rate of exploitation. *And exactly this is the bourgeoisie's goal today.*

Achieving this goal is now more urgent for the Israeli bourgeoisie in view of the immense price of the war, the critical situation of the balance of payments, the recession that is taking hold of the economy, and the possibility of achieving some sort of political "settlement" in Geneva. It is reasonable to assume that as a result of such a settlement the Israeli bourgeoisie stands to lose substantial advantages, especially the cheap Arab labor and the markets in the occupied territories.

Moreover, in case of the remote possibility that the settlement will result in open borders and trade with the neighboring Arab countries, the Israeli bourgeoisie must improve its competitiveness vis-a-vis Western producers who market their commodities in the Arab East and who enjoy modern technologies, high productivity, and increasing return to scale, and vis-a-vis the Arab bourgeoisie, which enjoys relatively cheap labor. The only road open for the Israeli bourgeoisie—aside from initiating another "defensive" war, for which they would have to receive U.S. approval, which is unlikely in the near future—is to reduce drastically the price of Israeli labor and sharply increase its rate of exploitation.

Realizing this goal, which entails the liquidation of the social gains of the workers, is today within the reach of the Israeli bourgeoisie, which has greatly increased its power in recent years and today is demonstrating a self-confidence and aggressiveness not previously witnessed in the history of the "Zionist Enterprise."

(To be continued.)

## Kaunda's Regime and Colonized Southern Africa

[The following interview with a Zambian Trotskyist was obtained by Tony Thomas on March 1.]

\* \* \*

*Question. Could you describe the economic life of Zambia and who controls it?*

*Answer.* Eighty percent of the population is still engaged in subsistence farming, with no real market agriculture. Outside of that, the concentration is in the copper-mining areas and along railways connecting those areas with Angola, Tanzania, and Rhodesia, through which the copper is shipped.

The copper mines are the center of the Zambian economy, accounting for over 90 percent of exports. They are owned by Anglo-Americans, one of the main South African mining firms, and by the Roan Selection Trust, a Rhodesian firm. The headquarters of the Zambian operations of these firms have moved to Bermuda and London respectively, in an attempt to mask the fact that they are owned by capitalists based in white-minority-ruled countries.

The government established a "majority ownership plan" several years ago by which the government now has 51 percent ownership in the mines. However, this has brought about no change except in appearance. The government has become more integrated into these trusts, supplying government or UNIP [United National Independence party—the only legal party in Zambia] officials as officials in these trusts. However, control still remains in outside, white colonialist hands.

These companies use a "management contract" to protect minority interests. The government hires the same interests that have the minority share to manage the company. This means that they get to decide what takes place in regard to training, employment, expansion, investment, etc. They also can cover their loss in their share of the profits by hiring subcontractors and firms for machinery and various

forms of work from their own firms and paying them very high fees. In essence, these Rhodesian and South African firms are running the mines as they did before, but are also being paid by the government to do it.

The government is also giving them a tax write-off since the government cannot afford to pay direct compensation.

*Q. What social basis does the Kaunda regime rest on?*

*A.* Since independence in 1964, the real political basis of the regime has been a compromise between aspiring capitalist and middle-class elements led by Kenneth Kaunda's UNIP, and the Rhodesian and South African interests that own the mines.

It is supposed to be a popular government based on the struggle for independence, but the demands that were raised by the masses during the independence struggle have been pushed into the background because the government does not want to strain its relations with the white-settler regimes.

The middle-class elements within Zambia itself have in large part become caretakers of the big firms, with their posts in them. The mining firms have a conscious strategy of picking out individuals within the Zambian middle class and upper class, giving them positions, and thus securing their firms against industrial actions.

Accordingly, the government has maintained a very hostile attitude toward the workers under the slogan "We must sacrifice." At this time, all strikes by miners and other workers are completely illegal. The government knows very well that the mining sector is very highly explosive and potentially powerful. The government has continually arrested and detained workers, especially in the mines, who tend toward any form of independent action.

At the same time, the government has moved to co-opt the trade-union bureaucracy. The trade unions have become an official arm of UNIP, with the union leaders being drawn into the government on the basis of UNIP's

capitalistic approach. Building independent workers organizations outside of this context is illegal. This has strengthened the hand of both government and union leaders to oppose all workers actions and has caused demoralization of many worker militants.

