

Intercontinental Press

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Pentagon Bids for 90,000 U.S. Troops to Go Back In



Ford in publicity stunt on receiving end of "Operation Baby Lift," showing he wants to resume bombing for laudable humanitarian aims.

The Point They Missed in Ford's Speech

Why Washington Could Not Win in Vietnam

Portuguese Trotskyists Call for Workers Assembly

The Struggle for Women's Liberation in Puerto Rico

The Point They Overlooked in Ford's Speech

The advance publicity for President Ford's April 10 speech stirred considerable curiosity. Would the man appointed to the White House by Nixon finally strike out on his own? Would he draw the called-for balance sheet on the costly intervention in the internal affairs of the peoples of Indochina? Would he announce that he had ordered the immediate evacuation of all American forces from Saigon?

Curiosity was all the higher in view of the leaks about those participating in drafting the document to be read by Ford. The speech could hardly be a more authoritative statement of the foreign policy projected by the White House.

Winston Lord, the director of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, was reported to have drawn up the basic drafts in consultation with two of Kissinger's aides, Lawrence S. Eagleburger of the State Department and Lieut. Gen. Brent Scowcroft of the National Security Council's staff. Both Ford and Kissinger were to go over these drafts. Kissinger was scheduled to work up a consistent final draft.

Then two of Ford's speech writers on foreign affairs, Robert T. Hartman and his aide, Milton Friedman, were to shape that text to fit the "language and cadence" of the old Republican-machine hack.

Ford gave a fine rendition of the lines put down for him. Yet the speech, to believe the press, was a colossal flop. It is true that it did not take the American public by storm. On the following day, the White House received more than 200,000 responses, according to a television newscast. Of these, two-thirds were unfavorable.

The liberal columnist Harriet Van Horne voiced the consensus: "Blind, pig-headed stupidity, we say today. And our instinct tells us it's the outward and visible sign of inner turmoil and fear. . . . But however limited the Ford mind, it surpasses belief that he imagines he'll get \$1 billion out of

Congress for another bloody round in Vietnam."

Even the *New York Times* professed puzzlement. A headline in the April 13 issue read, "Mr. Ford's Strange Ploy." This was accompanied by a second headline: "He Asks Aid for Saigon He Knows He Can't Get."

What stumped the commentators was their knowledge that Ford did not expect Congress to give Thieu another \$722 million for "military supplies" and \$250 million in "economic and humanitarian aid" by a deadline of April 19.

The commentators also knew that Ford did not expect his request to meet with a popular response in the United States. The latest Harris poll showed that 75 percent of the American people are opposed to giving any more military aid to Saigon.

What then were the calculations behind the speech? Various guesses have been made:

- The Republican administration wanted to pin the blame for the imminent collapse of the Thieu regime on the Democratic Congress, thus creating an issue for the 1976 presidential campaign.

- Kissinger saw the \$722 million request as a means of buying time from the Thieu regime. Without such a gesture, Thieu might turn on the Americans before preparations could be completed to evacuate them.

- To reactionary governments like the one in Israel, Kissinger wanted to emphasize that the White House keeps its "commitments."

- To the right-wingers in both the Republican and Democratic parties, and to all the "hawks" and flag-wavers in the United States, Ford wanted to indicate that he had done his best for them.

No doubt these were some of the things the White House camarilla had in mind in drawing up the speech.

Little has been said about one demand Ford made on Congress, although that body is giving it "expeditious consideration." Here is what Ford said he wanted—and by April 19:

"And now I ask the Congress to clarify immediately its restrictions on the use of U.S. military forces in Southeast Asia for the limited purposes of protecting American lives by insuring their evacuation, if this should be necessary. And I also ask prompt revision of the law to cover those Vietnamese to whom we have a very special

It Figures

In late March, according to *Time* magazine, South Vietnamese government officials asked agents of Balair, a charter airline affiliated with Swissair, if they would ferry out "some personal belongings" of the Thieu family as well as some personal effects of Lon Nol.

The baggage proved to be heavy. In fact it included sixteen tons of gold, worth \$73 million.

Balair turned down the shipment. The airline said it was concerned that the gold might be part of the official reserves of South Vietnam and Cambodia, open to inspection en route.

"At week's end the bullion was apparently still in Saigon, palletized and awaiting a more willing air carrier," *Time* said.

obligation and whose lives may be endangered, should the worst come to pass.

"I hope that this authority will never have to be used, but if it's needed there will be no time for Congressional debate."

About 3,000 to 6,000 Americans are in Saigon, most of them there to make a fast buck. But Ford indicated that more than the evacuation of these businessmen, gamblers, and "advisers" is involved.

Administration officials are talking of evacuating as many as 200,000 South Vietnamese. In fact, these same officials talk of 1.5 million South Vietnamese whose "lives may be endangered, should the worst come to pass."

Hence the Pentagon leak about landing "no fewer than 90,000 American troops." Enough for a new beginning . . .

If Ford could get away with it, there is not the slightest doubt that this is precisely what he would do. And since he specifies "Southeast Asia" as the area of operations, this might reflect Pentagon demands for permission to invade or bomb North Vietnam, perhaps with "small-yield nuclear weapons," as suggested by General Westmoreland on March 28.

Yet from Kissinger on down, the administration is well aware that such a move would have explosive political consequences in the United States.

It would bring into being almost overnight a new antiwar movement far more militant and powerful than the one that finally compelled even a Nixon to withdraw American troops from Vietnam. Such a movement could set off a social and political upheaval sufficient to bring down the American capitalist system.

In view of the well-founded fears in American ruling circles of that possibility, why did Ford demand legislation giving

Next Week

"In Defense of Vladimir Bukovsky and Valentyn Moroz" by George Novack.

An eloquent tribute to two leading Soviet dissidents and to all those who have fought for socialist democracy, as conceived by the founders of Marxism, against Stalinist totalitarianism. Put it on your list for must reading.

him power to put American troops back into Southeast Asia? Why is Congress acting as if it might grant the demand? And why is there such silence on this subject among the leaders and hangers-on of the Republican and Democratic parties?

The mystery deepens if the talk about evacuating 1.5 million South Vietnamese, or even 200,000, is taken seriously. Are they to be brought to the United States? With unemployment lines already dangerously long? With government bureaucrats snarling over packed relief rolls?

Obviously Kissinger had something else in mind in blocking out Ford's speech. Is it farfetched to suggest that what he was calculating was how best to give Moscow, Peking, and the conservative elements in Hanoi and in the Provisional Revolutionary Government a helping hand?

Moscow and Peking faithfully delivered everything that was asked of them in giving Nixon an assist in his hour of trial in Vietnam. It was part of the détente. Their pressure on Hanoi and denial of aid on the scale needed made it possible to snatch victory out of the hands of the Vietnamese freedom fighters in 1973 when the accords were negotiated in Paris.

Nixon used carpet-bombing and sowing the harbors of North Vietnam with mines to provide Moscow and Peking with arguments to be used by the Stalinist bureaucrats in those two centers to wring concessions from Hanoi and the PRG. "Look, these madmen in Washington are capable of starting a nuclear war! For the sake of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, you must agree to concessions. Besides, you will gain a partial victory."

Today Ford is not bombing the Vietnamese. He is only threatening to send the B-52s back into action, along with U.S. troops. But then his objectives are more modest than Nixon's.

He wants to freeze the military lines as they now stand. That would give him Saigon and an enclave around the city—along with the Mekong Delta if it can be held. As a concession in the interests of "peace," he is willing now to dispose of Thieu and agree to a coalition government—in accordance with the Paris agreement.

If this analysis is correct, then the main purpose of Ford's speech was to help build up the pressure against the most revolutionary-minded wing of the freedom fighters who want to carry their long struggle to the triumph that is so obviously at hand if it is just seized.

Whether Saigon will be next in the string of current victories or whether Kissinger, with the help of his allies in Moscow and Peking, can still retain that important city as a beachhead for American imperialism still remains to be seen. □

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The Pentagon Bids for 90,000 U.S. Troops to Go Back In

By Peter Green

President Ford's April 10 speech was designed to impress the world with the threat of resumption of full-scale American military intervention in the civil war in Vietnam.

Since the rout of Thieu's army, the Pentagon has indicated in various ways that it is pressing to send in B-52s and U.S. troops. The excuse, of course, is "to protect American lives." To show that it means business, the Pentagon has deployed naval forces off the coast of Vietnam. By April 10, 4,000 troops were standing by.

"Under the worst possible circumstances. . .," reported John Finney in the April 11 *New York Times*, "as many as 40,000 troops could be involved" with air cover supplied by Navy aircraft carriers. Other Pentagon sources have put the minimum figure at 90,000 American troops.

A tremendous propaganda campaign has accompanied these moves. In addition to the excuse of intervening to evacuate Americans, the White House has also been plugging the need to save the puppet officials and former employees of the United States. Unless they are evacuated, there will be a "bloodbath," said White House representatives. "Tens of thousands," "hundreds of thousands," even a "million or more" would have to be saved from the advancing Communist hordes, they claimed.

The press has cautiously supported the publicity. The return of American troops to Vietnam is an "ugly question" editorialized the April 12 *New York Times*, but "it may well be necessary to land military forces to protect American citizens as they leave."

A test exercise was carried out in Pnompenh. The Americans could just as easily have left by plane, but twenty-four helicopters swooped in, and marines with automatic rifles at the ready held a few hundred gaping children at bay while Ambassador John Gunther Dean carried his American flag and Samsonite suitcase through the cordon of troops.

No one bothered to mention that the marines were there despite an act of Congress barring their use. That little legal deterrent will not hold them back in Saigon either. The Democratic leader of the House of Representatives, Thomas O'Neill, said there was "no question" that there was a moral obligation to make sure American citizens get out of Vietnam safely. Only the use of troops in a massive evacuation of

Vietnamese is being questioned.

Any attempt to evacuate hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese would of course require a massive number of U.S. troops. These troops would have to hold an area around Saigon and the coast so that the evacuation could proceed by boat, an operation that would take months. George McArthur reported in the April 13 *Washington Post* that "even under good conditions at the Saigon port it would take a month or more to evacuate 200,000 Vietnamese by sea. . . ."

Meanwhile, the situation in Saigon is getting more explosive day by day.

'Mad as a March Hare'

U.S. Ambassador Graham Martin tried to keep a stiff upper lip. "I personally will be the last one to leave Vietnam," he said. But Don Oberdorfer in a dispatch to the April 13 *Washington Post* attributed this posture to Martin's cracking up when confronted with an "almost impossible job."

"Some people, including a number in his own embassy," said Oberdorfer, "believe him to be mad as a March hare and just about as elusive. . . ."

"As U.S. policy here draws ever closer to total failure, some observers believe that Martin's reasoned judgment and timely action have been impaired.

"There are signs of this, such as his continuing insistence that the lopping off of the unproductive northern provinces creates the basis for economic development of the remaining parts of South Vietnam. Within the past few days, Martin has been pushing new U.S. long-term investment programs."

