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Dr. Strangelove Weighs Risks

Reopen Vietnam War? Start War in Arab East?



CIA--Ford's Whitewash Commission

Cairo Demonstrators Protest Inflation

Feature Article

***Prospect for Unlimited Abundance
Under Scientific Planning of Socialism***

Political Prisoners Tortured in Kerala

Political prisoners in the Indian state of Kerala have been systematically tortured, according to a report published in the December 7 issue of the *Bombay Economic and Political Weekly*. The magazine's correspondent based the article on personal interviews and investigations into the treatment of political prisoners in the Central Jail in Trivandrum.

The "interrogation" center in Trivandrum, according to the report, is run by the Special Branch of the police department. "Interrogation," it said, "is just a high-sounding, antiseptic name for plain, murderous torture. . . . At the ordinary level torture takes on the form of beatings with hand, fist, lathis [steel-tipped bamboo clubs] and rifle-butts. In the interrogation centre all this is done by the officers. The constables only render the necessary help by, for instance, holding the detenu's body in place. . . ."

"At a higher level, there is a case of a piece of cloth having been wound around a young undertrial's penis and then set aflame so as to produce a confessional statement from him!"

Forty-five male political prisoners are being held in the Central Jail. Thirty-seven are under pretrial detention, some since 1969. Many of them are "Naxalites," alleged members or supporters of the Communist party of India (Marxist-Leninist).

The brutal treatment of the political prisoners prompted some of them to stage protests. In 1971, the alleged Naxalites, many of whom are classified as common criminals, went on a sixteen-day hunger strike to demand political-prisoner status.

On October 25, 1972, eleven pretrial prisoners protested by refusing to return to their cells. They, together with other political prisoners who had been in court at the time of the protest, were brutally beaten. "A few minutes later," the account said, "a doctor came to report on their condition. On the basis of his report the beatings continued throughout the day and well into the night—until the doctor felt that any further beating would cause permanent injury or death."

News of this incident filtered out of the prison. A report was prepared and sent to all the major newspapers in Kerala, including the organ of the state committee of the CPM (Communist party of India [Marxist]). None of the newspapers published the report.

The pro-Moscow Communist party of India (CPI) bears a major responsibility for the torture of political prisoners in the state, since the chief minister of Kerala is Achutha Menon, a leader of the CPI. The CPI rules the state in coalition with the Congress party. □

In This Issue

Closing Date: January 13, 1975

FEATURES	43	The Present Recession and Rising Worker Militancy—by Ernest Mandel
	48	Prospects for Unlimited Abundance Under Scientific Planning of Socialism —by Ernest Harsch
INDIA	34	Political Prisoners Tortured in Kerala
	47	Jute and Coal Workers Demand Higher Pay —by Sharad Jhaveri
VIETNAM	35	Is Pentagon Thinking of Reopening War? —by Peter Green
ARAB EAST	37	Washington Weighs Military Strike —by Dick Fidler
U. S. A.	40	Ford's CIA Commission Prepares Cover-Up —by Michael Baumann
DENMARK	42	Election Reflects Social Polarization
CHILE	45	Pinochet Frees Two Top Allende Officials —by Judy White
BANGLADESH	46	Rahman Bans Strikes, Assumes Dictatorial Powers—by Ernest Harsch
EGYPT	54	Cairo Rocked by Protest Against Inflation —by Peter Green
SWEDEN	80	Evald Hoglund Dies—by Pertti Malmberg
DOCUMENTS	57	Statement of the United Secretariat on the PST
	63	In Reply to the IMT's Open Letter No. 2
AROUND the WORLD	52	
DRAWINGS	46	Mujibur Rahman—by Copain
EN ESPANOL:		
ARGENTINA	55	Los Obreros Argentinos Responden

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Is Pentagon Thinking of Reopening Vietnam War?

By Peter Green

Following the liberation of Phuocbinh, capital of Phuoclong province, by the forces of the Provisional Revolutionary Government on January 7, the hawks in Washington came out in force. Not only did they issue threats, some veiled and some not-so-veiled, but the White House and the Pentagon have set to persuade Congress to step up allocations for the war.

A U. S. Seventh Fleet task force headed by the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *Enterprise* set sail from Subic Bay in the Philippines on the day that Phuocbinh fell. A United Press International report from Saigon quoted American diplomatic sources as having said that the ships would sail into Vietnamese waters to demonstrate support for South Vietnam and as a warning to North Vietnam. Speculation and rumors about resumption of direct U. S. involvement were sparked off around the world.

The White House issued denials, disclaiming any intention of defying legislative bans on U. S. reentry into the civil war. The mission of the six-ship naval task force, a Pentagon spokesman insisted, was "not connected with anything going on in South Vietnam." The spokesman pointed out that the ships were headed in a southwesterly direction, not west toward the South Vietnamese coast. He did acknowledge that the departure of the ships on "an operational mission" had been speeded up from earlier plans, but gave no reason for this.

Just in case anyone missed the real point of the exercise and for some reason took Washington's denials at face value for a change, the opinions of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger were leaked to the press. Quoting "administration officials," the January 11 *New York Times* reported that Kissinger had "expressed regret to the Pentagon" that the naval task force "had not been used to signal American determination to North Vietnam. . . ." Kissinger reportedly learned of the task force's movements too late for him to arrange for the ships to sail toward North Vietnam

in "a psychological demonstration of strength."

Kissinger issued the ritual denial—there was "no basis of fact" to the report, said a State Department spokesman—but the January 12 *New York Times* said that other officials had reaffirmed that Kissinger's regrets had been relayed to the Pentagon. According to one report from "well-placed officials," when Kissinger was informed that the task force had not been directed toward Vietnam, he responded, "Why the heck didn't we?"

Even while denying the story about Kissinger expressing regrets, State Department officials suggested that the deployment of the naval task force might have been discussed at a White House meeting on the morning of January 7. President Ford met with Kissinger and Lieutenant General Brent Scowcroft, deputy director of the National Security Council, to review, among other things, the Vietnamese situation. "All sorts of contingencies" are discussed in such a meeting, said a senior State Department official.

At a news briefing on January 8, one day after the liberation of Phuocbinh, administration officials announced that Ford had decided to ask Congress for at least \$300 million in military aid for Saigon in the current fiscal year in addition to the \$700 million already appropriated. They also said that Ford would be asking for \$1.3 billion in military aid for the fiscal year beginning July 1. Preparing the ground for even further increases, a State Department spokesman revealed that "the President and the Administration have under intensive consideration the question of going forward with a supplemental request."

The columnists and editorial writers chimed in dutifully. The U. S. "cannot cut and run," editorialized the January 8 *Christian Science Monitor*. Any supplementary aid request from Ford, they said, should be looked at "responsibly."

One "high Administration official" quoted by the January 9 *New York Times* also speculated that public

knowledge of the supplemental request "might serve as a useful signal to Hanoi."

As though there were any shortage of such "signals."

● Stockpiles of U. S. ammunition in Thailand were being moved to South Vietnam, according to a U. S. military spokesman in Bangkok quoted by the January 10 *Washington Post*. "We don't routinely send shipments to South Vietnam," the spokesman said, "but there is some shipping going on now." The report was routinely denied by the U. S. Embassy in Saigon.

● Marine and air force units at the U. S. base in Okinawa, Japan, had been put on alert since January 6, the *Washington Post* reported on January 10. Marine authorities denied the report and air force officials declined to comment. In addition, amphibious ships carrying marines had docked at Subic Bay naval base. A spokesman for the base admitted this, but said that their presence was "not unusual."

● On January 11 Washington admitted that U. S. planes are doing reconnaissance of North and South Vietnam. The question was raised when *Nhan Dan*, the official Hanoi newspaper, said that "manned and pilotless reconnaissance planes from U. S. bases in Thailand" had guided the heavy retaliatory bombing raids against Locninh, the PRG administrative center thirty miles from Phuocbinh. According to a PRG spokesman, 200 incendiary bombs were dropped on the town. Dozens of persons were killed, and hundreds of houses, two pagodas, and a Catholic church were destroyed.

The *Nhan Dan* report was officially denied by the U. S. Embassy in Saigon, the January 12 *Washington Post* reported, "but sources acknowledged that American planes had been flying reconnaissance missions along the North Vietnamese coast and over South Vietnam and Cambodia ever since the Paris cease-fire agreement was reached two years ago."

The deployment of the naval task force, the soundings about supplement-

tal aid for Thieu, the shipment of ammunition stocks to Saigon, the mobilization of the marines, and the admission about flights of spy planes over Vietnam, all these actions had the same purpose—putting pressure on Hanoi and the liberation forces, and trying to create a climate in the United States that would allow Washington to escalate its military intervention.

The actual fall of Phuocbinh was only incidental to the process. In fact, plans for the Pentagon's propaganda offensive had been made well before the capture of the provincial capital, according to the January 9 *New York Times*:

"A Pentagon memorandum written several weeks ago called for a broad publicity campaign to convince congress and the public that an emergency effort was needed or the Saigon government would run out of ammunition in 30 days.

"Senators and Congressmen were to be encouraged to visit South Vietnam, reports and assessment from the field were to be shown to them, material was to be leaked to reporters and certain Congressional committees were to receive special attention."

The usual denials were forthcoming. "When asked about the memorandum, a ranking Pentagon official responded that it had 'no status' and that 'there is now no calculated campaign, but one may develop.'"

However one interprets the "no status" category, Phuocbinh was certainly seized by the Pentagon as the cue to fully develop its campaign.

"... Phuocbinh, a military debit, is about to be converted into a political asset by allied planners," wrote the January 12 *Washington Post*. "They are displaying Phuocbinh as a grim example of the fate that awaits more important South Vietnamese towns, cities and provinces unless the new Congress provides more aid." Phuocbinh was portrayed as the opening of a big new offensive by the liberation forces.

The reality is somewhat different. Phuocbinh was an isolated pocket of Saigon military resistance in a province almost totally under PRG control.

"The communists controlled everything but the towns anyway," said one analyst quoted by the January 4 *Washington Post*. "Phuoclong was like an overripe fruit waiting to be

plucked off, and they could have done it any time during the past two years."

An article in the January 10 *Washington Post* gave an interesting insight into the extent of PRG control in the area. A former U. S. civilian aid official told of a checkpoint on the only road from Saigon to Phuocbinh where, after the cease-fire, "the Vietcong stopped buses and herded passengers into a movie theater to watch 'The Defense of Hanoi' and 'The Life of Ho Chi Minh.'"

Apart from the general stepping up of military activity during the dry season, one reason for the removal of this outpost now rather than at some other time was given by *Nhan Dan* on January 6. *Nhan Dan* accused Thieu of sending troops and tanks to comb the countryside of Phuoclong province and other regions, burning rice harvests that the Saigon army could not seize.

In a dispatch from Saigon to the January 12 *Washington Post*, Philip A. McCombs reported that most "Hanoi-watchers" there were agreed that a general offensive was not in the offing. McCombs reported that the number of PRG troops in South Vietnam was about the same as at the time of the cease-fire.

According to analysts there, he said, the current fighting "has limited military objectives." He also pointed to the importance that Hanoi is currently attaching to its own economic development. The general opinion was that "Hanoi is unlikely to order any vast escalation of its military activities in the South if it would jeopardize the long-term development of the North."

The North Vietnamese themselves denied charges by Washington and Saigon that a general offensive had been launched. In a statement broadcast by Radio Hanoi and quoted in the January 5 *Washington Post*, a spokesman for the North Vietnamese Foreign Ministry said the charges were "a trick aimed at misleading public opinion and covering up U. S. and South Vietnamese systematic violations of the Paris agreement on Vietnam."

"It is also aimed at pressing the U. S. Congress to increase aid to South Vietnam," the broadcast said.

Thieu exploited the capture of Phuocbinh to the full. He issued a statement praising the "heroes" of Phuoclong and called for three days of national mourning and prayer to "acknowledge the noble sacrifice" of

the defenders. To show how seriously he took the occasion, he ordered closed for this period all night clubs, bars, tea houses, and massage parlors.

No special prodding was needed for Thieu to step up the aid campaign from his side. On January 3 he presented a medal to visiting U. S. Senator Strom Thurmond. The next day as he was leaving, the senator popped up on cue with a fiery denunciation of the North Vietnamese and an appeal for more aid. Their propaganda offensive got another push with a meeting in Saigon on January 8 between Thieu, U. S. Ambassador Graham Martin, and Carlyle E. Maw, the U. S. deputy secretary of state for international security affairs. The U. S. press has also been playing up the military situation in Cambodia as part of the campaign.

At first glance, Ford's prospects for getting his aid proposals through Congress don't seem promising. Senate Democratic leader Mike Mansfield told reporters January 9 that Congress would resist Ford's proposals. "Additional aid means more killing, more fighting," he said. "This has got to stop sometime."

However, Chairman John C. Stennis of the Senate Armed Services Committee said that if "there is real proof" of need for additional aid "then I would take the lead in helping get more money. It doesn't look good over there."

In the past the White House has been very adept at digging up the kind of "real proof" to crumple the token resistance of Congress. Often it hasn't even bothered with that. The January 12 *Washington Post* reported that "for years the executive branch played a shell game with Congress on Indochina money and policy, even many officials privately concede. Fund requests were split into multiple compartments, making it difficult for Congress to add up the costs and the administration used a corps of experts to find legal loopholes in congressional restrictions."

According to figures recently compiled by Representative Les Aspin, the U. S. Congress has now authorized more than \$6 billion in U. S. military and economic aid to Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia since the January 1973 "cease-fire," plus about \$2 billion more spent for U. S. support forces in the area.

"This must be the most expensive cease-fire in the history of man," Aspin said. "It must also be the phoniest."

Just as congressional restrictions haven't had much effect in curbing Washington's ability to fund its puppet in Saigon, regard for legal niceties

in the past hasn't deterred the warmongers in the White House and the Pentagon from their military adventures either. In spite of congressional prohibitions against U. S. combat activities in Vietnam, and in spite of a reassurance by a Pentagon

spokesman that "if the United States was contemplating any military action in South Vietnam it would first consult the Congress," the recent menacing gestures by Washington might be intended to pave the way for new assaults on the Vietnamese people. □

Ford Backs Kissinger's War Threats

Washington Weighs Military Strike in Arab East

By Dick Fidler

"In the backrooms of Washington, alarmed policymakers are calling for a showdown with the oil-producing countries before it is too late," syndicated Washington columnist Jack Anderson wrote January 6.

"They want President Ford to serve notice on the oil potentates that present oil prices are ruining the Western world and, therefore, constitute hostile action. . . ."

"If a peaceful settlement cannot be reached," Anderson added, "they believe military intervention will become inevitable. They don't see how the United States can stand by helplessly while the Western world is plunged into economic and political chaos."

Such warmongering is not confined to the "backrooms" in Washington. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger himself spelled out the U. S. threat of war against the oil-producing countries, in an interview published in the January 13 issue of *Business Week* magazine. Acknowledging that U. S. military intervention would be a "very dangerous course," Kissinger added, "I am not saying that there's no circumstance where we would not use force. . . ."

Kissinger suggested that Washington would consider the use of military force justified "where there's some actual strangulation of the industrialized world."

The secretary of state's remarks were backed by President Ford in an interview published in the January 20 issue of *Time* magazine.

Arab Reaction

Kissinger's threat was immediately criticized by leading West European

allies, worried that a U. S. attack would be met with a retaliatory Arab embargo on much-needed oil supplies. (See *Intercontinental Press*, January 13, p. 5.)

Arab leaders reacted sharply. Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat said in an interview published in the Beirut newspaper *Al Anwar* that Arab countries would blow up their oil wells before allowing them to fall under the control of invading forces from the United States or elsewhere. ". . . it is much easier to blow up oil wells than to carry out an invasion," Sadat warned.

Algerian President Houari Boumediene declared January 6 that "occupation of one Arab state would be regarded as an occupation of the entire Arab world."

The semiofficial Cairo newspaper *Al Ahram* commented editorially that the Arab's use of oil prices as a diplomatic weapon to pressure the imperialists resulted directly from U. S. support of Israel. "If the U. S. is concerned about the continued flow of Arab oil supplies, it need only deal with the cause of the problem without having to move its forces and occupy the oil fields in the Middle East," it said.

Kissinger's new threats brought nothing more than the routine response from the Kremlin, however. Tass, the official news agency, carried a roundup of critical reaction to Kissinger's remarks by the news media in Asia, Africa, and Europe. And *Pravda*, the Communist party daily, charged January 7 that "defenders of monopoly interests" in the West were resorting to "military blackmail" against the Arab oil-producing countries.

But Soviet commentators steered clear of naming Kissinger as the "defender of monopoly interests," and failed to indicate how the Kremlin might respond to U. S. military intervention in the Arab East. Tass lulled its readers with the fatuous remark that "comments abroad on the United States threats show that the times of gunboat diplomacy and intimidation are gone."

To demonstrate its readiness to back up its threats with action, the Pentagon has shifted the training of troops in desert warfare to the Mediterranean area. On January 7, French television viewers watched a news film showing a landing exercise on a beach in Sardinia involving 1,000 marines attached to the U. S. Sixth Fleet.

A significant indication of the hardening U. S. stance is the generally sympathetic response the mass media have accorded an article entitled "Oil: The Issue of American Intervention." The article appeared in the January issue of *Commentary* magazine, which is published by the American Jewish Committee, an influential pro-Zionist organization. Written by Robert W. Tucker, a professor of international relations at Johns Hopkins University, the article is probably the most detailed public argument for U. S. military intervention against the Arab oil producers that has been made to date by an apologist for U. S. imperialism.

Making the Threat 'Credible'

Tucker's article, written before Kissinger's interview was published in *Business Week*, argues that "the alternative of military intervention, or the credible threat of intervention," must

be "given serious consideration by the American government."

The prospect of armed intervention "becomes credible to others," he writes, "when the upper reaches of bureaucracy manifest a receptiveness to employing armed force as one distinctly possible solution, when high officials make this receptiveness known through statements, however guarded, and when the actions otherwise taken by a government do not compromise the legitimacy and prejudice the success or the costs of military intervention, should it ultimately be chosen."

Kissinger's remarks were intended precisely to convey the Ford administration's "receptiveness to employing armed force" against the oil-producing countries. This makes the rest of Tucker's argument all the more interesting for what it may well indicate about thinking in high levels of the Pentagon and State Department.

Tucker is skeptical of all the proposals that have been advanced for meeting the strains of high oil prices through sharing of scarce supplies, coordinated cutbacks in consumption, and "recycling" of the so-called petrodollars. With respect to the latter, he writes that "the proposed solution not only requires a degree of cooperation that has been quite rare among states in the past, but a willingness to take risks that is very nearly unprecedented save in war." Besides, he argues, these are all relatively long-term solutions, requiring several years to reach full effectiveness in lowering world oil prices or "absorbing" the oil producers' revenues into the world financial system.

"... if the present situation goes on unaltered," he writes, "a disaster resembling the 1930's is indeed a distinct possibility and... it would have as its immediate and precipitating cause the present oil price... The oil price must come down if the crisis, with all its latent dangers, is to be overcome, but no one knows how this is to be achieved within the short-to-medium term."

Tucker's demand "that we at least raise the question of employing extraordinary means for resolving the crisis" is concretized in his proposal for a lightning U. S. invasion of an area on the Arab-Persian Gulf extending from Kuwait down along the coastal region of Saudi Arabia to Qatar. "It is this mostly shallow coastal strip less than 400 miles in length that pro-

vides 40 per cent of present OPEC [Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries] production and that has by far the world's largest proven reserves (over 50 per cent of total OPEC reserves and 40 per cent of world reserves). Since it has no substantial centers of population and is without trees, its effective control does not bear even remote comparison with the experience of Vietnam."

Tucker quickly disposes of possible objections of a technical nature to such an operation. "... it would be hard to find a group of states with a weaker collective military capability." And while the invaded countries would doubtless respond by sabotaging wells, pipelines, and refineries, the resulting damage could be quickly repaired; "we would be deprived of oil from the occupied area not for eight or nine months, but for three or four months and possibly less."

Invade the Gulf . . . or Libya?

New York Times military analyst Drew Middleton reported January 10 that "senior American and Western European military officers" he had interviewed thought the seizure of selected Middle East oil fields "militarily feasible" but "many doubted that the area selected by Professor Tucker offered the best conditions for the first and second stages." They tended to favor a target bordering the Mediterranean Sea: "a combined air-sea strike could be launched against Libya with greater hope of surprise than one directed deep into the Persian Gulf area."

Tucker also discounts the negative impact of a probable Arab embargo in reaction to the invasion, noting that "almost all the remaining OPEC countries are revenue consumers [i.e., they depend on their oil revenues for purchases of needed capital goods and consumer goods] and would be hard pressed to undertake an embargo for any appreciable period."

Kissinger echoed such thinking in his *Business Week* interview, when he observed that "countries that need oil revenues for their economic development, like Algeria, Iran, and Venezuela, do not have an unlimited capacity to cut their production. If the production of these countries is cut by any significant percentage, their whole economic development plan will be in severe jeopardy." In other words, the imperialists, on the pretext that they

are being economically "strangled," are prepared to destroy the economies of the semicolonial countries to maintain and strengthen imperialist domination.

Weighing Kremlin Reaction

Business Week asked Kissinger if he worried about Moscow's response to U. S. military action in the Middle East. He replied: "Any President who would resort to military action in the Middle East without worrying what the Soviets would do would have to be reckless. The question is to what extent he would let himself be deterred by it."

Tucker is evidently not deterred by the prospect of Soviet intervention. Soviet naval forces are inadequate for effective "interposition" in the Arab-Persian Gulf, he argues, and in any case, "The Russians simply do not have the interest here that we [the United States] have."

Yet U. S. miscalculation of how the Kremlin perceives its interest in the Arab East placed the world on the brink of a nuclear holocaust in October 1973, when Moscow indicated its readiness to intervene to prevent Israeli forces from annihilating the Egyptian Army III Corps, and Washington responded by placing its worldwide forces on a "precautionary alert."

Will the Pentagon make the same error again? *New York Times* correspondent Drew Middleton reported January 10 that "many military sources considered that the most likely Soviet countermove [in the event of a U. S. invasion of the Middle East] would come in the form of 'volunteers' from the Soviet Air Force flying missions in aircraft of the Arab air forces," rather than in a more direct form of response.

If strategists like Tucker are prepared to minimize the risk of Soviet "counterintervention," they are apparently even less inclined to let the prospect of opposition by Washington's political and military allies to inhibit their plans. In his *Commentary* article, Tucker cynically argues that "it defies belief that the developing nations, like the developed nations, would view with anything but relief, however disguised, a break in the petroleum price structure that followed a successful military intervention in the Persian Gulf. In the manner of Frederick the Great's description of Maria

Theresa on the morrow of the division of Poland ('She wept, yet she took'), developed and undeveloped would deplore the action—though in considerably varying degree—while accepting with alacrity the benefits flowing from it."

Reinforcing U.S. Domination

One reason Washington's allies are reluctant to support a U.S. assault on the oil-producing countries is that they are generally much more dependent on imports from the OPEC states. Tucker uses this as an additional justification for U.S. intervention—in much the same way that Washington argued at the outset of the cold war that all other imperialist countries should subordinate their military objectives to those of U.S. imperialism.

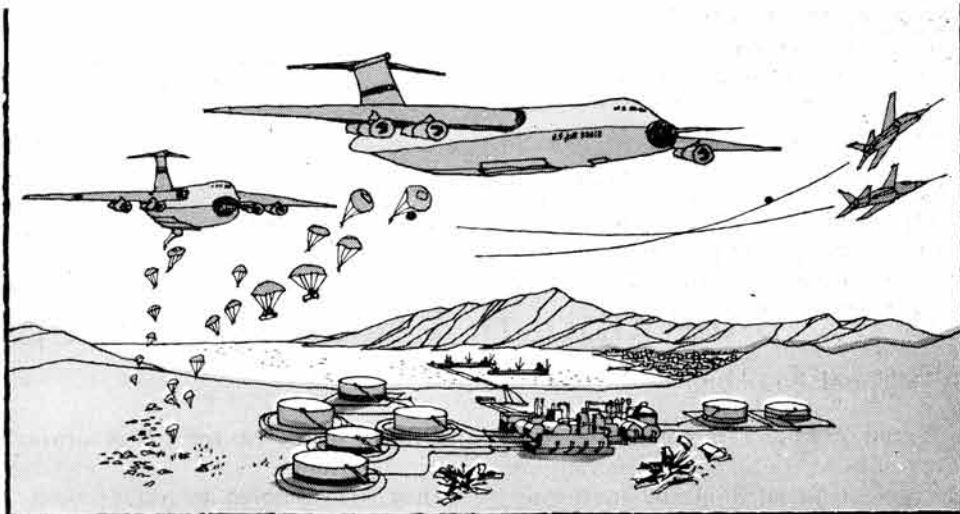
"The argument that today's Europe could deal with the Arabs if not for the interference of the Americans is even less persuasive than the argument that today's Europe could deal on its own with the Russians," he writes. "Indeed, the two arguments are really one, since if the Europeans could in fact deal with the Russians independently of America, then they might well be able to deal with the Arabs. Unfortunately, they can do neither."

Washington is seeking to turn the "oil crisis" against its leading competitors. Kissinger made this clear in his interview with *Business Week*, when he outlined the Ford administration's program to put economic pressure on the oil-exporting countries.

Kissinger described as the "most important" part of that program U.S. plans to "bring in alternative sources of energy as rapidly as possible so that the combination of new discoveries of oil, new oil-producing countries, and new sources of energy create a supply situation in which it will be increasingly difficult for the cartel to operate. We think the beginning of this will occur within two to three years."

But that is precisely why Washington does *not* favor a substantial lowering of the world market price for oil at this time—despite all its clamor to the contrary. Lower oil prices would make it unprofitable to develop the alternative energy sources.

Asked by *Business Week* whether U.S. policy had changed and it was no longer seeking "an immediate and substantial reduction in the price of imported oil," Kissinger hedged: "I



Newsweek

would disagree with the word immediate."

The same hypocrisy runs through the Tucker article in *Commentary*. Arguing for swift military action against the Arab oil producers, the professor states that "the [economic] crisis can be *safely* resolved only if the price [of oil] is drastically reduced." Yet when he later describes the "administered price" that would be established by the U.S. authorities following the successful invasion and occupation of the Arab oil fields, Tucker writes: "Clearly, the oil price would be designed to influence the structure of the world energy market. *It would be absurd and self-defeating to propose a price close to present production costs in the Middle East.* On the other hand, it would not be unreasonable to set a price below projected costs of alternative sources of energy, *though not so much below as to discourage active development of these sources.*" (Emphasis added.)

Such a price would hardly be likely to meet the desires of either Washington's competitor-allies or the semicolonial countries, whether oil exporters or importers. But it would guarantee continued high profits to the oil trusts and reinforce the relative advantage of U.S. corporations, which are less dependent on oil imports.

That is why Kissinger's assertion that the United States would not go to war with countries like Saudi Arabia and Iran over the issue of *oil prices* as such is misleading. What is really involved in Kissinger's threats is not the price question, but Washington's determination to thwart *by any means necessary* the efforts of the semicolonial oil producers to use their

control of petroleum resources to shift the relationship of forces with imperialism to their advantage.

And Public Opinion?

Finally, Tucker discusses a consideration that must weigh very heavily in the thinking of Washington strategists: the reaction of the U.S. public to war on the Arabs. The American people would probably "find in the act [of invasion] a manifestation of complete moral bankruptcy," he writes. But that need not constitute an insuperable obstacle to launching military intervention.

"The difficulty, of course, is that the public has been long habituated to support the use of force only in cases which have been made to appear as necessary for the containment of Communism, in turn equated with the nation's security. Could the public be induced, in the shadow of Vietnam, to support a military intervention that bore no apparent or tangible relation to the containment of Communism, itself a factor of diminishing importance in determining the public's disposition?"

"No one can say," he concludes. But a worsening economic situation could shift public opinion to support of war, he suggests, "particularly if unemployment were to rise to 8 or 9 per cent." And "the existence of an all-volunteer military force would preclude the painful issues once raised by the draft."

Furthermore, potential opposition from "the Left" could be neutralized if the public could be convinced that the oil-producing countries are responsible for the increasing impoverishment of most of the semicolonial coun-

tries, those suffering particularly from the high costs of imported oil.