*Q. Could you describe some of the conditions miners and other workers face?*

*A.* The amount of wealth that the mines provide is immense. However, even despite the so-called majority ownership by the government, the miners have received only a slight improvement in their wages since independence. And that in the light of a rise in world copper prices and mounting inflation in Zambia.

The cost of living has gone up tremendously, given the rising shortage of food and items that must be obtained from outside Zambia. On some basic necessities, the price has gone up more than four times in recent years.

There is also a very acute housing situation. While most of the miners are provided with houses by the mine companies, we have the development of large shantytowns around the major cities. There live people who have no homes, who live in shacks made of waste wood, tin, and corrugated metal. These are people from the countryside coming to the cities, chiefly being employed as workers in the small businesses and shops that are developing with the growth of an aspiring African middle class based on the mining firms and the government.

Within these shantytowns we also have a larger and larger unemployed segment for whom there are no jobs in the countryside, the mines, or the towns. This large unemployed layer has contributed to the low wages in industry.

*Q. Could you explain Zambia's relationship to the unliberated areas of southern Africa?*

*A.* The whole region has been dom-

inated economically by South Africa. There are only three independent countries in the region: Malawi, which has an openly collaborationist policy with South Africa; Botswana, which cannot even really be considered politically independent from South Africa; and Zambia.

Zambia is locked into a very strategic position. It borders on the Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola and on the white-settler-ruled countries of Namibia [South West Africa] and Zimbabwe [Rhodesia].

Zambia allows passage to these countries to the various African liberation organizations. They have offices and can receive supplies and information there. This places Zambia under the danger of direct imperialist intervention in order to stop the struggles in these countries.

This danger has been seen in border areas, where the white colonialists have crossed over in "pursuit" of the liberation forces. On the Angolan border, the Portuguese have bombed several Zambian villages because they claimed they harbored the liberation forces.

*Q. What has been the Kaunda regime's attitude toward this question?*

A. The leadership wants to play down the danger of a military confrontation with imperialism by entering into economic compromises. The most important companies in Zambia are controlled by South African and Rhodesian firms.

The UNIP leaders have tried to play down the idea of mass struggle against the minority regimes. They say that this is a thing only for politicians to think about or do something about. They are opposed to any independent organization by Zambians against the colonialist regimes and in support of the liberation forces.

This means concretely that when people try to set up such groups, they are banned by the government.

There was one organization called Africa 2000. It worked very closely with the liberation movements that have offices in Zambia. It was a medium of communication with similar support groups outside of Zambia. They thought that since there were support groups outside of the country, why couldn't there be one in Zambia? They passed on supplies and materials to the liberation groups.

Africa 2000 was also involved in a mass education campaign. They demanded that publications of the liberation groups be included in the libraries and the schools. They demanded that the question of the unliberated areas be discussed in history and current affairs classes in the schools.

This group was outlawed by the government. Even church support groups, which were tolerated for a little while, have been banned.

*Q. How was this problem reflected around the Rhodesian blockade of Zambia last year?*

A. What happened at the time was that there were several confrontations on the border between the liberation



KAUNDA: Interferes with support for liberation struggles.

groups and Rhodesian security forces. Now what Rhodesia did was to move toward an embargo because Zambia was using rail links with Rhodesia to export its copper. This was intended to force Zambia to stop giving access to the liberation groups.

Zambia received support from the United Nations and others to reroute the copper by road and railway through Tanzania and also through Portuguese-held Angola. There was broad support for this. However, people wanted this policy of boycott to be applied as a permanent policy to

all the white-settler regimes. There was also a major demand for arming the people to defend against imperialist attack. This was opposed by the government, which set up a draft instead. The government was clearly afraid that setting up a popular militia would have dangerous social implications for their interests and the imperialist interests in our country.

*Q. What solutions do you see for the economic and political problems facing Zambia?*

A. What is needed is a government controlled by the workers and poor farmers to put the government and economic resources of the country under control of the Zambian masses, not the imperialists or their Zambian caretakers. We need a socialist revolution.