Despite the ambassador's stance, however, foreign capitalists in Saigon are "voting with their feet." Most of the U.S. and Japanese companies were evacuating their personnel, the April 8 *New York Times* reported. The oil companies and the three largest U.S. banks had cleared out earlier. When the bankers left, they took with them "all their U.S. dollars, travelers' checks and other banking instruments," according to the April 10 *Washington Post*.

Many embassies are getting out of Saigon. West Germany has closed its embassy, the Thai embassy has evacuated nonessential staff members, and both Britain and Japan have suggested that their nationals leave as soon as possible.

"At the modernistic U.S. embassy in

downtown Saigon, 'evacuation' is the latest credibility victim," wrote George McArthur in the April 13 *Washington Post*. "It is something you do while denying you are doing it."

The American population of 6,000 has already been thinned out, and according to one official it was planned to be reduced to 2,000 within a few weeks. Some left by commercial flights, some on military transports, and some as "voluntary escorts" on planes taking orphans out.

Pedicabs Ordered Off Streets

Thieu's tiny base of support in Vietnam is dwindling even further.

The patriarch of the United Buddhist Church, the officially recognized Buddhist church in South Vietnam, called on Thieu to resign. The larger An Quang Buddhist faction has long criticized Thieu. Roman Catholic Archbishop Nguyen Van Binh also called for new leadership and urged Catholics not to evacuate their villages whatever happened, but to unite with their compatriots to establish peace and concord among Vietnamese.

As a sign of his nervousness about the situation in the capital itself, Thieu ordered the thousands of pedicabs off the streets. He apparently feared that the pedicab drivers, most of whom are poor, might have been infiltrated by the liberation forces.

The Provisional Revolutionary Government reiterated its call for negotiations, if Thieu were deposed. Foreign Minister Nguyen Thi Binh said in an interview in Dar es Salaam April 9 that "we are still for the application of the Paris peace accord."

There are quite a few figures willing to replace Thieu and open negotiations. According to a report in the April 11 *Chicago Tribune*, leaders of an underground coalition of generals, politicians, and intellectuals have proposed to Hanoi an immediate cease-fire. Included in the group was former Prime Minister Nguyen Cao Ky.

The newspaper quoted the Reverend Tran Huu Thanh, described as a founder of the "Government in hiding," as saying that contact with Hanoi had been made through the French embassy. Thanh is chairman of the People's Anticorruption Movement to Save the Country and Restore Peace that was formed last year.

After the unsuccessful bombing attack on Thieu's palace by one of his own pilots

Congress Weighs Demand to OK Use of U.S. Troops

By Dick Fidler

Ford's threat in his April 10 speech to use U.S. troops to evacuate Americans from Saigon was promptly denounced by a representative of the Provisional Revolutionary Government at a news conference in the South Vietnamese capital.

In an April 11 broadcast Hanoi radio described it as a pretext for reintroducing American forces into Vietnam: "Ford still harbors the illusion that his protégé [Thieu] might gain success if only he gets more American aid."

Members of the U.S. Congress are considering Ford's request for authority to use troops. Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia, the Senate Democratic whip, has taken the lead in drafting the necessary legislation, which is now being circulated on Capitol Hill.

But Byrd said he was opposed to using American troops to help evacuate Vietnamese. It would be "impractical and dangerous," he told the *New York Times*.

"If we started that, we would just be getting back into the war."

The administration is talking of evacuating 150,000 to 200,000 South Vietnamese.

Members of Congress appeared reluctant to publicly oppose Ford's request for \$250 million for "humanitarian aid" to the Thieu regime. But open opposition to his request for additional military aid was described as "nearly unanimous." When Ford first mentioned the \$722 million military aid figure, a hiss was heard from the Democratic side (a rare action among these trained seals), and a few Democrats walked out of the chamber as the president continued his speech.

"There would have to be a complete turnaround in the opinion of the American public . . . to support such aid," said Congressman Thomas O'Neill, Jr. of Massachusetts, the House Democratic majority leader.

"It's dead," said Senator Henry Jackson, a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination. "I oppose it. I don't know of any on the Democratic side who will support it."

Senator John McClellan, Democrat of Arkansas and chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, which would have to approve the military aid, said:

"I think it's too late to do any good. . . . Further military aid could merely prolong the conflict and perhaps postpone briefly

the inevitable—a Communist victory, a complete take-over."

"I think he has misjudged the mood of the country," Congressman John Brademas of Indiana, the deputy Democratic whip, said of Ford's request for military aid.

The "mood of the country" is overwhelmingly against any further military aid to South Vietnam or Cambodia, as members of Congress found out during the twelve-day Easter recess that ended April 7. "They're saying no, a loud, loud no," said Senator Frank L. Moss, a Democrat from Utah. Congressman Walter Flowers, a Democrat from Alabama, who has been a "hawk" on Indochina, told the House of Representatives that his constituents "feel Indochina is going down the drain and that we shouldn't pour in more military aid. They don't have any feeling of guilt. They say we're arm in arm with the big Communists in Russia and China but fighting the little Communists in Indochina tooth and nail. They think we should make friends with whoever can govern. I can't justify any more military aid."

A Harris poll released April 10 reported that Americans oppose any new U.S. military aid to Vietnam by a decisive 75-to-16 majority, and by 66 to 23 reject such aid to Cambodia.

James Reston of the *New York Times* referred to this underlying sentiment in an April 13 column inspired by the cover feature in the current issue of the British weekly *Economist*, "The Fading of America."

"What is 'fading,'" Reston said, "is not 'America,' but the illusions of America. . . ." Among these he listed the illusion "that the American people, with all their neglected problems at home, would continue indefinitely to support a war they could see on television with all its consequences of inflation, unemployment, and social turmoil."

Reston's main point was that the Ford administration should stop "exaggerating" its "losses" in Indochina, acknowledge the setback, and get on with tackling new issues. ". . . the problem now is to put things in order in the economies of the Western countries, and recreate the alliance in defense of the main priorities of Western civilization."

A similar tone was sounded in an April 13 editorial in the *New York Times*. Describing Ford's speech, it spoke of the "layers of

dead language about Vietnam and the weary stodginess of his over-all intellectual approach."

The editors called for an "invigorated sense of purpose" in U.S. foreign policy. In view of Ford's "anticlimactic speech," they said, "that task of intellectual definition and political leadership remains to be performed."

British newspapers also took a dim view of Ford's performance. The editors of the *Times* of London thought that Ford had "succeeded only to a limited extent" in restoring faith in U.S. foreign policy. "He could not erase images of what is happening in Vietnam, or his own inept response from the golf course," they wrote April 12. (Ford laughingly teased reporters and ran for his plane when they asked him about the debacle in South Vietnam.)

Since the loss of their own empire, the political leaders of British imperialism, Conservative and Labour alike, have acknowledged and accepted Washington's leadership. But they expect the No. 1 power to act as such. In its April 12 editorial, the *Times* expressed concern that "the United States, faced with inner problems and feeling rejected by an ungrateful and uncontrollable world, will gradually shrink from its responsibilities or miscalculate them."

Nevertheless, the newspaper seemed to see a positive side in the Indochina experience—that Washington, with a more realistic assessment of the limitations of its power, might now devote more attention to bolstering its European allies, including Britain. Or, as the *Times* put it, "see that the security of the United States depends on a network of relationships with countries bound by cultural affinity, geographical proximity, economic interests and strategic importance."

The *Economist*, too, has called for greater U.S. intervention in Europe. "The need for a coherent [U.S.] policy, if you live in one of the many countries that depend upon American consistency, is as great as ever. . . ." it said March 29.

"Without the United States, it is likelier that the left-wing authoritarianism that has been fastened on to Portugal will spread to other European countries."

The French bourgeoisie, having gone through a similar experience in Indochina more than twenty years ago, could not

resist the temptation to tell Washington, "We told you so."

For Jacques Renard, the Washington correspondent of the conservative Paris daily *Le Figaro*, Ford's state of the world address "marked the close of the Vietnam era in United States history, not the first chapter of a new era."

South Vietnam is on its own now, Renard said. The only reason Ford asked for any aid at all for Saigon is that if he had not, the regime would probably have "fallen immediately."

"On the world's big issues," said *Le Figaro's* correspondent, "Gerald Ford contributed no ideas, no new concepts."

"His speech contained, one after the other—with some omissions, for example not a word about Portugal—the key ideas and principles of Kissinger's policy as inherited from Nixon."

Le Monde, one of the more authoritative voices of the French bourgeoisie, showed a certain sympathy for Washington's problems, although it likewise could not resist turning the knife a bit when referring to the mental capacities of Ford, who, it seemed to think, lacks some of the characteristics of a Bonaparte.

"At this stage," the editors wrote April 5, "it would be easy to tell the Americans, as General de Gaulle did in no uncertain manner, that the whole affair was bound to end as it has. But the French have no right now to adopt a sardonic, holier-than-thou attitude toward the pronouncements of a head of state who is manifestly out of his depth."

Washington's "fatal mistake" in Indochina, *Le Monde* said, was a political one: It mistook a nationalist uprising in the South for Communist aggression from the North. "All the Pentagon's tanks, planes, and logistics experts were helpless to solve such a totally misconceived problem. Give the computer the wrong data, and it will automatically give the wrong answer."

The task now, it concluded, is to accept the inevitability of Vietnam's reunification and to encourage any tendencies among its leadership toward independence from Moscow and Peking.

West German authorities have expressed a less sanguine view of Washington's reverses in Southeast Asia and elsewhere. A recent U.S. public opinion poll showing that only 39 percent of Americans would favor military action by Washington should the Soviet Union occupy West Berlin was given wide publicity. Some West German politicians have sensed an opportunity to campaign for strengthening German ascendancy in Europe.

"Western Europe cannot continue to ask America to bear alone its defense burden," said a leader of the Christian Democrats, the conservative opposition party. "We must become stronger ourselves."

West German Defense Minister Georg Leber, a Social Democrat, has been doing some saber-rattling of his own. In a recent article, "Vietnam and Us," he stated:

"The so-called coexistence between Communism and the free way of life exists for



Macpherson/Toronto Star

the expansive ideology of Communism only as long as other ideologies cannot be overcome." He referred to "sword and fire in Vietnam and Cambodia, and probably soon elsewhere in the world."

Belying this aggressive cold-war imagery, the Kremlin has in fact responded with the greatest caution to Washington's difficulties. The Soviet press has shown little enthusiasm about the gains of the liberation forces in Indochina, the setbacks to Kissinger's diplomacy in the Middle East, and the revolutionary ferment in Portugal.

Washington Post correspondent Peter Osnos wrote from Moscow April 5: "Western diplomats believe Soviet response has been cautious out of an underlying concern for maintaining the basic pattern of detente with the United States that is the centerpiece of the Kremlin's present world strategy."