This cynical reasoning illustrates the

importance of a firm response to the renewed U.S. threats of war against the oil producing countries on the

part of all who defend the right of self-determination of the semicolonial countries. □

Widening Scandal Over CIA Spying

Ford's 'Blue Ribbon' Commission Prepares Cover-Up

By Michael Baumann

President Ford's move to set up a "blue-ribbon panel" to investigate charges of illegal domestic spying by the Central Intelligence Agency is an effort "directed at avoiding anything close to a Watergate," an anonymous White House aide is quoted as saying in the January 6 *Christian Science Monitor*.

Continuing revelations of illegal and clandestine CIA activity, along with disclosures of close links with the spy agency on the part of most panel members, make it clear, however, that the White House is deeply involved in yet another cover-up.

Following revelations in the December 22 *New York Times* that the CIA "conducted a massive, illegal domestic intelligence operation during the Nixon Administration against the anti-war movement and other dissident groups in the United States," and that these spying operations resulted in the CIA's maintaining files on at least 10,000 "dissident" Americans, a number of new disclosures of illegal CIA surveillance have been made public.

Ex-Army Agent Briefed CIA

Ralph Stein, a former Army domestic intelligence agent, told the *New York Times* January 10 that he had given a secret briefing on U.S. radical activity to the CIA in late 1967. Stein, who served as a military counterintelligence agent from 1965 to 1968, said he realized during the briefing that the CIA was already involved extensively in spying inside the United States. The briefing, he said, "convinced me that they (the C.I.A.) had extensive information on domestic personalities and organizations."

The CIA men, he said, "asked a lot of questions that indicated that they had already carefully examined some of the underground publications in question—such as The Berkeley Barb

and S.D.S. (Students for a Democratic Society) manuals.

"They also seemed to have investigated the personalities."

Stein told *New York Times* correspondent Seymour M. Hersh that the CIA agents had asked him a number of questions about student activists "and particularly about the people who were involved with the published media—editors and writers.

"Ramparts came up often," he said.

"The C.I.A. men surprised him," Hersh added, "by suggesting that the magazine, which that year published its disclosure of the C.I.A. agency's financing of student groups, was being financed by foreign agencies."

"This was ridiculous . . .," Stein said. He knew from his own spying, "from my classified files that it was in very poor financial shape" and that it was not receiving outside help.

Domestic Spying Files Kept by Army

Stein's account of Army and CIA domestic spying was buttressed that same day by an Army disclosure that it had "discovered" domestic surveillance files that were supposed to have been destroyed several years ago.

According to a report in the January 11 *Washington Post*, "The Army announced yesterday that it has discovered counterintelligence files on political dissenters that were supposed to have been destroyed under a 1971 Defense Department directive.

"The announcement by Army Secretary Howard H. Callaway indicates that the files on dissenters, contained in some 400 microfilms, are now being destroyed. . . .

"Callaway said the files, which contain the results of military surveillances of American civilians conducted prior to 1971, relate mainly to civil disturbances. A Defense Department spokesman said the civilian spying

by the military was also targeted against draft resistance movements, GI coffeehouses and other anti-Vietnam war activities."

According to the *Washington Post* account, the Army discovered the files "late last month," that is, at the same time the initial CIA revelations broke into the news. "Material had, in fact, been added to the file subsequent to the pledge that the files would be purged, the Army learned."

CIA 'Mail Tapping'

On January 7, former CIA agent Dr. Melvin Crain revealed that when he retired from the agency in 1959, its domestic duties included intercepting and copying mail, with the assistance of the U.S. Post Office.

"According to Dr. Crain's account," reported the January 8 *New York Times*, "the Post Office Department set up areas in post offices in New York and New Orleans, staffed by specially cleared personnel, where sophisticated equipment was used to open, copy and reread letters from Americans about whom the C.I.A. sought information. . . .

"A similar mail surveillance unit was operated by the Washington headquarters of the F.B.I., he added."

According to Crain, the CIA was particularly interested in letters to friends and relatives in the Soviet Union. "One purpose of the surveillance, he said, was to develop contacts with Americans who had acquaintances in Russia.

"This was often a method for recruiting C.I.A. operatives," he said."

Stein said he kept one of the intercepted letters, written in November 1958 by an Amherst College student apparently connected with the student newspaper. The letter, which was opened and copied before being forwarded to Moscow, sought to arrange for a shipment of 1,000 copies of the

college newspaper to the Moscow Committee of Youth Organizations. "We were, in effect, building dossiers on these people," Stein said.

"Officials of the C.I.A. told me they knew it was illegal and unconstitutional but it was needed to achieve our mission," he said. "They told me the Post Office and the F.B.I. were involved."

One well-known U.S. citizen whose mail was regularly read was George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO trade-union federation. According to a report in the January 10 *Washington Post*, a former CIA official "said the mail cover operation was inaugurated because the CIA was not able to get sufficient financial reporting from the American unions that served as conduits for agency funds to European trade unions."

"The CIA became involved in the European labor movement shortly after World War II in collaboration with AFL and CIO officials," the *Post* account continued. "Communist unions and trade union confederations were the principal target of the program. The agency's interests later expanded to Latin America, where the AFL-CIO maintains a program known as the American Institute for Free Labor Development, and Africa."

Agents who directed the CIA program to build up anti-Communist unions in Europe during the 1950s apparently suspected Meany of keeping some of the funds himself. One of the former CIA agents, who was assigned to reading Meany's mail, said, "If you're running a bank and you have doubts about where the money is going, you try to find out."

Meany's performance was apparently within accepted limits for such operations. "There were some unpleasant surprises," the agent who read Meany's mail said, "but on the whole no one was being robbed. Allen Dulles, the late CIA director, always used to say, 'you've got to give them the dough and leave them a certain amount of independence.'"

Arab Students Targeted

Jack Anderson reported in his January 9 nationally syndicated column that in 1969 the Justice Department turned over to the CIA a computerized printout listing "9,000 antiwar agitators, New Leftists and ghetto militants."

"From the 9,000 names," Anderson

said, "the CIA picked out those who had received training or had participated in demonstrations overseas." This information was then relayed back to the Justice Department's "civil disturbance" section for "its guidance in dealing with domestic demonstrations." (The files themselves were re-



tained by the CIA.) As part of the service, Anderson said, "The CIA also identified Arab students in America who had alleged ties with the Palestine Liberation Organization."

Few Americans have been spied upon by the CIA at home, Anderson claimed. "The CIA simply doesn't have the manpower to keep 10,000 Americans under surveillance, said one source."

Other well-informed sources disagree. "The CIA is big, very big," wrote Victor Marchetti and John D. Marks in their 1974 book *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*. "Officially it has authorized manpower of 16,500, and an authorized budget of \$750 million. . . . Yet, regardless of its official size and cost, the agency is far larger and more affluent than these figures indicate. . . ."

"The 16,500 figure does not reflect the tens of thousands who serve under contract (mercenaries, agents, consultants, etc.) or who work for the agency's proprietary [controlled] companies."

In an article published in the January 11 London *Times*, former CIA agent Miles Copeland said that the CIA may actually be spying on as many as 100 million Americans. According to a January 11 Associated

Press dispatch, Copeland "wrote that 'now there is a fuss about a mere 10,000 names.' But he said through computers and exchanges with other agencies, the CIA has access to virtually all U.S. files on private citizens."

"He said this includes the Internal Revenue Service with 78 million names, the Veterans Administration with 15 million, the FBI's fingerprint records with 160 million, and the Secret Service with 150,000."

"Allowing for overlap, and given the looseness with which labels are being applied to various CIA activities these days, it might fairly well be said that the CIA 'investigates' or 'spies on 100 million Americans,' he said."

Ford Sets Guard in Cabbage Patch

In this atmosphere of growing public awareness of CIA lawbreaking, Ford announced January 5 the formation of a blue-ribbon "citizens commission" to investigate the CIA. "All of the people [named to the panel] have been checked," White House press secretary Ron Nessen told reporters January 6. "They would not have been picked if they had any connection with the CIA which would hamper them."

It is a "truly blue ribbon" panel, Republican Senator Hugh Scott said January 5. "These are distinguished men without personal axes to grind—men of great national reputation."

Not everyone agreed. "The 'blue ribbon' commission appointed by President Ford to protect the public against domestic spying by the C.I.A. looks suspiciously like a goat sent to guard a cabbage patch," *New York Times* columnist Tom Wicker wrote January 7. "Having the C.I.A. investigated by such a group is like having the Mafia audited by its own accountants."

First of all, Wicker said, the commission was the "brainchild of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who has been the chairman of the Forty Committee, the high-level body that gives the agency its policy direction and control." Thus Kissinger himself stands to be damaged by further revelations of illegal CIA spying.

Second, "The commission apparently was discussed in advance with those to be investigated: William E. Colby, the C.I.A. director, and Richard Helms, who was director when domestic spying is alleged to have been at its peak."

In fact, wrote *New York Post* columnist James A. Wechsler January 8, Kissinger may have already "given the show away when he remarked after a recent meeting with Ford that he saw 'no reason why Ambassador (and former CIA chief) Helms should not return to his post in Iran.' The statement was tantamount to a preview of CIA whitewash by the Ford commission."

The likelihood of a commission cover-up of CIA spying can also be gauged from the background of its members. Leaving aside its chairman, Vice-President Rockefeller, whose credentials are well known, the other members include:

● *Lyman Lemnitzer*. As head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff when the CIA organized the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba, General Lemnitzer approved plans for the operation. His concern for public access to the truth about secret government policy decisions can be assessed from his statement on Daniel Ellsberg's release of the Pentagon Papers. The release of the papers, he said, was a "traitorous act on the part of an individual who didn't know what he was doing to the security of the United States."

● *Douglas Dillon*. "As Acting Secretary of State," the *New York Times* reported January 6, "Mr. Dillon let his press officers put out a report in 1960 that a C.I.A. U-2 spy plane lost over the Soviet Union was on weather reconnaissance." Dillon was named chairman of the board of trustees of the Rockefeller Foundation in 1971.

● *Erwin Griswold*. As former U.S. solicitor general, Griswold argued in court the White House case defending Army spying on antiwar demonstrators. "What was done, as unwise as it might have been, does not violate a statute or the Constitution," he said. He also argued the government's case against allowing the Pentagon Papers to be published.

● *John T. Connor*. As former president of the Merck pharmaceutical company, Connor collected millions of dollars in drugs and medicine to ransom CIA operatives and others captured in the Bay of Pigs invasion.

● *Lane Kirkland*. An AFL-CIO staff member since 1948, Kirkland served for eight years as executive assistant to George Meany. He has been secretary-treasurer of the trade-union federation since 1969. It is unlikely that he could have served in either capacity

without participating in the secret channeling of CIA funds to anti-Communist unions.

It is clear that the White House was

telling the truth when it said of Ford's panel that "all of the people have been checked." The cover-up of domestic CIA spying has begun in earnest. □

Workers Vote Against Wage Freeze

Danish Election Reflects Polarization

While the rising discontent of Danish workers and the lower middle classes was first expressed in a high maverick vote in the last national elections only thirteen months ago, the January 9 vote showed a trend toward social polarization.

The ruling Liberal party of Premier Poul Hartling increased its popular vote from 12.3% to 23.3% and its seats from 22 to 42. But this gain seemed to reflect primarily a consolidation of the bourgeois party vote. The Conservative party dropped from 16 to 10 seats and the Radical Liberals from 20 to 13, with the demagogic Progress (antitax) party of Mogens Glistrup falling from 28 to 24 seats.

On the other hand, a right-wing break-away from the Social Democratic party (the Center Democrats led by Erhard Jacobsen, who supported the Hartling government), fell from 14 to four seats. The main workers party, the Social Democrats, increased its representation from 46 to 53 seats and gained 4.4% in popular vote for a total of 30%.

There were indications, moreover, that this vote represented a conscious shift to the left and not just a return to major party allegiances. The Venstresocialisten (Left Socialists), who had fallen below the 2% threshold for representation in the last elections, cleared the barrier this time and got the minimum four seats. The old left centrist Socialistisk Folkeparti (People's Socialist party), which has been moving to the right, lost about a fifth of its vote. It dropped from 6% to 4.9% and lost two of the eleven seats it had in the last Folketing. The Communist party gained 0.6% in popular vote for a total of 4.2%, and its representation in parliament rose from six to seven.

No party came close to winning 90 seats, which constitutes a majority in a house of 175 Danish representatives plus two from Greenland and two from the Faroe Islands. There were two rather well defined blocs. The traditional bourgeois parties, joined by the Center Democrats, hold 78 seats against a combined total of 73 for the workers and left parties. Glistrup's antitax party holds 24. Counting the antitaxers, the bourgeois bloc has a comfortable majority of 102. However,

in the context of a polarization this formation may prove unstable.

In any case, it is clear that Hartling cannot claim to have won a mandate for his austerity and wage-freeze policy.

"There is a widespread belief that this small and rich country of five million now faces a period of new economic troubles, perhaps including a rare outburst of strikes," *New York Times* correspondent Alvin Shuster wrote from Copenhagen January 10. He noted: "Trade-union leaders have made it clear that if he [Hartling] pushes through the [wage] freeze, over the objections of the Social Democrats, they will not hesitate to stop work in protest."

As the pressure of the class struggle increases, the Social Democratic leaders are proposing new and more radical-sounding class-collaborationist schemes, such as one by which the workers would gradually acquire 50% of the stock in the companies they work for. However, the further economic decline that seems to lie ahead will tend to increase the trend toward class polarization and may impel masses of workers into actions that the Social Democrats and their "left" understudies, the Stalinists, will find it difficult to contain in a class-collaborationist framework.

What lies ahead immediately, probably, is a sharp conflict between the two parliamentary blocs, both of which claim to have won the elections. Since Hartling did not resign when he called the elections, he remains the premier. But most observers were dubious about his government's chances for survival. "Hartling will have to come to terms with the Social Democrats somehow," a "diplomat" told Shuster. "If he doesn't, he is out." □

Israel Steps Up Attacks on Lebanon

Lebanon reported at the United Nations January 6 that Israel had committed 423 acts of aggression during the last four weeks. The list included forty-four overflights, ten incursions by Israeli warships, 347 artillery shellings, fourteen incidents in which Israeli troops fired across the border with machine guns, and eight raids by Israeli soldiers.

The Present Recession and Rising Worker Militancy

By Ernest Mandel

[The following article appeared in the November 1974 issue of *Le Monde Diplomatique*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Two general characteristics mark the history of capitalist crises of over-production. First, these crises have occurred in a regular and periodic way ever since modern capitalist industry conquered the world market. Second, for each crisis the ideologues and apologists for capitalism have tried to present a specific explanation that would make it an exceptional phenomenon unconnected with the nature of capitalism itself.

Logically, the reoccurrence of these crises over the last 150 years would seem to exclude their being explained by unique phenomena, particular to each crisis, although the influence of these specific phenomena should not be denied. Apologies for the capitalist system correspond not to the demands of logic but to those of material interests. This is why the "ideologues" have once again found a specific reason for the decline in economic activity that characterizes the present situation in nearly all the imperialist countries. It is said to be the result of the increase in the price of oil, if not of the political blackmail of the "oil sheikhs."

However, the recession had begun in the United States and in the Federal Republic of Germany (and was around the corner in Japan) before the October war. Moreover, the "deflationary" effect of currency hoarding by the exporting countries (the only actual "withdrawal" of financial resources from the international capitalist economy) is absurd in relation to the volume of world commerce, not to mention the volume of the gross national product of the imperialist countries as a whole.

But if there is a myth that, since the time of the "Keynesian revolution," has refused to die, it is that the capitalist economy (or the capitalist economy rechristened "mixed economy")

has finally learned how to avoid economic fluctuations, guarantee full employment, and resolve all its internal contradictions. To confess to failure in the matter is not easy, nor is it without social and political consequences. This is why it is easier to make the Arabs the scapegoat.

If it is true that this recession is different from those that have preceded it, it is not because it was made worse by the "oil war" but because it will be the first general economic recession since the second world war: It will hit all the imperialist countries as a whole. For this reason, it will be more serious than any other recession since 1938; one can already predict some fifteen million unemployed in the OECD [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development] countries during the winter of 1974-75.

Another characteristic of the recession now under way is that it clearly marks the end of the "long boom" following the second world war or, to be more precise, the end of a long period of accelerated growth that dominated the international capitalist economy from 1948 to 1968 (the economy of the United States from 1940 to 1968).

In academic economic theory, conjunctural "long waves" are referred to as "Kondratiev cycles." Kondratiev, a Russian economist of some talent and a former minister under Kerensky, was director of the Moscow Business Research Institute under the Soviet regime until Stalin had him liquidated. In two famous articles he tried to explain the existence of "long waves" in the history of capitalism. Joseph Schumpeter took up this explanation in broad outline and incorporated it into his fundamental work, *Business Cycles*.

The Marxist (more precisely pseudo-Marxist) tradition has remained rather silent about the theory that there are "long waves" in the history of capitalism. Paradoxically, however, this theory is of Marxist origin. It was elaborated by the Russian

Marxist Parvus, at that time a friend of Trotsky's; by the Dutch Marxist van Gelderen; then by Trotsky himself in his report on the world situation at the third congress of the Communist International.

In essence, what distinguishes the Marxist theory of "long waves" from Kondratiev's theory is that the former is less mechanical. While Kondratiev explained the succession of "long waves of expansion" and "long waves of stagnation" by purely economic factors inherent in the capitalist mechanism, Marxists view external factors (such as wars, revolutions, inventions and discoveries, the outcome of decisive phases of the class struggle, and so forth) as playing an important role.

For Kondratiev, a rigid periodicity governs the succession of "long waves," which, for that reason, he calls "long cycles." For Marxists, there is no such rigidity, given the important role of external, not purely economic factors in the succession of "long waves."

The Marxist theory of "long waves" not only enabled us to predict in the mid-1960s the coming end of the period of rapid postwar expansion and the beginning of a new long period of worsening crisis for the capitalist system (which was ushered in more by May 1968 than by the 1966-67 recession in Germany or the 1967-68 recession in the United States). It has also enabled us to work out a more precise explanation of the succession of twenty- to twenty-five-year periods of accelerated growth and twenty- to twenty-five-year periods of slower growth in the history of capitalism:

- 1847-1873: accelerated growth
- 1873-1893: slower growth
- 1893-1913: accelerated growth
- 1913-1940: slower growth
- 1940(1948)-1968: accelerated growth
- since the end of the 1960s: slower growth

For Marx, it is the period of renewal

of fixed capital that serves as the determining factor for the length of the normal economic cycle (a cycle of seven to ten years, which has a tendency to become shortened to a five-year cycle in the epoch of "late" capitalism). However, two forms of renewal of fixed capital must be distinguished: that which is limited to reproducing and perfecting machinery within the framework of a given technology; and that which implies a complete and revolutionary renewal of the technology as a whole.

We put forward the thesis that while the normal cycle permits raising the capital necessary for the normal renewal of fixed capital, a long period of slower growth is required for assembling the capital necessary for a full and revolutionary renewal of the entire technology.

Each of the "long waves of expansion" has thus occurred under the aegis of a technological revolution. The "wave" of 1847-73 saw the steam-driven machine replaced by the steam engine. The "wave" of 1893-1913 saw the electric engine and the internal-combustion engine replace the steam engine. And the wave of 1940(1948)-1968 saw electronics and nuclear energy gradually replace the machinery developed from the classical electric-powered engine.

Each "long wave of expansion" in which new technology is introduced in a massive way (and in which it is necessary, among other things, to construct and finance the installations that will begin to mass produce the new machinery) is followed by a "long wave of slower growth," a period limited to perfecting and spreading the new technology.

Each "long wave" undergoes the classic cycles, that is, the successive phases of cyclical ups and downs. But in "long waves of expansion" the upswings last longer and growth is more rapid, whereas in "long waves of slower growth" the crises last longer and run deeper.

The "long waves" do not, however, follow one another automatically. To account for this fact, an intermediary link must be introduced into the explanation.

To do that it is necessary to examine which factors determine the long-term fluctuations in the rate of profit. In

point of fact, for a mass of new discoveries or inventions to produce a technological revolution, it is not sufficient that they merely be registered with the patent office. It is also necessary for capital to have an interest in introducing them into production in a massive way. This presupposes a high rate of profit and an expanding market. The concurrence of these two factors every twenty years is in no way "automatic." External factors are required to get things moving.

Thus in the period following the 1913-39 "long wave of slower growth," a period in which many of the discoveries put into practical application after the second world war were actually made, a radical change in the rate of profit, owing to historic defeats of the international proletariat (fascism) and the second world war, was required to make possible a third technological revolution.

Take the example of the Federal Republic of Germany: In relation to the same work force, the capitalists' profits at the beginning of the 1950s were *three times higher* than they were in the best years of the Weimar Republic and equivalent to what they were under Hitler in 1938.

But the long period of accelerated growth (1940-68 in the United States, 1948-68 in capitalist Europe and Japan) has precipitated a long-term decline in the rate of profit in two ways. It has brought about a large increase in the organic composition of capital (the relation between expenditures for machinery, buildings, and raw materials on the one hand, and outlays for wages on the other) in industry, agriculture, and transport. This enabled workers to take advantage of a long period of reduced unemployment to halt the steady increase in the rate of exploitation (rate of surplus value) that they were subjected to in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s.

Thus the present recession is characterized by the threefold signs of excess productive capacity in an entire series of sectors that "carried" the "long boom" (autos, construction, household electrical appliances, electronics); a reduced rate of profit and a decline in the rate of self-financing (the corporate liquidity crisis); the inability of capitalist governments to impose, imme-

diately or in the short term, a new era of "austerity" on wage workers without first inflicting a serious defeat on the working class. *It is the fact that the recession coincides with an exceptionally high level of militancy in the Western working class that makes the present crisis much more serious for capitalism than the crisis of 1929, even though this one is much more moderate on a purely economic level.*

Since the second world war, inflation has been "integrated" into the international monetary system by the fixed-exchange system based on the dollar backed by gold and by the permanent inflation of the dollar. It has been the main instrument used by capitalism to "moderate" the effects of its internal contradictions. There have been, as in the past, periodic economic recessions. But they have been less serious and shorter than those of the past, on account of inflation.

The inflation of paper money (of corporate credit) has made it possible to limit the effects of the lowering of the rate of profit on investments. The inflation of consumer credit (and particularly of mortgages and installment purchases) has made it possible to limit the effects of the contradiction between the growth in productive capacity and the much slower growth of the purchasing power of the masses.

In the United States, the total of mortgage debt went from \$23 billion in 1946 to \$212.9 billion in 1965 to \$660 billion at the end of June 1974. Corporate debt rose from \$121 billion in 1946 to \$567 billion in 1965 to more than \$1 trillion at the end of June 1974. As a proportion of the gross national product, private debt taken as a whole has more than doubled since the end of the second world war.

This carousel could not continue to spin forever. It ended up first sinking the international monetary system, a development that was not difficult to foresee. It then led to increasingly heavy debt service for corporations, which transformed inflation from a motor into a brake on the most costly and the most durable investments. In the end it led to a situation in which increasing doses of inflation were necessary to avoid serious

recessions: Inflation was condemned to a perpetual boom. That is how we went from expansion stimulated by inflation to first *stagflation* and then *slumpflation*.

It is neither new nor surprising that bottlenecks and situations of specific shortages coincide with a generalized recession (in which U. S. industry works at no more than 80 percent of its capacity). Recession (a crisis of moderate overproduction) is precisely the capitalist mechanism by which massive amounts of capital are withdrawn from sectors suffering from ex-

cess productive capacity (such as automobiles) to be poured into sectors in which production has not kept up with the long-term curve of demand (such as energy).

But the question of whether or not these transfers will be carried out at the cost of massive unemployment and the imposition of "austerity" on wage workers is in no way resolved in advance like the givens of an algebraic theorem. It will be the focus of intense class struggles that will mark the months and years to come in all the imperialist countries. □

As Reports of Torture Continue

Pinochet Frees Two Top Allende Officials

By Judy White

Two cabinet ministers in the Allende government were released from prison by the Pinochet junta and flown into exile in Rumania January 11. They are former Foreign Minister Clodomiro Almeyda Medina and former Minister of Justice Jorge Tapia. Three unnamed lower officials were also exiled with them. Charges against all five—"of importing weapons for a civil war" while they were government functionaries—were dropped.

In addition, the junta has repeated an earlier proposal to free 200 political prisoners provided Mexico agrees to grant them asylum, and to give safe-conducts to 260 refugees currently in foreign embassies.

The Mexican government said it would accept the refugees "in principle" but demanded time to study the names first.

Included on the list of prisoners to be freed is Laura Allende, sister of former Chilean President Salvador Allende. Laura Allende, who is sixty-three years old and suffers from cancer, was arrested in Santiago November 2. Since then, her case has been the focus of a vigorous international campaign.

The December 22-23 *Le Monde* reported that 424 French parliamentarians had submitted a petition in her behalf to the Chilean ambassador in Paris. Among its signers were Edgar Faure, president of the French Assembly, and Alain Poher, president

of the French Senate, along with all Communist and Socialist members of the legislature.

Simone de Beauvoir and thirteen other prominent French women submitted an identical petition.

The announcement of plans to release the 200 political prisoners is the second such step in an effort by the Pinochet junta to improve its image. On November 11, names of 100 political prisoners were turned over to various international agencies that were to seek places of asylum for them.

Among those released under these conditions was Chilean Trotskyist leader Luis Vitale. Manuel Cabieses, director of *Punto Final*, the official organ of the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (Movement of the Revolutionary Left) before the September 1973 coup, has been promised asylum in Cuba.

However, it is well known that thousands of political opponents of the junta are still imprisoned, and Pinochet's public-relations efforts have not been able to silence reports of the torture they are suffering.

On December 6 the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights submitted a 175-page report to the Organization of American States detailing some of the violations of human rights in Chile. The document contained the results of a twelve-day investigation made by a commission

team last summer. Among the team members was Robert F. Woodward, former U. S. ambassador to Chile and former assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs.

The commission's report described 576 torture cases, including the following, cited in the December 10 *New York Times*:

● "No. 5 at El Buen Pastor detention center—Arrested in September, 1973, and accused of having acted as a spy. Said she had not taken part in any political activity. Was tortured an entire night with beatings and electric shocks in the Chilean Air Force headquarters."

● "No. 2 at Capuchinois detention center, Santiago—says that he was beaten so severely during interrogation that he suffered complete paralysis of his left side. No specific charge has been brought against him."

● "No. 9 at Santiago public jail—suffered fracture of left rib, his coccyx and left arm. No political affiliation."

● "No. 13, arrested late in July, 1974, and beaten. His left ear is visibly injured and there are blood stains on his clothing."

The commission listed six centers of "psychological and physical torture" that they had been refused permission to visit: 38 Londres Street in Santiago, the Air Force War Academy in Santiago, a section of the Santiago Military Hospital, the Central Bureau of Investigations in Santiago, Tejas Verdes, and the navy ship *Esmeralda*.

When confronted with this evidence of torture and repression, the White House continued to defend its aid to the junta. In contrast with the campaign Washington carried out to "destabilize" and economically strangle the Allende regime, a high State Department official told the U. S. Senate December 13 that the Ford administration was opposed to cutting off aid to the junta. Human rights violations, he said, "are more effectively dealt with by means other than absolute sanctions." □

Spain's Largest Plant Shut Down Indefinitely

Spain's largest industrial plant, the SEAT Automobile Works, closed its Barcelona factories indefinitely January 8. The reason given was the months of political strikes by the plant's 30,000 workers. The strikes were fought over wages, working conditions, and trade-union democracy.

Rahman Bans Strikes, Assumes Dictatorial Powers

By Ernest Harsch

The regime of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman assumed dictatorial powers January 3 when it released a twenty-nine-page set of rules giving it the power to impose press censorship, intercept mail, ban political parties, and deport foreigners. According to the government announcement, violation of the new rules could result in prison terms ranging from three years to life, or deportation for life.

A January 3 Reuters dispatch from Dacca reported, "It has been observed here that if the Government were to use all the powers it now has, it would mean martial law by civilians."