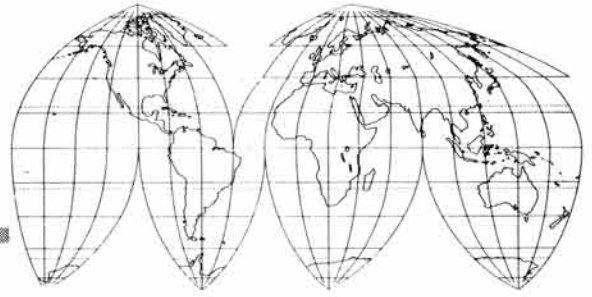
The class gaps in the country are widening. More and more of an African middle class is being produced. At the same time, their small businesses and the extension of the government and the mines are creating a stronger African working class. The popularity UNIP gained by being in the leadership of the independence struggle is being worn away by its clear identification with African and imperialist elements hostile to the Zambian masses.

Another factor that will deepen the social struggles in our country, as I have already explained, is the struggles in the unliberated areas and the threat of an imperialist attack on Zambia. The only way that these problems can be met is by taking power away from UNIP and Kaunda and putting it in the hands of the African working masses. □

### Preserving Their Heritage

Columnist Jack Anderson reports that the U.S. National Park Service is planning to reconstruct the outdoor privy behind the boyhood home of former President Herbert Hoover. This touch of Americana is being put together "plank by plank, near the cottage where the 31st President was born in West Branch, Iowa. The Hoover Presidential Library and burial site are part of the same compound." The structure, Anderson noted, is intended to be functional as well as decorative: "In addition to adding an air of authenticity to the Hoover park, the outhouse will hide an electrical transformer."

# AROUND THE WORLD



## North Korea Proposes Peace Talks

In a letter to the U.S. Congress, the Supreme People's Assembly of North Korea has proposed "concluding a peace agreement directly with the United States."

The letter, dated March 25, suggested that such an agreement would include a mutual nonaggression pact and a commitment by Washington not to prevent Korean reunification, a prohibition on introduction of weapons into Korea, the withdrawal of U.S. troops and weapons "at the earliest possible date," and a prohibition against the establishment of "a military or operational base for any foreign country."

The Assembly proposed that negotiations be held at Panmunjom or in a third country.

## Supporters of Chilean Revolutionists Hold National Conference in France

The first national conference of the "Committee in Support of the Revolutionary Struggle of the Chilean People" met in Paris March 23-24. More than 300 delegates, representing about 8,000 members, attended.

The organization was launched about six months ago, immediately following the downfall of the Allende regime. Most of the far-left groups in France have backed the movement, helping it with publicity and the participation of activists.

It was reported at the conference that more than 500,000 francs (about \$US102,000) had been collected and already sent to the resistance.

In a "political platform" adopted by a vote of 296 to 23, the conference outlined the organization's objectives. "It is a question," the platform said among other things, "of helping those who, today, are working to rebuild the revolutionary movement by drawing the lessons of the past . . . of supporting those who do not want to go back to the framework of a democratized bourgeois state, but who intend to struggle to bring down the dictatorship, to destroy its roots, and to construct socialism. That is why our political support must go to the revolutionary wing of the resistance, and our active solidarity be directed to supporting all the activities

of the resistance that weaken the bourgeoisie, and to aiding the victims of the repression."

In a press release issued March 25, the Socialist Youth Movement and the Socialist Students announced that they were withdrawing from the organization.

They accused the supporters of the weekly paper *Rouge* of having taken over the conference "by antidemocratic means" and of "imposing an adventurist and sectarian line, giving financial support only to the MIR, refusing to accept the line followed by the Chilean workers and their organizations in the Resistance, that is, struggling in a united way."

This was immediately answered by the Committee in Support of the Revolutionary Struggle of the Chilean People. The committee denied "giving financial support solely to the MIR."

It pointed out that the platform adopted by a huge majority at the conference declared "clear solidarity with all the currents of the Chilean resistance in face of the repression" but that the platform also specified that "political support" should go to "the revolutionary wing of that resistance."

"We do not propose in any manner," the statement continued, "to dictate a strategy or tactics to the organizations struggling in Chile, nor to serve as the mouthpiece in France of any Chilean organization. . . . It is in accordance with the demands of the revolutionary left in Chile that we are sending funds to the Rome secretariat."

## Mounting Student Unrest in Brazil

The military dictatorship in Brazil is reported to be worried about mounting student unrest.