An anonymous Soviet official cited by Osnos indicated the Kremlin bureaucrats' underlying contempt for their Indochinese allies: "With the irritant of Indochina removed once and for all, he said there would be an opportunity for closer Soviet-American cooperation in matters that count more—strategic arms limitation, trade, and perhaps, the Middle East."

In a conversation with *Le Monde's* Moscow correspondent, one Soviet official even expressed relief that the liberation forces' advances in South Vietnam had not occurred during last November's Vladivostok summit meeting between Ford and Brezhnev. That "would have been very embarrassing for us," he said.

Right after Ford's April 10 speech, Brezhnev met for an hour in Moscow with U.S. Treasury Secretary William Simon.

"Simon said he and Brezhnev had not discussed the Indochina situation directly," Peter Osnos cabled the *Washington Post* April 12, "nor had the Communist leader commented on President Ford's foreign-policy speech Thursday night, in which the President said detente should not be a 'license to fish in troubled waters.'"

"But the Treasury secretary said that Brezhnev spoke warmly three times about Mr. Ford and said he was looking forward to 'new and useful initiatives' at the planned summer summit meeting in Washington."

In a dispatch from Moscow in the April 5 issue of *Le Monde*, correspondent Jacques Amalric said that in the Kremlin's view the Vietnamese should not "take all the fruits" but first "digest" the victories they have already won, and "organize their regime in the regions already conquered, especially the big urban centers like Hue and Da Nang, to which they are unaccustomed." A "provisional halt" in their advance, *Le Monde's* correspondent was told, would also show "a minimal respect for the Paris accords. . . ."

As for Cambodia, the Moscow press is emphasizing statements by the Khmer Rouge and Prince Sihanouk that Cambodia under their leadership will be "neutral."

The Chinese press has likewise played down the victories of the Vietnamese insurgents. A statement in the April 13 issue of *Jenmin Jih Pao*, signed "commentator," was critical of the U.S. buildup in Southeast Asia "for continuing the war."

"[The United States] recently sent over 20 warships including missile-carrying cruisers, aircraft carriers, destroyers, amphibious and supply ships, and several thousand combat-ready marines, swarming on the waters of South Vietnam," the statement said.

However, the statement said, the enormous U.S. military intervention in Vietnam in recent years "cannot block the victorious development of the Vietnamese people's just struggle."

The statement apparently made no direct reference to Ford's speech.

Cambodia's ambassador to Washington got Ford's message clear and responded accordingly. "We are the patient and the United States is the doctor," Um Sim told the Washington Press Club April 11. "You have found our case is hopeless, but we have to cling to life until we die."

The only government that found Ford's speech "encouraging" was, predictably, Thieu's. "Once again," the puppet regime said in an April 11 statement, "these pledges [of U.S. support] have demonstrated the continuity of the United States foreign policy through five Presidents."

There could hardly have been a clearer condemnation of Ford's policy. □

So They Say

[As the military positions of American imperialism and its puppets in Indochina continue to crumble, comments from all sides published in the press make illuminating reading. Here are more selections like those we published last week.]

* * *

In all candor . . . "WASHINGTON—What we face now is whether the United States will deliberately destroy an ally by withholding aid from it in its moment of extremity."—Kissinger, in a March 26 news conference.

"The Defense Dept. said today that, despite Congressional reductions in military aid, South Vietnamese forces were not critically short of either ammunition or fuel. . . . Contrary to the assertions of Secretary of State Kissinger that because of Congressional reductions American aid had been limited to ammunition and fuel, the Pentagon figures show that a substantial amount of spare parts had been ordered to keep American-furnished weapons in operation."—*New York Times*, March 28.

"Winning the hearts and minds." Ford's televised speech to Congress April 10 calling for U.S. troops and more money to Vietnam won, if anything, millions of new converts to the theory that he had indeed once played football without a helmet, thereby suffering irreparable brain damage.

The reception it got from Vietnam veterans at Prince George's Community College in Largo, Maryland, is instructive.

At one point, *New York Post* columnist Mary McGrory reported April 11, "The Commander in Chief was saying he 'must, of course, consider the safety of some 6000 Americans who remain in South Vietnam.'

"Those mothers,' murmured a bearded young man. 'They have a way out any time they want. They're the contractors who have been over there raking in the ducats from the beginning, and they'll be there at the end, taking every last penny.'"

Ford's request for an extra \$1 billion as a going-away present for Thieu did not strike a responsive chord among the veterans either. One who had been wounded seven times said that it once took him nine months to get a veterans' check. Another pointed to Rockefeller, sitting behind Ford. "Maybe he'll donate a million to his favorite orphanage," he said.

The congressional audience applauded loudly when Ford made his plea for the preservation of the CIA. "Why are they clapping?" one of the vets asked.

"They're paid to clap," was the answer.

"Silent Majority" tells Ford off. Ford and his predecessors in the White House counted heavily on support for the war in the small towns of the Midwest and South. That, too, has vanished like a pricked bubble. Consider some of the comments made in the American Legion Post in Clifton, Kansas, (population 800) during Ford's speech.

A twenty-six-year-old former Seabee, stationed in Vietnam in 1968 and 1969: "I couldn't believe all that scramble for the planes, when they were throwing the women and children off. That was supposed to be their elite forces. I'd have hated to see their mediocre ones."

A twenty-five-year-old former infantryman who fought in Vietnam in 1970 and 1971: "If they [the Saigon army] couldn't handle it the way we left it, they never will be able to. I thought we had them set up pretty good. I don't know what more we could have done."

A twenty-three-year-old who served in the Seventh Fleet off Vietnam: "I don't think money's going to do it. I think the only thing Ford could do would be to send troops over there, but I don't think it's going to come to that. I think the North Vietnamese are going to take over.

"Me? I'm getting married. I'm not going back."

(Quoted in the April 12 *New York Times*.)

Better off in Vietnam than Boston. At a meeting in Washington, D.C., April 7, organized to speed up the transport of Vietnamese children to the United States, several Blacks in the overwhelmingly white audience challenged the claim that half-Black, half-Vietnamese children would be better off in the U.S.

"Do you think they'll be allowed in the South Boston schools?" one Black shouted. (Quoted in the *New York Times*, April 8.)

Glut of orphans in U.S. *New York Post* columnist Carl Rowan, a Black journalist, made a telling point when he called attention to the 100,000 to 120,000 babies available for adoption in the United States.

He suggested that these "homeless U.S. infants need rescuing from some forces every bit as devastating as the Communist hordes which are viewed as a threat to the babies of South Vietnam.

"Most of those U.S. tots are constantly imperiled by hunger and malnutrition, exposure to the cold of wind-pierced tenebrousments, rats that bite in the night, leaded paint that falls off the walls, violent criminals who strike day or night," and all

the other attractive features of any major American city.

"So who's kidding whom when we put on this great show of national compassion which includes our President carrying Vietnamese orphans off planes and Mrs. Ford wishing she could adopt one? Are we trying to assuage feelings of inner guilt because we failed to see the battle through, because we won't now bomb Hue, Da Nang, Haiphong and Hanoi and try to push back the Communist tide, because Congress won't even give the Thieu regime \$300 million more for arms its soldiers can use to beat back some more women and babies who want to get on rescue vessels?"

Money changers get the message. "Following the broadcast here today of Mr. Ford's speech, the black market street rate of Vietnamese piasters to dollars jumped from 1,200 to the dollar to 1,400.

"The Ford speech apparently was not received by most South Vietnamese as especially significant."—A dispatch from Saigon in the April 12 *New York Times*.

Abandoned by Big Brother. Ambassador Um Sim of Cambodia had harsh words for the Ford administration's failure to continue asking Congress for the requested \$222 million in military aid. (Ford said in his speech that such aid would be "soon too late.")

"We are the patient and the United States is the doctor," Um Sim said April 11. "You have found our case is hopeless, but we have to cling to life until we die.

"Let's face it, you took advantage of us, our inexperience. As you are much cleverer than we are, you could induce us into this fighting. If this is true, it is a sad thing for Cambodia, maybe we are too naive." (Quoted in the April 12 *New York Times*.)

Law of supply and demand. A reporter's account of conditions aboard a refugee barge that made a nine-day voyage from Hue to Vung Tau, a port forty miles southeast of Saigon:

"The sun had scorched them on the open deck all that time and they had been without food and water. From the huge pile of debris on the deck . . . at least 50 bodies were pulled out by nightfall, most of them children and women. . . .

"Some people came out in boats with water,' a woman said, staring blankly out to sea. 'They sold it to us for 1,500 dong'—about \$2—a glass. Of course, most people could not afford a whole glass, so we tried to share it.

"A few times it rained, and we all lay on the deck trying to lick up what gathered, although the deck was so thick with human waste it was awful." (Malcolm W. Browne, in the April 7 *New York Times*.)

Now It Can Be Told

[The elaborate propaganda facade that dressed up Washington's military intervention in the Vietnamese civil war is collapsing. It is one of the consequences of the military collapse suffered by the puppet armies. The following is a sampling of admissions that have appeared in the capitalist press in recent days as the truth begins to emerge.]

* * *

Cuddled up in cribs. "Operation Baby Lift" apparently had other purposes than trying to meet the demand in the United States for adoptions (the going market price for adoptable babies is said to be about \$5,000):

"Some of the more than 20 women killed Friday in the crash of an Air Force C-5A transport that was also carrying children were actually Defense Attaché's office employes being evacuated, it is now known. They got on the flight by acting as escorts for the 243 children."—Dispatch from Saigon in the *New York Times*, April 8.

Those commitments. Here is why they have been so obscure and so puzzling to most people:

"It was disclosed last week that despite clear and specific assurances to the contrary by Secretary of State Kissinger, he had in fact negotiated a secret agreement with Saigon when the 1973 Paris peace agreements were reached. . . .

"Presidential Press Secretary Ron Nessen confirmed there were 'private exchanges' between President Thieu and then-President Nixon requiring 'vigorous' American action. The exchanges had been negotiated by Secretary Kissinger. Mr. Nessen said they would not be made public.

"When he announced the Paris agreement, Mr. Kissinger said: 'There are no secret understandings.'

"Reports of such assurances were current at the time of the accord, and were generally believed to involve American bombing of Communist positions in South Vietnam or even bombing of North Vietnam."—*New York Times*, April 13.

Morale built up by the Pentagon. "Mey Seyvanthang, a 26-year-old infantryman, says he thinks the war will soon end in an insurgent victory if it keeps going the way it is now. But a rumor is spreading through the foxholes that suggests a miraculous intervention. The rumor is that the Americans will resume their bombing in

three days."—Dispatch from Pnompenh in the *New York Times*, April 8.

That wasn't \$1 billion. Remember the gasp in Washington when the Pentagon announced that Thieu's armies had abandoned \$1 billion in armaments?

In a television interview April 10 immediately following Ford's appeal to Congress to give Thieu another \$722 million in military aid, Senator Frank Church revealed that the \$1 billion figure represented the "depreciated value" of the matériel. The actual value was somewhere between \$5 billion and \$10 billion.