The assumption of dictatorial power followed a December 28 declaration of an indefinite state of emergency, after which troops and paramilitary forces moved into strategic positions in cities and towns throughout Bangladesh. One of the first victims of the state of emergency was Siraj Sikder, the head of the East Bengal Proletariat party, who was arrested January 1. The police said that he was shot to death the next day "during an escape attempt."

Under the state of emergency, all political activities have been suspended, strikes banned, and democratic rights curtailed. The proclamation gave the regime the power to ban or seize newspapers, arrest persons involved in "prejudicial activities," and "make such rules as it deems necessary to combat subversion."

A government spokesman said that the state of emergency was directed against "anti-state elements who had killed a number of Parliament members, sabotaged industrial complexes and destroyed our jute." The regime also said that Bangladesh's "security and economic life have been threatened by internal disturbances" and claimed that "some collaborators of the Pakistan army . . . extremists and enemy agents, on the payroll of foreign powers," were involved in the "subversive activities."

These new measures are an extension of the repression maintained by the Awami League since it came to power in December 1971, when Ban-



RAHMAN: Regime will make any rules "necessary to combat subversion."

gladesh won its independence from Pakistan. Thousands of political opponents were murdered by the Awami League goon squads, the military, and the various police forces. Thousands more have been arrested and held without trial in the country's jails and detention camps (see *Intercontinental Press*, December 9, 1974, p. 1642).

The new government crackdown came as the mass unrest caused by the famine and the country's economic crisis continued. The regime has admitted that 30,000 persons have starved to death so far; some sources put the figure as high as 100,000. Social tensions in the countryside were heightened as many small farmers were forced to sell their land for food. The thousands of refugees who streamed into Dacca and other cities and towns added to the political explosiveness in the urban areas.

An October 13 demonstration of 75,000 persons in Dacca called by the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal¹ was followed on November 26 by a JSD-

1. JSD—National Socialist party, the largest opposition party in Bangladesh.

sponsored *hartal*² throughout the country. The Jatiya Rakkhi Bahini (National Defense Forces) were deployed in the cities, and a number of JSD leaders and members were arrested, including acting JSD General Secretary Shahjahan Siraj. The *hartal* was supported by the seven opposition members of parliament and by the United People's party (UPP).

Additional actions were also planned. At a November 24 rally in Dacca, the UPP called for a countryside mass protest on January 5. The demands for the action included the release of all political prisoners, the repeal of repressive legislation, the disbanding of the Jatiya Rakkhi Bahini and the private goon squads, the right to strike and to organize unions, the end to press censorship, and emergency measures to aid the famine victims.

At a December 18 conference, which drew representatives from more than 600 trade unions throughout the country, the five opposition labor federations³ formed the National Labour Action Committee (NLAC)⁴ and called for labor actions on January 18 and 19. A declaration passed at the conference, the text of which was published in the December 24 issue of the Dacca weekly *Holiday*, stated:

"The ruling coterie, which claims the sole agency for democracy, has snatched away the internationally recognised fundamental rights of the workers to strike and bargain. As a result, the workers of Bangladesh do not have any legal means to protest against the sufferings, injustices and repressions to which they are continuously being subjected. . . .

2. A protest action that includes strikes by workers and the closure of shops and markets.

3. The labor federations were the Jatiya Sramik Federation, Jatiya Sramik League (Opposition), Bangla Mazdoor Federation, Bangla Sramik Federation, and Sangjukta Sramik Federation.

4. Jatiya Sramik Sangram Committee.

"The country is groaning under an unprecedented famine created by the limitless corruption, inefficiency and ill-planning of the ruling coterie. Thousands of people are dying daily from starvation and epidemics; their figure is increasing at a geometrical rate. Inequalities are widening. Inflation is galloping. In one word, the country is passing through economic

anarchy."

The demands put forward by the NLAC included the ouster of the Awami League regime, a higher minimum wage, the right of all workers to participate in trade-union activities, the release of all imprisoned labor and political activists, and free education, medical care, and housing for workers and their children. □

As Inflation, Layoffs Mount in India

Jute and Coal Workers Demand Higher Pay

By Sharad Jhaveri

Jamnagar

More than 2.5 lakh¹ jute workers are set for an indefinite strike if their demands are not met. They are calling for a 20 percent bonus, implementation of a corrected cost-of-living index, regularization of casual workers, fair-price shops, a price of at least 100 rupees per maund [82 pounds] of jute to the growers, and better facilities for the workers. They are also demanding repeal of the wage-freeze act and nationalization of the jute industry.

Four thousand bargemen working on more than 1,000 boats have already halted the export of jute from Calcutta by a wildcat strike.

Seven central trade unions represent jute workers. The CITU²-affiliated Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor union has the biggest following.

Initially the strike call was issued by INTUC,³ AITUC,⁴ and the pro-Congress section of HMS⁵ to begin January 6. Considering a separate call unnecessary, five other trade

1. One lakh equals 100,000 units.

2. Centre of Indian Trade Unions, an all-India trade-union federation dominated by the Communist party of India (Marxist).

3. Indian National Trade Union Congress, a federation dominated by Gandhi's Congress party.

4. All-India Trade Union Congress, a federation headed by CPI leader S. A. Dange.

5. Hind Mazdoor Sabha, an all-India federation dominated by the Praja Socialist party.

unions—CITU, UTUC,⁶ TUCC, UTUC (Lenin Sarani), and HMS—have decided to make a joint front with INTUC and AITUC. All seven trade-union federations have now issued a joint statement calling on jute workers to prepare for the strike.

More than half a million miners have also announced their intention to go on an indefinite strike, beginning December 16, if their demands for higher wages are not met.

Coal miners are among the most wretched sections of the Indian working class. The accident rate in Indian coal mines is one of the highest in the world. Occupational diseases, such as tuberculosis, are a serious threat.

Despite the nationalization of the coal industry in 1973 and some subsequent improvements, contract labor still prevails. The contractor gets a minimum of eight rupees [about US\$1] per worker per day from the company and pays at most five rupees a day to the workers. The number of casual workers and their rate of turnover are reported to be on the increase.

The bipartite negotiating committee agreed on a minimum basic wage of 325 rupees a month, as compared to the present 130 rupees. There was also agreement on some increase in the allowances for underground work and house rent. The agreement said nothing, however, about working conditions. The government is unwilling to accept the settlement negotiated by its own representatives.

AITUC and INTUC unilaterally

6. United Trade Union Congress.

staged a one-day strike October 7 without obtaining any response from the government.

A miners' strike at this moment would have serious repercussions for the badly shaken capitalist economy, given the power shortage and the "energy crisis." A lead article in the October 12 *Times of India* voiced the concern of the Indian bourgeoisie when it said: "The last thing the country can afford at the present time is a stoppage of work by coal miners which will be as disruptive of the economy as a rail strike."

In the textile industry, the plight of the workers is worsening day by day. In Ahmedabad, where this oldest sector of the industrial economy is concentrated, the twin problems of antiquated mills and the closing of the third shift (along with the shutdown of machines on other shifts) have affected the lives of thousands of textile workers. About 20,000 workers have already been hit by such closures.

In Uttar Pradesh, more than 94,780 textile workers were laid off for different periods between January and August of 1974. S.M. Banerjee, a Communist party of India member of parliament, has warned the government of a countrywide textile strike if these laid-off workers are not paid compensation.

The government has already begun to take over some of the economically threatened mills, paying huge compensation to the owners but refusing to pay the workers the provident-fund dues owed by the millowners. Unfortunately, the major left parties have not taken up the plight of textile workers.

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The Prospects for Unlimited Abundance Under Scientific Planning of Socialism

By Ernest Harsch

[Last of a series.]

Humanity today has the capacity to end hunger many times over. In antiquity, when food gathering and hunting were the prime means of survival, starvation was, of course, endemic. Even after the shift to agricultural cultivation and stock raising, the productive forces were insufficient to banish the ever-present threat of famine. In contrast, the scientific methods of intensive farming now employed have made it possible to produce more food than the entire human race can consume and have laid the basis for even greater advances in agricultural productivity.

This tremendous potential, however, has been stunted by the limitations of the capitalist system. Although capitalism, in its infancy, gave a boost to industrial development, it has long since shed its progressive features and has now become the chief obstacle to further economic advancement. The present world food crisis highlights, like nothing else could, the capitalists' inability to plan production. What more telling indication of capitalism's archaic nature than the fact that it can't even feed its workers?

Since the capitalist system still reigns over most of the world and the productive forces are linked on an international scale, the threat of famine has also reached global proportions. Clearly, the steps required to rid humanity of such economic anarchy and to reverse the present famine danger will have to be of a similar scope.

The Need for Global Planning

In *The Hungry Future*, French agronomist René Dumont noted the necessity to develop new forms of organization beyond that of the nation-state: "Because economic interdependence has become world-wide (although we are still divided by the barriers of a bygone age) we know that someday we must establish correspon-

dingly universal forms of social organization, and introduce general arbitration and collective responsibility for the whole world. The nations of the twentieth century are reminiscent of the French provinces of the eighteenth century, before national integration. At that time some areas were allowed to suffer from serious want in spite of food gluts in other areas."

Dumont thinks that "universal forms of social organization" can be established within the framework of the capitalist system. But real cooperative social organization on a world scale can only emerge after socialist revolutions in all the capitalist countries break down the national barriers and economic restrictions erected by the bourgeoisies. The capitalists, landlords, rural moneylenders, and rich peasants will have to be expropriated, and the banks and key industries—including the giant agribusiness trusts in the United States—will have to be taken over. Immediate land reform will have to be carried through in the underdeveloped countries to end the centuries-long agricultural stagnation imposed by the big landowners.

In *America's Road to Socialism*,¹⁹ James P. Cannon, a founder of American Trotskyism, indicated how this social transformation would eventually affect agricultural production. "In time," he wrote, "the historical anachronism of isolated, privately operated small farms will be preserved only here and there as relics of a backward age. Agriculture will be developed just as all other industry has developed, on the factory system with modern labor-saving machinery, with the scientific methods of soil culture, fertilizing, and so on. The aim will be to produce the greatest amount of food with the minimum of labor. The people, including the present farmers

19. James P. Cannon, *America's Road to Socialism* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1975), pp. 82-3.

and agricultural workers, will get the benefit of it in the form of a higher standard of living, less hours of labor, and more leisure for living, for culture, and just to fool around and have a little fun."

With the control of agriculture taken out of the hands of the profiteers and traders and turned over to the agricultural workers, agronomists, soil experts, seed specialists, chemists, and biologists, agricultural productivity will make tremendous leaps. By eliminating the waste of economic competition, useless advertising, and the enormous expenditures for armaments, more than enough capital will be available to launch this new agrarian revolution.

With the end of economic anarchy, the producers of the world can begin to cooperate for the first time, plan how best to fulfill their ambitious goals, and institute rational divisions of labor. In the area of food production, they might set up a world council of agronomists and other experts to discuss and decide how to rid the world of hunger and ensure that everyone has a sufficient and healthy diet.

The economic plans of the various workers states will eventually have to be combined into one. Such a step will require the overthrow of the bureaucratic castes in the present workers states and the introduction of proletarian democracy in those countries.²⁰

With such scientific and rational planning on a world scale, the elimination of famine and hunger will be a relatively simple matter.

Turning Back the Famine Danger

Even before the development of such

20. Bureaucratic mismanagement by the Stalinists in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China has hampered agricultural production in the workers states for decades.

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long-range global planning, there will undoubtedly be general agreement on the immediate tasks necessary to quickly end famine in the worst stricken countries of the underdeveloped world.

Having seized the granaries and stockpiles of the food profiteers, hoarders, and agribusiness interests, it will be possible to send massive emergency food relief to such countries as India, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Chad, and the dozens of other countries now ravaged by widespread starvation. Supervisory committees could be elected by the workers and peasants in the famine areas to oversee the distribution of this relief aid.

Also of prime importance will be the immediate elimination of the most acute forms of hunger. Kwashiorkor, which today affects millions of children in Africa and Asia, can be quickly cured with the introduction of adequate protein diets. Emergency supplies of enriched foods and vitamin supplements will have to be sent to Asia to prevent the further spread of blindness in children caused by vitamin A deficiencies. Since children, as a rule, are the most vulnerable to malnutrition, it will be necessary to set up special child feeding facilities throughout the underdeveloped world and to launch a crash program to train many more nutritionists for that purpose.

In fact, the upgrading of everyone's diet will be within close reach. Today, most of the populations of the underdeveloped countries get about 80 percent of their protein from grains and vegetables, which generally lack one or more of the essential amino acids that make up balanced protein.²¹ To increase the quality of their protein diets, it will be necessary to provide more meat, fish, and dairy products, manufacture more protein-rich soybean concentrates as food additives, and even fortify the traditional food grains with synthetic protein and vitamins.

21. The human body requires twenty essential amino acids to remain healthy. It produces twelve of these itself, but needs to take in the other eight through food. With the exception of soybeans and other oilseeds, most plants lack some of these amino acids, greatly reducing their protein value. Meat, fish, and dairy products have the most balanced proteins of all natural foods.

These initial measures, however, will be insufficient to totally banish the hunger threat. It will be necessary to take precautions against bad harvests, both in particular regions and on a global scale. Even the highly productive and industrialized agriculture of the United States is vulnerable to unfavorable weather conditions. In the underdeveloped world, at least for a few years, the need for favorable weather to produce high yields will remain critical, especially in those countries that depend on the monsoon rains to assure harvests.

The only short-term safeguard against the vagaries of nature would be the establishment of a worldwide system of food reserves large enough to tide everyone through the worst possible weather conditions or natural catastrophes. China, for example, has already set up a modest reserve system, holding 40 million tons of grain in central stocks and another 40 million tons in local granaries. Such a system on a world scale would also require an adequate distribution network to ensure that the food stocks could reach the affected areas quickly.

A World Without Hunger

With the removal of all economic restrictions on agriculture, the systematic application to the rest of the world of those scientific methods of food production now used in the United States can soon raise world crop yields many times over.

Since land will no longer be kept idle to raise crop prices, the simple step of increasing the amount of land under cultivation can be taken. In 1967, President Johnson's Science Advisory Committee estimated that the world's potentially arable land is 7.9 billion acres, or more than three times the area now harvested in any given year. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization estimated that the most promising unused lands are in the Amazon River basin of northeast Brazil; the savannahs of Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, and Brazil; a band of 1.7 billion acres across central Africa; and areas of Malaysia, Thailand, Burma, Indonesia, and the fertile Mekong River basin.

The construction of vast irrigation projects can further increase the effectiveness of this unused arable land, as well as the unirrigated land pres-

ently cultivated. Colin Clark wrote in his book *Starvation or Plenty?* (New York: Taplinger Publishing Company, 1970) that the productive value of irrigated land was about one and a half times that of standard land.

The August 25, 1974, *New York Times* carried a description of one ambitious irrigation project developed by the Ralph M. Parsons Company in the United States, which, if built, could water 40 million acres and as a by-product generate 70 million more kilowatts of power than would be needed for its own operation. "One of the most grandiose schemes advanced," the *Times* wrote, "is a vast engineering proposal, known generally as the Parsons plan, that would take excess water from great rivers of the northwestern corner of North America, impound it in a Rocky Mountain trench reservoir, pump it from there into another reservoir in central Idaho and then let it flow by gravity through the Western states and down to Mexico." This plan, however, is now considered too "costly."

If necessary, the amount of arable land in the world can be extended. Asphalt barriers placed two feet below the surface can increase the productivity of sand 60 to 80 percent. The frozen tundras of Siberia and northern Canada could be artificially heated. It may even be possible to breed plants that can be irrigated with salt water or can be grown in deserts.

To further increase the productivity of the land in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, it will be necessary, in addition to better irrigation, to supply those areas with millions of tons of fertilizer and to systematically introduce more of the high-yielding hybrid strains of wheat and rice that were first used in some areas during the "green revolution" of the mid-1960s. Since then, new hybrids of barley, sorghum, and maize have also been developed, as well as triticale, a hybrid of wheat and rye that surpasses wheat in total protein content. The extension of multicropping—the growth of two or more different crops on the same land—can also increase productivity considerably.

An article in the November 11, 1974, issue of *Time* magazine tried to estimate the costs of some of these measures to increase world food production, undoubtedly in an effort to prove that they were too costly or impossible. To irrigate 57 million ex-

tra acres, *Time* wrote, would cost \$3.5 billion for the next eleven years. Expanded fertilizer production to meet present commercial demands would cost \$8 billion a year until 1980 and \$12 billion after that. A 10 percent increase in the world's arable land, it is estimated, would cost \$400 billion to \$1 trillion.

Yet such figures are less staggering than *Time* would have them appear. The annual military budget of the United States alone—about \$100 billion—could cover much of the cost, not to mention the present outlays for armaments elsewhere in the world. Add to that the hundreds of billions of dollars now lost during the economic crises and depressions of the capitalist system, and the costs for increasing agricultural production appear to be relatively small indeed.

Under a planned socialist economy, however, the price tag for ending famine and hunger will only be a minor consideration. The real needs of the hundreds of millions now facing starvation, whatever the cost, will come first.

Ending 'Underdevelopment'

With the overthrow of the imperialist interests, those countries now condemned to "underdevelopment" can begin the process of industrialization and economic growth. The advanced industrial countries will bear a special responsibility to provide whatever aid is necessary to speed that process.

The industrialization of the underdeveloped countries will have to be carefully coordinated within the framework of an international division of labor. With the resources of each part of the world available to the entire human race, it would be unnecessary and wasteful to try to duplicate the diversified industrialization of the economically advanced countries in each underdeveloped area. It would be far more efficient to concentrate particular industries in the areas that are best suited to the manufacture of those products.

For example, Malaysia, which is now the world's leading producer of tin, could further modernize its tin mining and smelting industries. Cuba could mechanize its sugar production and Sri Lanka its tea cultivation. Angola, with its extensive deposits of iron, copper, manganese, phosphate, and petroleum and its large hydro-

electric power potential, could become a major producer of industrial goods. Those industries in the advanced countries that could be run more cheaply in other parts of the world could be relocated. Rather than building petroleum refineries in Europe and Japan, for instance, it would be more practical to locate them near the oil fields. The fruits of such a division of labor would then be distributed internationally, with the developing areas receiving as many industrial goods as they need.

The mechanization of agriculture in the underdeveloped regions will be a priority. In the initial stages, aid from the industrialized countries could include the transfer of capital and skilled technicians to the underdeveloped countries. Agricultural research centers could be set up to study the best ways of increasing farm productivity in the particular regions and to develop grain hybrids suited to local conditions. Special schools could be built to train local scientists and administrators in the most advanced techniques of food production.

In countries like the United States, the automobile factories—after the construction of more efficient rapid transit systems—could be easily converted to the production of tractors and other farm machinery, which could then be sent directly to the fields of Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

Today, North America, Europe, and Japan are the major suppliers of chemical fertilizer. It might be cheaper to construct fertilizer production facilities in countries like Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Pakistan, and Burma, all of which have large deposits of natural gas, a prime ingredient of nitrogen fertilizer. Most of this natural gas is today flared off by the giant oil companies because they consider it unprofitable to utilize the natural gas in fertilizer production.

As the former colonial and semi-colonial countries break out of their economic backwardness, they can build better grain storage facilities and introduce scientific methods of pest control to cut down on food waste. It is now estimated that about one-fourth of the world's food is destroyed by rats, insects, fungus, and mildew. In Latin America annual food losses are about 40% and in tropical Africa more than 30%. In parts of India, the figure reaches 70%. "If the capital were available," the November 11 *Time*

magazine wrote, "to upgrade transport systems, build concrete warehouses and modernize marketing methods, there could be a great increase in the food available for underdeveloped countries."

The agricultural potential of the so-called Third World is limited only by the amount of capital and human labor available. Soil-improvement projects, nuclear-powered groundwater pumps to irrigate the fields of India and China, the expansion of livestock herds, and other equally practical plans that are now uneconomical can be easily realized as these countries develop.

In his essay "Increasing Food Production in the Tropics by Multiple Cropping,"²² Richard Bradfield stated that by using the full 365-day growing season of the tropical areas—most of which are in underdeveloped countries—and by utilizing multicropping, total yields in some parts of the tropics could increase between four and sixteen times. Colin Clark estimated that with the existing agricultural technology (and excluding the extension of irrigation systems or food from the sea), Latin America and Africa could each feed much more than the world's present population.

Increased agricultural production in the underdeveloped countries will create millions of new jobs for the unemployed and underemployed in the rural areas. The development of thriving industries can provide further employment for the millions of shantytown dwellers who now crowd the slums of the major cities in the colonial and semicolonial world. (The mechanization of agriculture will eventually release the peasantry of the most back-breaking chores and free most of them for other occupations.)

To carry through this vast task of transforming the underdeveloped world, a large amount of human labor will be required. The present "surplus populations" in those areas will then become a tremendous asset.

Centuries of Abundance

These advances, however, will be only the beginning. It is not possible for us to lay out a blueprint of what

22. In *Research for the World Food Crisis*, edited by Daniel G. Aldrich, Jr. (Washington, D.C.: American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1970).

food production under socialist planning will be like; that is a task for future generations. But we can point out the possibilities and general directions.

With the transformation of production for profit to production for human need, and the elimination of actual hunger, the emphasis of food manufacturing will shift from quantity to quality. Nutritionists will be highly valued and research will focus on providing everyone with a healthy, balanced diet. Scientists will study ways of making safer preservatives, herbicides, and insecticides.

Enormous projects will have to be launched to clean up the environmental mess left behind by capitalism. The purity of rivers, streams, and oceans will need to be assured and soil that has been depleted by wasteful farming will have to be restored. Particular attention will be paid to the possible ecological effects of new forms of agricultural production. Environmental research may even lead to developments in weather control.

As humanity gains greater knowledge of and control over the world's resources, it may even be able to end its dependence on traditional agriculture altogether.

For instance, one almost totally untapped source of food is the sea. Seafood now accounts for less than 1 percent of world food consumption, although Soviet scientists indicate that the productive capacity of the sea is more than 1,000 times that of the arable land area.

Besides the kind of fishing already practiced (which will have to be carefully controlled to prevent wasteful depletion of fishing grounds), it is possible to breed and raise fish on the same principles as livestock.²³ In addition, Dr. William F. Royce, associate director for resource research at the National Marine Fisheries Service, estimates that 50 million to 100 million tons of krill, tiny shellfish, could be harvested from the waters of the Antarctic each year. Other seafoods, such as edible algae and high-protein plankton, can be cultivated.

Plans have also been drawn up for

totally self-contained "food factories" in desert areas, using plastic greenhouses and nuclear energy. Similar facilities have been proposed for areas along the oceans and seas, which would use nuclear power to desalinate the sea water and to produce their own chemicals and fertilizers.

There are possibilities even beyond these. Food production can be totally industrialized by removing agriculture from its dependence on soil and weather. The science of hydroponics, the growing of food in tanks filled with nutrient solutions, was first developed in 1929, but has yet to be applied on a wide scale. The Herbagère machine, invented by the Belgian biologist Gaston Perin and introduced into the United States in 1956, can actually produce "machine-made grass" and other animal fodder.

The further perfection of such methods can open the way for the production of high-quality foods in the carefully controlled conditions of a "factory." This will also make it possible to release much of the land from agriculture, converting it into parks or restoring it to its natural state for vast wildlife preserves.

The basic nutrients and proteins contained in food can already be produced synthetically on an industrial scale. Protein can be extracted from leaves, and lysine, one of the basic amino acids, can be produced by biosynthesis and used for food protein fortification. Tokuya Harada, in "The Role of Micro-organisms in Food Production,"²⁴ explained how high-protein yeasts could be produced in vats of petroleum much faster than plants could be grown.

In his book *The Nutrition Factor* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1973), Alan Berg described the production of single-cell protein, commonly called protein flour, which is extracted from microorganisms grown in a variety of culture mediums. "Since SCP [single-cell protein] is grown in a reactor or fermenter," he wrote, "it is independent of the vagaries of the weather and it makes no special demands on farm land. It requires so little space that half a square mile could produce 10 percent of the world's protein supply."

With the further rational application

of science to food production, the limit of the number of persons the earth can support would not be reached until long in the future. Dr. Fremlin of Birmingham University estimated that after artificial photosynthesis (or other methods of synthesizing necessary nutrients) has been mastered, the only restriction on population growth will be the earth's physical capacity to hold them. He thought this limit would be reached somewhere around 1,000 trillion to 100,000 trillion persons!

Of course, how large a population future generations will actually decide to have is another matter entirely. Fremlin's figures simply underline the fact that, with socialist planning and greater control over the earth's resources, humanity's capacity to feed itself is not limited by the restrictions of the past. In fact, the potential for food production increases many times faster than the actual need.

Once capitalism has been abolished and world planning instituted, it will not take long to lay the groundwork for such an abundant future. Humanity's millennia-old preoccupation with scrambling for the next meal will be over. It can then turn its attention to the monumental task of building a truly human society. □

U.S. Army Seeks Manufacturer for Deadly Nerve Gas

Despite a congressional order banning production of nerve gas except for research, the U.S. Army has been lining up manufacturers to provide the components of a particularly deadly variety, as well as the artillery shells to deliver it, Les Aspin, a Democratic member of the House Armed Services Committee, has charged. His accusations were based on a December 11 entry in the Commerce Department's "Business Daily," a listing of notices of government contracts.

The item in question was an inquiry seeking chemical companies willing to produce "ton quantities" of dimethyl polysulfide and ethyl 2-Diisopropylaminoethyl, the two components of a gas called "VX," which attacks the nervous system when inhaled or absorbed through the skin. One quart contains "several million lethal doses," one of Aspin's aides informed the press.

About the same time, the army announced a search for a company to produce artillery projectiles that could be filled with "nontoxic chemical solutions," Aspin's aide said.

23. Tokyo has already begun to apply some of these methods, by closing off entire bays for breeding and restocking the ocean with young fish.

24. In the April-June 1974 issue of *Impact of Science on Society*.

AROUND THE WORLD



Elite CIA-Trained Unit in Thailand?

According to a report in the January 10 *Far Eastern Economic Review*, it is widely believed that a CIA-trained sixty-man gun squad has been formed in the Thai police department.

Known as the "Sawasdee Unit," its commander is said to be Major-General Vitoon Yasawad. Yasawad, now a top police official, led the CIA's force of Thai "irregulars" in Laos for ten years, until late 1973.

Members of the sharpshooters unit are said to have been instructed in the use of Israeli-made weapons at an isolated firing range sixty miles east of Bangkok.

According to the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, "it is being alleged that the Sawasdee Unit is at least partly trained and financed by the American CIA and even that the squad could be used to kidnap or eliminate political undesirables."

France Jails Guyane Opposition Leaders

The French government has arrested most of the main opposition leaders in the South American colony of Guyane and is preparing to put them on trial for "subversion."

Eight opposition leaders, including teachers, journalists, a lawyer, and a doctor, are now awaiting trial in the Sante prison in Paris.

The government says the eight were planning attacks in the Guyanese capital, Cayenne, for December 24, and claims to have seized arms, ammunition, and documentary evidence. Cayenne is reported to be in a virtual state of siege, with riot police brought in from Guadeloupe and troops of the Foreign Legion patrolling the streets and searching houses. Gatherings of more than five persons have been banned.

The arrests were preceded by violent clashes between police and demonstrators in September and November, during visits by the Minister for Overseas Territories Olivier Stirn. A major factor behind the political unrest is the serious deterioration of the colony's economic situation. Prices are 60 percent higher than in metropolitan France, and already massive unemployment will be further increased through a new cutback at the Kourou space center.

The opposition leaders face jail terms of up to ten years. The eight, who include

Guy Lamaze, a 34-year-old teacher who heads the proindependence Mouvement Guyanais pour le Decolonisation (Guyanese Movement for Decolonization), obtained political-prisoner status and rights after staging a hunger strike at the end of December.

They will be tried by the Special State Security Court, which was originally set up to deal with the operations of the Secret Army Organization (OAS) in Algeria, and which in recent years has tried proindependence militants from Guadeloupe and Martinique.

More Unrest in Store for Japan

Japan's National Police Agency, in its annual report summarizing the events of 1974 and predicting the trends for 1975, forecast massive labor and antigovernment actions in the coming year. It predicted that the 1975 *shunto*, the spring labor offensive, will be larger than last year's. The 1974 *shunto*, which brought out 5.7 million workers, was the largest labor action in Japanese history.