In the middle of March a strike broke out in the school of medicine at the University of Sao Paulo in protest against the system of internship. The action was backed by all 1,050 students.

At the university's branches at Ribeirao Preto and Sao Carlos students staged strike actions to protest increased prices in student restaurants.

There has also been a noticeable increase in the distribution of protest leaflets and pamphlets on various campuses.

## Tribunal Finds 4 Latin American Juntas Guilty of 'Crimes Against Humanity'

An inquiry held in Rome under the sponsorship of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation found the governments of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay guilty of "crimes against humanity."

The international tribunal issued a statement April 6 calling on all governments to cut off economic and military aid to the guilty regimes.

Among the cases of torture in Brazil described by witnesses was the submission of a one-year-old baby to electric shocks in the presence of the father. When the father threw himself on the torturer, he was killed on the spot.

The tribunal assembled evidence on more than 1,000 cases of torture in Brazil alone.

Special attention was called to the role of U.S. companies in bringing military juntas to power in Latin America and maintaining them in office.

## Tokyo to Aid Thieu

Under an agreement signed in Saigon March 30, the Japanese government will provide the Thieu dictatorship with \$50 million in aid—\$30 million in the form of a loan and \$20 million as a grant for "postwar reconstruction."

## Boumedienne to Pay French Exploiters

The Boumedienne government is "on the point of reaching an agreement to indemnify the French companies that were nationalized in 1963 and 1966 after [Algerian] independence was won," according to *Le Monde* (March 31). The Paris daily ascribes its information to "private sources."

The amount involved was put at 130 million francs (about \$US 26.5 million).

## Saigon Buddhists Protest Imprisonment

The March 31 issue of the Paris daily *Le Monde* reports that 340 Buddhist prisoners, held in Chi Hoa prison in Saigon, began a hunger strike March 1.

Representatives of NBC and CBS, two U.S. television chains, interviewed the

hunger strikers on March 13. However, their film was seized by the prison director, Lt. Col. Phan Vanhai.

In a statement issued in behalf of the group February 20, the Reverend Thich Ming Hoang said, among other things:

"We were arrested during roundups looking for army conscripts. Because of our categorical refusal to become soldiers, which is against our religion and our personal convictions, the government of the Republic of Vietnam imprisoned us as coming under military jurisdiction, charging us with 'indiscipline' and 'disobeying the orders of superiors.' During our imprisonment we have been brutalized and deprived of clothing, food, and medicine. Some of us have been held in prison for six years, the newest ones for a year."

Previously held in a recruiting center, the Buddhists were transferred to Chi Hoa prison when they refused once again to serve as soldiers. This led them to declare a hunger strike.

### Wang Ming Dies

Wang Ming, one of Stalin's most faithful Chinese disciples, died in Moscow March 27 "after a long and serious illness," according to *Pravda*. He was born April 9, 1904.

Wang joined the Chinese Communist party in 1926. He studied in the Soviet Union at the University of the Toilers of the East for the next three years.

Upon returning to China, he sought to make a career of being the most faithful exponent of the thought of Stalin in the internal struggles of the Chinese Communist party.

In the 1931-37 period, Stalin rewarded him with a high post in the Comintern. Although Mao eventually elbowed him out, Wang was kept on the top bodies of the Chinese Communist party. In 1956 he again went to Moscow "for reasons of health."

With the outbreak of the Sino-Soviet conflict, Wang Ming made a specialty of defending Khrushchev and then Brezhnev against Mao Tsetung. The articles that appeared with his name as author matched Peking's productions in factional virulence.

### Czechoslovak Stalinists Revoke Citizenship of Eduard Goldstuecker

The Czechoslovak government has stripped Eduard Goldstuecker of his citizenship. The official justification for the action was that Goldstuecker "lives abroad and is carrying out alien activities against Czechoslovakia which infringe state interests."

Goldstuecker was chairman of the Czechoslovak Union of Writers during the

Prague Spring. He now lives and teaches in England.

In a statement to the press April 12, Goldstuecker said: "I shall consider myself still a citizen of Czechoslovakia. I am being deprived of citizenship of my country by a regime that is not the regime of an independent state but the organ of a foreign power."