Paymaster grilled. President Ford's "friends and allies" in Cambodia seem to have taken in a most literal way the capitalist dictum about living off fellow human beings:

"Angry, mutinous troops are airlifted from a provincial town called Kompong Seila, which was under almost constant shelling for nearly eight months last year during an unsuccessful siege by the insurgents. The soldiers have not been paid in four months and a paymaster who ventures into their encampment at a pagoda south of the city without any funds to pay them is beaten to death and cannibalized. Foreign television crews rush to the pagoda and the mutineers are soon explaining into microphones that they took to eating human flesh, when rice stocks gave way during the siege. The army, which needs every soldier it can get for the defense of the city's exposed southern flank, apparently decides not to treat the eating of the paymaster as a breach of discipline. Within hours of his death, it starts paying the soldiers at the pagoda."—Dispatch from Pnompenh in the *New York Times*, April 8.

Any job to get by. "A former Premier and Foreign Minister named Yem Sambo entertains friends on a languid afternoon at a farewell meal at his home. He is flying to Bangkok the next day, he explains, on a plane the United States is using to evacuate its official personnel, foreigners in its employ . . . and diplomats. A former Cambodian Premier does not seem to fit any of these categories, but a member of Mr. Yem Sambo's household explains that he has become the honorary consul here for Haiti."—Dispatch from Pnompenh in the *New York Times*, April 8.

No, it was Ford's friends and allies. The propaganda is that the refugees, in fleeing the battle areas as Thieu's troops

withdrew, were voting against communism "with their feet."

"Hundreds of refugees interviewed in various parts of the country in the last few weeks have said they were fleeing not so much because of any specific fear of the Communists as because of the general panic that spreads when most people start running.

"The people who escaped with us were more afraid of the rangers than they were of the Communists," a middle-aged man from Pleiku, in the highlands, told friends the other day, speaking of the elite South Vietnamese Government force.

"Two rangers, he said, put their M-16 rifles against his stomach. One had stripped off his Rolex watch; the other took his wallet. 'After that,' he said, 'I was so afraid of the rangers that I hid my clothes and went around in my underwear so they wouldn't have anything to steal.' He had been the manager of an ice plant at home.

"When the refugee column from Pleiku reached Tuy Hoa, near the coast, the rangers looted the town. 'They just went into restaurants, ordered chicken, duck and beer—whatever they liked,' the man from Pleiku went on. 'When the time came to pay the bill they put a hand grenade on the table and demanded the owner's money.'

"But the North Vietnamese treated us well when they stopped us,' said the refugee."—Dispatch from Saigon in the *New York Times*, April 8.

Heroic defenders of free enterprise system. Thieu and his retainers were pictured by Washington as sterling defenders of the values of the free world. And so they were:

"The Long Island newspaper *Newsday* reported today that it had learned from Pentagon sources that the accounting agency estimated some \$200-million in American equipment had been lost or squandered by the South Vietnamese [in addition to the \$1 billion worth of equipment they abandoned].

"*Newsday* said its source indicated a large amount of the equipment had been stolen by officials of the Saigon Government and sold to the North Vietnamese and Vietcong. . . .

"The *Newsday* article said that among the major items lost were 143 small warships valued at \$37-million. It also said that \$2-million worth of ammunition was stored without cover, allowing it to deteriorate, and that \$10-million worth of small arms was reported missing from a depot that had no physical security."—Associated Press, April 8.

Remember the buildup? "President Thieu is one of the four or five best politicians in the world."—Richard Nixon in the days before Watergate.

Why Washington Could Not Win in Vietnam

By Dick Fidler

This is not a "suitable time," said the *New York Times* in an April 5 editorial, "for critics of past and present American policy in Southeast Asia to draw lessons from this debacle. . . .

" . . . To try to pre-empt history's role now is only to perpetuate the bitter quarrel of the last decade in a new and uglier form. This nation went through one such hideous political and intellectual debauch—"Who lost China?"—a generation ago. It most certainly does not need to begin another one now."

The most astute circles of the American ruling class do not want a public debate about the underlying lessons of their debacle in Vietnam. They are agreed that there is little Washington can do to prevent the collapse of its South Vietnamese puppet. They see no merit in emphasizing that harsh truth.

Yet the magnitude of the defeat is such that Washington's policy makers and their apologists can scarcely avoid discussing it. However, official and semiofficial reactions expressed in the wake of Saigon's rout have fallen far short of a convincing explanation.

In fact, U.S. officers involved in training Saigon's army claim that the behavior of Thieu's troops is "inexplicable."

Others blame the collapse of morale in South Vietnam's military on the misleadership and the well-known corruption of Thieu's gang.

The Ford administration has blamed Congress, with its Democratic majority. Some voices, especially in and around the Pentagon, have complained about insufficient financial and military aid to Saigon.

Such "explanations" have a common logic. They attribute Saigon's defeat to *military* deficiencies. They claim to see a possible solution in the application of more firepower.

But what difference could another \$700 million in military equipment make? According to Pentagon figures, the war in Vietnam alone, that is, excluding money spent on the fighting in Laos and Cambodia, cost the United States \$110 billion—more than \$3,000 a second, every second, for ten years. The real cost to the United States of the intervention in Indochina has been conservatively estimated to be \$400 billion.

Between 1965 and 1973 the United States

exploded as much as 15 million tons of bombs and shells on North and South Vietnam, the approximate equivalent of more than 500 Hiroshima atomic bombs. Nearly 50,000 tons of chemical defoliants and more than 200,000 tons of napalm were dropped on the Vietnamese before the 1973 cease-fire went into effect. All this investment in death and destruction could not prevent a crushing defeat.

The *New York Times* offered a more realistic assessment of Washington's problem in an April 6 editorial. "The events of recent weeks," it said, have proved "that South Vietnam could not prevail militarily unless helped by American bombing and probably also by American ground troops."

But the American people, the editors of the *Times* said, have "determined that those are heavy costs that they would not pay again in Southeast Asia."

A Political Defeat

The reason Washington's hands are tied is *political*.

1. The war in Vietnam is fundamentally a civil war. The collapse of the puppet regime's forces shows that it has no popular support. Thieu's regime does not have the political base required to survive on its own.

2. The antiwar opposition, especially in the United States itself, has undermined the political base of the U.S. government.

Ten years after Lyndon B. Johnson began to escalate the war, virtually the entire American ruling class is convinced that any resumption of large-scale U.S. military intervention would precipitate a massive social crisis in the United States that could well make even the crises at the peak of U.S. aggression in Vietnam pale by comparison.

Kissinger referred to this fact indirectly, in a March 26 news conference, when he said, "We have gone through the experience of Vietnam, through the anguish of Watergate. And I think the cumulative effect of nearly a decade of domestic upheaval is beginning . . . to take its toll."

Washington learned this lesson only with the greatest reluctance. Hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese were murdered in the process; more than 56,000 American soldiers lost their lives before the Pentagon's war machine was forced to pull back. None of this comes as a surprise to revolutionary

socialists. Here are some of the things we said:

The Trotskyist Forecasts

The February 19, 1965, issue of *World Outlook*, the former name of *Intercontinental Press*, quoted a reported conversation in 1961 between President John Kennedy and General Douglas MacArthur, who had commanded U.S. troops in Korea. MacArthur had prophesied to Kennedy that eventually the whole of Southeast Asia would go Communist "by popular choice." "The truth is," *World Outlook* observed, "that Washington sees no genuine hope of saving its position in South Vietnam. It knows that if its military support is removed, the puppet Saigon regime will crash overnight.

"Moreover Washington is aware that its military position is becoming desperate. . . .

"The Pentagon finds itself incapable of containing the rising revolution except through all-out war. But can it win a conflict inevitably involving China and the Soviet Union? To use nuclear arms would mean suicide; not to use them would mean defeat by revolution. The tide of the future is with communism 'by popular choice' on a world scale. In their hearts, the American generals know it. They simply can't bring themselves to admit it—publicly."

They still can't, today.

International Solidarity

The Dr. Strangeloves could be defeated only through the organization of a massive movement of international solidarity. This was pointed out in the March 5, 1965, issue of *World Outlook*:

" . . . either of two immediate possible turns can cause the White House to hesitate and even retreat—a further rise in the revolution in South Vietnam or the sending of massive Soviet aid to North Vietnam. Either or both of these turns would not cause American imperialism to give up its long-range war plans, but it would cause the Washington warmongers to once again ask their electronic computers if this were not the wrong front at the wrong time, as they did in Korea.

"The spotlight thus shifts to Moscow, where the heads of the Soviet bureaucracy are now confronted with a problem perhaps

even graver than in 1938-39 when Hitler was preparing for his eventual attack on the Soviet Union.

"Meanwhile, other pressures are rising against the Washington warmongers. In the United States itself, the rulers have not yet achieved a common view on whether it is advisable to plunge ahead at the present time. Among the people, a few courageous voices are being heard, and a few demonstrations are to be noted. . . .

"Abroad there is not a single big capitalist power that really supports the United States in Vietnam. . . .

"These forces, if they are registered loudly enough and emphatically enough, can strengthen and hearten the opposition in the United States to such an extent as to convince the Texas gambler [Johnson] that the odds in the game of Russian roulette he is playing are not five to one, but just the reverse."

Moscow, Peking Cave In

The Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, major world powers wielding great influence in the international workers movement, had the power to stop U.S. imperialism in its tracks. Had they made clear to Johnson that attacks on the North Vietnamese workers state would not be tolerated, had they provided the Vietnamese with sufficient weaponry to defend themselves, had they called for the mobilization of the mass Stalinist parties on a world scale, the Pentagon would have been forced to back down in the mid-1960s.

But instead of joining in a united front against Washington's dangerous intervention, Moscow and Peking failed to make the least countermove to U.S. aggression. Acting within the framework of "peaceful coexistence," Moscow confined its response to verbal denunciations of Washington's interference, and Peking ridiculed U.S. imperialism as a "paper tiger."

The reaction of the Soviet and Chinese bureaucrats was a prime consideration in the minds of the Washington strategists at every stage of the growing involvement in Vietnam. The escalation on a step-by-step basis was designed to gauge that reaction. Each time there was no meaningful answer, the imperialists escalated further.

The Pentagon Papers documented what the revolutionary socialists consistently said about this policy. Here, for example, is the Pentagon's estimate of the initial response to the bombing of North Vietnam after the Pleiku incident* in February 1965:

"... Peking's propaganda, though full of bellicosity and bluster, and publicizing

huge anti-U.S. rallies organized in China's major cities, carefully avoided threatening any direct Chinese intervention. . . .

"Moscow's response was even more restrained. . . . While indicating that 'DRV [Democratic Republic of Vietnam] defenses' would be strengthened, some Moscow broadcasts took note of the growing interest in the United States and elsewhere for a

"... millions of Americans can be actively involved in the struggle against the Vietnam war. A movement of that scope, even though centered around the single issue of the war, would have the most profound effects on every social structure in the country. . . ."—Fred Halstead, in *the Militant*, November 22, 1965.

negotiated settlement in Vietnam."