According to the December 29, 1974, *Japan Times*, the report predicted that "unions in the public sector will repeat strikes and workers of smaller enterprises may take over management in labor disputes."

Death on the Job

As many as 100,000 U. S. workers may die each year from occupational illness, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has reported. It also estimated that 390,000 workers develop work-related illnesses each year.

One Acquitted, Two Get Light Terms in Trial of French Conscripts

Three conscripts in the French army, arrested and charged with having organized a protest demonstration against conditions in the armed forces last September, were tried by a military court in early January.

Twenty-one-year-old Alexandre Taurus, a private, was acquitted January 8. Non-commissioned officers Robert Pelletier, 25, a former union organizer, and Serge Revet, 20, were each sentenced to one year in prison, with eight months of the term suspended. Since both have already spent four months in jail, they were to be re-

leased within three days.

The three men were among a group of 200 soldiers, many of them Blacks, in the Nineteenth Artillery Regiment who demonstrated in the southern town of Draguignan last September 10. The demonstrators charged that they had been subjected to constant racist harassment as well as other conditions that violated the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

At their trial, the three defendants denied they had led or provoked the demonstration, insisting that it had been spontaneous.

Their statements were supported by several soldiers called as witnesses, some of whom reversed testimony they had given for the prosecution in preliminary hearings.

The arrests and trials of the three Draguignan defendants were met by protest demonstrations in Paris and other cities throughout France. Their case became a focus for the campaign for democratic rights in the French armed forces, helping to dramatize many of the grievances protested in the "Appeal of the One Hundred," a petition that has been circulating in the ranks since May 1973.

West German Unemployment Up

Unemployment in West Germany rose to just under 950,000 workers in December, according to a report from the Federal Labor Office January 9. The new unemployment rate was 4.2%, against 3.5% in November. It was also the highest December unemployment rate since 1958. The number of workers affected by short-time schedules jumped from 461,400 in November to 703,300 in December. Unemployment among foreign workers was 5.4%. The 1973 unemployment rate averaged 1.2%; for 1974 it had more than doubled to 2.6%.

Angola Rebels Sign Unity Pact

Three Angolan liberation movements signed a joint political declaration January 5 in Mombasa, Kenya, in preparation for their discussions with the Portuguese regime. The agreement included a peace pact between the MPLA (Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola—People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola) and the FNLA (Frente Nacional

de Libertacao de Angola—National Front for the Liberation of Angola), which have fought each other in the past. The third guerrilla group, UNITA (Uniao Nacional para Independencia Total de Angola—National Union for the Total Independence of Angola), signed separate agreements with the MPLA and FNLA in late 1974.

Talks between the liberation movements and the Lisbon regime began in Alvor, Portugal, January 10.

Miners Strike in South Africa

About 12,000 African miners went out on strike at the Vaal Reefs gold mine in South Africa January 6. The Vaal Reefs mine is the largest gold mine in the world and is run by the Anglo-American Corporation.

The strike was sparked by a regulation passed by the Lesotho government that required all Lesotho miners employed in South Africa to deposit 60 percent of their wages in Lesotho banks until they returned home. Lesotho is a formally "independent" enclave in South Africa that is totally dominated by the racist regime. About 100,000 Lesotho laborers work in South Africa, most of them as miners.

Officials of the Anglo-American Corporation claimed that eight miners killed in the first days of the strike were the victims of tribal clashes between Basothos (the predominant tribal group in Lesotho) and Xhosas. According to one report, however, one miner was killed January 6 when the police attacked the strikers.

In addition, miners struck at the Western Deep Level Gold Mine and the Saaiplaas Gold Mine on January 2. After the Vaal Reefs strike began, about 500 Basotho miners walked off their jobs at the Blesbok and New Largo coal mines.

Ethiopian Union Federation Declares Support to Regime

The Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Unions, the largest trade-union federation in Ethiopia, announced its support for the military regime January 3. It declared its "total support to the provisional military council in the carrying out of the socialist objectives of the Ethiopian revolution." The day before, CELU President Ato Tesfaye Belayneh, who had been arrested for calling a strike, was acquitted by a court-martial in Addis Ababa.

Mexican President Linked to CIA

A former agent of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency has charged that Mexican President Luis Echeverria Alvarez and two of his predecessors collaborated with the CIA.

Philip Agee, in his book *Inside the Company: C. I. A. Diary*, published in London January 2, states that before becoming president, Echeverria "worked in close col-

laboration" with the chief of the CIA's Mexico office, Winston Scott. According to Agee, the two preceding presidents, Adolfo Lopez Mateos and Gustavo Diaz Ordaz, also had close relations with Scott.

Agee, who worked in the CIA's Mexico office in 1967 and 1968, says that President Diaz Ordaz and Echeverria, then minister of the interior, were responsible for liaison between the CIA and the Mexican security and intelligence agencies, in the establishment of a new, secret communications network between the presidential office and the country's major cities.

Spain Hit by Drought

Sections of twenty Spanish provinces have been declared disaster areas as the result of a severe drought, according to a January 8 announcement by the Agriculture Ministry. Regions most affected are the southern province of Andalusia, the central plain of Castile, and western Estremadura.

Spain, which is usually self-sufficient in cereals, will have to import grain this year. The government has extended \$15.6 million credit to farmers to buy feed.

White House Committee 'Predicts' U. S. Intervention in Caribbean

U. S. interventions by military units of 40,000 or larger, "resembling occupation armies," are predicted in the Caribbean and "possibly in Latin America" during the last quarter of this century, according to a secret report on "The Future World Environment" prepared for President Ford and the U. S. Congress.

The study, now being circulated in confidential, numbered copies, was drawn up by Vice-President Rockefeller, Senate majority leader Mike Mansfield, House of Representatives foreign policy experts Clement Zablocki and Peter Frelinghuysen, and former Undersecretary of State Robert Murphy, among others.

According to a report by nationally syndicated columnist Jack Anderson January 8, the study also predicts the "militarization of India . . . under the weight of the food-population crisis. . . ."

Chile Under the Junta

More than one-third of the children under six years of age living in the Chilean shantytown of Barancas are suffering such severe malnutrition that they will be stunted or handicapped physically or mentally, according to the auxiliary bishop of Santiago, Monsignor Fernando Ariztia.

The bishop, who delivered a New Year's message on the suffering of Chilean workers under the military junta, pointed to the high unemployment, the increase in prostitution and alcoholism, the lack of respect for the rights of workers, and the

increase in the number of children begging in the streets.

A recent survey by the Chilean Catholic magazine *Mensaje* reported that the buying power of a family whose income falls on the lower end of the wage scale has been cut almost in half during the last year.

Economic Crisis Spurs Shoplifting

As the economic crisis deepens, shoplifting is on the rise in the United States. Store losses are estimated at \$5 billion a year, and the National Retail Merchants Association reported that its members' shoplifting losses were 2.07 percent for 1973 and were expected to be higher for 1974.

"With double-digit inflation and high unemployment, the stealing impulse is almost certain to become overwhelming with many more people," said the manager of a private security service.

And it's not just those who are the worst off, either. "Rich people shoplift just as much as poor," said the security officer at a store in a suburban area. Some merchants were reportedly at a loss as to how to deal with shoplifters who are some of their best and richest customers. The usual solution reported for such offenders was just to make them pay for the goods.

Dominica Rebels Hunted

The regime of Dominica, a West Indian island that is part of the British Commonwealth, has passed repressive legislation designed to crush a Black nationalist organization called the Dreads. The new law, which was passed after the killing of two Canadian tourists in November, allows anyone to legally kill a member of the Dreads who is found in a private residence. It also empowers the police to arrest anyone wearing the hair style preferred by the rebels. "When a difficult situation arises," said Sir Louis Cools-Lartigue, the British governor, "you have to take strong measures to stamp it out."

Prime Minister Patrick R. John has sent special police patrols and the island's 200-man defense force into the interior rain forests where the Dreads are thought to be hiding. One young Black, who was convicted of killing a U. S. tourist, has been sentenced to death.

Police Commissioner Oliver Philips said that the young rebels had been influenced by the Black nationalist movement in the United States and in the West Indies. The Dreads advocate nationalization of the banks and insurance companies and common ownership of land, he said. "They want to change the whole governmental system."

Lawyers and civil libertarians throughout the Caribbean have protested the new repressive legislation.

Cairo Rocked by Protest Against Inflation

By Peter Green

"Violence hit the streets of Cairo today after a demonstration by 1,000 industrial workers against low pay and high living costs developed into a full-scale riot. . . ." *Washington Post* correspondent Michael Tingay reported from Cairo January 1.

"The central security forces arrived in truckloads to quell the rioters, who tore up paving stones and smashed windows, halting traffic and disrupting Cairo's Liberation Square and the surrounding areas near Egypt's Parliament building and ministries."

The workers were mostly from the Helwan iron and steel complex about fifteen miles south of Cairo, and they were joined by several hundred students and a number of passersby. The demonstrators shouted slogans as they marched on Liberation Square: "Down with the high cost of living," "Sadat, meat costs £2 a kilo [about US\$5.50]," "Nasser, where are you?" "So where is socialism?"

Much of the anger was directed at Premier Abdel Aziz Hegazi for failing to provide long-demanded wage increases in the budget adopted December 31 by the People's Council (parliament): "Hegazi out!" "Hegazi is incompetent," "Hegazi, Hegazi, your era is like the Nazis."

Armed with shields, helmets, and clubs, and firing tear-gas grenades, the police charged the demonstrators, breaking them up into small groups and forcing them down separate streets.

Newsheets published by students at Cairo University the following day said the workers began their demonstration intending to gather peaceably in front of the offices of a daily newspaper to demand publication of their grievances. A worker on the demonstration interviewed by the *Washington Post* described the worsening economic plight confronting him, and went on:

"We tried to go to the National Assembly meeting. We asked to speak to the speaker of the Assembly, Mr. Sayed Marei, but the area was cordoned off.

"The march moved on to the In-

terior Ministry, where the minister, Mamdouh Salem, addressed the crowds for 15 minutes with a megaphone. He told us, 'Your problems will be solved and we take note of your demands.' Then the minister of war production told us, 'Go back to your factories.'"

According to the *Post*, it was after this address that the violent clashes with the security forces took place. The demonstrators stoned buses and private cars. They smashed the windows of a building of the American University; the Soviet bookshop; Air France, Tunis Air, and Libyan Airways; scores of small shops; the government Tahrir Club, where diplomatic receptions are held; and a district office of the Arab Socialist Union, the country's only legal political party.

That night the government issued a decree banning all demonstrations and warning that it would "deal firmly with all forms of violence." It said that forty-eight persons had been arrested and that two demonstrators and several policemen had been injured. The statement also claimed that a train on the Helwan line had been damaged, as well as fifteen private cars, twenty-six city buses, and nineteen stores.

Thousands of spectators watched the demonstration in Liberation Square from an overhead pedestrian bridge. The motives of the demonstrators would have been well understood, noted *Le Monde* of January 3, since "the majority of the townspeople, not to speak of those from the country, suffer more and more from the rising cost of living—which increased about 50 percent since October 1973—from the black market, and from the scarcity of essential products such as tea, rice, sugar, soap, etc." The high prices of shoes (about \$17 a pair) and meat are particularly resented.

Le Monde also pointed out that the demonstration was even more significant since "the Helwan workers, the cherished children of Nasserism, have a privileged life with their pay of £20 a month (about \$55), which is nearly double the minimum salary paid in

industry."

Recent government measures, such as massive imports of wheat or forced reduction of the price of certain items of clothing, have not made much difference. In fact, the liberalized economic policies the government introduced to attract investment have only served to further widen the gap between rich and poor. Stores are stocked with goods that the vast majority of Egyptians cannot possibly afford.

"The cleavage between those who benefit from the economic liberalization and those who have stayed poor was graphically demonstrated in Liberation Square this morning," reported Henry Tanner in a January 1 dispatch from Cairo to the *New York Times*.

"A gleaming new American car, twice as big as most others in Cairo, drove unsuspectingly into the square while the crowd was still milling around. A rock thrown from the pedestrian overpass smashed onto its spotless hood. The driver panicked, tried a fast U-turn and skidded into a lamppost. He left his car and ran across the square without looking back."

Discontent has been simmering among the Egyptian masses for several months. A prelude to the Cairo demonstration came on December 22, when seventeen persons were arrested in Port Said during celebrations commemorating the withdrawal of British and French invasion forces during the 1956 Suez war. On December 27 in downtown Cairo police also clashed with large crowds who wanted to join a funeral procession for War Minister Marshal Ahmed Ismail. On December 28 similar disturbances occurred during a mass funeral for Farid Atrash, a popular folk singer.

On January 1, it was reported that separate protests erupted in other parts of Cairo when news of the large demonstration arrived. Hundreds of students at Cairo University assembled the following day to demonstrate their solidarity with the Helwan workers. The students shouted slogans demanding that the workers be granted

the right to strike. They were then dispersed by security forces sent rapidly to the spot.

Wall newspapers printed by the students reported that the workers also demanded the replacement of their union leaders, whom they accused of not defending their interests. The January 4 *Le Monde* reported that the agitation continued inside the university throughout the morning. Some classes were shut down, and continuous meetings were held in the main amphitheater. On January 4, similar demonstrations took place at Cairo and Ain Shems universities, the January 6 *Christian Science Monitor* reported.

The regime has responded with a harsh crackdown. More arrests were made, and a "plot" discovered. The official Middle East News Agency (MENA) announced January 5 that 120 persons had been questioned, fifty-six had been charged with "anti-state" activities, and seven were regarded as actual "ringleaders" in the demonstration. United Press International quoted sources who said more than 400 persons had been jailed, but an official in the Interior Ministry denied this as "exaggerated."

The previous day MENA had announced the discovery of a "new Communist organization." Pamphlets attacking President Sadat's regime were seized, the agency added. There was no further amplification on the nature of the new organization. However, the *New York Times* reported that "government officials and members of the National Assembly are known to have used the term 'Trotskyites' . . . in connection with the alleged ringleaders of the riot. This has been interpreted as an effort to make it clear that the Government is not blaming Communists who are under Soviet influence."

The January 1 action was the most significant protest against the regime since the student demonstrations of 1971. The January 3 *Le Monde* described it as "a severe warning to the authorities." One anti-Sadat slogan chanted by the demonstrators summed up the new angry mood of the masses—increasing disillusion with Cairo's failure to regain the territory seized by the Zionists and mounting discontent with their economic hardships. "Hero of the crossing," they shouted, "where is our breakfast?" □

La Represion Sufre un Revés en Santa Rosa

Los Obreros Argentinos Responden

[Los siguientes artículos aparecieron el 12 de diciembre de 1974, en *Avanzada Socialista*, publicación del Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores, organización simpatizante de la Cuarta Internacional.]

* * *

El Movimiento Obrero le Aplicó el Primer Golpe a la Ley de Seguridad

La huelga de Santa Rosa, que comentamos en esta misma página, tiene el inmenso mérito de haber aplicado el primer golpe contra la anti-obrera Ley de Seguridad del Estado, específicamente contra su artículo 5o., que cercena el derecho de huelga. Como se sabe dicho artículo establece penas carcelarias contra los trabajadores que realicen huelgas declaradas "ilegales" por el ministerio de Trabajo. En Santa Rosa, el gobierno dio el primer paso en ese sentido, al declarar la "ilegalidad" de una huelga iniciada en exigencia del cumplimiento de la Ley de Contrato de Trabajo. La movilización de los compañeros de Santa Rosa impidió, luego de veintiseis días, que sobre esa huelga "ilegalizada" se descargara el peso de las penas carcelarias, que, en este momento están sufriendo en cambio otros compañeros, como los de La Hidrófila.

Cuando se promulgó la Ley de Seguridad, con el voto del peronismo y el aval de la UCR [Unión Cívica Radical]—que se opuso, pero prestó quorum—nuestro Partido señaló que se trataba de una herramienta para reprimir al movimiento obrero y a la izquierda y coartar las libertades democráticas. Presentada con el pretexto de perseguir a la guerrilla y al terrorismo, señalamos que sus verdaderos objetivos eran muy distintos. El sólo hecho de que con la guerrilla se estuviera librando una "guerra de bolsillo" resuelta diariamente con un saldo de muertos y encarcelados, nos indicaba que la nueva Ley apuntaba en otra dirección. Por su artículo 1o. se establece el delito de opinión; por el 6o. se establecen penas contra los agiotistas y especuladores; y por el

5o., el que tiene una redacción y un objetivo bien precisos, se cercena el derecho de huelga, permitiendo que administrativamente el Ministro de Trabajo pueda declarar la ilegalidad de los paros.

A dos meses y medio de vigencia de esta Ley debemos señalar la confirmación de nuestras advertencias. No ha servido para perseguir a ningún guerrillero y mucho menos a un terrorista de derecha, pero en cambio el gobierno ha hecho funcionar dos de sus artículos: el 1o. y el 5o. El 6o., en cambio, dirigido contra los agiotistas y especuladores, sigue casi sin estrensarse, ya que los capitalistas, lejos de haber recibido penas, han recibido el "premio" de la liberación de los precios.

La aplicación del artículo 1o. que establece el delito de opinión ha sido aplicado en varias oportunidades, especialmente contra diarios, lógicamente no oficialistas. En la volteada han caído diarios de corrientes patronales tal vez por el "delito" de ser opositores. En la fecha, una noticia periodística que no hemos podido confirmar, indica que un afiliado nicolense de nuestro Partido, Levatto, ha sido detenido por este artículo que pena el "delito" de ser socialista.

Pero el más importante de los artículos represivos, el 5o., que pena el "delito" de hacer huelgas que no le gusten a la patronal o al gobierno ha empezado a funcionar y no sólo contra el movimiento obrero, sino también contra los colectiveros, cuya huelga fue "ilegalizada." Las huelgas obreras que recibieron el amenzante "no" del Ministerio de Trabajo son, entre otras, La Hidrófila y Santa Rosa. Otras luchas de menor envergadura fueron rápidamente levantadas ante el decreto gubernamental. En La Hidrófila hizo falta una dura intervención policial que quebró la huelga y determinó el encarcelamiento de muchos compañeros. En Santa Rosa, aunque también se produjo una intervención policial, la firmeza del personal alrededor de la huelga y del Comité de Lucha elegido en su desarrollo, impidió que el gobierno pudiera aplicar su segundo pa-

Llamamos a todas las corrientes del movimiento obrero y especialmente a las direcciones sindicales y de la CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo] a inspirarse en el ejemplo de los compañeros de Santa Rosa para recuperar en nuestro país le vieja conquista del derecho de huelga, cuya limitación, cercenamiento y pérdida pondría en peligro la existencia misma de las organizaciones obreras, de lo cual es un ejemplo la situación peligrosa por la que atravesó la UOM [Unión Obrera Metalúrgica] de San Justo— a pesar de oponerse a la huelga de Santa Rosa— por permitir a los huelguistas, durante varios días, reunirse en su sindicato. Llamamos a no seguir los pasos de la conducción de esa seccional, que desalojó a los trabajadores de su sindicato, sino a enfrentar al verdadero enemigo, que es el artículo 5o. y, en general, toda la Ley de Seguridad, luchando por su derogación.

La Tormenta de Santa Rosa

El jueves 5, después de veintiseis días de huelga, los compañeros de Santa Rosa volvieron a la fábrica en forma triunfal: con el reconocimiento patronal del Comité de Lucha y la promesa de solucionar rápidamente el cumplimiento de la Ley de Contrato de Trabajo, reivindicación que originó el conflicto. Los gritos de alegría que rubricaron la asamblea final no hicieron aflojar los puños de un personal que había luchado no sólo contra la patronal sino también contra esa nueva herramienta de represión, que es la Ley de Seguridad del Estado.

Esta lucha pasó por distintos momentos. Se comenzó reclamando una cosa de estricta justicia y legalidad. Para ello la CI [Comisión Interna] y el CD [Cuerpo de Delegados], respaldados por la UOM, realizaron una engorrosa negociación que chocó con la intransigencia patronal. Contra el consejo de la UOM, los activistas y la base desbordaron a los delegados con una huelga progresiva, desde el 9 de noviembre, desatada en Trafilería, a la que siguió Acería. Varios de los dos mil quinientos obreros con los que hablamos nos pintaron adecuadamente la situación de ese momento: *"La Interna y el sindicato están entre la espada y la pared. En fábrica se ha hecho costumbre funcionar en asamblea. Prácticamente to-*

dos los días hay tres o cuatro." Bien pronto vinieron las definiciones: el 20 de noviembre la policía desalojó la fábrica y, desde entonces, la huelga siguió afuera; poco después la dirección de la UOM desalojó del sindicato a la asamblea obrera y, sobre llovido mojado, el Ministerio declaró la "ilegalidad" de la huelga. En suma, la patronal, la conducción de la UOM y el gobierno se habían decidido por quebrar la lucha.

Para reemplazar al CD y la CI se eligió democráticamente un Comité de Lucha, el cual comenzó a funcionar en la UCR de San Justo. El Comité de Lucha puso en marcha distintas comisiones obreras que distribuyeron volantes, recolectaron fondos y recabaron la solidaridad de otras fábricas. Establecimientos como Indiel, Cegelec y MAN volcaron su ayuda y partidos como el PST se hicieron presentes. Al cabo de veinte días llegó a su punto crucial. Era inminente una definición ya que la patronal y el gobierno llegaban a una situación límite, pero también en la base habían síntomas de cansancio. Y la definición se produjo cuando la policía concurrió a desalojar a los compañeros del local de la UCR y, al mismo tiempo, el Partido Justicialista [la organización política del peronismo] ofreció el suyo, "dentro del cual no corre el Estado de Sitio."* Los compañeros aceptaron la oferta del justicialismo, pero en cambio rechazaron su pretensión de que se eligiera un nuevo Comité "netamente peronista." La asamblea ratificó al Comité (formado por compañeros de distintos partidos). Al ver esta demostración de firmeza, la patronal, el gobierno y la conducción sindical cambiaron de actitud: reabrieron las negociaciones reconociendo al Comité de Lucha y Lorenzo Miguel [principal dirigente de la UOM] concurrió a entrevistarse con los huelguistas. El ministro Otero envió, un representante personal y

*Formalmente, las leyes del Estado de Sitio sólo autorizan al Estado prohibir asambleas en la vía pública, sin embargo han sido usadas para restringir el derecho de reunión en general y para impedir el funcionamiento de los partidos políticos. Aparentemente, los peronistas de Santa Rosa asumieron que no tendrían los mismos problemas de los demás partidos. — IP

prometió "arreglar en seguida." Con estos compromisos, que implican un triunfo parcial, el jueves pasado se volvió al trabajo.

La movilización obrera mostró que se le puede ganar aún al Estado de Sitio y al artículo 5o. Por otra parte, los vaivenes de la burocracia sindical a lo largo del conflicto muestran el incómodo papel en el que están ubicados los dirigentes. Además, la dureza del conflicto muestra de qué manera el funcionamiento democrático, la organización de los activistas y las comisiones obreras resultan indispensables para resistir. Hay, por último, una experiencia que queremos resaltar: los compañeros que insistían en que se trataba de un conflicto estrictamente gremial, se encontraron rodeados de partidos políticos, desde el radical y el peronista hasta el PST. Es que toda lucha tiene que ver con la política, aunque más no sea porque enfrenta leyes como la de Seguridad y el Estado de Sitio y porque los partidos, al menos los patronales, piensan del mismo modo que el enviado del ministro Otero cuando vino a tirar la esponja el último día y dijo a los compañeros: *"Si esto no lo arreglamos nosotros, en 1977 el peronismo perderá quince mil votos."*

Como partido obrero, el PST cree que, así como en este caso los compañeros pudieron utilizar esos cálculos electorales al servicio de la huelga, en todos los casos hay que mantener una actitud independiente hasta tener también una política y un partido propios, manejados por los trabajadores.

Mientras charlamos de todo esto, hacemos llegar nuestro más fraternal saludo a los compañeros que protagonizaron un primer triunfo sobre la Ley de Seguridad y marcaron un camino a todo el movimiento obrero. □

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Statement of the United Secretariat on the PST

[The following statement was published in the December 12, 1974, issue of *Inprecor*, a fortnightly publication of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

* * *

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International has adopted the following statement in response to the August 20, 1974, statement of the Executive Committee of the PST:

We acknowledge the affirmation of the comrades of the PST that they did not sign the document of March 21, 1974, or the documents of June 29 and July 3, 1974, signatures the Argentine press had attributed to them.

If the contrary impression was created, it was due in large part to the fact that *Avanzada Socialista*, the organ of the PST, had itself confirmed the information in the bourgeois press in this regard and to the fact that there was an extraordinary delay in the correction made by the PST.

Let us leave aside the argument that it was necessary to wait two months before publicly correcting the error made by *Avanzada Socialista* in order to give that correction greater exposure through the television appearance of Comrade Coral. But what of the delay in the *internal* rectification?

The comrades of the PST were invited to three successive meetings of the United Secretariat to explain their attitude toward the meeting and document of March 21, 1974. They did not attend any of these meetings. They could have immediately explained in writing that they had not signed the document in question. They refrained from doing so. The first written indication in this regard was received by the United Secretariat at the beginning of June in a letter from the PST dated May 23. The first public interpretation of the new version of the facts came to the United Secretariat three months after the events, with the June 26 issue of *Avanzada Socialista*, which explained that the PST had not signed the document. To this day we have received no explanation of the reasons that led the PST to delay so long an internal rectification that could have been sent forty-eight hours after their receipt of the first letter from the United Secretariat.

We also acknowledge to the comrades of the PST that in the published text of the United Secretariat resolution of July 12, 1974, the passage relative to the PST's conception of the defense of institutionalization was placed between quotation marks through an error in transcription of the manuscript. It is true that this was not a quotation from *Avanzada Socialista* but rather our own judgment of the meaning of the conceptions and action of the leaders of the PST, a judgment based not on an allegedly abusive quotation but rather on an analysis that we can only reiterate.

All this is not the basis of the problem. What concerned the leadership of the Fourth International was not only the fact that according to the Argentine press, including *Avanzada Socialista*, the PST was said to have signed a common declaration with seven other parties, several of them bourgeois parties, one of them the country's principal bourgeois opposition party. What was also of concern was the argumentation through which the leadership of the PST had justified the meeting with representatives of the government and the bourgeois parties and through which *Avanzada Socialista* had justified—"by mistake," it now appears—signature of a common document of the eight parties.

Avanzada Socialista continued to develop this argumentation for months. It thus exhibited a political orientation that breaks with the programmatic continuity of the Fourth International and of revolutionary Marxism on at least one important question. That is the reason the leadership of the Fourth International judged it necessary to make public its criticism of the PST in its declaration of July 12, 1974, and, at the request of the PST, continues to have this discussion publicly.

I.

Thus, in the first denial, published by the June 26 *Avanzada Socialista*, we read (we are quoting the English version published in the July 15, 1974, *Intercontinental Press*):

"In our country the democratic liberties we have at present are the result of tremendous workers' struggles that erupted with the Cordobazo. These liberties are being threatened by the rise of fascist groups that are supported by a wing of the government, by the union bureaucracy, and by the bourgeoisie. Faced with that threat, we consider it not only permissible but obligatory to make limited, tactical, temporary agreements with any sector that comes out for the defense of democratic rights. . . .

"One of the eight parties proposed that a joint declaration be made, and it presented a draft. Our party proposed a series of changes that were partially accepted. At the time we went to press, the editorial staff thought that the document bore the signature of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores. Actually, it was not signed because there was still disagreement with it."

That can mean but one thing: In principle, the leadership of the PST continues to think that signing a common document with the Communist party and a certain number of bourgeois parties, among them the country's principal opposition bourgeois party, "for the defense of the process of institutionalization" was correct. If the PST did not sign this particular common declaration, it is simply because an agreement on the exact content

of the declaration had not (must we say, had not yet?) been reached.

In its July 4, 1974, issue *Avanzada Socialista* returned to the charge and wrote (again, we are quoting the English version, published in the July 22, 1974, Intercontinental Press):

"Our party is the only militant party left in Argentina that has publicly stated that it supports the process of institutionalization. . . .

"In October 1972 representatives of our party went to meet the representative of the military dictatorship to tell him that we supported the 'process of institutionalization' and to demand the withdrawal of the military junta from the government. . . .