### Report U.S. Offer of Loan to Cairo

Washington has made an "informal offer" of a \$500 million low-interest loan to the Egyptian government, according to Ihsan Abdel Kuddous, editor of the Cairo weekly *Akhbar El Yom*. The April 14 *New York Times* quoted Kuddous as saying that the offer was intended as "a token of good intentions."

Neither U.S. nor Egyptian officials would comment on the report. Kuddous, according to the *Times*, "has close personal relations" with President Anwar el-Sadat.

### Government Nationalizes Holdings of Royal Dutch-Shell in Libya

Tripoli Radio announced March 30 that the Libyan government had completely nationalized the petroleum operations in that country of Royal Dutch-Shell. The company's holdings were in Oasis Oil Company, a consortium in which Marathon Oil, Continental Oil, and Amerada Hess also participated. Last September, the latter three companies agreed to a 51 percent take-over of their interests by the government, but Royal Dutch-Shell refused.

The broadcast said that a Libyan committee would conduct a study to determine the amount of compensation to be paid for the new nationalization.

### Mexico Seeks Warmer Ties With Cuba

The Mexican government has recently been seeking to improve diplomatic relations with Cuba. While Mexico was the only Latin American country that refused to bow to State Department pressure to break diplomatic ties with Havana ten years ago, relations remained cool and formal.

On March 29 Mexico's foreign minister, Emilio O. Rabasa, flew to Cuba for a four-day visit. This was the first time that a Mexican foreign minister visited Havana since the Cuban revolution fifteen years ago.

It has been announced that President Luis Echeverria Alvarez is likewise planning to visit Cuba later this year.

Various reasons have been advanced for these diplomatic moves. Echeverria, it is said, wants to improve his leftist

image in preparation for playing a bigger role in the "third world."

It has also been rumored that he wants to serve as an intermediary between Washington and Havana in an effort to end the State Department's aggressive policy toward Cuba.

The moves also fit in with Moscow's long-sustained policy of seeking to housebreak the Cuban revolution. During his visit to Cuba at the end of January, Brezhnev stressed "peaceful coexistence," the detente with the United States, and the "complete identity" of Cuban and Soviet views in international relations.

Brezhnev's propaganda along this line received unusually warm acclaim from Cuban officials, including Castro.

### Belgium Departs Hunger Strikers

Ten North African workers who had been conducting a hunger strike since March 22 were arrested by Belgian police April 1, shoved onto a plane specially requisitioned by the government, and flown to their countries of origin.

Nine of the hunger strikers were seized in a police raid on a church in a small town near Brussels where they had been holding out.

The workers had entered Belgium as tourists and then sought permission to stay as residents. They also demanded work permits as well as suppression of police control over foreigners.

### Rosenberg 'Evidence' Disappears

The United States Attorney's office has claimed that key exhibits in the case of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg have "disappeared." The disclosure was made in a suit filed April 9 by Morton Sobell to allow inspection of ten of the exhibits.

Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were executed in the electric chair in 1953 at the height of the McCarthyite witch-hunt in the United States. They were accused of conspiring to transmit the "secret" of the atom bomb to the Soviet Union. At the time, the charges were widely held to be a frame-up.

Morton Sobell served almost eighteen years on charges of being a fellow conspirator and is still required to report to the United States Board of Parole until 1981.

From the beginning of the case and throughout the long years in prison, he stoutly maintained his innocence. He now hopes that he "might be able to prove an exhibit a fraud."

Among the exhibits Sobell wants to examine are four sketches that David Greenglass the chief prosecution witness, averred were replicas of drawings he allegedly made for transmission to Julius Rosenberg or Harry Gold as a spy courier.

# Protests Spread Throughout Ethiopia

The continued unrest in Ethiopia has for the first time spread in a massive way to the population of Eritrea, a "province" that has been struggling for its independence from Addis Ababa for more than a decade. An Associated Press dispatch in the April 3 Tokyo *Daily Yomiuri* reported that 10,000 persons demonstrated in the town of Adi Ugri, thirty-five miles south of Asmara, against "authorities who have not cared for electricity and water supplies." Beginning on April 9, hospital employees and other municipal workers in Asmara staged a wave of strikes, demanding the dismissal of Asmara's mayor.