Later in the war, Washington was to enlist the aid of both Moscow and Peking to impose onerous cease-fire conditions on the Vietnamese liberation fighters. That the crucial nature of the bureaucrats' role is fully appreciated among U.S. ruling circles today is indicated by the absence of any attempt to attribute the current advances of the Vietnamese insurgents to pressure from China or the Soviet Union.

The victories now being scored by the Vietnamese against their formidable imperialist foe are all the more impressive in view of the counterrevolutionary role played by the two Stalinist bureaucracies.

Growth of Antiwar Movement

One of the strongest assets of the Vietnamese was the support and encouragement provided by the international antiwar movement—above all, the powerful movement in the United States. In sharp contrast to traditional pacifist movements that collapsed with the outbreak of war, this movement began to develop with the first major escalation of U.S. intervention in 1965. It grew and deepened as the war continued, drawing broader and broader layers of the American populace into active protest.

Unlike the bourgeois apologists for Washington's counterrevolutionary intervention, antiwar activists have every cause to study and publicize the balance sheet of the Vietnam experience. As the focus of the contest between imperialism and the colonial revolution for more than a decade, Vietnam showed the difficulties American imperialism faces in trying to defeat revolutions in other countries. The lessons from that experience will serve anti-imperialist fighters everywhere.

The growth of the international antiwar movement was documented week by week

in the pages of *Intercontinental Press*, and in other publications of the worldwide Trotskyist movement.

The first major antiwar demonstration, mobilizing 20,000 persons, took place on April 17, 1965, in response to a call by the Students for a Democratic Society. At that time, tens of thousands of U.S. "advisers" were in South Vietnam. The SDS call described the Vietnam war as a civil war and called for an end to U.S. involvement. It invited the participation of left-wing groups, including the Communist and Socialist Workers parties. In response to the SDS appeal, international solidarity actions were held in a number of countries.

The SDS leadership unfortunately soon abandoned the struggle against the war. But the Trotskyists persisted in the effort to build a massive antiwar protest movement. In the November 22, 1965, issue of the *Militant*, the revolutionary-socialist news-weekly, Fred Halstead, 1968 presidential candidate of the Socialist Workers party and a prominent antiwar leader, predicted the course the antiwar movement would follow.

"The growth of consciousness by the student youth," Halstead said, "is a forerunner of a growth of consciousness on a much larger scale, among the working class youth, among young men forced into the army, and among broad sections of the population as a whole.

"It is well within possibility that not just a few hundred thousand, but millions of Americans can be actively involved in the struggle against the Vietnam war. A movement of that scope, even though centered around the single issue of the war, would have the most profound effects on every social structure in the country, including the trade unions and the soldiers in the army.

"It would very probably also result in a general rise in radical consciousness on many other questions, just as it has already had an impact against red-baiting. But above all, it could be the key factor in forcing an end to the Pentagon's genocidal war in Vietnam. The lives of untold thousands of Vietnamese men, women and children, and U.S. G.I.'s may depend upon it. That alone is reason enough to put aside sectarian differences to unite and help build a national organization which can encompass anyone willing to oppose U.S. involvement in Vietnam, regardless of their commitment, or lack of it, on other questions."

This perspective was borne out in reality. In the following years, the antiwar movement became enormous in scope, mobilizing nearly one million persons in one day in major U.S. cities such as Washington and San Francisco.

International protests were also impressively large. Such cities as London, Paris, Melbourne, and Tokyo witnessed turnouts

*Guerrilla attack on U.S. helicopter base used as pretext by Johnson for ordering air strikes against North Vietnam, beginning undeclared war and escalation of U.S. aggression.

of as high as 100,000 persons or more. Many antiwar protesters, in addition to raising the demand for immediate unconditional withdrawal of U.S. troops from Indochina, also raised demands directed against the complicity of their "own" governments—whether in the form of diplomatic or material aid—in Washington's war effort.

How the Movement Was Built

Although students were the core of the antiwar movement, opposition spread through other layers of American society. Black people were almost universally opposed to the war. Referendums in such cities as Dearborn, Michigan, showed strong support among working people for immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam. Antiwar sentiment began to develop among GIs.

An article by Fred Feldman in the February 5, 1973, issue of *Intercontinental Press* described how the mass movement was built.

"The mass mobilizations would have been severely curtailed on many occasions had it not been for the existence of a militant left wing in the antiwar movement, based primarily on the campuses," Feldman wrote. "At the core of this left wing were the Trotskyists, who saw defense of the Indochinese revolution as their foremost task. Unlike the sectarians of various kinds, they never made support for their own demands or tactics a condition for participating in united antiwar actions."

During the course of the war, *Intercontinental Press* published the statements by the Fourth International, the international Trotskyist movement, analyzing each successive phase of the revolutionary struggle and stressing the need for international solidarity.

Members of the Socialist Workers party and the Young Socialist Alliance "fought for a broad, united antiwar movement open to all who wanted to participate in antiwar demonstrations," Feldman said. "They were opposed in this by reformists, who wanted to exclude 'leftists,' and by ultraleftists, who believed that procapitalist or reformist leaders could be defeated politically by barring them from the speakers' platform at demonstrations.

"The Trotskyists' tactics aimed at mobilizing the masses independently of the capitalist parties in demonstrations against the war. They opposed the confrontationist proposals of ultralefts who believed that militant action by small groups could 'stop the war machine' or that clashes with the cops would galvanize the masses."

They fought the attempts of reformists, including the Stalinists, to channel antiwar sentiment into support of capitalist politicians.

As defenders of the right of self-determination of the Vietnamese, the Trotskyists fought to make the central unifying slogan of the antiwar movement the demand for immediate, unconditional withdrawal of U.S. and allied troops from Vietnam. They defended this demand against the advocates of "negotiations" who wanted to limit the movement to winning favor with liberal politicians whom they viewed as natural leaders of the movement. The disorienting effect of the "Negotiate now!" slogan was evident when Johnson himself became an advocate of "negotiations," in an effort to confuse and disarm the antiwar movement.

Eventually, experience and patient education convinced most antiwar activists of the correctness of the "Out now!" slogan.

Division in Ruling Class

The rise of the antiwar movement sharpened tactical divisions within the U.S. ruling class. Fearing the deepening of social

"The truth is that Washington sees no genuine hope of saving its position in South Vietnam. It knows that if its military support is removed, the puppet Saigon regime will crash overnight."—Joseph Hansen, in *Intercontinental Press*, February 19, 1965.

conflicts at home if the escalation in Vietnam continued, major capitalist newspapers and political representatives began to advocate a tactical retreat from Vietnam. Each big turn in the war illustrated the power of the Vietnamese resistance fighters and the American antiwar protest movement to force important concessions from U.S. imperialism.

An example was the Tet offensive in 1968. On January 30 the National Liberation Front launched simultaneous assaults on twenty-six provincial capitals throughout South Vietnam. The offensive was a stunning military and political defeat for Washington, destroying at one blow the myth that it was "winning the war" and "pacifying" the Vietnamese countryside. News reports described the astonishment and perplexity prevailing in top government circles in Washington.

Joseph Hansen wrote in the February 9, 1968, *World Outlook*:

"Washington's mood is not unprecedented. In fact history teaches us to expect such feelings among ruling circles confronted by powerful revolutionary upsurges, which to them are always 'something wholly alien and inexplicable.'

"The Pentagon, the State Department and the White House have been hypnotized by the military chessboard. No matter with

what brutality they may engage in this game, its rules still remain the rules of war. By all the logic of war the Vietnamese should have been smashed long ago. What the Washington strategists left out of account is that the logic of war tends to pass over into the logic of revolution, which supersedes war. This applies all the more pertinently to Vietnam where U.S. intervention was intervention in a deep-going *civil war*."

A similar observation could aptly be made with respect to current official reaction to Saigon's rout.

The ruling class sensed that a shift in tactics was in order. General William Westmoreland's demand for 200,000 additional U.S. troops was refused, and the commander in chief of U.S. forces in Vietnam was removed from his post.

For the first time, major U.S. newspapers began to talk of the likelihood of Washington losing the war. An editor of the *Wall Street Journal* warned that "the American people" had "better be prepared to accept the possibility that the whole thing may go to pot no matter what our Government does."

Senator Robert Kennedy admitted publicly that the United States could not win in Vietnam.

Fears that U.S. imperialism was militarily overextended in Vietnam were coupled with growing concern that the United States faced a major social revolt if the escalation continued. A clear majority of the population was now opposed to the war. Demonstrations and campus protests on April 26-27, 1968, were the largest to date. There were growing signs of serious discontent among the troops, both in Vietnam and elsewhere.

The White House decided to carry out a turn, and initiate negotiations with the North Vietnamese and the National Liberation Front. As a further sop to the antiwar movement, Johnson promised not to run again for president.

Stalemated militarily, Washington sought a Korea-style settlement, which would ensure the maintenance of a puppet regime in Saigon supported by a permanent U.S. army of occupation. But as antiwar sentiment mounted among the troops, this plan, too, had to be jettisoned. In November 1969, Johnson's successor, Richard Nixon, announced the "Vietnamization" strategy: gradual withdrawal of American troops, and their replacement by mercenary puppet troops backed by massive use of U.S. air power.

Washington continued to seek a deal with Moscow and Peking that would help it to save South Vietnam as an imperialist beachhead.

"Vietnamization" encouraged illusions that Nixon was indeed winding down the war. But antiwar sentiment did not decline.

This was demonstrated in the clearest way when Nixon announced April 30, 1970, that he was sending U.S. troops into Cambodia—the most serious escalation of the war since Johnson's decision to bomb North Vietnam. Within days the United States was plunged into a crisis described as the deepest of this century.

On May 4 national guardsmen shot and killed four students in a demonstration at Kent State University in Ohio protesting Nixon's decisions. Millions of students expressed their shock and outrage by occupying universities and converting them into antiwar mobilization centers. The scope of the protest was unprecedented. There were demonstrations at 89 percent of all independent universities and 76 percent of all public ones. The number of student strikers was conservatively estimated at more than five million.

Under the impact of the students' upsurge, the first significant signs of mobilization by the trade unions began to appear. In New York City, the first antiwar demonstration sponsored by trade unions drew 25,000 to a street march—a significant crack in the monolithic labor support for the war that AFL-CIO President George Meany had sought to maintain.

Leading representatives of the capitalist class openly voiced forebodings at the revolutionary implications of this massive upsurge of domestic discontent. McGeorge Bundy, one of the central figures in the Johnson administration responsible for escalating the war in 1965, said:

"The point is, quite simply, that any major action of this general sort, if undertaken in the same fashion as the Cambodian decision—now that the domestic effects of that decision are visible—would tear the country and the Administration to pieces. At the very least the Congress would stop money for the war, and the chances of general domestic upheaval would be real."

A leading Republican, John W. Gardner, said: "... judged in the strictest national security terms, our involvement in Southeast Asia is hopelessly counter to our best interests."