". . . today . . . once again, in the aftermath of General Perón's death, we have reiterated our support for the 'process of institutionalization' against the attacks of the putschist right."

We were and are in total opposition to this political orientation, whose fundamental logic, based on a distorted quotation from Lenin, is expressed in the clearest manner in the following passage from the July 4, 1974, *Avanzada Socialista*:

"In a nutshell, since the Cordobazo unleashed the struggle against the Onganía dictatorship, the word 'institutionalization' has acquired a meaning in Argentine politics different from the one given in the dictionary. It has become a synonym of fighting to defend or win democratic rights.

"This is why we have used the term in public statements. And we do not regret using it to condemn the military dictatorship, even though this could have the effect of defending the elections the Peronists won; or to condemn the Navarro coup, even though this could have the effect in practice of defending Obregón Cano; or to condemn a coup d'etat now, even if it has the effect of defending the Peronist government. . . . This is what Lenin was referring to when he said that every revolutionary had to distinguish between forms of government and defend higher ones. . . .

"How must the process of institutionalization be defended?

"The fact that in defending democratic rights our position coincides with non-working-class and nonsocialist currents and parties does not mean that we agree with them on anything else or on the way to defend these democratic rights.

"Our party will always agree with Balbín and the FAS lawyers in opposing by all means the suppression of the daily *El Mundo*. Balbín does this in the name of the bourgeois liberal constitution he supports. We do so in the name of workers democracy and socialism.

"These convergences with bourgeois sectors can be expressed in the form of limited agreements, documents, statements, etc. All these various types of public actions, from joint communiqués to rallies, are useful and help to create the kind of social consciousness and climate needed to defend civil liberties or condemn fascism. Moreover, they safeguard and reinforce the legal rights of the revolutionary party."

We can only repeat: We are in total disagreement with this conception of the struggle against fascism and the threat of rightist dictatorship. For the Trotskyist movement and the Fourth International, the struggle against

fascism and the threat of rightist dictatorship is centered on the necessity for the *workers united front*, which is a class front and not an interclass front. We reject the Social Democratic policy of lesser evilism according to which the workers are supposed to defend "superior" or "better" bourgeois "forms of government" against "less good" or "inferior" forms of government. Lenin explained that it was perfectly possible to struggle against Kornilov without defending the "superior" form of government of Kerensky. Trotsky many times explained that the necessity of combating the fascist threat as the heaviest threat weighing on the working class in no way involved defense of the "superior" government of Brüning, not to mention that of von Papen or von Schleicher, against Hitler. (Leon Trotsky, *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany*, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1971, pp. 95, 108, 135-7, 140, 152, etc.)

The position of *Avanzada Socialista* was so excessive that the PST had to back off on the matter and sketch out an initial self-criticism in its statement of August 20, 1974. There we read:

"Still another charge is made against the leaders of the PST by the authors of the United Secretariat resolution. They state: 'At the same time, they (the PST leaders) have forgotten the fundamental distinction that exists between the democratic rights demanded by the workers movement and the structures of bourgeois democracy.'

"We acknowledge that some of the formulations we have used could have led to this impression. We might even have made the error in the current situation in Argentina of not carefully distinguishing between a given bourgeois 'structure' and the defense of democratic rights."

Unfortunately, this beginning of self-criticism, which we salute, stops short with an attempt to reduce everything to semantic confusion over the word "institutionalization." The word is supposedly not being used in the dictionary sense, but rather to mean "the institutional guarantee of democratic rights." Without wanting to enter into this semantic debate, we draw the attention of the PST comrades to the fact that *they themselves* have used this term in a clearly broader sense—one that does not diverge very much from the usual meaning the "dictionaries" commonly attribute to it. When *Avanzada Socialista*, apropos of the "process of institutionalization," refers to the *elections won by the Peronists* (issue of July 4, 1974); when the PST insists on the necessity of obtaining *constitutional guarantees of democratic rights* (Intercontinental Press, September 9, 1974); when Comrade Coral affirms at the "multisectoral" meeting of October 8, 1974: "El PST seguirá luchando contra todos esos factores que crean el clima golpista, y luchará por la continuidad de este gobierno, porque fue elegido por la mayoría de los trabajadores argentinos, . . ." (The PST will continue struggling against all those factors that create the putschist climate and will struggle for the continuity of this government, because it was elected by the majority of Argentine workers; *Avanzada Socialista*, October 17, 1974), it is obvious that it is not simply a question of the "guarantee of democratic rights" but also of the functioning of *the institutions of the so-called democratic parliamentary bourgeois state as a whole*. Obviously, this includes parliamentary elections, the parliament, the bourgeois state apparatus, the govern-

ment that comes out of these elections, etc. And Marxist-Leninists know that these institutions *also involve* defending bourgeois property, capitalist exploitation, and the apparatus of repression devoted to this defense.

The insufficiency of the self-criticism and the confusion that it maintains derive from the fact that the comrades of the PST identify the question of "institutionalization," that is, the continuity of the democratic parliamentary institutions of the bourgeois state with the question of the defense of democratic rights. It is true that the PST's August 20, 1974, declaration pronounces itself against any *political* support to a bourgeois regime or coalition. That is really the least one can demand from an organization that claims allegiance to Trotskyism. But the rejection of "support to the policy of a bourgeois regime" combined with "support to the process of institutionalization," that is, the consolidation and strengthening of the institutions of bourgeois-parliamentary democracy, leaves the question of the PST's attitude toward the *bourgeois state* completely open. And it is that question that lies at the center of the controversy. The PST's self-criticism has not at all clarified the party's attitude in this regard. We hope that it will be extended to eliminate any equivocation on this crucial problem.

II.

The origins of the confusion appear rather clearly when the question of agreements with the parties or representatives of the bourgeoisie is examined. Revolutionary Marxists are advocates of the defense of democratic rights. They have even always allowed for the possibility of temporary technical agreements with bourgeois liberals *on practical objectives of struggle for a given and precise democratic right*, all the while rejecting any political bloc with the liberal bourgeoisie. Trotsky cited in this regard the fact that some bourgeois Jews gave money to the Social Democratic workers groups in Russia in order to allow them to buy arms to fight against the Black Hundreds, who were organizing pogroms. Only inveterate sectarians who are scarcely interested in the real struggle could reject such an agreement as "opportunist."

Likewise, no revolutionary having a minimum of good sense would reject the support of a bourgeois politician in a campaign to defend or regain legality for a workers journal or for the exercise of the right to strike, so long as that support is not contingent on subordinating the general orientation, including in the defense of democratic rights, to the exigencies of the search for the support, that is, to a policy of compromise with the "liberal" bourgeoisie.

The August 20, 1974, document of the Executive Committee of the PST appears to say the same thing. But in sliding from the question of an occasional technical agreement for the defense of a particular democratic right to the search for an agreement with the "liberal" bourgeoisie for the defense of democratic rights in general, the statement passes imperceptibly to the search for political accords *for the defense of the institutions of bourgeois parliamentary democracy*.

This emerges clearly from the quotations already cited from the July 4, 1974, *Avanzada Socialista*, in which this journal speaks of "convergences with bourgeois sectors (that) can be expressed in the form of limited agree-

ments, documents, declarations, etc. All these various types of public actions(!), from joint communiqués to rallies, are useful and help to create the kind of social consciousness and climate(!) needed to defend civil liberties or condemn(!) fascism."

It is precisely to avoid such confusion that Trotsky clarifies the objectives of a workers united front in the struggle against the rise of fascism by making a *distinction* between the defense of the "germs, elements, of proletarian democracy within bourgeois democracy" and the defense of the bourgeois-democratic institutions of the bourgeois state:

"What will the Communist Party 'defend'? The Weimar Constitution? No, we will leave that task to Brandler. The Communist Party must call for the defense of those material and moral positions which the working class has managed to win in the German state. This most directly concerns the fate of the workers' political organizations, trade unions, newspapers, printing plants, clubs, libraries, etc. Communist workers must say to their Social Democratic counterparts: 'The policies of our parties are irreconcilably opposed; but if the fascists come tonight to wreck your organization's hall, we will come running, arms in hand, to help you. Will you promise us that if our organization is threatened you will rush to our aid?' This is the quintessence of our policy in the coming period. All agitation must be pitched in this key." (The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany, Pathfinder Press, 1971, p. 72.)

And still more clearly in an article entitled "Fascism and Democratic Slogans" dated July 14, 1933:

"It is true that the upsurge of discontent of the middle classes and the resistance of the workers will provoke a division in the bloc of the owning classes and will impel a 'left wing' to seek ties with the petty bourgeoisie. *But the task of the party of the proletariat in regard to the 'liberal' wing of the owning classes will not consist in integrating them into a bloc 'of all classes' against fascism but on the contrary in immediately engaging in a determined struggle against it for influence over the lower layers of the petty bourgeoisie.*" (Trotsky, *Schriften über Deutschland*, Volume 2, p. 600, our emphasis.)

Now, the meetings in which the PST has been participating in no way had as their objective engaging in *practical* actions for the defense of a *given* democratic right, a *given* conquest of the working class. It was a matter of meetings to affirm—in the presence of the government—the defense of the "process of institutionalization." Moreover, *regular* meetings with the bourgeois opposition parties and the CP are in turn becoming *institutionalized* meetings. In political terms, that is called *an interclass political bloc against all those who "resort to violence" in Argentina and who thereby threaten the "process of institutionalization."*

This political orientation is inadmissible from the standpoint of principle. From the standpoint of the desired effects in the struggle against the fascist threat and against the terror of the far right it is totally ineffective.

In its March 28, 1974, issue *Avanzada Socialista* makes much of a quotation from Trotsky affirming that in the struggle against fascism one can even make an alliance with the devil and his grandmother. But the organ of the PST neglects to add that this quotation

was aimed at explaining to Communist workers the necessity of a united front with *the Social Democratic party*, that is, a reformist workers party whose leaders are undoubtedly representatives of the bourgeoisie within the workers movement but who are no less *part of the organized workers movement*. Trotsky in no way proposed such an agreement with *bourgeois parties* like those that are participating in the regular meetings between the PST and the seven other parties.

In drawing this quotation out of context Avanzada Socialista above all does not point out that the very article from which this phrase is drawn, "What Next," turns completely on the idea of the *class united front*, of a "class against class" opposition to combat the rise of fascism:

"The contentions regarding the policies of the united front take their origin from such fundamental and inexorable exigencies of the struggle of *class against class*. . . ." (The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany, p. 179.)

"'Class against class!' This means all organizations of the proletariat must take their place in the united front against the bourgeoisie.

"The practical program of the united front is determined by agreements with organizations made in full view of the masses. Every organization remains under its own banner and its own leadership. Every organization obeys in action the discipline of the united front.

"'Class against class!' Indefatigable agitation must be conducted in order that the Social Democratic organizations and the reformist trade unions shall break with the perfidious bourgeois allies in the 'Iron Front' and that they join in common with the Communists and all other organizations of the proletariat." (Ibid. p. 256.)

Trotsky considered the breakup of the alliance between the Social Democrats and the "antifascist" bourgeois "liberals" of the *Staatspartei* as a concomitant condition for the constitution of a *workers united front* against fascism. He called for the exclusion of the bourgeois liberals of the *Eiserne Front* (Iron Front) at the same time as he demanded the conclusion of *agreements* between the Social Democratic party and the CP.

Does the PST counterpose the conception of a bloc with liberal bourgeois parties for the defense of the "process of institutionalization" to Trotsky's conception of the workers united front?

This conception of Trotsky's was not a concession to the ultraleftist atmosphere prevailing in the Communist International in the beginning of the 1930s. Its roots lie in the Marxist comprehension of the origins and nature of fascism. The source of the rise of fascism lies in the structural crisis of decadent capitalism and the crisis of the bourgeois-parliamentary system, which is its corollary. The more serious these two crises become without the revolutionary vanguard being capable of leading the working class to the overthrow of capitalism, the more the culture medium of the fascist germs ferments. Under these conditions, to counterpose defense of increasingly paralyzed bourgeois-parliamentary institutions in decomposition to the rise of fascism is to court certain defeat. Trotsky explained in this regard:

"Isn't the conclusion self-evident that, faced with difficulties and tasks too great for it, the democratic re-

gime is losing control? . . . The internal and external difficulties of the German nation have heated up the class struggle to the point where no one can or wants to subordinate it to parliamentary conventions. Some may regret this, bitterly reproach the extremist parties for their inclination toward violence, hope for a better future. But facts are facts. The wires of democracy cannot take too high a social voltage. Such are, however, the voltages of our time." (Ibid. pp. 267-68.)

For this reason, the *workers united front* against fascism turns entirely on the *extraparlimentary action of the workers*. The *defense* of the workers organizations against the fascist gangs is an indispensable precondition for strengthening the self-confidence, striking force, and combativity of the working class. That is why wanting to pass to "the offensive" so long as fascism is not driven back represents irresponsible chatter. But this defense *must unleash* a dynamic of anticapitalist offensive to render the antifascist struggle victorious:

"The task of demolishing fascism retains all its acuteness. The decisive battle of the proletariat against fascism will signal the simultaneous collision with the Bonapartist state apparatus. This makes the *general strike* an indispensable fighting weapon. It must be prepared. A special general strike plan must be worked out, that is, a plan for the mobilization of the forces to carry it out. Proceeding from this plan, a mass campaign must be unfolded, on the basis of which an agreement for carrying out the general strike under well-defined political conditions may be proposed to the Social Democracy. Repeated and made concrete at every new stage, this proposal will lead in the process of its development to the creation of the *soviets as the highest organs of the united front*." (Ibid. p. 321.)

And even more clearly:

"The logic of events is such that the struggle for 'parliament' and for 'democracy' becomes for every Social Democratic worker a question of *power*. Therein lies the main content of the whole conflict from the standpoint of the revolution. The question of power is the question of the revolutionary unity of the proletariat in action. A united front policy with respect to the Social Democracy must be pursued in the very near future to render possible, on the basis of proletarian democratic representation, the creation of class organs of struggle, i. e. of workers soviets."

Of course, Argentina in 1974 is not Germany in 1932. There are important differences in the social structure of the two countries, in the relative weight of the different social classes, and above all in the forms of organization, political tradition, and level of political class consciousness of the workers. But no "national particularity" can transform the Radical party of Mr. Balbin into a serious candidate for the organization of a general strike — not to mention workers councils — at the side of the workers organizations. Is it not obvious that Trotsky is defending a *different political orientation* in these propositions of struggle against the fascist threat through the workers united front leading to the united class action of the proletariat culminating in a general strike — different from the orientation that sees regular meetings with bourgeois parties, signing common declarations and communiqués with these parties, and organizing common meetings with these parties as the useful condi-

tion for "creating the kind of social consciousness and climate needed to defend civil liberties or condemn fascism" (Avanzada Socialista, July 4, 1974)?

Moreover, the comrades of the PST are caught in an additional contradiction. They heavily insist on the fact that they were and remain irremediably opposed to coalitions of the "popular front" type. Excellent resolve! But they seem to forget that the popular fronts were constituted in the 1930s exactly with the aim of "defending democratic rights" against the fascist threat. If not only *technical* agreements but also *political* agreements with liberal bourgeois parties are admissible for the defense not only of a specific democratic right but democratic rights in general, what remains of the basis of the revolutionary Marxist opposition to the "antifascist" policy of the popular front? Is it solely the fact that the popular front also contains a governmental program? Would it then become acceptable without such a program? If agreement with bourgeois parties to defend democratic rights in general is admissible, is it not even more admissible for regaining them where they have been suppressed? What then remains of the validity of the revolutionary Marxist opposition to the policy of "antifascist front" with the "liberal" bourgeoisie and its political parties, as followed by the Spanish CP, the Chilean CP, and the Uruguayan CP, to cite only three examples?

The question is not simply rhetorical. Already the PRT-U (Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores-Uruguay), a close political ally of the PST, has pronounced itself squarely in favor of such a front for the "reconquest of free elections":

"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 (1973) 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.*" (Prensa Obrera, March 11, 1974, quoted in Intercontinental Press, April 22, 1974, our emphasis.)

We are entitled to ask the comrades of the PST: Do you agree with this "bloc" with the liberal bourgeoisie for the "defense" or "conquest" of "free elections"? Is that the line that Trotsky defended as the orientation for the struggle against fascism and the threats of far-rightist dictatorship? Is that the orientation of the workers united front? Is not an urgent and complete self-criticism required in face of such dangerous confusion?

III.

Nevertheless, the seriousness of the error committed by the PST acquires an additional dimension when it is placed in the context of the concrete political situation that exists in Argentina today.

Revolutionary Marxists are unanimous in regarding the replacement of the military dictatorship of Lanusse by the return to power of the Peronists as being the result of the rise of an explosive mass movement that

began with the insurrectional general strike in Córdoba in 1969. We will add that the development of multiple forms of armed confrontation between the military bourgeois forces on the one hand and sectors of the masses as well as some groups of the vanguard on the other created for the bourgeoisie the clear danger of a civil war in which entire sections of the toiling masses would successively become engaged, a danger that precipitated its opting for a return to power of the Peronists.

By promoting the "process of institutionalization" through the "great national accord," the Argentine big bourgeoisie, supported by imperialism, pursued the essential aims of averting the risk of an overall confrontation between its army and the masses (which involved, moreover, a challenge to the internal cohesion of the army), of reestablishing control over the workers movement through the Peronist trade-union bureaucracy, of arresting the impetuous rise of workers struggles, and of relaunching the process of accumulation of capital thanks to the combination of reestablished "social peace" at home and precise operations abroad (search for investments from European and Japanese imperialism, search for new outlets in the bureaucratized workers states, development of an "Andes bloc" as a privileged market for Argentine industry vis-à-vis its Brazilian competitor, etc.).

But the sine qua non for the success of this Peronist project was the acceptance of "social peace" by the whole working class in exchange for "free elections" and some improvements in real wages in comparison with the worst periods of the military dictatorship. And the situation in the workers movement after the experience of the military dictatorship and after the Cordobazos was no longer one of integral control by the Peronist bureaucracy over all the workers. A growing number of workers—although still largely a minority on a national scale—were beginning to act independently both in certain regions (Tucumán and Córdoba, for example) and in certain sectors (the workers of the drafting industry, for example).

Under these conditions, the reestablishment of the Peronist regime inevitably involved a *growing violent and terrorist repression* not only against the Peronist far left and the groups engaged in guerrilla struggle, but also against all independent sectors of the workers movement and the working class. From the attacks against the Peronist youth *on the very day of Perón's return to Argentina* (the massacre at Ezeiza airport) to the raiding operations against union headquarters in October 1974, inclusive of the innumerable intervening bombing attacks and assassinations of leftist militants, this repression has in no way been a "riposte" to the "violence of the far left," as the open apologists and other mouthpieces of the bourgeoisie claim. *Rather, it is inscribed in the very logic of the project of the Great National Accord: reestablish "social peace" at any price and isolate—in order to crush them—the radicalized sectors of the working class and the petty bourgeoisie that are not submitting to the "social peace."* The resolution on Argentina adopted by the Tenth World Congress of the Fourth International (Fourth Congress since Reunification) affirmed in this regard:

"It is this very explosion of the internal conflicts of Peronism that has rapidly brought to light the unstable

character of the new period of bourgeois democracy. But beyond the internecine struggle within the Peronist movement, the escalation of actions by the parapolice gangs and the bureaucracy is aimed at dealing selective but effective blows against sectors of the social vanguard that refuse to accept the imperatives of capitalist 'national reconstruction.' The murder of militants, kidnappings, and the rightist attacks of various kinds are occurring at a rhythm never seen before, even under the military dictatorship. A curious 'democracy' that develops the white terror starting from the highest governmental circles! The selective repression, under the cover of the activity of the parallel gangs, is going to be completed by new repressive legislation on various levels."

That is exactly what has happened.

This "institutionalized" and systematic repression, under the direct control of López Rega, the "strongman" of the Peronist regime, reveals the hypocritical and fraudulent character of the declarations of the leading Peronists—yesterday General Perón and today Maria Estella Perón—according to which "the process of institutionalization" justifies no form of violence. Those who have made these declarations are tolerating, covering for, and justifying a systematic terror against the vanguard sectors of the working class and youth. The first duty of a revolutionary party in Argentina is to denounce this abject hypocrisy. The PST's participation in the institutionalized meetings between the government and the so-called center-left opposition on the contrary provides left cover for a political operation whereby the Peronist regime is seeking to *camouflage its responsibility* for the organization of an antiworker and antirevolutionary repression behind the shield of verbal declarations against "terrorism wherever it comes from." By publishing headlines in its newspaper like "Neither Guerrillas Nor Social Peace," by multiplying condemnations of "terrorism of the left and the right," by affirming that the "guerrillas create the pretext" for the unleashing of the rightist terror, the PST provides grist for the mill of the bourgeois propaganda to the effect that the fascist terror is the "product" of the "violence of the left" instead of denouncing the terrorist repression against the far left and the vanguard sectors of the working class as the logical and inevitable product of the Peronist project of reestablishing "social peace" at any price and of fostering class collaboration in a climate of exacerbation of the class struggle.

The PST's participation in the hypocritical comedy of "national harmonization" around support to the process of institutionalization organized by the Peronist regime is all the more fraught with consequences in that it allows the bourgeois press to distribute in millions of copies reports about the PST's *approval* of the government propaganda about the "union of all Argentines around democratic institutions and the unanimous condemnation of violence." And the statement made by Juan Carlos Coral at the "multisectoral meeting" of October 8, 1974, was not made to deny this propaganda. In the text of that statement, we read, notably:

"Asumiendo plenamente la cuota de responsabilidad que nos corresponde en el actual proceso político con la sinceridad con que siempre hemos expresado nuestros puntos de vista, y con la sinceridad que la misma

señora presidente nos reclamaba en su discurso inicial, hemos venido esta mañana a *repudiar* categoricamente todas las formas de terrorismo, todas las manifestaciones de violencia individual de grupos que se ejerzan al margen de la voluntad y las necesidades de *las masas*, y a repudiar también esa otra forma de violencia mas general y casi institucionalizada en nuestro país, que es el golpe de estado.

"Termino, señora, diciendo que nuestro partido considera útil esta forma de diálogo, que no tiene precedentes en el país. No pretendemos modificar con un discurso la política del gobierno, pero, seguramente, la señora presidente y los señores ministros habrán recogido algunas de las observaciones que hemos formulado.

"Sabemos que las limitaciones burguesas del gobierno le impedirán adoptar las medidas mínimas que nosotros reclamamos. Ni puede hacer la Reforma Agraria, ni puede expropiar los monopolios, ni puede modificar sustancialmente la relación de precios y salarios, ni podrá, seguramente, sancionar drásticamente los desbordes de la violencia fascista.

"El Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores seguirá luchando contra todos esos factores que crean el clima golpista, y luchará por la continuidad de este gobierno, porque fué elegido por la mayoría de los trabajadores argentinos y porque permite el ejercicio de algunas libertades democráticas que son, a su vez, una conquista de las movilizaciones obreras y populares que conmovieron país a partir del cordobazo." (Avanzada Socialista, October 17, 1974.)

("We fully assume the responsibility that devolves on us in the present political process with the sincerity with which we have always expressed our points of view and with the sincerity that Señora Presidente herself demanded of us in her opening speech; we have come this morning to categorically *repudiate* all forms of terrorism, all the manifestations of individual violence of groups that act apart from the desires and necessities of the masses, and to repudiate also that other, more general, almost institutionalized, form of violence in our country represented by coups d'etat.

("Finally, Señora, let us say that our party considers this form of dialogue, which is unprecedented in the country, to be useful. We do not hope to alter the government's policy with a speech; but surely Señora Presidente and the ministers have noted some of the observations we have formulated.

("We know that the bourgeois limitations of the government will prevent it from adopting the minimal measures that we are demanding. It cannot carry out the Agrarian Reform, cannot expropriate the monopolies, cannot substantially change the relations of prices and wages, nor, surely, will it be able to drastically restrict the incidents of fascist violence.

("The Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores will continue struggling against all those factors that create the putschist climate and will struggle for the continuity of this government, because it was elected by the majority of Argentine workers and because it permits the exercise of some democratic rights that, in turn, are conquests of the workers and peoples mobilizations that have shaken the country since the cordobazo.")

It is true that Coral's speech as reported in Avanzada

Socialista also contained a condemnation of the government's "passivity" in face of the murder of worker militants like those of the PST (a condemnation that was not reported in the bourgeois press). But the passages we have just quoted—like the accounts published in *Avanzada Socialista* according to which the president approached the PST delegates to express condolences for the losses in human life suffered by the PST and like the big headlines about the condemnation of the white terror by the oppositional delegates assembled at the multisectoral meeting—facilitate the Peronist government's camouflage and cover-up operation instead of exposing it. Coming on the eve of the proclamation of the state of siege, after the vote on antistrike laws, and after the greater and greater accentuation of terror against the PST itself, this manifestly serves the bourgeoisie and the Peronist regime more than it contributes to defending the PST against the violence of the far right or the attempt to outlaw the PST.

It is thus high time for the PST to reexamine and correct its policy of "support to the process of institutionalization." To take all the initiatives necessary to effectively defend its own legal status, the freedom of action of all the workers organizations, the total exercise of the right to strike and of trade-union democracy, and to

defend effectively its own leaders and militants, who are more and more threatened by the terror of the far right, the PST must resolutely orient itself toward the line of the workers united front and the propagation and carrying out in practice of self-defense by the workers organizations themselves against the fascist terror.

It is high time to put the main stress on the Peronist government's responsibility for the repression against the left and to avoid any false maneuver that serves in reality to hide this responsibility from the masses.

The Fourth International has a duty of political clarification to fulfill. We are convinced that this duty constitutes an aid for the comrades of the PST and not an attack on this sympathizing organization. But the principal task of the sections of the Fourth International at the present moment, given the situation that is developing in Argentina, is to arouse the workers movement and the toiling masses of all countries against the terror in Argentina, to the defense of the workers and revolutionary organizations that are victims of violent repression, both legal and extralegal, to the defense of the PST and the other sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International in Argentina. We are certain that our sections will not fail in this task. □

In Reply to the IMT's Open Letter No. 2

[The following statement by the Executive Committee of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Socialist Workers party), a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Argentina, was issued January 7, 1975. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Whose Responsibility?

1.

On July 26, 1974, the majority of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International published an "open letter" entitled "Whither the PST?"¹ which was directed to the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores. The objective of the statement was to try to show that the PST was following a class-collaborationist policy in clear violation of the principles of Trotskyism.

In a reply dated August 20, 1974, "In Defense of the PST and the Truth,"² we deplored the decision of the majority of the United Secretariat

to engage in a public attack on our party on matters that ordinarily would be discussed within the ranks of the world Trotskyist movement. We regretted that the action taken by the majority of the United Secretariat left us no recourse but to answer in public.

The majority of the United Secretariat was obviously disconcerted by our reply, which set the record straight, including criticizing ourselves for some mistakes we had made. But instead of closing the public debate on this subject and referring continuation of the dispute—if this was thought necessary—to the internal bulletins of the movement, the majority of the United Secretariat decided to publish another "open letter," which they apparently hope will prove less fragile than the first one. This was made public in the December 12, 1974, issue of *Inprecor*.³

We again express regret that the majority members of the United Secretariat have chosen to follow this course. They have assumed a grave responsibility.

We would like to stress the point all

the more since the majority members of the United Secretariat have chosen in their second open letter to misrepresent our stand. They state that it was "at the request of the PST" that the United Secretariat decided to continue the public discussion.

Nothing of the kind. We took the opposite position that the debate be internal.

In addition, we have been informed that a minority of the United Secretariat, that is, the representatives of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction, whose views we share, not only opposed the contents of the new statement but argued against continuing the discussion of this subject in public and warned that it could further damage the authority of the United Secretariat. They had taken the same position on the first open letter submitted by the majority of the United Secretariat, and they contended that the resulting exchange had confirmed their forecast.

The majority members of the United Secretariat, who adhere to the International Majority Tendency, the faction that gained a majority vote at the last world congress of the Fourth International, again rejected the advice of the LTF leaders. There is thus no question that the IMT leaders knowingly assumed responsibility for

1. For an English translation, see *Intercontinental Press*, September 9, 1974, p. 1145.—IP

2. For an English translation, see *Intercontinental Press*, January 20, 1975

continental Press, September 9, 1974, p. 1147.—IP

3. The text is published elsewhere in this issue of *Intercontinental Press*.—IP

opening and continuing this public attack on the PST.