Previous protests in Eritrea appeared to have been confined to the troops at Asmara and the sailors at Massawa, most of whom are from other parts of Ethiopia, and to a few actions by the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), one of the guerrilla organizations fighting for Eritrea's independence. On March 26 three Americans and two Canadians searching for oil for the Tenneco Oil Company were captured by forces of the ELF after their helicopter crashed in Eritrea.

The April 3 *Daily Yomiuri* also reported that Jimma, the capital of Kefa province, was paralyzed by a general strike. An April 7 Agence France-Press dispatch reported that telephone lines between Diredawa, in Harar Province, and Addis Ababa, had been cut by railroad workers. Railway workers threatened to strike on April 9 for higher wages. On the night of April 10 an inspection train was derailed when it hit a sabotaged section of tracks, killing one policeman. The next day forty leaders of the railway union were arrested, and other union leaders met to plan actions in response to the arrests.

In Addis Ababa, bus drivers went on strike April 7, for the third time in six weeks, demanding the dismissal of five directors of the bus company. Four days later, 10,000 workers marched through the capital to

Emperor Haile Selassie's Jubilee Palace demanding the dismissal of Halle Giorgis Workineh, the mayor of Addis Ababa. The next day Workineh was ousted. Although the garbage workers went back to work after this victory, 2,000 bus drivers, factory workers, and students marched once more the following day.

Rebel troops of the Third Division took over the government radio station in Harar, the capital of Harar province, on April 7 and demanded the resignation of the army deputy chief of staff, Lieutenant General Haile Baikedagne. The radio announcer, identified as the Voice of the Ethiopian Eastern Command, said that a curfew had been imposed "because of corrupt and criminal officials still in power in Ethiopia." The rebel soldier went on: "It is our duty as members of the armed forces to see to it that the criminals in power are brought to justice." Baikedagne immediately submitted his resignation and the rebellious troops went back to their barracks the following day.

But on April 12, units of the mechanized brigade of the Third Division arrested officers and businessmen in Jijiga, about forty-five miles east of Harar, demanding an end to hoarding of food grains by merchants, high prices, and profiteering. They also demanded that the courts move faster to prosecute grain dealers.

Earlier in the month, students at Haile Selassie University in Addis Ababa boycotted classes and staged a hunger strike, calling on the regime to meet the demands of Ethiopia's 20 million sharecroppers, many of whom have been struggling to regain their land; to stop killing political prisoners; to stop the arrests of dissident troops; and to declare a state of emergency to deal with the spreading famine in southern Ethiopia.

According to the April 1 *Washington Post*, three members of parliament representing famine-stricken Wallo province issued a statement, which was printed in the *Ethiopian Herald*, blaming the regime for the deaths of more

than 250,000 persons in the famine in Wallo. "Without the inaction of the former government," the statement said, "the disaster would never have reached such proportions in Ethiopia."

About 300 high school students marched through Addis Ababa the same day, chanting antigovernment slogans. They were attacked by the police and some were beaten. In Dessye, the capital of Wallo province, fighting was reported during a student strike. In Jimma, according to an April 1 Associated Press dispatch, "student vigilante groups" detained a number of corrupt local officials.

An Agence France-Press dispatch dated April 11 said: "Reports that revolutionary committees and people's tribunals were being set up amid ever-growing hostility toward provincial governors and local authorities continued to pour in from the countryside."

In the face of such widespread unrest, Premier Endalkachew Makonnen announced on March 30 that the government would issue a white paper on its proposals for political, social, economic, and land "reform." In his radio and television speech, Makonnen called on the armed forces, police, and the entire population to help maintain "law and order."

"He warned," said an Associated Press dispatch in the April 1 *Daily Yomiuri*, "that the country will suffer 'in many ways' if order was not guaranteed. He said foreign assistance and technical aid, 'let alone our own development efforts,' will be drastically affected if donor countries suspend aid because of 'uncertainties' in the country." He also claimed that the demands of the striking workers, if met, would deplete the government's revenues, and that the wildcat strikes were damaging the economy.

Makonnen's cabinet announced on April 8 that the white paper contained proposals for land reform, without specifying how those "reforms" would be carried out. The Ethiopian parliament, which is dominated by landlords and aristocrats, has rarely passed even mild land-reform bills. The few that have been passed were never carried out. When Makonnen attempted to present the cabinet's measures to the parliament on April 10, he was shouted down by the deputies.