Former Chief Justice Earl Warren spoke of "a divisiveness in our society to a degree of intensity that has not been equaled in the past hundred years."

Citing these statements in an article in the May 25, 1970, issue of *Intercontinental Press*, Joseph Hansen noted that it was "clearly the opinion of . . . top ruling circles that American involvement in the war in Vietnam has led to such civil division and strife that the country may now be on the verge of a revolution."

Although Nixon's troop withdrawals in following months convinced some people that he was really planning to end the war, demonstrations held in Washington and

San Francisco on April 24, 1971, topped even the massive outpouring of November 1969. Major contingents of Vietnam veterans and Chicanos showed that organized protest had extended its social base beyond the student movement.

Another source of concern to the U.S.

"What the Washington strategists left out of account is that the logic of war tends to pass over into the logic of revolution, which supersedes war. This applies all the more pertinently to Vietnam where U.S. intervention was intervention in a deep-going civil war."—*Joseph Hansen, in Intercontinental Press, February 9, 1968.*

rulers was the profound impact the antiwar feeling in the population as a whole was having on the morale of American troops. By 1971 the ground-combat effectiveness of the U.S. Army in Vietnam had virtually collapsed. Marine Corps historian Col. Robert D. Heinl, Jr. (ret.) offered the following assessment in the June 7, 1971, issue of the *Armed Forces Journal*:

"The morale, discipline and battle-worthiness of the U.S. Armed Forces are, with a few salient exceptions, lower and worse than at any time in this century and possibly in the history of the United States.

"By every conceivable indicator, our Army that now remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse, with individual units avoiding or having refused combat, murdering their officers and non-commissioned officers, drug-ridden, and dispirited where not near mutinous.

"Elsewhere than Vietnam the situation is nearly as serious."

Forced to envisage a complete withdrawal of its combat troops from South Vietnam, Washington's main concern now was to ensure preservation of an anticommunist government in Saigon. To achieve this aim, it relied on the bureaucrats in Moscow and Peking. In return for trade and diplomatic concessions, they were to guarantee they would not augment the fighting capacity of the liberation forces and thereby jeopardize the survival of the Thieu regime. The result of this trade-off was one of the biggest betrayals of a liberation struggle in history.

The depth of the betrayal was underscored in the early months of 1972 by the reception accorded the chief of U.S. imperialism in Peking, and later Moscow, while U.S. warplanes rained bombs on North Vietnam. When Thieu's army began crumbling under the blows of the liberation forces' spring offensive, Nixon launched the heaviest bombing to date against North Vietnam and mined North Vietnam's ports and waterways, something Washington had never dared to do before.

Brezhnev's willingness to play host to Nixon cut across the massive antiwar protests that were beginning to develop. The lull in antiwar activity did not end until Nixon began the carpet bombing raids on Hanoi and Haiphong in December 1972. But at Nixon's second inaugural in Washington on January 20, 1973, well over 100,000 persons gathered at the base of the Washington Monument to express their outrage at the murderous bombings.

The 1973 Accords

The "Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring the Peace in Vietnam" left Thieu with the world's third biggest air force, a one-million-man army, huge amounts of U.S. direct aid, and a guarantee of U.S. naval and air power off the coast and in Thailand.

At the same time, the bombing halt, the last withdrawal of U.S. troops, and the recognition of the liberation forces' presence in South Vietnam represented gains of the antiwar movement and the Vietnamese insurgents.

The headline on the February 5, 1973, issue of *Intercontinental Press*, which analyzed the accords, summed up their true meaning: "Nothing Really Settled." A civil war cannot be ended by a compromise—particularly when the war involves two conflicting social systems.

"None of the basic issues around which the civil war in South Vietnam has been fought was settled. . . ." wrote Jon Rothschild.

"The struggle of the Vietnamese people for national independence and socialism has not been won; it has merely reached a turning point. The United States stands ready to resume its military aggression at any moment, and political, economic, and military interference will continue in any case."

The accords had no sooner been signed than Thieu commenced an offensive, apparently aimed at eliminating pockets of support for the Provisional Revolutionary Government, and in "resettling" an estimated 750,000 refugees in areas under Saigon control. These moves were followed up by an increase in large-scale offensive operations by the South Vietnamese army that actually increased Saigon's control of people and land from the time of the cease-fire.

A subsequent "offensive" by the liberation forces in the spring of 1974 appears to have had no further objective than the regaining of land lost to the Saigon forces during the period since the cease-fire.

Even accounts by hostile observers have indicated that the PRG endeavored to comply with the accords and did not utilize openings that existed to extend the resistance against Thieu's attacks. In an article

in the January 1975 issue of *Foreign Affairs* quarterly, written shortly before Saigon's recent reverses, *Newsweek's* former bureau chief in Saigon, Maynard Parker, wrote:

"Although in some areas, particularly in northern South Vietnam, they possess overwhelming strength, the North Vietnamese have chosen to stay inside the perimeters of the Paris peace agreements by generally not attempting to take land that was firmly under the control of the South Vietnamese at the time of the ceasefire. And despite the fact that the North Vietnamese have scores of tanks and 130 artillery pieces clustered near most of South Vietnam's largest cities, they have not used these weapons against the cities. . . . the North Vietnamese have even occasionally practiced a policy of limited accommodation in the midst of battle. During a battle at Dak Pek this spring, an ARVN unit which was completely surrounded was allowed to walk out unscathed."

Parker attributed "Hanoi's reticence" to open an offensive to several factors. North Vietnamese leaders had postponed the objective of unifying Vietnam in favor of reconstructing the economy of the North. They believed that Thieu's regime would crumble and collapse from within, from its internal contradictions.

"But the most critical, and perhaps even the determining, factor in Hanoi's reticence," he said, "is the fact that while the North may be able to afford an all-out war militarily, it cannot afford to do so diplomatically. For although North Vietnam has enough war matériel to sustain the first round of a major offensive, it has no guarantee from either the People's Republic of China or the Soviet Union that those supplies would be replaced. Indeed, since the ceasefire the Soviet Union and China have been most circumspect, and although both powers have increased their level of economic aid, they have actually decreased their military aid to Hanoi."

Hanoi's aid from the workers states was always qualitatively lower than Washington's aid to South Vietnam. In 1971, for example, total Soviet military aid to North Vietnam was valued at only \$100 million, while official U.S. figures listed spending \$9 billion on the war—ninety times the Soviet figure. Chinese military assistance to Hanoi in 1971 was listed at the even lower figure of \$75 million.

Behind Saigon's Rout

Thieu's army collapsed from the internal contradictions of the regime, not under the blows of any large-scale offensive by the PRG forces.

Despite extensive U.S. backing for Saigon, the situation in South Vietnam had deteriorated rapidly during the last two years. An inflation rate of nearly 90 percent

in two years had spurred a 45 percent drop in per capita income. Nearly one million persons are unemployed. Economic stagnation inspired political unrest. In September 1974 the Buddhists began agitating for peace and national reconciliation with the Communists, while a few weeks later Catholics began an anticorruption campaign against the government.

If the collapse of the Saigon forces came more swiftly and was more extensive than expected, the evidence of the regime's thorough rottenness should surprise no one. Nothing was propping it up but U.S. arms, U.S. soldiers, and U.S. air power. Their withdrawal—under the dual pressure of the Vietnamese masses and the international antiwar movement—is the underlying cause of Saigon's defeat.

Significantly, like many others who have continued to favor U.S. support to the puppet regime, Parker emphasized in his *Foreign Affairs* article that such support "should not in any circumstances turn into something that involved American military action."

Park Shuts 20 Universities as Student Protests Spread

Eight Political Prisoners Executed in South Korea

Following the declaration of a state of emergency on April 8 by South Korean President Park Chung Hee, about 200 government troops stormed Korea University and closed it down in an effort to halt continuing student protests against Park's repressive regime.

The next day, about 300 Korea University students staged a street demonstration in defiance of the state of emergency and demanded the release of jailed students and the lifting of the decree. An estimated 3,000 students at three other universities held rallies on their campuses to protest the closing of Korea University. Some of the demonstrations called for the resignation of Park, the disbanding of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, and freedom of the press. By April 12, twenty universities in South Korea had been closed.

The Seoul regime reimprisoned twelve dissidents, including nine students who were released two months ago after receiving suspended sentences. All twelve were tried by military courts in April 1974 on charges of having plotted to overthrow Park.

Kim Sang Jin, a student at Seoul National University, died April 12 after stabbing himself in the stomach in protest against the government repression.

As a brutal warning to student protesters, eight persons accused of belonging to the

If, he added prophetically, "the nerve of the ARVN [South Vietnamese army] should fail and South Vietnam should begin to crack militarily, the United States should not attempt to stave off such a defeat by the reentry of American air or naval power, still less ground forces. If . . . the Saigon government should dissolve in political turmoil, we should not attempt to put things right, but accept whatever reality finally emerges."

This caution about intervening militarily in Indochina at the present time constitutes one of the outstanding achievements of the antiwar movement. Direct involvement of U.S. troops on a large scale anywhere outside of the United States today is certain to meet with militant opposition domestically, and the likelihood that this opposition will broaden quickly into a colossal force.

That is why the bourgeoisie would prefer not to have a public debate on the political lessons of their debacle in Vietnam. Those lessons can only inspire and instruct a new generation of fighters for national and social liberation. □

outlawed People's Revolutionary party were hanged April 9, barely twenty-four hours after the Supreme Court rejected their appeals. They had been tried and sentenced to death during secret military trials. Nine others accused in the case had been given life sentences and the remaining four sentenced to shorter prison terms. The regime had charged the twenty-one defendants with spying for North Korea and aiding the student demonstrations.

During the trial, the defendants denied the charges and said they had "confessed" only under torture. When the sentences were confirmed by the Supreme Court April 8, members of their families shouted "injustice" and "unfair trial."

The day after the executions, about 200 riot police broke up the funeral for Song Sang Jin, one of those executed, to prevent it from becoming a political demonstration. Members of the family who resisted were dragged from the hearse, and a priest was clubbed. The police seized the body and took it directly to a crematorium. □

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Portuguese Trotskyists Call for National Workers Assembly

By Gerry Foley

LISBON—"Socialism is to begin" was the headline in the April 8 issue of *Diário de Lisboa*. The event that inspired this conclusion by the editors of the Communist party-influenced daily was the Assembly of the Armed Forces Movement (MFA), which met April 7 for the first time since the abortive rightist coup of March 11.

After the disastrous setback for the bourgeoisie forces last month and the new mass upsurge that developed in response to yet another coup attempt, the assembly reflected powerful pressures from below. The ruling military circles sought to give it more representativeness and authority. For the first time, it included noncommissioned officers and common soldiers. The army was represented by eighty officers, twenty sergeants, and twenty privates; the navy and air force by forty officers, ten sergeants, and ten privates each.