Some Questions Best Discussed Internally

2.

Before proceeding to issues of greater substance, we would like to call attention to the tone of the new open letter. The IMT leaders accept in the most grudging way our explanation of why *Avanzada Socialista* mistakenly gave the impression that we had signed a document that also carried the signatures of the representatives of the Communist party and several bourgeois parties. If they found it inadvisable to criticize themselves for their suspicions, they would have done better to simply say no more and drop the matter.

Instead they decided to bring forward new grounds for throwing blame on us: "The comrades of the PST were invited to three successive meetings of the United Secretariat to explain their attitude toward the meeting and document of March 21, 1974. They did not attend any of these meetings."

The IMT leaders fail to mention that a representative of the United Secretariat visited Argentina. We explained to him how the error came to be made in *Avanzada Socialista*, and we thought that our explanation was accepted. No doubt we should have sent a formal written explanation.

However, why present such an organizational complaint to the public after acknowledging that we did not sign the famous document?

In return we would like to ask the IMT leaders to answer the following question: "In view of your recent interest in improving relations with us and making it easier to respond to your invitations to attend meetings of the United Secretariat, would it not be well to rectify your policy and end the ban you imposed on PST observers being present?"

We are referring to the fact that immediately after the last world congress and *before* we allegedly added our signatures to a class-collaborationist document, the leaders of the International Majority Tendency *specifically barred the PST from having observers present at meetings of the United Secretariat.*

This action, it is worth noting, was taken against the largest contingent of the world Trotskyist movement, a contingent organized moreover in the difficult conditions of a semicolonial country.

We would also like to ask the leaders of the IMT about another matter. An addendum dated July 12, 1974, was attached to Open Letter No. 1. The addendum accused us of having signed a second document like the first one we were alleged to have signed. The addendum specified the exact date of the supposed crime: "June 29, 1974." It accused us further of having signed a third document of similar class-collaborationist nature. The exact place, date, and circumstances were specified: "Santa Fe . . . July 3 . . . at the request of the president of the provincial chamber of deputies." Open Letter No. 2 grudgingly acknowledges our "affirmation" that we did not sign these documents.

Now we should like to ask: "Why, dear comrades, are you silent on your reasons for having included these fabrications in an official document of the Fourth International? Why do you refrain from offering a single word of explanation?"

We called attention in our reply of August 20, 1974, to the fact that the addendum to Open Letter No. 1 "was not considered at any meeting of the United Secretariat." It was never discussed or voted on by the United Secretariat. Yet it was presented to the public as part of an official document of the United Secretariat.

Just what is the explanation of that? Or do the leaders of the IMT consider the reasons to be so obvious as not to require any explanation even after attention has been called to it?

Was it, then, approved at a faction meeting held at an as yet undisclosed place and undisclosed date? Was it at such a meeting that a decision was made to use the name of the United Secretariat to lend authenticity to these concoctions found in the bourgeois press of Argentina?

The Real Issue— Guerrillaism Versus Trotskyism

3.

Let us turn now to the political arguments leveled against us by the

leaders of the IMT in their Open Letter No. 2.

The essence of these arguments is simple. It consists of lecturing us on the situation in Germany in the early thirties, citing numerous quotations from the writings of Leon Trotsky on the need for a united front of the mass proletarian organizations to fight German fascism, and accusing the PST of departing from the course outlined by Trotsky and seeking instead to organize a class-collaborationist front (i.e., a popular front) in the vain hope that in Argentina this will stem the assault of the ultrarightists and their backers in ruling circles.

First, on the quotations from Trotsky. We have no quarrel with them although we note that the selection is one-sided. We agree with Trotsky's analysis of the situation in Germany in the early thirties and his conclusions as to what ought to have been done there. His position, in fact, is not new to us. We recommend what Trotsky had to say on the German situation more than forty years ago to everyone interested in the problem of stemming an ultraright advance, above all in imperialist countries.

In particular we recommend to the IMT leaders that they themselves re-study Trotsky's writings on this subject, for they seem to have missed the main point Trotsky was making — that the purpose of forming a united front of the mass proletarian organizations is to mobilize the working class and its allies *by the millions* against the fascist threat.

Insofar as it is possible to compare the situation in Germany in the early thirties with the situation today in Argentina (we note the admission of the IMT leaders that "Argentina in 1974 is not Germany in 1932"), our objective has been the same as the one projected by Trotsky — *to help mobilize the masses by the millions to carry out a socialist revolution.*

It was by hewing to this objective that we were able to build the largest national organization of the world Trotskyist movement to date and to root it deeply in the Argentine working class and its trade unions. It was this concentration on the objective fought for by Trotsky that has assured such a high proletarian composition to the membership of the PST. No other sector of the international Trotskyist movement comes near the PST in this

respect. It is a fact that ought to be weighed in judging the political course we have followed.

Why did the leaders of the IMT happen to miss the main point in the quotations they cited from Trotsky? The explanation is that since the world congress of the Fourth International held in 1969 they have been partisans of guerrilla war, or, to use the label they prefer, "armed struggle in Latin America." It is adherence to this view that lies behind their public attack on the PST, for the PST stands as living evidence of the incorrectness of their position.

Because of numerical (not political) reasons, the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (Combatiente) was recognized at the 1969 world congress of the Fourth International as the official section in Argentina. The PRT (Combatiente) had in reality developed a guerrillaist deviation which it was soon to carry to extreme lengths, going so far as to set up a guerrilla force, the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo, that opened up "armed struggle" in complete isolation from the masses. Instead of seeking to rectify the guerrillaism of the PRT (Combatiente), the IMT leaders approved it. They held that its course was nothing less than a model application of the "turn" adopted by the majority at the 1969 world congress.

When the Socialist Workers party in the United States dissociated itself publicly in a mild way from one of the more flagrant departures of the ERP from Trotskyist principles, this dissociation was denounced by the leaders of the IMT as a gross violation of democratic centralism.

The official section in Argentina was never a Trotskyist organization, a fact that was fully known to the leaders of the IMT before the 1969 world congress. It adhered to Guevarism, Giapism, Maoism, and Kim Il Sungism. It held that the Fourth International harbored counterrevolutionaries in its ranks. It held that sectors of the Fourth International were redeemable but that a genuinely revolutionary international had yet to be built, and this was to be accomplished with the aid of other Latin American guerrilla groups plus the Cubans, the Chinese, and the Albanians.

Despite this, the IMT leaders continued to present the official section to the public as exemplary. They felt that its guerrilla actions more than compensated for its anti-Trotskyist politi-

cal positions.

It was not until the official section was on the verge of denouncing the Fourth International that the IMT finally ventured to formulate some criticisms of the course of the official section. Even then it kept its criticisms internal until the 1974 world congress.

The comradely procedure followed by the IMT leaders in relation to this anti-Trotskyist grouping stands in striking contrast to the way they have acted toward those who have sought to uphold the program of Trotskyism in Argentina.

During this same period, as mentioned above, we had to face the "normal" difficulties to be found in a semi-colonial country. In addition we had to face the complication of a guerrilla group that engaged in a highly provocative course and that was recommended to the public by the IMT leaders as a model of Trotskyism. Despite these difficulties we succeeded in building a relatively strong nucleus of revolutionary cadres.

The lesson and the result appears to us to be instructive. Nevertheless their significance was rejected by the IMT leaders. At the world congress in 1974 they reaffirmed "armed struggle" as the royal road in Latin America. Open Letter No. 2, like Open Letter No. 1, was written within the framework of this proguerrilla line and against the Trotskyist line followed by the PST for the past half decade in opposition to the guerrillaism of the former official section.

The real issue is thus guerrillaism versus Trotskyism. The questions of substance that have to be answered are: Is it possible to repeat the pattern of the Cuban revolution (as depicted by Guevara) elsewhere in Latin America or anywhere in the world? If so, what are the odds? Doesn't the guerrilla course followed by the Tupamaros and their kind amount to toying with insurrection, which was condemned long ago by the Marxist movement? Shouldn't the theory and practice of the guerrillas—despite the heroism displayed by many of them—be resolutely opposed as obstacles in the path of the proletarian revolution and the building of its vanguard party?

Instead of drawing the lessons that ought to be drawn, the IMT leaders prefer to follow a different course. By using dubious tidbits culled from the bourgeois press or bad formulations made by militants of the PST or the

staff of our press, they hope to persuade Trotskyists in other countries that we are crossing over to the side of the capitalist class.

If successful, this dubious enterprise would eliminate the need to determine just why the PST was able to score its notable gains and why the IMT made one of the worst blunders in the history of the Fourth International in supporting a Guevarist guerrilla group in Argentina, covering up its anti-Trotskyist views, and proclaiming it to be a model section of the world Trotskyist movement.

Why the Relentless Search for 'Proofs'?

4.

Appreciation of this background is a necessary requisite to understanding the differences held by the IMT leaders over our way of proceeding in defending democratic rights, trying to bolster Argentina's weak democratic institutions through mobilizing the masses in their defense, and fighting against the efforts of the ultraright to crush them.

For the Peronist and Guevarist guerrilla organizations, the political necessity of defending democratic rights and institutions hardly exists. They scorn bourgeois democracy. We, too, do not think it is much; that is why we propose to replace it with proletarian democracy. But we differ with such groups on whether bourgeois democracy (not the capitalist state that operates behind its façade) should be defended from attack by the ultraright. The formula of the guerrillas is to proceed, arms in hand, regardless of the situation—even if there are only a few dozen hands, even if the democratic institutions are threatened at the same time by powerful ultraright forces armed to the teeth and backed by a section of the army, and even if their guerrilla pinpricks, which they parade as "armed struggle," play into the hands of the foe as surely as if they had been planned by the rightists themselves.

The official section of the Fourth International held to this ultraleft view before it deserted; and, of course, it has maintained its ultraleft view and its ultraleft course ever since. The proguerrilla turn taken by the IMT at the world congress in 1969 and confirmed again in 1974 required adap-

tation to this ultraleftism. It is the ultra-left bias of the IMT leaders that prompts them in their Open Letter No. 2 to state that our way of defending democratic institutions leaves in question our attitude toward the *bourgeois state*. Only out and out Guevarists could have indicated more clearly the view that defense of democratic institutions against reactionary attacks equates to defense of the bourgeois state.

It is from this angle that the IMT leaders comb the Argentine bourgeois press and our publications for evidence to prove their thesis that the PST in defending democratic rights and institutions must inevitably slip, even if only "imperceptibly," toward a Kautskyist position of defending the bourgeois state. We will return to this point further on.

Trotsky on Importance of Defending Bourgeois Democracy in General and in the Colonial and Semicolonial Countries Specifically

5.

In the Imperialist Sector

In polemicizing against the ultra-lefts of his time on this question, Trotsky stressed the general importance of defending bourgeois democracy against reaction. The sectarians, he said, "refuse to draw a distinction between bourgeois democracy and fascism — as if the masses could help but feel the difference on every hand!" (*Transitional Program*.)

Trotsky continued: "Sectarians are capable of differentiating between but two colors: red and black. So as not to tempt themselves, they simplify reality. They refuse to draw a distinction between the fighting camps in Spain for the reason that both camps have a bourgeois character."

Trotsky spoke even more incisively against the ultra-lefts. Here is an example:

"These doctrinaires refuse to understand that we carry on half, three-quarters, or, in certain periods, even 99 percent of the preparation of the dictatorship *on the basis of democracy*, and in doing this we defend every inch of democratic positions under our feet. But if one can defend the democratic positions of the working class, then perhaps one may fight for them where they do not yet exist?"

"Democracy is a weapon of capitalism, our critics tell us; yes, but a contradictory one, just as capitalism as a whole is contradictory. Democracy serves the bourgeoisie, but within certain limits it can also serve the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. The unfortunate thing is that the Bordighists do not grasp democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat as historical institutions which can replace one another dialectically, but as two naked principles of which one embodies good, the other evil." (*Writings of Leon Trotsky* (1930-31), p. 135. Emphasis added.)

In taking this general position, Trotsky, of course, placed no confidence whatsoever in the capacity of the bourgeoisie or any sector of it to offer an effective defense of bourgeois democracy. In fact he warned over and over against placing any confidence in the bourgeoisie. Revolutionary Marxists must retain complete independence from the bourgeoisie, even if marching side by side with a sector of the bourgeoisie in struggling against fascism. That is why Trotsky insisted on the use of proletarian methods to defend bourgeois democracy.

It is important to understand why it is in the interests of the working class to defend bourgeois democracy against reaction. First of all, as one of the conquests of the revolution that overturned feudalism, it is a heritage that belongs to the working class. Secondly, the greater the degree of bourgeois democracy, the easier it is for the proletariat to strengthen its own institutions and to organize for the coming socialist revolution.⁴ Thirdly, it constitutes a point of departure for the extension of democracy into the economic structure that will occur under world socialism. Fourthly, the bourgeoisie, both big and little, are increasingly incapable of defending democracy — in actuality the upper layers of the bourgeoisie

4. Lenin considered this question in *State and Revolution*. Here is one of his formulations: "Engels's statement that in a democratic republic, 'no less' than in a monarchy, the state remains a 'machine for the oppression of one class by another' by no means signifies that the *form* of oppression makes no difference to the proletariat, as some anarchists 'teach'. A wider, freer and more open *form* of the class struggle and of class oppression vastly assists the proletariat in its struggle for the abolition of classes in general." (*Collected Works*, vol. 25, p. 454.)

tend more and more to turn against it; thus it devolves upon the proletariat to assume this task.

The necessity to defend bourgeois democracy against fascism constitutes one of the basic principles of the Trotskyist movement. Trotsky dealt extensively with this question not only in connection with the struggle in Germany but also with those in Austria, Spain, France, the United States, and other countries.

We come now to a crucial point. The leaders of the IMT apparently consider the example of Germany to be their most telling argument. That is why they offer such extensive quotations from Trotsky on the struggle against fascism in Germany. But they simply reveal how abstract their approach is. It is true that they admit, as we noted above, that "Argentina in 1974 is not Germany in 1932." But this is only an escape clause. In exactly what way is the Argentina of 1974 not the Germany of 1932? They are mute on this, stopping precisely where they ought to have begun if they were to consider the situation concretely to develop a correct policy under the given conditions in Argentina.

Besides stating the *general* position of revolutionary Marxism in relation to defending bourgeois democracy against reaction, Trotsky took into account the division of the capitalist world into imperialist powers and colonial and semicolonial countries. From this he derived a basic distinction within bourgeois democracy between *imperialist* democracy and *colonial and semicolonial* democracy. In the imperialist countries, finance capital turns from democracy to fascism as political need dictates. In the epoch of the death agony of capitalism, democracy in the imperialist powers becomes increasingly less substantial, and the ease with which finance capital resorts to a strong state or fascism becomes increasingly marked.

Colonial and Semicolonial Sector

In the colonial and semicolonial world, on the other hand, bourgeois sectors are to be found that will offer at least a certain resistance to imperialism. In doing this they sometimes turn to the masses for support, even if only partially and for a short time. Such uncompleted democratic tasks of the bourgeois revolution as *national independence* are thus thrust to the fore.

In Trotsky's time, a sector of the Mexican bourgeoisie under General Cárdenas provided an example that is still worth studying. Another example occurred later in Argentina under General Perón.

Such cases can be considered rather rare and also evanescent. But at certain times they can be quite important tactically. Much more common, of course, are the cases in which sectors of the bourgeoisie, giving way to the latifundists or their own fears of the proletariat, serve as local agencies of imperialism. The Pinochet regime in Chile provides a good current example.

The different weight that Trotsky gave to democracy in the imperialist and semicolonial countries is clearly outlined in the letter he wrote in 1938 to the Cuban paper *El País*:

"Democracy for Mexico, for instance, signifies the desire of a semicolonial country to escape from bonded dependence, to give land to the peasants, to lift the Indians to a higher level of culture, and so on. In other words, the democratic problems of Mexico have a progressive and revolutionary character. And what does democracy signify in Great Britain? The maintenance of what exists, that is, above all the maintenance of the rule of the metropolis over the colonies. The same is true in relation to France. The banner of democracy covers here the imperialist hegemony of the privileged minority over the oppressed majority." (*Writings of Leon Trotsky* (1938-39), second edition, p. 26.)

Trotsky was dealing in his letter with the struggle against fascism, and how this struggle in the semicolonial countries differs from that in the imperialist countries. He said among other things:

"In the same manner we cannot speak of fascism 'in general.' In Germany, Italy, and Japan, fascism and militarism are the weapons of a greedy, hungry, and therefore aggressive imperialism. In the Latin American countries fascism is the expression of the most slavish dependence on foreign imperialism."

Already we can see the insufficiency of the analogy drawn by the IMT leaders between the Germany of 1932 and the Argentina of 1974. The insufficiency is *qualitative*. It reduces the lesson of Germany to such a thin abstraction as to make it misleading if the utmost care is not used in ap-

plying it to the Argentine situation.

In the one case we are dealing with an imperialist power, in the other with a semicolonial country. The difference is decisive in determining the political course of the Trotskyists in each instance.

In Argentina we have to take into account as a prime element the struggle against a foreign imperialist power; and this affects the attitude that must be adopted toward the sector of the bourgeoisie that is inclined—however weakly and undependably—to resist imperialism and its most venal and brutal native agents. The struggle for national independence, a bourgeois democratic task, becomes one of our foremost considerations. In this our tasks differ from those of the Trotskyists in imperialist Germany, whether in 1932 or 1974.

How did the IMT leaders happen to leave this out of account in criticizing our course in Argentina? Was it just a lapse of memory ascribable to their lack of familiarity with the political problems of revolutionary Marxism in semicolonial countries?

Trotsky Explains the Difference

Let us listen to Trotsky a bit more on this question. In October 1938 he wrote an article dealing with the concessions granted by imperialist Britain to Hitler at Munich. In arguing in favor of a revolutionary defeatist policy in the imperialist democracies, Trotsky added the following proviso:

"All of this does not, of course, imply that there is no difference at all between democracy and fascism, or that this difference is of no concern to the working class, as the Stalinists insisted not so very long ago. Marxists have nothing in common with such cheap political nihilism. Only, it is necessary in each given instance clearly to comprehend the actual content of this difference, and its true limits.

"For the backward colonial and semicolonial countries, the struggle for democracy, including the struggle for national independence, represents a necessary and progressive stage of historical development. It is just for this reason that we deem it not only the right but also the duty of workers in these countries actively to participate in the 'defense of the fatherland' against imperialism, on condition, to be sure, that they preserve the complete independence of their class or-

ganizations and conduct a ruthless struggle against the poison of chauvinism. Thus, in the conflict between Mexico and the oil kings and their executive committee, which is the democratic government of Great Britain, the class conscious proletariat of the world sides wholly with Mexico (this does not of course apply to the imperialist lackeys at the head of the British Labour Party).

"As regards advanced capitalism, the latter has long since outgrown not only the old property forms but also the national state, and in consequence bourgeois democracy as well. The fundamental crisis of contemporary civilization lies precisely here. Imperialist democracy is putrefying and disintegrating. A program of 'defense of democracy' for the advanced countries is a program of reaction. The only progressive task here is the preparation of the international socialist revolution. Its aim is to smash the framework of the old national state and build up the economy in accordance with geographic and technological conditions, without medieval taxes and duties." (*Writings of Leon Trotsky* (1938-39), second edition, pp. 64-65.)

Note what a sharp line Trotsky draws between the defense of bourgeois democracy in the colonial and semicolonial countries and its defense in the imperialist countries. In the one case it is "necessary and progressive"; in the other, it is a "program of reaction."

Lest he be misunderstood, Trotsky in the very next paragraph indicates that even in the imperialist countries, revolutionists are duty bound to defend democracy against its domestic foes:

"Again, this does not imply an attitude of indifference toward the current political methods of imperialism. In all cases where the counterrevolutionary forces tend to pull *back* away from the decomposing 'democratic' state and towards provincial particularism, towards monarchy, military dictatorship, fascism—the revolutionary proletariat without assuming the slightest responsibility for the 'defense of democracy' (it is indefensible!) will meet these counterrevolutionary forces with armed resistance, in order, if successful, to direct its offensive against imperialist 'democracy.'

"This policy, however, is applicable only with regard to internal conflicts,

that is, in those cases where the struggle really involves the issue of a political regime, as was for instance the case in Spain. The participation of Spanish workers in the struggle against Franco was their elementary duty. But precisely and only because the workers did not succeed in time in replacing the rule of bourgeois democracy with their own rule, 'democracy' was able to clear the path for fascism."

Case of Haya de la Torre

Trotsky did not write extensively on the problems of the Latin American revolution. It was not until his residence in Mexico that he gained firsthand acquaintance with these problems and some of the political personalities. The conditions of his political asylum in Mexico further restrained him from writing freely. From what he did write, it is clear that he was reaching insights of increasing concreteness. That he did not have the opportunity to write more on this subject was among the great losses our movement suffered from his untimely death.

Despite the tantalizing brevity of the material, we would like to call attention to his attitude toward Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre, the head of the Peruvian APRA movement. Referring to a letter by Haya de la Torre published in the August 1938 issue of the Argentine review *Claridad*, Trotsky said:

"We won't apply either a Marxian or socialist criterion to this document; Haya de la Torre wrote the letter as a democrat and we shall consider it from that angle, primarily from the democratic point of view. A good democrat is better than a bad socialist, but precisely from this point of view, the letter of Haya de la Torre has great limitations." (*Writings of Leon Trotsky* (1938-39), second edition, p. 101.)

Haya de la Torre, Trotsky explains, sees the dangers threatening Latin America not in "imperialism in general" but in only "one of its varieties, fascism." The APRA leader voices confidence in the United States. Trotsky, in contrast, sees the United States as "the most immediate danger and, in a historical sense, the most threatening."

Trotsky offers an example of what he is referring to: "The relations between Washington and Rio de Janeiro

have not become worse but indeed have improved after the coup d'etat in Brazil. The reason is that Washington considers the Vargas dictatorship a more docile and sure tool of American imperialist interests than revolutionary democracy. This basically is the position of the White House in regard to the whole southern continent."

Throughout his criticism, Trotsky refrains from demanding that Haya de la Torre take a revolutionary-socialist stand. ". . . we limit ourselves to purely democratic criteria."

Trotsky does demand, however, that Haya de la Torre, as a democrat, take a consistent stand: ". . . democratic politics demands clarity."

What is most instructive in the way Trotsky addresses Haya de la Torre is his basic assumption (the progressive nature of the struggle for bourgeois democracy in the colonial and semicolonial world), and the issue he singles out (the struggle against imperialism). He criticizes Haya de la Torre on his inconsistency as a bourgeois democrat—he ought to be a good one, that is, above all take a clear stand in opposition to American imperialism, the oppressor of Peru.

In a follow-up, in which he answers a defender of Haya de la Torre, Trotsky says further: "The democrat in France and the United States cannot, naturally, be a revolutionist; he is for the maintenance of the existing system; he is a conservative. But the democrat of a backward country, who finds himself under the double oppression of imperialism and police dictatorship, as is the case in Peru, cannot but be a revolutionist if he is a serious and logical democrat." The reproach registered against Haya de la Torre is over "his position as a defender of democracy and not because he doesn't appear to be a socialist in his programmatic letter." Haya de la Torre is an "illogical democrat." (*Writings of Leon Trotsky* (1938-39), second edition, p. 183.)

Practical Agreements

Further on in the same article, Trotsky touches on the question of practical agreements with bourgeois democrats in semicolonial countries:

"Revolutionary Marxists can conclude practical agreements with democrats, but precisely with those who are *revolutionary*, that is to say, with those who rely on the masses and

not on the protecting hen. [A reference to the description by Lombardo Tolando, the Mexican Stalinist trade-union leader, of the imperialist United States as a hen protecting its Latin American chicks.] APRA is not a socialist organization in the eyes of the Marxist because it is not a class organization of the revolutionary proletariat. APRA is an organization of bourgeois democracy in a backward, semicolonial country."

Trotsky places the APRA in the same category as the Russian populists and the Chinese Kuomintang. "The Russian populists were much richer in doctrine and 'socialist' phraseology than APRA. However, that did not hinder them from playing the role of petty-bourgeois democrats, even worse, *backward* petty-bourgeois democrats, who did not have the strength to carry out purely democratic tasks in spite of the spirit of sacrifice and heroism of their best combatants." The Russian populists proved to be "prisoners of the liberal bourgeoisie—this good hen who protects her little ones—and they betrayed the peasants at the decisive moment during the 1917 revolution. It is impossible to forget that historical example. A democrat who sows confidence in imperialist 'guardians' can only bring bitter illusions to oppressed peoples."

Trotsky's interest in Haya de la Torre as a representative of bourgeois democracy in a semicolonial country suggests a further line of thought. Trotsky's criticism of Haya de la Torre centered on his inconsistency. What about the case of *consistent* bourgeois democrats in countries like Peru? Can any such cases be found? We grant that they are few and far between. Bourgeois democrats who display varying degrees of inconsistency constitute the average. Nevertheless we would offer as an exhibit Fidel Castro.

Case of Fidel Castro

Castro began from a petty-bourgeois position (his description) dedicated to struggling for the restoration of bourgeois democracy in Cuba. The consistency of Castro's position in favor of bourgeois democracy was shown not so much by his decision to resort to the use of arms—that was a tactical question—as by his struggle for a thoroughgoing agrarian reform. To carry that out demanded, in turn, op-

position to U. S. imperialism; and that entailed struggling for national independence, a bourgeois-democratic task.

Castro demonstrated the consistency of his bourgeois-democratic position by following this road to the end; that is, mobilizing the masses, establishing a workers and peasants government, and by means of that instrument establishing a workers state.

As has been pointed out many times by the Trotskyist movement, the logic of the course followed by Castro was the logic of the permanent revolution.

Castro himself was such a consistent democrat that in pursuing his course to the end he had to admit that he had gone beyond bourgeois democracy. With some reluctance, he said that the Cuban revolution was socialist in character.

This instructive example should show us how completely consistent it was of Trotsky from a revolutionary-socialist point of view to take an attitude toward bourgeois democracy and its protagonists in the colonial and semicolonial world quite different from the attitude he took toward bourgeois democracy and its protagonists in the imperialist countries. Trotsky's contrasting attitudes were different in principle, deriving from his analysis showing the world to be divided into three sectors (imperialist, colonial-semicolonial, and workers states).

In Argentina all of our work touching on this question has been governed by adherence to Trotsky's line of reasoning.

Criticisms addressed to us should be directed to how well we have succeeded in keeping that concept alive and applying it in practice, not to how well we have conformed to a sectarian concept that would have us apply in Argentina an attitude relevant to the imperialist sector.

Our Opposition to Peronism

6.

On the most salient peculiarity of Argentine politics—the Peronist movement—we are unable, unfortunately, to turn to Trotsky for advice. Peronism developed after his death. Again unfortunately, outside of our own efforts, little is to be found on this question in the literature of the world Trotskyist movement.

The main characteristics of Peronism can be specified as follows: Its

base consists of the most powerfully organized labor movement in Latin America, one that has resisted every effort up to now to crush it. Its most contradictory feature is the difference between this base and its leadership—a bourgeois figure who exercised control through a conservative trade-union bureaucracy. A further characteristic was that Perón, somewhat like General Cárdenas, represented a sector of the Argentine bourgeoisie willing (up to a certain point) to adopt independent attitudes toward imperialism, including specifically the colossus north of the Rio Bravo [Rio Grande].

The Peronist movement thus presented an unusually complex problem for the revolutionary Marxist movement. On the one hand the ranks consisted of the most militant sectors of the working class that had to be gained to the cause of the socialist revolution. On the other hand appeals to the ranks had to bear constantly in mind their devotion to Perón, which was based on genuine concessions granted to the working class during his first regime.

In trying to demystify the image of Perón, it was necessary to take into account his resistance to imperialism, which, for Argentina, as we have seen, was a key issue. The task was made still more difficult by the success of U.S. imperialism in toppling Perón in 1955, in exiling him, and in replacing his regime by one that Washington considered to be a "more docile and sure tool," as Trotsky observed of the Vargas dictatorship in Brazil.