## On the Workers Offensive in Martinique

[A series of important labor struggles swept the French West Indian colony of Martinique earlier this year, culminating in a week-long general strike in mid-February. As a result of these strikes and demonstrations, Martiniquan workers were able to win some of their demands for wage increases and job security.

[The following assessment of the struggles was written by the Political Bureau of the Groupe Révolution Socialiste (Socialist Revolution Group), the Antilles section of the Fourth International. The GRS played an important role in organizing the general strike, which was brutally attacked by the police and army.

[The statement appeared in the March issue of *Libération/Antilles-Guyane*, the newspaper published by GRS members living in France. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

1. The powerful workers offensive that swept Martinique constituted the first step of a vigorous response by the Antillean masses to the high cost of living, low wages, discrimination, and injustice.

In a magnificent outpouring, thousands of workers from the newspaper *France-Antilles*, the electrical workers union, the building trades, the municipal governments, the banks, business offices, the hotels, the docks, the big factories, the apartment complexes, the hospitals, the teaching profession — all with the support of the high-school and college students — left their jobs, took to the streets, and once again gave the trade-union central office the place it deserves at the very heart of the country's life.

2. Reactionaries of all stripes, who had been convinced that the workers would agree to pay the cost of the crisis of capitalism without a struggle, were overcome with both panic and a sheer mania for repression.

The colonial regime was not con-

tent with adding the names of [Renor] Ilmany and [Georges] Marie-Louise [two banana workers killed by the police during the general strike] to the long list of martyrs of the Antillean people. It had to go further and make a ludicrous effort to cover its crimes by creating a diversion — the hysterical campaign against "leftists," particularly the Groupe Révolution Socialiste.

By adopting the official version put forward by Messrs. Orsetti [governor of Martinique] and Stasi [former French minister of overseas colonies], the bourgeois press in both the Antilles and in France frequently reported the events from a policeman's point of view, tending to leave the impression that the incidents that occurred in the course of the struggles were the work of "uncontrollable" groups.

3. The reformist leaderships, who for their part were at a loss for what to do when confronted with the unexpected breadth of the February struggles and were driven to panic by the explosion of long-repressed popular discontent, objectively lent credence to the regime's trumped-up version.

They systematically distorted the positions of the GRS and consciously concocted an idiotic amalgam of the GRS and the other far-left groups. They finally ended up adding their voice to the chorus of slanders and calumnies heaped on the GRS by the bourgeoisie and the government.

4. The workers are familiar with our politics. All of them want to make the trade unions into effective instruments of struggle. Their aim is to carry out generalized and democratically organized struggles around clear, unifying demands.

Preparation of, participation in, and support to workers struggles are basic tasks for communist militants. That is what the communist militants of the GRS did. That is what they will continue to do, while putting forward the slogans, demands, and forms of action that seem correct to them *and*, at the

same time, respecting workers democracy — that is, the decisions adopted by the majority of the workers.

5. The workers — and not only those who belong to the GRS — must express their indignation with the insulting charge that they are incapable of leading their own struggles. They must call these charges by their true name: sheer police provocations designed to prepare public opinion for repression — first against far-left militants and particularly the GRS, but then quickly spreading to all working-class political organizations and trade unions.

Faced with the repressive intent of the government and the bourgeoisie, and with the bosses' thinly veiled threat to organize private armed bands, workers self-defense can only be organized through working-class unity.

6. The government's present plans — giving the workers some crumbs while lashing out at selected militants — will be smashed by the resistance of the workers. Martiniquan working people cannot be satisfied with a few concessions paid for so dearly with the blood of Ilmany and Marie-Louise, or with a few vague promises from cabinet ministers.

The movement, even in the opinion of the trade-union leaderships, has only been temporarily suspended; it has not been stopped. The workers will not allow themselves to be stripped of the fruits of their battles. Sickened but in no way disheartened by Chalvet's butchery, they will renew the struggle to hold on to the gains of February, to block the government's maneuvers and efforts at intimidation, and to win those demands they have raised that have yet to be met.

7. To accomplish these aims it is necessary to draw a balance sheet of January and February — one that is not marked by complacency — in order to persuade the trade-union organizations to stop hesitating and to come forward with overall perspectives that are absolutely clear.