The statement approved at the start of the assembly explained the new composition of the body in this way: "The elements that make up the Assembly of the MFA are designated in accordance with the functions they perform and taking into account the places where they serve. They are in touch with all the everyday military and political-administrative activities and thus enable the leading bodies of the Armed Forces Movement to maintain constant contact with all of the components of the movement."

"Thus the Assembly of the Armed Forces Movement is able to inform the Conselho da Revolução of the feelings and desires of the armed forces and the people of the respective areas and to transmit to the armed forces the directives of the Conselho da Revolução."

According to the final communiqué, the agenda included the following eight points: (1) a report from the Conselho da Revolução on its work; (2) a discussion of the "internal institutionalization" of the Armed Forces Movement; (3) a report on the investigation of the March 11 attempted coup; (4) the creation of a revolutionary tribunal to try those officers involved in the coup; (5) the drawing up of a communiqué stating the socialist goals of the Armed Forces Movement and the methods to be used to achieve them; (6) the restatement of the MFA's determination to maintain "democratic and revolutionary order" especially in the election period; (7) a report on the "constitutional pact" between the MFA and the political

parties; and (8) a report from Premier Vasco Gonçalves on the economic and social plans of the government.

It was apparently point no. 5 that inspired *Diário de Lisboa* to state that the move toward socialism had begun. This point was elaborated further in the issue of the MFA publication *Movimento* that appeared April 8. The headline in the military's paper took a more martial tone: "Reinforce Revolutionary Will and Discipline."

The article under this heading stressed that the failure of a second rightist coup had opened a new phase:

"In the wake of March 11, the contradictions in the MFA and in the political arena can begin to be resolved through the qualitative advance of the revolution that has become possible because of the high treason of the counterrevolutionaries.

"In a transitional period that will last some years—in the period that can be called *the first phase of the transition to socialism*—the revolution has gained a clear-sighted and firm political leadership, the MFA, through its institutionalized organs, in particular the Conselho Superior da Revolução. In this period, three fundamental tasks arise: making a determined start toward building an economy of the socialist type, putting the economic sector under the direct control of the political sector; reinforcing the alliance between the people and the MFA, through the creation of structures for popular participation at all levels and the transformation of the armed forces into an instrument at the service of the people; strengthening the MFA as an independent political force serving the revolution and uniting the genuinely democratic political forces."

The nationalization of the banks and insurance companies was to provide the basis for moving on to a socialist economy. It would be followed by "agrarian reform, nationalization of the basic industries, and socialization of the main lines of foreign trade."

However, Right Now. . .

At the same time, the article promised that the socialism the MFA would build would not be "state capitalism." It said: "The Portuguese socialist project calls for the creation of a broadly democratic society with popular participation in which the

expansion of the area of social ownership represents a means—and not an end—a means for building socialist democracy. Hence the need for building at all levels structures for popular participation that can provide the basis for strengthening the alliance between the people and the MFA and put the working masses more and more into the vanguard of the revolutionary process, the role that belongs to them historically, the role that cannot be denied to them in a genuinely socialist revolution. Otherwise, it would be in danger of becoming a falsification of a revolution."

The article promised that the future socialist Portugal would be a "multiparty" society. But at the same time, it placed the MFA above the political parties and demanded that they subordinate themselves to the military leadership: "It is necessary to maintain the MFA as the guarantor and driving force of the process until the conditions have been assembled that will make it irreversible. It is the revolutionary action of the Conselho da Revolução and the Provisional Government that is mobilizing the people behind the objectives of the revolution."

"However, it has become necessary in order to carry the revolutionary process forward to clarify the role and attitude of those components that are active in the vanguard. If the MFA must remain for a certain period the locomotive of the process and the unifier of the truly progressive political forces, the fact is, especially after the elections, that needs of going forward rapidly with the policy of national reconstruction demand that the parties involved in the revolution give clear and firm support to the MFA, to the Conselho da Revolução, and to the Provisional Government in their consistent work to mobilize the people around the main objectives of the revolution. These needs require that the parties continually seek—without giving up their political individuality—those factors that unite, as well as the bases of fruitful dialogue over the construction of socialist society."

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The concrete means for pressing these demands was the "pact with the parties." On April 3, the MFA called the twelve parties with ballot status to a secret meeting. It presented them with a "pact-

platform" that was to be included in the constitution that will be drawn up by the Constituent Assembly elected in the April 25 vote. In its April 4 issue, the Lisbon morning paper *Diário de Notícias* reported:

"On the draft platform-pact, the MFA will 'accept dialogue,' since it is not an ultimatum, as Vasco Lourenço [the usual spokesman of the MFA] stressed. 'We presented a text that has essential points,' he added. 'So, logically we will accept debate and even some small changes, as long as its spirit is not changed. It is obvious, however, that we are not prepared to yield on the essential points, one of which is institutionalization of the MFA.'"

Of the twelve parties contesting the elections, eleven went to the meeting. Only the Frente Eleitoral Comunista (Marxista-Leninista) (FEC[ML]—Communist Electoral Front [Marxist-Leninist]), a Maoist group whose primary strength is in Oporto, refused to attend the meeting.

The Portuguese sympathizing group of the Fourth International, the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI—Internationalist Communist League), went to the meeting, but immediately denounced the pact and announced that it would not sign it.

The Maoists of the União Democrática do Povo (UDP—Democratic People's Union) also rejected the pact-platform, denouncing it as an ultimatum. A grouping that split off from the Socialist party at the end of the year, the Frente Socialista Popular (FSP—People's Socialist Front), expressed reservations about the agreement.

The LCI Explains Why

The LCI expanded on its answer to the MFA in a rally in Oporto April 5, where Ernest Mandel, the noted Marxist economist and member of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, was the featured speaker. Speaking to an audience of about 1,000 persons, José Tavares, a soldier on active duty, said:

"Everyone is talking about socialism today. Today, comrades, there is no one in Portugal who doesn't call himself or herself a socialist. And the MFA is also beginning to talk about building socialism. For this purpose, it is seeking an alliance between the workers movement and the small and medium-sized capitalists.

"It is on the basis of this alliance that the leaders of the MFA and the army, the Conselho Superior da Revolução, think they can erect some reforms that will lead to socialism. For the sake of this, they are calling on us to unite, to show our discipline, to subordinate ourselves, and to place our confidence in them.

"But comrades, where can unity of the working class and the toilers be achieved except within their own organizations,

independent from the bosses and the state?"

"Only there, through the discipline imposed by the working class itself can we achieve the iron unity of the proletariat that is necessary to make the socialist revolution.

"Only the independent organizations of the working class can have the authority to decide who is and is not a revolutionist, who is and is not a socialist, who is and is not a communist.

"It is on the basis of the Workers Committees in the factories, on the Soldiers Committees in the barracks, that the united front of the working class that we are fighting for and that all revolutionists, all workers, aspire to, will be built.

"Therefore, comrades, we say that it is not the working class nor the soldiers that have to have confidence in the MFA or its Conselho da Revolução. But rather, those in the MFA who call themselves socialists and revolutionaries must have confidence in the workers and the toilers and in their independent organizations.

"And so I am speaking especially for the soldier comrades, whose organization lags behind that of the workers out of uniform.

"Comrades, Soldiers Committees must be formed at the national level, in every platoon, in every company, in every barracks, to stand guard against reaction, to struggle for improving the living conditions of the soldiers, and to struggle for a socialist revolution."

Another LCI speaker, António Brandão, a candidate in the Oporto district, criticized the MFA for its slowness in moving against the right after the September 28 attempted coup and called for the dissolution of the riot police and repeal of the "fascist laws" that are still on the books.

Francisco Sardo, an LCI candidate for the Lisbon district, stressed that the bourgeois parties, the Partido Popular Democrático (PPD—People's Democratic party) and the Centro Democrático Social (CDS—Social Democratic Center), still represented a danger to the workers: "The CDS and the PPD are active most of all in the provinces. They do not defend the workers. They attack the rallies and meetings of the revolutionary organizations of the working class. They plan provocations designed to prepare the ground for a coup. But although they have been exposed, the reactionaries of the PPD continue to carry out their provocations, and even today in Amarante they tried to carry out a demonstration of the 'silent majority' by manipulating the poor peasants in a march of tractors."

The slogan of "PPD, CDS, dissolução" (Ban the PPD and the CDS) was one of the most popular at the meeting, where rhyming slogans were chanted dozens of times. Perhaps a fourth of the audience rose each time to give the clenched-fist salute and

shout the slogans begun by LCI members.

Mandel talked about the international context and implications of the upsurge in Portugal. He analyzed the present crisis of capitalism, the worldwide recession, and the increasing tendency of workers to demand control over the process of production. He said that as the crisis deepened and the upsurge continued in Portugal, the workers would have to take control of industry to defend themselves against both the economic and political attacks of big capital.

"If the bourgeoisie continues with its line of sabotage, the workers themselves must occupy the factories and organize production." He went on to say: "The independent organization of the working class is the only form of revolutionary struggle, independent organization in factory and neighborhood committees."

Mandel stressed that the need for workers to organize independently was the essential feature of proletarian revolution that had been obscured by Stalinism.

The organizers of the meeting tried to give it a strongly internationalist note. "For a workers' red Europe" and "Long live the Fourth International" were among the slogans most enthusiastically and frequently chanted. The question of the upsurge going on now in Spain was raised, along with the demand for the release of Spanish political prisoners. Most of the daily press took particular note of Mandel's statement that the process in Portugal was the "most important in Europe at the moment."

The majority of the crowd in the Palvilão do Académico, a basketball stadium, were young people in their early- and mid-twenties. But unlike the rallies of the young left groups that followed the April 25, 1974, overturn, there was also a notable sprinkling of older people, including, apparently, some workers. The LCI presented forty candidates, most of them young workers in their early twenties. After the meeting, groups of youths walked around the city chanting the slogans that had been raised.

Mandel's tour was the main national event in the first phase of the LCI's campaign. It began with a news conference in Lisbon and a meeting in the local university April 4 that got extensive coverage in the Portuguese press. The tour schedule was a packed one. It included a major rally in Oporto on April 5, another in the university center of Coimbra on April 6, and a final rally in Lisbon's Palácio de Desportos on April 7.

These three rallies differed considerably in their setting. In the provincial industrial center of Oporto, there is less political ferment than in Lisbon. The strongest group to the left of the CP is the sectarian Maoist FEC(ML), which is quick to attack persons selling Trotskyist papers. In gener-

al, the probourgeois parties are stronger relative to the left and maintain a substantial following even among the workers. The audience at the Coimbra rally, in contrast to those at the rallies in Oporto and Lisbon, seemed to be essentially an academic one, interested in a Marxist economic analysis and in the political debate among the left groups.

However, in all three rallies, the same themes came through clearly. The LCI speakers called for the formation of committees directly representing the exploited sectors of the population at all levels and for a National Assembly of Workers that would unite all these committees. They stressed the need for a working-class united front that would include the CP in particular. They explained that they could not support the Maoist candidates because of their sectarianism toward the mass workers parties, especially the CP, which the Maoist groups call "social fascist."