Perón in exile was regarded with reverence by the Argentine working class as a whole. We had no choice but to keep this feeling in mind in all our efforts to educate the class and help it move along the lines of independent political action. To have acted in any other way would have barred us from getting a hearing.

Throughout the long years of Peronism, the small nucleus that later expanded into the PST persevered along this course. Whatever errors were made—and we are aware that we made some—we think the attitude we took toward Peronism was in correspondence with the principles outlined by Trotsky.

After a decade and a half of regimes whose main objective was to please Washington, a new chapter was opened in Argentine politics in 1969. In Córdoba and other cities the workers took to the streets in massive dem-

onstrations that shook the military regime to its foundation. The rank and file of the Peronist movement was on the march.

In our participation in these events, we sought to follow the method proposed by Trotsky in the *Transitional Program*: the coordination and extension of mass actions, the development of militant strikes, the projection of bold initiatives and slogans that in their logic transcend capitalism. With our small forces we could not exercise a direct leadership role—most of the mass actions at the time were spontaneous—but we began to grow at a rate we had never before experienced, and we took this as a good indication that we were on the right road.

Why Peron Was Brought Back

7.

The nationwide upsurge of the working class symbolized by the Cordobazo precipitated a political crisis for the Argentine ruling class. To meet this crisis they felt compelled to make some concessions to the working class, the most important of which was restoration of at least some democratic rights.

Granting that the weakness of Argentine capitalism, coupled with the pressure of U.S. imperialism, precluded this constituting anything more than a democratic *interlude*, what should our attitude be toward this opening? We decided that we ought to take full advantage of it. That meant doing everything possible to extend democracy and to *institutionalize*, that is, strengthen it. Above all, it meant opening an intensive struggle to gain legal recognition for our party.

And that was the course we followed. In our opinion, it represented the consistent application of the basic principles of Trotskyism in a semicolonial country, specifically Argentina at a particular moment.

The Argentine ruling class, of course, intended to withdraw its concessions as soon as possible. The tactical prescription was to bring back General Perón, making this out to be an additional concession to the masses.

The chief aim of putting Perón back into the Casa Rosada was to divert the masses from taking the road of socialist revolution. Once this im-

mediate goal had been achieved, the democratic concessions would be undermined and chipped away until conditions again became propitious for another phase of open military rule or something still more oppressive, if that proved necessary. It can be taken for granted that the State Department and the CIA were privy to this blueprint and approved it, as their public posture indicated.

Perón himself began the process of hemming in the newly won democratic rights and striking blows at the political opposition that stood to gain by them. With his death, the process was considerably speeded up. The success of Pinochet in Chile helped in this.

The general political situation in Argentina, briefly put, was as follows: By proletarian methods, i. e., strikes, demonstrations, extraparliamentary methods, etc., the working class made big strides forward beginning with 1969. Because of Peronism, these actions were blocked from immediately opening up a socialist revolution. Leveling off at a plateau for the moment, they became registered primarily as gains for bourgeois democracy.

The Cordobazo and similar outbursts, it is quite clear, gave an impulse to the realization of tasks belonging to the bourgeois democratic revolution, and this occurred *against the will and the efforts of the Argentine bourgeoisie*.

In this respect, Trotsky's theory of the permanent revolution was again confirmed. Likewise confirmed was the position of the PST in assiduously trying to advance the socialist revolution along *this road*, the road actually taken by the living class struggle in sovereign disregard of the schemas and dogmas of the guerrillas and their well-wishers.

What We Actually Said

8.

We have outlined the concrete circumstances we faced and the course we have followed to show how earnestly we have sought to uphold the principles of Trotskyism and to apply them in practice. Permit us to repeat that criticisms of our work ought to be directed either against the principles we chose to follow or to the gap between what we could have achieved and what we actually accomplished.

But that is not the case with the leaders of the IMT.

They do not take up what Trotsky taught our movement concerning the correct course to be followed in semi-colonial countries like ours. We do not know whether they agree with Trotsky or not. If they think that Trotsky was mistaken, or that his positions have been outmoded by the theories of the practitioners of guerrilla war, it would greatly facilitate the discussion if they would state their views. However, they simply say nothing. Is it because they regard Trotsky's views on how to conduct the revolutionary struggle in semicolonial countries as irrelevant? Or insufficient?

Much of the argumentation of the leaders of the IMT is aimed at proving that we have abandoned Trotskyism and that we are proceeding like Social Democrats or a comparable variety of class collaborationists.

This explains why they disregard the many statements of our views published in our press on a weekly basis over the years concerning our opposition to Peronism, to the Peronist regime, to the capitalist state, to the capitalist parties, and to our defense of the rights of the guerrillas despite our opposition to their anti-Marxist, anti-Leninist, and anti-Trotskyist course.

Why, in attacking us, do the leaders of the IMT rely so heavily on falsifications in the bourgeois press (as they did in Open Letter No. 1) unless they believe that the bourgeois press presents a more honest view of where we stand than our own publications and statements?

This view accounts for the extraordinary importance they place on isolated errors we have made. And it explains why they read into some of our statements the opposite of what we clearly mean.

Above all, the view that we have in actuality become reformists, while trying to cover it up, would explain the strange selection of quotations from our press and the way they are presented. As an example of this, let us take the main quotation they use in Open Letter No. 2 in their effort to establish a case against us.

They quote four paragraphs from the statement made by Comrade Juan Carlos Coral at the "multisectoral" meeting held October 8, 1974, with Perón's widow, the current president of Argentina. They state that they took these four paragraphs from the text

of the statement published in the October 15, 1974, issue of *Avanzada Socialista*.⁵

The first paragraph quoted by them does not read the same as the text published in *Avanzada Socialista*. The IMT leaders were either incapable of copying correctly, or they used a different text—maybe one taken from their favorite source, the Argentine bourgeois press.

Fortunately, the differences are not substantial ones. Unfortunately, the IMT leaders do not quote the entire paragraph. The first half was sufficient for their purposes.

We now come to the subsequent three paragraphs quoted by them. These consist of an accurate reproduction of the final three paragraphs of Coral's statement (save for one change that seems to have been introduced to correct his usage of the Spanish language). *The IMT leaders give no indication whatsoever that something came between the first sentences quoted by them and these last three paragraphs.*

This "something" consists of nothing less than 136 centimeters of type; that is, all of Coral's statement except the opening and closing sentences.

It is hard to know exactly which of Comrade Coral's phrases were considered by the IMT leaders to be the worst, but the following two probably come high on the list: ". . . will struggle for the continuity of this government, because it was elected by the majority of the Argentine workers. . . ."

In isolation the phrases can be given an invidious implication by opponents searching for ammunition. Considered in the context of our general policy, their meaning is quite plain, and completely in the tradition of the Trotskyist movement.

1. ". . . will struggle for the continuity of this government. . . ." That is, we will fight against its being toppled by a reactionary coup d'état, although we have no political confidence in this government and will continue to oppose it from a revolutionary-socialist point of view. Our position is comparable *in general* to the one advocated by Trotsky in Spain during the civil war there. Naturally, our *concrete* position corresponds to the

5. For an English translation of the full text, see *Intercontinental Press*, January 13, 1975, pp. 28-30. — IP

situation in Argentina today.

2. ". . . because it was elected by the majority of the Argentine workers. . . ." That is, our party will abide by the will of the majority of the working class and popular masses. In our opinion, the workers are mistaken in placing political confidence in a bourgeois government. Despite this mistaken attitude, caused by illusions in Perón, we will submit to majority will in our course of action (but not in our political views). We hope to win this majority to our program. Our method of doing this is outlined in the *Transitional Program*. Until we have won that majority, we are opposed to actions that play with insurrection. This includes violent *minority* actions, guerrilla war, or other "exemplary" deeds carried out by a handful of individuals divorced from the masses.

Understood in this context, it is quite clear that these "damning" phrases do not depart from Trotskyist principles.

The authors of Open Letter No. 2 admit that Coral's speech, "as reported in *Avanzada Socialista*," also contained "a condemnation of the government's 'passivity' in face of the murder of worker militants like those of the PST (a condemnation that was not reported in the bourgeois press)." But "the passages we have just quoted . . . facilitate the Peronist government's camouflage and cover-up operation instead of exposing it."

By judiciously selecting and fixing up quotations in this way, it is possible to prove anything. It is even possible to prove that while the headquarters of the PST were being smashed and its militants murdered, the leaders of the PST were so caught up in class collaborationism and were of such low political level as to engage in a tactic that "manifestly serves the bourgeoisie and the Peronist regime more than it contributes to defending the PST against the violence of the far right or the attempt to outlaw the PST."

It must be admitted that this is consistent with the view of the leaders of the IMT that the growth of the PST into the largest sector of the world Trotskyist movement is to be explained by the low political level of those Argentine workers and youth who have become acquainted with our press, our activities, and our political positions and therefore signed up as

members.

What brazenness was required to reduce the content of Coral's statement to the few sentences that the IMT leaders thought would best prejudice the PST in the eyes of the world Trotskyist movement can be judged from the fact that on the very same two-page center spread in *Avanzada Socialista* featuring the statement, an editorial denounced the butchery of Coral's words committed by the bourgeois press. The editorial, entitled "Struggle Against the Coup Without Supporting the Government,"⁶ stressed once again the opposition of the PST to the Peronist regime. The editorial explained why, in face of this opposition along class lines, we nevertheless considered that a military coup would signify a political defeat for the Argentine working class.

The editorial reaffirmed the stand we had previously taken on the multi-sectorial meeting in the form of a statement by the Executive Committee of the PST distributed in mimeographed form at the meeting. It was surely known to the leaders of the IMT, since it was published in the October 10, 1974, issue of *Avanzada Socialista*.⁷ The leaders of the IMT had their own good, or at least sufficient, reasons for ignoring the analysis of the multi-sectorial meeting that appeared in that issue along with the text of the statement of the Executive Committee of the PST that was presented at the meeting. Here are the opening paragraphs of the statement:

"Our party is attending this meeting, as we did previous meetings between the government and other parties and organizations. Not because we aspire to, or believe in, the possibility of a 'national unity'—which is impossible between antagonistic social classes—but because we want to defend the democratic liberties won at a heavy price by the masses in the fight that began with the Cordobazo.

"The fundamental purpose of such democratic rights is to ensure respect for the right of the masses to decide what government they want—which in this case is the Peronist government—and the fundamental respect for the right of all political forces to present their ideas to the masses.

6. For an English translation, see *Intercontinental Press*, January 13, 1975, pp. 30-31. —IP

7. See footnote No. 9.

Thus, we unhesitatingly condemn any attempt at a coup designed to bring down the current government, which has been elected by the majority of the working class.

"Starting with June 12, when the social tensions caused by the failure of the Social Pact came out into the open, provoking a resignation threat from the deceased President Perón, a period began in the country that has been marked by a threat hanging over our heads—a threat that the forces of oligarchic-imperialist reaction, the same elements that had to begin a retreat after the Cordobazo, were trying for a comeback by means of a new 1955.

"This threat, which if realized would mean the worst kind of defeat for the country and the workers, is real because the lukewarm nationalist measures and the relatively independent foreign policy line adopted by the government have not touched the powerful economic and political bases that imperialism maintains in the country."

The statement carefully distinguishes between the fascist-minded terrorists of the ultraright and the revolutionary-minded guerrillas of the ultraleft:

"We did not have to wait until the situation reached its present gravity to express our condemnation—in the name of the working class and socialism—of guerrilla warfare isolated from the masses. We have consistently opposed that desperate resort, which has been taken at times in the name of a socialist ideal and at others as a tactic designed to apply political pressure. Normally this kind of action ends up sowing the worst type of confusion in the ranks of the workers, as well as opening up the way for the most indiscriminate repression. In this case it has promoted a militarization of the country that may lead very far, that may lead ultimately to eliminating the increasingly limited democratic freedoms that the masses won by their struggles.

"But these condemnations of the guerrilla operations must not be used to cover up the causes that provoked this phenomenon nor to whitewash the fascist gangs by lumping their activity together with that of the guerrillas under some general common heading.

"We recognize perfectly the differences between the present government and the dictatorial forms that preceded it and threaten to return. We recog-

nize that guerrilla actions and terrorism promote putschism. We proclaim our determination to fight against any attempt to topple the government by a coup. At the same time, we must point out the responsibility for this situation that falls on the government because of its retreat on democratic rights, which began May 25, 1973."⁸

Here are some sentences from the statement's indictment of the government for its role in the deteriorating situation:

"The attack on democratic rights is shown by the absolute impunity with which the fascist gangs act. It now culminates in the passage of the State Security Law, which contains articles designed to repress the guerrillas and uses their activity as a pretext to institute repression of strikes and leftist currents.

"This rightist course of the government, followed by its four presidents, has in itself achieved many of the objectives that a reactionary coup might shoot for. This course in our country has been an expression of the same evolution that has led to brutal repression of our brothers in another part of the Southern Cone. Continuing this orientation cannot lead anywhere but to a 'cold coup' born in the belly of the very regime in power, a reactionary take-over which, through a Bonapartist dictatorship, will end up suffocating the democratic possibilities of the parliamentary regime."⁹

We think it high time that the leaders of the IMT begin to present to the Fourth International as a whole the "unedited" texts of our declarations expressing our political positions. Every member of the world Trotskyist movement ought to be able to draw an individual conclusion on the basis of accurate, and not truncated, biased, and distorted presentations of our positions.

We propose, therefore, that the IMT leaders meet their responsibility by giving international circulation not only to this reply but to the full text of the speech made by Comrade Coral at the multisectorial meeting, the edi-

8. May 25, 1973, was the date Hector Campora was sworn in as Peron's surrogate in the presidency. — *IP*

9. For an English translation of the full text and the accompanying analytical article, see *Intercontinental Press*, October 28, 1974, pp. 1419-22. — *IP*

torial analysis of the meeting published in the October 15, 1974, issue of *Avanzada Socialista*, and the Executive Committee statement published in the October 10, 1974, issue of *Avanzada Socialista*.

Let the ranks of the Fourth International read all the material and judge for themselves.

False Accusations Based on False Premises

9.

We turn now to arguments made by the leaders of the IMT that we have not yet dealt with.

'Superior' Democracy Vs. 'Inferior' Fascism

IMT accusation: "We reject the Social Democratic policy of lesser evilism according to which the workers are supposed to defend 'superior' or 'better' bourgeois 'forms of government' against 'less good' or 'inferior' forms of government."

PST reply: We, too, reject the Social Democratic view that socialism can be won by reforming capitalism through parliamentary measures until it has been legislated out of existence; and, as part of that view, of backing for office the least evil of whatever bourgeois alternatives are placed before the electorate. The Social Democratic view means placing *political confidence* in bourgeois democracy.

We are likewise against the ultraleft sectarian policy of refusing to defend bourgeois democracy against fascist attack. The fascist offensive is carried on outside of parliament, and the working class must meet this attack in a similar way.

The innuendo made by the IMT leaders brings to mind a quotation cited by Trotsky in an article he wrote during the Spanish civil war (September 14, 1937). The quotation, from a resolution submitted by the Joerger-Salemme group, an ultraleft sectarian tendency in the Socialist Workers party, was as follows:

"The Social Democrats who criminally preferred the victory of Hindenburg to that of Hitler, and got both, or the Stalinists who preferred Roosevelt to Landon, are no more politically degenerate than the Cannons and Shachtmans who prefer the victory of the Negrins over the Francos and will get either a Negrin military dictatorship or a Negrin-Franco truce."

(*The Spanish Revolution (1931-39)*, p. 287.)

Trotsky said in reply:

"The civil war between Negrin and Franco does not signify the same thing as the electoral competition of Hindenburg and Hitler. If Hindenburg had entered into an open *military* fight against Hitler, then Hindenburg would have been a 'lesser evil.' We do not choose the 'greater evil,' we choose the 'lesser evil.'" (Ibid., p. 287.)

In the concrete situation in Germany, in which the differences did not extend beyond the parliamentary arena, "To support Hindenburg against Hitler meant to give up political independence." (Ibid., p. 287.)

Trotsky continued: "To affirm that to fight together with the Negrin forces against Franco is the same as to vote for Hindenburg against Hitler is an expression, I am sorry to say, of what is known as parliamentary cretinism. The war against fascism cannot be resolved by parliamentary means because fascism is an army of reaction that can be crushed only by force. That's why we were against the policy of the Social Democrats in Germany — the pure parliamentary combination with Hindenburg against Hitler. We called for the creation of workers' militias, etc. But here we do have a fight against fascism. It is true that the general staff of the 'democratic' army is capable of tomorrow making a truce with Franco, but it is not a fact today. And we can't overlook the real events. Tactically we must use the war of the republicans against the fascists for the purpose of a strategic aim: the overthrow of the capitalist regime." (Ibid., p. 288.)

In the cases of both Germany and Spain, the analogies with Argentina are of but limited usefulness. Insofar as they do apply, they plainly speak in favor of the policy followed by the PST, which was neither Social Democratic nor ultraleft, but in the tradition defended by Trotsky.

Support Gains, Not Limitations

IMT accusation: On the PST's support of the struggle to institutionalize democratic rights: "Obviously, this includes parliamentary elections, the parliament, the bourgeois state apparatus, the government that comes out of these elections, etc. And Marxist-Leninists know that these institutions *also involve* defending bourgeois property, capitalist exploitation, and the appa-

ratus of repression devoted to this defense."

PST reply: Obviously, the IMT leaders are disregarding the implications of their arguments. Marxist-Leninists consider themselves to be heirs to the gains of the bourgeois democratic revolution, not its limitations, still less its retrogressive features in the epoch of the death agony of capitalism.

For instance, in the United States Marxist-Leninists are duty bound to defend and attempt to extend the Bill of Rights which has been institutionalized in the bourgeois constitution of that country. That does not mean that they thereby become involved in defending bourgeois property, which is sanctified in that same constitution.

To take a contrary position would also involve defending the sectarian rejection of the positive features of bourgeois democracy, a position scored by Trotsky. True, such a sectarian position is held by some of the guerrillas in Argentina, but that is hardly a recommendation for discarding the Trotskyist stand.

Yes, the Capitalist State Is Bad

IMT accusation: "It is true that the PST's August 20, 1974, declaration pronounces itself against any political support to a bourgeois regime or coalition. That is really the least one can demand from an organization that claims allegiance to Trotskyism. But the rejection of 'support to the policy of a bourgeois regime' combined with 'support to the process of institutionalization,' that is, the consolidation and strengthening of the institutions of bourgeois-parliamentary democracy, leaves the question of the PST's attitude toward the *bourgeois state* completely open. And it is that question that lies at the center of the controversy."

PST reply: We disagree that this is the question that lies at the center of the controversy. What is central in our opinion, is the question of guerrillism versus Trotskyism.

Aside from that, it is fallacious to argue that our defense of bourgeois democracy against attack by fascists and their kind leaves our attitude on the bourgeois state "completely open." The argument should really be directed against Trotsky. It was he who maintained that the struggle for bourgeois democracy in a semicolonial country is progressive and revolutionary. We only followed him in this.

Was Trotsky wrong? Did his view

on this question leave "completely open" his attitude toward the bourgeois state? Or have the leaders of the IMT left themselves completely open on the question of their attitude toward ultraleft sectarianism?

We oppose the capitalist state and support whatever democracy exists in Argentina. Is this position right or wrong?

The Slander on 'Political Accords'

IMT accusation: On temporary practical agreements with "bourgeois liberals" in defense of democratic rights: "The August 20, 1974, document of the Executive Committee of the PST appears to say the same thing. But in sliding from the question of an occasional technical agreement for the defense of a particular democratic right to the search for an agreement with the 'liberal' bourgeoisie for the defense of democratic rights in general, the statement passes imperceptibly to the search for political accords for the defense of the institutions of bourgeois parliamentary democracy."

PST reply: Neither in our statement nor anywhere else have we passed "imperceptibly," perceptibly, or in any other way, into searching for political accords. This is a slander. Not a shred of evidence can be cited to support it, unless one considers the tortured reasoning of the IMT leaders to be "proof."

In our long struggle to convince the vanguard of the Argentine working class of the necessity for independent political action, we have always been alert to the importance of our own example. Besides that, we did not care to commit political suicide.

In seeking allies in this struggle we have always sought practical objectives such as the defense of political prisoners, and, above all, concrete actions that, from our point of view, would help mobilize the masses.

It is true that our tactics and attitude have been different from that required in an imperialist country like France, Belgium, Germany, or the United States. That was because we paid attention to Trotsky's admonition concerning the difference between democrats in imperialist countries and those in colonial and semicolonial countries.

Again we ask the leaders of the IMT, was Trotsky wrong in teaching us this?

What 'Institutionalized' Meetings?

IMT accusation: "Now, the meetings in which the PST has been participating in no way had as their objective engaging in practical actions for the defense of a given democratic right, a given conquest of the working class. It was a matter of meetings to affirm — in the presence of the government — the defense of the 'process of institutionalization.' Moreover, regular meetings with the bourgeois opposition parties and the CP are in turn becoming institutionalized meetings. In political terms, that is called an interclass political bloc against all those who 'resort to violence' in Argentina and who thereby threaten the 'process of institutionalization.'"

PST reply: Let us separate out the various ingredients of this mishmash.

1. Our objectives from the beginning have been to initiate practical actions jointly with other forces aimed at helping to mobilize the masses.

2. The given democratic rights were all those won by the Cordobazo and similar mass actions, which we consider to be conquests of the Argentine working class.

3. The meetings "in the presence of the government" were intended as confrontations, as efforts at obtaining wide publicity, and as springboards for actions such as mass rallies that could lead to broader and more dynamic mobilizations of the working class.

4. Meetings with the bourgeois opposition parties "and the CP" (is the IMT, then, against meeting with leaders of Communist parties?) were neither regular nor institutionalized, nor led to any political accord, "interclass," or otherwise.

5. Our position is crystal clear. We never make strategic, programmatic, or long-term blocs with non-working-class parties. Nor do we sign common political programs, or hold joint rallies of a general political type with such parties. With such parties we conclude only "limited, specific, tactical agreements." Such tactical accords serve essentially for propaganda campaigns on well-defined individual problems and to a lesser degree and in exceptional cases for obtaining some practical gain. They therefore play only a relative role, since for our party only "the mobilization of the working class can solve all the problems."

6. As to the charge that we have

formed an "interclass political bloc" against all those who "resort to violence," this is a falsification.

The PST has never declared itself in opposition to violence in general, nor has it raised the slogan "Down with violence." The purpose of this falsification is to insinuate that the PST has adopted the position of the petty-bourgeois pacifists who oppose violence even when it is exercised by the masses.

(Certain phrases in the above IMT accusation are enclosed in quotation marks. The French translation does not follow the Spanish in this. The English version differs from both the Spanish and the French. We would appreciate it if the falsifiers would reach a common agreement on what phrases they want placed in quotation marks and what were the sources of the phrases.)

7. In political terms, this accusation leveled by the IMT leaders can be called a malicious factional construction aimed at prejudicing the rank and file of the Fourth International against the PST.

Workers United Front

IMT accusation: "Does the PST counterpose the conception of a bloc with liberal bourgeois parties for the defense of the 'process of institutionalization' to Trotsky's conception of the workers united front?"

PST reply: We are against any bloc that crosses class lines. We are for practical agreements that help advance the struggle to institutionalize the democratic gains won through the Cordobazos. We are also decidedly in favor of a workers united front.

With regard to a workers united front we would greatly appreciate it if the IMT leaders could furnish Argentina with the mass Social Democratic and Communist parties of the Germany of 1932 to go along with the quotations from Trotsky's writings on this subject that they provided us.

In the absence of forces like the ones in the Germany of 1932 we have had to content ourselves with the reality at hand—the disintegrating Peronist movement and the mass trade unions, which confront us with a different set of problems from those the IMT leaders have in mind.

Trotsky, Kerensky and Joerger-Salemme

IMT accusation: "Under these con-

ditions, to counterpose defense of increasingly paralyzed bourgeois-parliamentary institutions in decomposition to the rise of fascism is to court certain defeat."

PST reply: The IMT leaders are arguing by analogy that what Trotsky said about the situation in Germany in 1932 applies to the Argentina of 1974.

But the IMT leaders are so one-sided in their quotations that the lesson they would like to draw for Argentina does not hold for concrete situations that can arise in the struggle against fascism even in the *imperialist* democracies. Consider the following observations made by Trotsky during the Spanish civil war against the position of the Joerger-Salemme group:

"1. The difference between Negrin and Franco is the difference between decaying bourgeois democracy and fascism.

"2. Everywhere and always, wherever and whenever revolutionary workers are not powerful enough immediately to overthrow the bourgeois regime, they defend even rotten bourgeois democracy from fascism, and they especially defend their own position inside bourgeois democracy.

"3. The workers defend bourgeois democracy, however, not by the methods of bourgeois democracy (Popular Fronts, electoral blocs, government coalitions, etc.) but by their own methods, that is, by the methods of revolutionary class struggle. Thus, by participating in the military struggle against fascism they continue at the same time to defend their own organizations, their rights, and their interests from the bourgeois-democratic government." (*The Spanish Revolution* (1931-39), p. 282.)

In those years, the ultralefts did not hesitate to call Trotsky wrong, and even worse than wrong. Joerger-Salemme were as arrogant as others of their school. In his rebuttal, Trotsky did not give a millimeter:

"'The difference between the Negrin government and that of Franco,' I said in reply to an American comrade, 'is the difference between decaying bourgeois democracy and fascism.' It is with this elementary consideration that our political orientation begins. What! exclaim the ultralefts, you want to restrict us to a choice between bourgeois democracy and fascism? But that's pure opportunism! The Spanish revolution is fundamen-

tally a struggle between socialism and fascism. Bourgeois democracy does not offer the slightest solution. . . . And so on." (*Ibid.*, p. 295.)

Trotsky continued with further concrete analysis. One of the points he made was the incorrectness in the given situation of attempting to engage in an immediate effort to overthrow the bourgeois democratic government:

"The Stalin-Negrin government is a quasi-democratic obstacle on the road to socialism; but it is also an obstacle, not a very reliable or durable one, but an obstacle nonetheless, on the road to fascism. Tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, the Spanish proletariat may perhaps be able to break through this obstacle and seize power. But if it aided, even passively, in tearing it down today, it would only serve fascism. The task consists not merely of theoretically evaluating the two camps at their true worth, but moreover of utilizing their struggle in practice in order to make a leap forward." (*Ibid.*, p. 296.)

In several instructive paragraphs, Trotsky took up the example of the Bolsheviks in the struggle between the Kerensky regime and the attempted coup d'etat by Kornilov in August 1917:

"The left centrists as well as the incurable ultralefts often cite the example of Bolshevik policy in the Kerensky-Kornilov conflict, without understanding anything about it. The POUM says: 'But the Bolsheviks fought alongside Kerensky.' The ultralefts reply: 'But the Bolsheviks refused to give Kerensky their confidence even under the threat of Kornilov.' Both are right . . . halfway; that is, both are completely wrong.

"The Bolsheviks did not remain neutral between the camp of Kerensky and that of Kornilov. They fought in the first camp against the second. They accepted the official command as long as they were not sufficiently strong to overthrow it. It was precisely in the month of August, with the Kornilov uprising, that a prodigious upswing of the Bolsheviks began. This upswing was made possible only thanks to the double-edged Bolshevik policy. While participating in the front lines of the struggle against Kornilov, the Bolsheviks did not take the slightest responsibility for the policy of Kerensky. On the contrary, they denounced him as responsible for the reactionary attack and as incapable

of overcoming it. In this way they prepared the political premises of the October Revolution, in which the alternative Bolshevism or counterrevolution (communism or fascism) evolved from a historic tendency into a living and immediate reality.

"We must teach this lesson to the youth. We must inculcate the Marxist method into them. But as to the people who are a few decades past school age and who persist in counterposing to us at all times—to us as well as to reality—the same formulas (which they have, by the way, taken from us), it is necessary to recognize them publicly as incurables who must be kept a few feet away from the general staffs who are elaborating revolutionary policy." (Ibid., pp. 296-97.)

We ask those who today echo the arguments of Joerger-Salemme: Has anything occurred since Trotsky's time that would show he was wrong in calling for a policy of defending "even rotten bourgeois democracy from fascism"? Has Trotsky been outmoded? Should he be displaced to make way for the theoreticians of "armed struggle in Latin America"? Isn't it time to speak up?