Instead of being simply the sum of partial and similar struggles, the movement must become generalized and united around demands that are common to all.

Among the demands, emphasis must be placed on those that best correspond to the requirements and possibilities of the present situation:

— End low salaries, equal pay increases for everyone!

— Down with high prices and inflation; a sliding scale of wages under workers control!

— No layoffs or unemployment; decrease the hours of work with no loss in pay!

To win, the workers must organize themselves in all domains, above all in the trade-union arena: membership in the trade unions for the unorga-

nized. Form new union locals where there are none, and strengthen them where they already exist. Fight for the fullest trade-union democracy. Massive participation in the general assemblies in each sector. Active support to the strike committees.

The workers must do this in order to prevent the coming struggles from being isolated like those of January and February. The arrival in Martinique of the forces of repression stationed in Guadeloupe and Guyane at least contains a lesson: The government and the bosses are ready at any moment to make use of our countries' proximity. To combat the forces of reaction, workers can and must take action together, in order to apply common solutions to the similar problems that are posed in our countries.

9. We are not isolated. The strug-

gles of January and February met an unaccustomed response in France and the rest of the world. Whatever distortions can be observed here and there in the reporting or analysis of the struggles, the fact remains that today the rest of the world has a little bit better idea of what is going on in this country.

We will be able to count on international working-class solidarity, in particular the solidarity of French workers, if we merit it through our militancy and determination.

*Forward to a victory of the workers!*

*Forward to workers unity in action!*

*Forward with the joint struggle of the workers of the Antilles and Guyane!*

*French troops, red berets, and legionnaires out of the Antilles!* □

## Call for Day of Actions in Defense of Grigorenko

[The following statement was released in Amsterdam on April 3 and in New York on April 9 by exiled Soviet dissident Pavel Litvinov.]

\* \* \*

Political persecution and attacks on civil liberties have not been confined to one country or bloc of countries, and in recent years they have been increasingly common and more intensive. Radicals, humanitarians, consistent advocates of democratic ideas, socialists, and communists have found themselves protesting about repression in every continent and in almost every country.

It is particularly regrettable that in the countries of Eastern Europe, and especially in the USSR and Czechoslovakia, the tendency to solve political disputes by administrative and repressive measures has become more acute. Many elementary liberties have once more been put in question. The incarceration of Major General Grigorenko in a mental hospital, the forced confinement of Vladimir Bukovsky, as well as the imprisonment of numerous other people such as Plyushch, Moroz, Svitlichny, and Lyu-

barski in the USSR, and also the heavy penalties against Milan Hubl, Jaroslav Sabata, Jan Tesar, and Jiri Muller, among many others, in Czechoslovakia, are famous cases in point.

Like peace, civil liberties are indivisible. Oppression in any country diminishes humanity everywhere. Oppression in a country with a socialist constitution is a particular challenge to the radical conscience of the rest of the world, since these countries claim themselves to be both democratic and advanced in the field of civil rights.

To all those human beings who feel sympathy for the future of socialism in this sense, and to all genuine democrats, we address this appeal.

We are calling for worldwide participation by socialists, communists, democratic and humanitarian organizations and individuals in three days of protest against the repression of civil liberties in the USSR and Czechoslovakia, as well as in other Eastern European countries.

The first of these we propose to designate Grigorenko Day, which will be fixed on May 7, 1974, the anni-

versary of the imprisonment of Major General Pyotr Grigorenko. On that day we urge a worldwide initiative of protests, meetings, and petitions in solidarity with Pyotr Grigorenko and all other victims of politically motivated incarceration in mental hospitals and prisons in the USSR.

On the second day, November 27, 1974, which is the anniversary of the arrest of Jaroslav Sabata and Jiri Muller, and on the third day, March 29, 1975, which is the anniversary of the imprisonment of Vladimir Bukovsky, we propose similar worldwide actions and efforts.

We appeal to men of goodwill throughout the world to endorse and support this appeal.

*Pavel Litvinov*, on behalf of the Initiative Group for the Defense of Human Rights in the Soviet Union, *Jiri Pelikan*, for the collective of *Listy*, the journal of the Czechoslovak Socialist Opposition,

*Andrei Sakharov*, member of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union,

*Ken Coates* and *Chris Farley*, for the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation.

*Intercontinental Press*