Was it Wrong for Antiwar Movement to Let American Balbins Speak?

IMT accusation: "Of course, Argentina in 1974 is not Germany in 1932. There are important differences in the social structure of the two countries, in the relative weight of the different social classes, and above all in the forms of organization, political tradition, and level of political class consciousness of the workers. But no 'national particularity' can transform the Radical party of Mr. Balbin into a serious candidate for the organization of a general strike—not to mention workers councils—at the side of the workers organizations. Is it not obvious that Trotsky is defending a different political orientation in these propositions of struggle against the fascist threat through the workers united front leading to the united class action of the proletariat culminating in a general strike—different from the orientation that sees regular meetings with bourgeois parties, signing common declarations and communiqués with these parties, and organizing common meetings with these parties as the useful condition for 'creating the kind of social consciousness and climate needed to defend civil liberties or condemn fascism' (Avanzada

Socialista, July 4, 1974)?"

PST reply: In listing the differences between Germany in 1932 and Argentina in 1974, the IMT leaders ought to have added that Germany belonged to the imperialist sector and Argentina the semicolonial. How do they explain having missed this capital distinction?

Despite the oversight, we think we can reach substantial agreement with the IMT leaders on at least one point they raise. We can agree with them that Balbin is not "a serious candidate for the organization of a general strike—not to mention workers councils."

As to the rest of the accusation, it shows either bad faith or political blindness. We did not say that meeting with these parties is a useful "condition" for "creating the kind of social consciousness and climate needed to defend civil liberties or condemn fascism."

Since the IMT leaders themselves quoted us almost correctly only a few pages previously, it is easy to ascertain our views. (Perhaps a stronger word than "almost" should be used. In one of the paragraphs, an important sentence was omitted without any indication that something had been left out.) Two paragraphs of the quotation used by the IMT leaders should suffice to show our views (we have restored the missing sentence, italicizing it for easy identification):

"Our party will always agree with Balbin and the FAS lawyers in opposing by all means the suppression of the daily *El Mundo*. Balbin does this in the name of the bourgeois liberal constitution he supports. We do so in the name of workers democracy and socialism.

"These convergences with bourgeois sectors can be expressed in the form of limited agreements, documents, statements, etc. A recent example was the rally organized by our party in condemnation of the Pacheco Massacre, in which, besides the left, almost all the bourgeois democratic forces participated. All these various types of public actions, from joint communiqués to rallies, are useful and help to create the kind of social consciousness and climate needed to defend civil liberties or condemn fascism. Moreover, they safeguard and reinforce the legal rights of the revolutionary party."¹⁰

10. For an English translation of the full

It appears to us that the IMT leaders do have a serious political difference with us. They seem to be opposed *in principle* to limited agreements or public actions involving bourgeois sectors in the struggle against fascism or other ultrareactionary forces. We think that they are not alone in taking an ultraleft position of this kind.

We should like to remind them that at the height of the antiwar movement in the United States, quite a few petty-bourgeois and even bourgeois figures sought to share the platform in the giant rallies that were staged at the time. The Trotskyists in the United States did not oppose this. In fact, they favored it.

But how the ultralefts screamed! They considered this to be proof positive that the Socialist Workers party had formed an "interclass political bloc" with the liberal wing of the Democratic party, thereby falling into the Social Democratic "policy" of class collaborationism. It is one of the main "proofs" still thrown at the SWP by the ultralefts in the United States (and elsewhere) to bolster the charge that the SWP has "degenerated," turned "reformist," and "betrayed" the working class.

Popular Frontism in Thirties and Today

IMT accusation: "Moreover, the comrades of the PST are caught in an additional contradiction. They heavily insist on the fact that they were and remain irremediably opposed to coalitions of the 'popular front' type. Excellent resolve! But they seem to forget that the popular fronts were constituted in the 1930s exactly with the aim of 'defending democratic rights' against the fascist threat. If not only technical agreements but also political agreements with liberal bourgeois parties are admissible for the defense not only of a specific democratic right but democratic rights in general, what remains of the basis of the revolutionary Marxist opposition to the 'anti-fascist' policy of the popular front? Is it solely the fact that the popular front also contains a governmental program? Would it then become acceptable without such a program? If agreement with bourgeois parties to defend democratic rights in general is admissible, is it not even more ad-

text, see *Intercontinental Press*, July 22, 1974, pp. 1004-06. — IP

missible for regaining them where they have been suppressed? What then remains of the validity of the revolutionary Marxist opposition to the policy of 'antifascist front' with the 'liberal' bourgeoisie and its political parties, as followed by the Spanish CP, the Chilean CP, and the Uruguayan CP, to cite only three examples?"

PST reply: This house of cards collapses at the first touch. The popular fronts in the 1930s were *not* constituted "exactly with the aim of 'defending democratic rights' against the fascist threat." That was the propagandistic bait used to hook the naïve and the unwary. The popular fronts of the 1930s were constructed "exactly with the aim" of drawing the working class into political collaboration with the bourgeoisie. Stalin was thoroughly aware of what he was doing in both France and Spain.

That was why Trotsky saw these popular fronts as replicas of the class-collaborationist blocs of earlier times despite the difference in publicly professed aims.

The astonishingly superficial approach of the IMT leaders on this question led them in 1974 to classify the Union of the Left in France as something different from the people's fronts of the 1930s, since the propagandistic bait used by the architects of the Union of the Left was to "win socialism" not "defeat fascism."

On the basis of that distinction, the leaders of the IMT approved the policy of the Front Communiste Révolutionnaire of calling on the French workers to vote for Mitterrand in the second round.

In Argentina, in contrast, the PST entered the elections in opposition to the Peronist candidates from top to bottom—and not only in the first round *but in the second round.*

The electoral course of the PST proved where we stood politically in relation to *all* the bourgeois parties and those in the left tied to Perón's Justicialista party such as the Stalinists and most of the guerrilla organizations.

The former official section of the Fourth International went through a crisis on the question of whether to vote for the Peronist candidates, and ended up by splitting. It is true that the official section had already left the Fourth International, so that the IMT leaders cannot be held directly responsible for this lamentable outcome.

As for the PST, we had no problem whatsoever in this question; our party demonstrated its political clarity in the most graphic way throughout the campaign.

One of the features of our campaign was rejection of all overtures to build a popular front or to help pave the way for one.

In a report approved at a special convention of the PST in July 1973, Comrade Coral denounced the bourgeois effort at establishing under Perón "the broadest alliance of classes that the country has ever known." Coral's concluding remarks were as follows:

"It is not a question here of preparing the party to carry out an electoral function but of putting the elections at the service of building the party. During this period, as during any other, we will have to carry out the three-pronged revolutionary tasks described by Lenin: agitate among the masses, propagandize for our ideas, and educate the cadres. It is in this sense that we must intervene in the elections.

"What I want to point out in conclusion is that at this stage we must be conscious above all else of the urgent need to educate our cadres. For it is certain that the instability of this latest attempt at an alliance between the classes, the instability and decrepitude of the bourgeoisie and the ruling classes in the government, opens up for us a revolutionary perspective. And when this moment arrives, it is the strength of our organization and the ability of the cadres of our party that will determine whether this revolutionary crisis will end in a tragedy, like the Spanish revolution, or in a historic revolution, like the Russian revolution of 1917." (See the August 1-8, 1973, issue of *Avanzada Socialista*.)¹¹

We have followed the same line since then, scorning the overtures made in our direction by both the Stalinists and some of the bourgeois political figures.

In their Open Letter No. 2, the IMT leaders sedulously avoid considering how our electoral campaign proved the intransigence of our revolutionary-socialist stand against class collaborationism. In fact they do not even mention our campaign.

11. For an English translation, see *Intercontinental Press*, September 10, 1973, pp. 995-96. — IP

Besides, the Uruguayans Are Not Guilty

IMT accusation: "The question is not simply rhetorical. Already the PRT-U (Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores-Uruguay), a close political ally of the PST, has pronounced itself squarely in favor of such a front for the 'reconquest of free elections' . . ."

PST reply: We are against the practice of determining guilt by association. We are responsible for the political course of the Trotskyists in Argentina; not those in Uruguay, Belgium, Canada, or anywhere else. Moreover, even if we were to prove the innocence of the Uruguayan comrades, the IMT leaders would hardly agree that this made us innocent by association.

We will say, in addition, that we consider it completely inadmissible to subject the Trotskyists, working in the most difficult conditions in the underground movement in Uruguay, to being pilloried in public this way without discussing with them in advance, without notifying them, without giving them a chance to explain their position internally, and without even quoting them in context.

Is this the way the IMT majority of the United Secretariat proposes to proceed from here on out with all the sections and sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International?

We underline the fact that the responsibility for attacking the Uruguayan comrades in public this way belongs completely and solely with the leaders of the IMT.

As to our positions on issues facing the Uruguayan revolutionary Marxist movement, we will state them after the Uruguayan comrades have had an opportunity to reply to the completely unjustified attack leveled against them.

Divisions Among Bourgeoisie

IMT accusation: "The PST's participation in the institutionalized meetings between the government and the so-called center-left opposition on the contrary provides left cover for a political operation whereby the Peronist regime is seeking to *camouflage its responsibility* for the organization of an antiworker and antirevolutionary repression behind the shield of verbal declarations against 'terrorism wherever it comes from.'"

PST reply: Of course the Peronist regime is seeking to camouflage its

responsibility. Nonetheless the divisions among the bourgeoisie over the question of putting an Argentine Pinochet in power are quite real. In our opinion it is absolutely correct to try to take advantage of these divisions as part of the effort to mobilize the working class in defense of democracy against the ultraright.

To argue that the confrontations on a propagandistic level with the government representatives provided a "left cover" for the Peronist regime is nothing but camouflage for the ultra-left sectarian position that staked everything on guerrilla action in isolation from the masses.

Should We Worry Over Bourgeois Press?

IMT accusation: "The PST's participation in the hypocritical comedy of 'national harmonization' around support to the process of institutionalization organized by the Peronist regime is all the more fraught with consequences in that it allows the bourgeois press to distribute in millions of copies reports about the PST's approval of the government propaganda about the 'union of all Argentines around democratic institutions and the unanimous condemnation of violence.'"

PST reply: The IMT leaders have caught us red-handed; consequently we plead guilty to the charge that we have not gauged our tactics according to what the bourgeois press might say. We have resisted dropping to such a low political level.

What we have kept our eyes on, in accordance with the Trotskyist aim of building a mass revolutionary party in Argentina, has been among other things the circulation of our press, the rate of recruitment to the PST, and our becoming rooted in the masses.

Because of long years of experience under dictatorial regimes, the vanguard of the Argentine working class is accustomed to discount what appears in the bourgeois press to a higher degree than may be the case in countries where the vanguard, under imperialist democracy, has fallen into uncritical acceptance of what is printed in the bourgeois press. Consequently the references to us in the Argentine press helped to arouse curiosity as to what we had really said and done. Coupled with this were some expositions of our real positions that Comrade Coral was able to make to a vast television audience. As a result,

the circulation of *Avanzada Socialista* increased by leaps and bounds.

Similarly, recruitment to our ranks proceeded at such a rate as to necessitate our putting controls on it to bring it into conformity with our capacities to educate and integrate new cadres.

Was this swift growth resulting from our political orientation and tactics bad? The guerrilla groups may think so. We do not. We are proud of the expansion in numbers and in prestige that we have been able to bring to the world Trotskyist movement.

We propose to continue what we have been doing with whatever tactical adjustments may be required in view of objective developments in the situation. We grant the right of other revolutionists to say what they want about this. We are willing to debate with them, publicly or otherwise. But unless more compelling arguments can be advanced than those assembled by the IMT leaders, we do not intend to change our course.

Where They Go Wrong on the Situation in Argentina

10.

A Superficial Survey

The résumé of the Argentine situation offered by the leaders of the IMT is journalistic and incomplete; it lacks precise class characterizations. This summary consists of the following seven points:

1. "The replacement of the military dictatorship of Lanusse" is attributed to the struggle of the mass movement beginning with the Cordobazo. Another factor cited is "the development of multiple forms of armed confrontation" with the "military bourgeois forces" by "sectors of the masses as well as some groups of the vanguard."

2. The bourgeoisie and imperialism "by promoting the 'process of institutionalization' through the 'great national accord' . . . pursued the essential aims of averting the risk of an overall confrontation between its army and the masses" and "of reestablishing control over the workers movement. . . ."

3. ". . . the sine qua non for the success of this Peronist project was the acceptance of 'social peace' by the whole working class in exchange for 'free elections'. . . ." Minority sectors of the working class were beginning "to act independently."

4. "Under these conditions, the re-establishment of the Peronist regime inevitably involved a *growing violent and terrorist repression* not only against the Peronist far left and the groups engaged in guerrilla struggle, but also against all independent sectors of the workers movement and the working class."

5. "The resolution on Argentina adopted by the Tenth World Congress of the Fourth International (Fourth Congress since Reunification) affirmed . . . the unstable character of the new period of bourgeois democracy." At the same time this resolution pointed out it was "a curious 'democracy' that develops the white terror starting from the highest governmental circles!"

6. "This 'institutionalized' and systematized repression, under the direct control of López Rega, the 'strongman' of the Peronist regime, reveals the hypocritical and fraudulent character of the declarations of the leading Peronists. . . ."

7. "The PST's participation in the institutionalized meetings between the government and the so-called center-left opposition . . . provides left cover for a political operation whereby the Peronist regime is seeking to *camouflage its responsibility* for the organization of an antiworker and antirevolutionary repression. . . ."

Startling Omissions

This summary, which is correct as to the facts—although not in its assessment of the PST's actions—suffers from omissions and insufficiencies that are startling. Let's consider a few.

1. The IMT leaders fail to say whether the "new period of bourgeois democracy" is better for us Trotskyists than the military regimes, and whether, with the great gains scored by the masses, the workers are in a more advantageous position than under the Lanusse and Onganía governments. The PST holds that in fact the present regime in Argentina differs qualitatively from the military dictatorship, as well as the regimes of Pinochet, Bordaberry, Geisel, or Banzer, which are brutal Bonapartist dictatorships supported by the oligarchy and imperialism.

This characterization does not deny the right-wing and reactionary course of Peronism in office but does include a qualification; namely, that we have a bourgeois democratic regime although the government is in the hands

of a party that is swinging more and more in a rightist and reactionary direction.

2. The lack of a precise characterization of the regime causes the leaders of the IMT to overlook the danger that a coup d'etat may *wipe out the democratic gains made by the masses and the workers movement*, that is, sweep away the "new period of bourgeois democracy" mentioned in the resolution adopted at the last world congress.

The PST maintains that such a threat exists, that it is a terrible danger (although not something that is likely to happen next week, that is, immediately), and that it constitutes the gravest political problem facing the masses and our party.

3. While the summary takes into account and defines the attitude of the vanguard of the workers movement, it fails to say a single word about the overall situation in the workers movement.

It recognizes that the workers movement as a whole does not act or think in the same way as the vanguard, by noting that the latter is "largely a minority on a national scale." But it totally ignores the level of consciousness and attitude of the working class as a whole. This omission, this failure to analyze how the entire working class thinks, feels, and acts, is impermissible, since the level of class consciousness is one of the fundamental elements required for formulating a correct policy.

4. As a result of this deficiency, the IMT leaders analyze Peronism as a government and the GAN [Gran Acuerdo Nacional—Great National Agreement] as a system, but they overlook Peronism as a mass movement and they overlook the mass support the GAN has. However, there are some figures that point up these facts clearly. The GAN, with its project of "institutionalizing the country" was voted for by 98 percent of all Argentines over the age of eighteen. More than 90 percent (95 percent comes closer) of the workers voted for the Peronists.

This current, therefore, has much greater support in the workers movement, for example, than Mitterrand in France and more than double the support for the Socialist and Communist parties in Italy.

The IMT leaders should specify whether they believe that the situation

remains the same today or whether they believe that it has undergone a qualitative change. That is, does this majority of the working class, which does not follow the vanguard and does not support its independent actions, still support the government or not?

The PST holds that the crisis of Peronism in the workers movement has begun, but only just begun, and that it is developing very slowly. We do not know whether, when this crisis reaches its culmination, the workers will turn directly to the positions of revolutionary socialism, toward an independent workers party, or will remain stalled for a period at some "left" variety of popular frontism offered by the populist Peronists.

Do the IMT leaders believe that the crisis of Peronism is in its early or in its concluding stages? Is there a possibility or not that a mass popular front may arise as a result of this crisis?

5. This ignorance of what the workers movement is doing and what it seeks is shown by the fact that although they refer to the "Social Pact" as a governmental plan, they "neglect" to analyze it from the standpoint of its relation to the working class. They fail to point out that because of what this plan means (freezing wages in face of accelerating inflation), it has been and will remain the source of the most intense workers struggles.

The omission leads to a still graver oversight: forgetting the struggle of our class in general—not minority sectors of the vanguard—against the wage freeze. Nonetheless, this struggle produced three giant strike waves in 1974 and led to an important partial defeat of the "Social Pact" and the wage freeze. The class struggle has been deemed not worthy of a single line in the document of the IMT, as if it were devoid of significance.

6. An almost incredible oversight is the failure to mention the guerrillas. However, they exist and are active. The PRT (Combatiente) and the ERP launched a war to the knife against the Peronist government shortly after its installation. More recently, the Peronist left also turned to guerrilla actions against the government. The guerrillas are part of the national reality that deserves mention, and so we will devote some attention to them.

Is it politically correct to launch

armed attacks against a government that had—and continues to have—the political support of the immense majority of the workers movement and a large part of the populace? Is it valid to argue that the guerrillas played no role in the stepped-up repression, because such repression is inherent in the capitalist system? Shouldn't Marxist analysis note that if the workers movement does not react against the repression this is because it is being carried out in the name of defending a government regarded by the workers as their own that is being physically attacked by a small irresponsible elite? Shouldn't it be said that this guerrilla activity provides an excuse for accelerating the repression, provoking an unnecessarily early crackdown out of proportion to the level reached by the workers struggles; that this activity enables the bourgeoisie to isolate the vanguard sectors, which cannot find the mass support needed to resist these attacks because the masses support the government?

7. It is not made clear that in the Argentine situation the gravest contradiction is the one between the degree of militancy and organization achieved by the proletariat on the trade-union level and the degree of rottenness reached by its trade-union and political leaderships. This contradiction cannot be left out of any serious analysis, since on the subjective level it finds expression in the contradiction between the very high trade-union consciousness of the Argentine workers and their extreme political backwardness, their fanatic Peronism.

For a Leninist-Trotskyist Political Course

11.

To develop a correct revolutionary policy in our country requires taking into account the situation as a whole, of which the factors overlooked by the IMT leaders form an essential part. Thus the policy prescribed by our critics, who call on us to "resolutely orient . . . toward the line of the workers united front and the propagation and carrying out in practice of self-defense by the workers organizations themselves against the fascist terror," simply sounds ridiculous to us.

A workers united front? With whom? The relatively tiny Argentine Com-

munist party? No, obviously a workers united front requires mass organizations, not small parties. A workers united front with the Peronist unions, which are the only mass organizations that exist? But the fact is that a whole "sector of fascism" draws its support from the Peronist unions, which in their turn support the government as do the workers. So then, should it be a united front of the Peronist unions against the Peronist unions?

"Self-defense" by the workers organizations themselves? Should we call on the Peronist unions to organize "self-defense" against their own fascist goons or against the parallel police, if the goons are part of the government apparatus?

We would like the authors of the document to tell us exactly with what "workers organizations" (mass organizations, of course) we are supposed to achieve a workers front and promote self-defense. The key to the situation, precisely, is that the Argentine workers in their vast majority do not think or feel that there is any need *for the time being* for self-defense against the fascists. They do not think so because in their extreme political backwardness, as shown by their support for the Peronist government and movement, they do not regard fascism as their main enemy *for the time being*. They do not feel the need to defend themselves because, *for the time being*, the fascists are not attacking the mass workers organizations, or the labor movement, but only sections of the vanguard standing far in advance of the masses. The working class as a whole, *for the time being*, is indifferent to the fascist threat.

What the workers are conscious of is the threat of a coup d'etat. But precisely with regard to this danger, which is the most serious one—much more acute than the activity of the fascist groups—and which the working class recognizes, the leaders of the IMT have no line. Nowhere in their document do they mention the possibility of a reactionary coup d'etat, as if the perspective of a Pinochet seizing power in Argentina were something remote. Just at the moment when this danger begins to loom larger, they prove to have no line for confronting it. We cannot help feeling astonished at this failure by those who a year ago were predicting a reactionary coup and accusing us of lack of

preparations to meet it.

Nor do our critics suggest a course to help speed up the crisis in the Peronist movement and prevent the workers movement from going through a new populist or popular-front experience.

To top off their falsifications of our positions, the leaders of the IMT go so far as to suggest that the PST thinks that the way to fight the reaction is by agreements with the bourgeoisie; and without any proof, they go on to accuse us of having a "popular front" line.

Yet when it comes to analyzing the immediate problems and formulating a line for Argentina, they leave out completely the danger of popular frontism and what to do about it. Specifically, the IMT leaders fail to even indicate that the main slogan to advance in combating Peronism, any alternative form of populism, and a popular front is the political independence of the working class.

Another incredible "omission" by our critics with regard to what line revolutionists in Argentina ought to adopt concerns the gravest kind of "terrorism," as our party has defined it, the terrorism waged by the Peronist government against the workers in imposing the "Social Pact" and its wage freeze. We cannot understand why those who accuse us of serving as a "left cover" for the Peronist government failed to mention that one of the fundamental tasks in defending the rights of the workers against this government is to struggle against the agreement between the bosses and the union bureaucrats included in the "Social Pact."

Finally, there is another "omission" that seems to be a complement of the ironical attitude these polemicists decided to adopt toward the "process of institutionalization." They fail to take into account its effect on the consciousness of the working class. The process of institutionalization as it concerns the bourgeoisie is one thing, and our critics have correctly ascertained what this is. But institutionalization is something else again from the standpoint of the understanding, feelings, and aspirations of the labor movement and the masses who voted for it.

To the workers and the masses, "institutionalization" means the process of winning democratic freedoms for themselves besides supporting the Per-

onist government, which they consider to be *their* government. If this is not understood, it is impossible to understand anything at all about the present level of consciousness of the Argentine workers; and, as a consequence, it is absolutely impossible to develop a correct line.

A genuinely revolutionary line must take into account all these elements that have been "overlooked" by our critics. Our party weighed them in arriving at a policy that combines the following complementary lines of action:

1. To mount a head-on fight against the "Social Pact." Our policy is to help the working class organize strikes to win higher pay, break the "wage freeze," and defeat the "Social Pact."

This line of struggle goes hand in hand with denouncing the government for enforcing the pact. It means seeking to unmask the government in practice; and, what is just as important, impelling the working class to mobilize massively behind an objective that it is able to undertake right now.

Our entire policy is based precisely on finding a leverage point from which the working class as a whole can be set in motion on its own against the capitalist system and the Peronist government. Given the workers' high level of trade-union consciousness, this leverage point is to be found in their readiness to mobilize against the "Social Pact." If, in struggling against the pact, the working class wins successive victories, they will in due course come to confrontations with the government and the fascists that will enable them to overcome their political backwardness. Events are proving us right in our choice of the central issue, since the largest working-class mobilizations have occurred against the wage freeze, the main pillar of the "Social Pact."

2. To engage in an energetic defense of the "process of institutionalization" as the masses understand it—not as the bourgeoisie and above all the Peronist government understand it. In voting for this "process," the workers voted for expanding democratic freedoms. We agree with the workers and with the feeling they expressed by their votes. We are pointing out to them that they must struggle to ensure that the process moves forward and not backward.

In this course, we are following the method outlined in the *Transitional*

Program, which teaches us to look for the progressive substance placed by the working class in slogans that on the surface may appear to serve their interests (for example, "peace," when the bourgeoisie advance it as part of their preparations for a reactionary war).

3. To engage in a dialogue with the Peronists as long as they continue to enjoy massive support from the workers. Our purpose in engaging in a dialogue, which includes such tactics as meetings with them, is to try to accelerate the crisis of the Peronist movement. We level demands on the Peronists in the name of the working class and denounce them for the "Social Pact," the repression, the protection of fascist groups, their reactionary course, and their policy that objectively facilitates preparations for a reactionary coup. Our main accusation is that they do not defend democracy but undermine it and curtail it.

4. To continue to make "limited, tactical agreements" with any current in defense of any specific right or body of rights that is under attack or can be won. At the same time, as conditions mature for forming a real working-class united front against the fascist gangs, we will continue to propose to independent unions and left worker parties that they form united fronts and participate in united efforts of workers militias. (Although we have received only negative responses so far, the PST has been carrying out a full-fledged campaign in favor of such proposals for months, a fact systematically ignored by our critics.)

5. To continue combining the struggle for trade-union democracy with the struggle against the "Social Pact" as the best way of sweeping away the trade-union bureaucracy.

6. To continue to raise the alarm against the danger of a reactionary coup d'etat and explain the need for mobilizing the workers movement to face this threat. This policy includes using proletarian methods to defend the bourgeois democratic regime against a reactionary coup d'etat. That is, we fight for the continuity of the "present period of bourgeois democracy" against reactionary assaults as long as the masses are not yet prepared to go beyond it to the establishment of socialist democracy.

7. To continue to battle for the political independence of the workers movement and to oppose any slide into popular frontism. This is the axis

of our entire line — class against class.

8. To continue to oppose guerrillism. In their ignorance of, and contempt for, the consciousness of the masses, for what the masses want and feel, the guerrillas fell into terrorist actions against a government that the workers are not yet ready to abandon, particularly in face of a threat from the ultraright. The majority of the

working people either ignore or repudiate the terrorist actions of the guerrillas. Moreover, we will continue to explain how the irresponsible course followed by the guerrillas has helped accelerate the repression and increased the danger of a reactionary coup against a workers movement not yet prepared politically to resist and defeat such an attack. □

Evald Höglund Dies

By Pertti Malmberg

[The following article was published in the December 30 issue of *Internationalen*, the weekly paper of the revolutionära Marxisters Förbund (Revolutionary Marxist League, the Swedish section of the Fourth International). The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

Comrade Evald Höglund died November 18. He was sixty-five years old.

For the younger comrades in the revolutionary movement today, Evald was not well known. His main political activity was in the 1930s. At the end of the 1940s he participated in the work to build a revolutionary movement. This culminated in the formation of a very limited group. Several circumstances produced this result, including the lack of a revolutionary tradition and the fact that Stalinism neutralized those sections of the working class that were most ready for a revolutionary organization.

When the conditions for a strong revolutionary movement appeared at the end of the 1960s, Evald was prevented by illness from taking an active part. He did, however, participate in trade-union work in this period, and by contributing to the debate in his union's paper, *Metallarbetaren* [The Metalworker], he put forward his views on labor and political questions.

As was mentioned, Evald's period of political activity was in the 1930s. He participated in the Socialistiska Ungdomsförbundet [Socialist Youth League] and worked for its paper, *Avantgardet*. He concerned himself most of all with international questions. In articles and in public meetings, he discussed the rise of fascism and the Comintern's abandonment of its former class politics.

At the end of 1936, he went to Spain to follow the development of the struggle. He made contacts there, especially in the Barcelona region. After he had studied the conditions there, he was able to see how the Comintern was being used to serve the national interests of the Soviet Union. In *Avantgardet*, he wrote:

"This kind of hypocrisy is leading to the acceptance by the international body of nationalism, the capitalist state apparatus, reformism and individual terror, as well as to opposition to the fight for socialism generated by the struggle of the working class for liberation in several countries." His internationalism was expressed as a class position in this critique of the Comintern.

The dominant tendency in the opposition to the Comintern was centrism. But the centrists were incapable of taking up the tradition that the Comintern had abandoned and, in the given situation, carrying it further. They were also incapable of fighting for a revolutionary line in the Socialist party. A section of the centrists accepted the consequences of this and went over to Social Democracy. Another wing moved toward pacifist activism during the Russo-Finnish war.

Evald Höglund was among the comrades in the Socialist party who fought against this capitulation. This led to the expulsion of his group. But it too was dominated by centrists, who prevented it from developing into a revolutionary alternative for the working class.

We have lost a comrade. We will honor his memory by continuing and improving our work in the revolutionary movement, our work to build a revolutionary party. □