They rejected the class-collaborationist pact proposed by the MFA. They referred to the need for an armed insurrection by the masses and stressed the importance of the mass resistance to the September 28 and March 11 coup attempts by the right. There was always a strong internationalist tone, represented in particular by Mandel, as a spokesman of the Fourth International.

In the Coimbra meeting, Mandel stressed the importance of the Spanish upsurge, saying that it would lead to a development far more important than the present process in Portugal, because of the higher level of class consciousness and the greater numbers of the Spanish proletariat. Because of this, he said, it was essential for the Portuguese workers to back demands for the release of Spanish political prisoners, including many Trotskyists.

About 300 persons were present at the LCI rally in the Palvilão da Palmeira in Coimbra. It was the largest meeting the local LCI unit had ever had, the organizers told me. Here, after an introduction by Vítor Fernandes, Mandel's lecture took up most of the program.

There was a long question period that lasted until 12:30 a.m. Mandel used the example of Yugoslavia to demonstrate that self-management had to be centralized and politically directed in order to achieve real democracy. The purely local form under Tito had not done so.

A Spanish anarchist insisted on speaking from the floor to denounce Mandel as an "authoritarian." He said that the Yugoslav self-management experiment was purely "statist" and "demagogic" and compared it to the fascist unions. Mandel replied that the factory committees in Yugoslavia had removed not one or two but "hundreds" of managers.

Mandel also dealt with questions about the class nature of the Soviet Union and the

mode of production in the transitional societies. He had an attentive audience. Nearly everyone stayed until the end, although the meeting went rather late, even for Portugal, where evening activities tend



Flama

to run two hours later than in the United States.

Ferment in Army Ranks

After the meeting, I talked to one of the LCI activists in the army, who gave me a picture of how concrete and urgent the problem of direct democratic organization is now in Portugal. The soldiers on his base conducted two general strikes, arms in hand, to force the release of an imprisoned sergeant. He had led a committee of soldiers who forced the removal of a commander.

During the March 11 coup attempt, the CP was forced to call for a mass mobilization out of an elementary reflex of self-defense. In this process, a member of the CP leadership in Oporto approached revolutionists on his base asking for their help.

The soldiers refused to leave their barracks in this period unless the officers explained to them exactly where they were going and what they were going to do. At the same time, they took the opportunity to arm themselves and many did not hand back the guns after the crisis ended.

The traditional distinctions in rank are rapidly disappearing. The most active element is the sergeants, who are organized and more numerous than the officers and come from modest backgrounds.

The low pay of the common soldiers has accelerated the process of the disintegration of bourgeois military discipline. Since privates get only about \$4 a month, a campaign quickly got under way to refuse

to pay fares on public transport.

In some cases, the problem of transportation for soldiers led to violent clashes. For example, a group of soldiers from the Azores found during the Christmas holidays that all the flights to their home islands were taken up by officers. So they seized a brigadier general, and hit him twice, demanding that he find them transportation home. He called the military police. The soldiers barricaded themselves in and forced the MPs to negotiate. They finally won their demands.

The MPs decided that the brigadier general was completely in the wrong. In this case, the LCI activist told me, the strong family and local ties of the conservative islanders were transformed into a revolutionary force.

As a result of this kind of experience, I was told, the Portuguese government now stations draftees close to their homes, thereby enabling them to maintain their ties with the population and the working-class organizations. There is powerful pressure from the ranks of the armed forces for purging rightist officers. This tendency was given momentum by the example of masses in mobilizing to block the rightist coups.

Committees Begin to Form

In the navy, where the political consciousness of the ranks is most advanced, the LCI activist told me that there is now a Sailors Committee that rules on the orders issued by officers, orders that may be either accepted or rejected.

The example set by the bank and insurance workers in the period following the attempted coup also seems to be spreading rapidly. In many cases, these workers stood guard to prevent the management from removing records. They began to exercise a control over the functioning of the company.

In this context, the April 8 issue of the Lisbon daily *A Capital* announced that the government was studying a bill that would give the local workers organizations control over firings. In companies with more than fifty workers, this control will be exercised by the Comissões de Trabalhadores (Workers Committees); in those with fewer than fifty workers, by the union committees.

Factory committees do not yet exist everywhere, but they fill an important function in the big plants in particular. Because of the craft concept of unionism fostered by the old regime, it is common to have more than forty unions represented in the larger companies. This is the case, for example, in the Sacor oil refinery in Oporto. The Workers Committee elected by an assembly of all the workers in the plant is much better able to represent the work force effectively than the fragmented unions. It is

also considerably more democratic.

Participation in union elections has increased since April 25, 1974. In the clerks union, for instance, only about 200 out of 40,000 used to vote. The percentage is now about 25 percent, but that is still considerably fewer than in the Workers Committees. However, the *Comissões de Trabalhadores* remain essentially within the framework of the Intersindical, the national union federation.

In the opinion of a Sacor worker I talked to in Oporto, they are the nuclei of industrial unions. On the night of March 11, these committees organized vigilance pickets in which all the workers at Sacor in Oporto participated. One of the main activities of the Sacor plant now is rooting out rightists from the administration and work force.

Before March 11, I was told, lack of cooperation from the government was blocking this process. Specifically, the committee could not get information about the past of suspected persons. Since March 11, twenty persons suspected of belonging to the *Frente Anticomunista* (FAC—Anticommunist Front) and one believed to be a member of the ELP (*Exército de Libertação Portuguesa*—Portuguese Liberation Army, a rightist terrorist group) have been suspended without pay.

In this plant, as in most, the Sacor worker said, the MFA retains a strong influence over the workers involved in such activity. In the army, however, the support for the MFA seems at least to be more critical. The LCI soldier activist in Coimbra told me that two officers assigned to his base by the *Conselho da Revolução* had been purged by the ranks.

Call for Workers Government

In the April 7 rally in Lisbon, LCI leader Francisco Sardo stressed:

"The secret of the victory won on March 11 lies in the experience accumulated by the workers in their struggle and in their independent organization against reaction and capitalist exploitation. It does not, and could not, lie in the long practice of collaboration with the bourgeoisie and its politicians, in unity with parties like the PPD, a party whose only role in the government has been to impose limitations on economic, social, and democratic rights, and which in the countryside and the provincial cities has joined the fascists of the CDS in attacking the struggles and the rallies of the workers and revolutionary organizations."

Sardo attacked the reformist parties for saying that it was not possible yet to expel the PPD from the coalition and establish a workers government: "The workers were strong enough to defeat reaction on March 11. They were able to close ranks and force the nationalization of the banks and

insurance companies. They are still more capable of expelling the PPD from the government.

"Side by side with ever broader sectors of workers, the LCI declares its determination to struggle for the immediate establishment of a government of the workers organizations, so as to assure the defense of the rights and gains of the working masses. By this we mean that the government must have the following objectives: immediate nationalization, under workers control, of the big private enterprises; agrarian reform, giving the product of the soil to those who work it; economic planning under workers control, so that the fruits of their labor can go to improve their living conditions and the conditions on the job; the immediate institution of a 6,000 escudo [about US\$250] minimum wage; the reduction of the work-week to 40 hours and full retirement at fifty as a means of fighting unemployment; drastic reduction in rents and the cost of energy and transport; free medical insurance and education."

In addition, Sardo called on the government to suppress the procapitalist forces: "The only right we grant the capitalists is to disappear forever from history."

He also explained the need for a workers united front in a clear and forceful way: "Just as a bourgeois will always be a bourgeois even when he calls himself a Social Democrat [as the members of the PPD do], a worker will always be a potential revolutionist, even if he or she is a member of the reformist organizations."

2,000 at LCI Rally

About 2,000 persons attended the rally in the *Palácio de Desportos* in Lisbon, a giant sports stadium on a hill overlooking the *Avenida de Libertade*. Some activists told me it was the largest meeting the LCI had yet held.

It seems evident that the LCI is rapidly developing a substantial national following through its electoral campaign. The workers united-front demand in particular seemed popular with the audiences in the meetings during the weekend of April 4-7. Although the LCI faces competition from a number of Maoist groups that are still numerically stronger, the absence of sectarianism in its approach gives it a considerable advantage.

Furthermore, unlike the Maoists, who are divided into many bitterly warring factions, the only two significant Trotskyist groups are united in this campaign. The only other substantial group of Trotskyists, the *Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores* (Revolutionary Workers party) and the youth organization affiliated to it, the *Aliança Socialista da Juventude* (Young Socialist Alliance), which have some strength in Lisbon, particularly in the student move-

ment, announced on April 4 that they would support the candidates of the LCI.

In addition, Mandel and the other LCI speakers could offer a more concrete international outlook than the Maoists. The question of solidarity with the workers and revolutionists struggling in Spain was raised forcefully again and again in every meeting. This issue is taking on more and more importance as the fall of capitalism and the need for a struggle against imperialism become a more real perspective here. It has great appeal to the Portuguese masses apparently, but remains acutely embarrassing to the reformists and the government.

Also Mandel referred once or twice to the vital role played by sections of the Fourth International in organizing defense of the Vietnamese revolution. He pledged the solidarity of the international revolutionary movement against reactionary intervention in Portugal.

The Portuguese people have an unusual, almost unprecedented, opportunity to hear and weigh the ideas of many tendencies within the working-class and left movement. The radio and television programming is full of lectures by all sorts of groups on capitalism, revolutionary struggle, the needs of the working class, and so on. The bourgeois forces are unusually weak and discredited. The masses are confident and anxious to move ahead.

By the same token, the conservative forces are showing increasing desperation, and the government itself must rely on the mass movement to survive. In this context, even the ultra-Stalinist Portuguese CP leadership has been forced to make uncharacteristic moves, such as pushing against PPD participation in the government and supporting the outlawing of the Christian Democratic party, moves that have drawn the criticism of the Italian CP.

Under these conditions, young revolutionists have an opportunity to gain an unusually rich fund of experience in mass struggle very quickly, a chance to test their ideas and to establish a dialogue with the masses. This experience may well be one of the most important results of the first revolutionary upsurge in Western Europe since the French May of 1968. □

Portugal Announces Take-over Plans

Portugal's High Council of the Revolution announced April 12 that the government would take over privately held communications, transportation, and other key industries.

No details were announced concerning the decision. However, business executives in Lisbon speculated that the first nationalization moves would be taken in the steel, petroleum, and chemical industries.

Capitalism Fouls Things Up

French and German Antipollution Demonstrators Join in 'Watch on the Rhine' to Halt Nuclear Plant

By Ernest Harsch

Capitalists in Western Europe have been pressing for the rapid development of nuclear energy without considering its harmful effects on the environment or to the health of nuclear workers and local residents.* They have also ignored other sources of energy that would be safer but less profitable.

During the past two months, broad-based movements against the construction of nuclear power plants and other polluting industries have erupted in parts of France, Switzerland, and West Germany, threatening the capitalists' schemes.

At Marckolsheim in Alsace, France, local residents forced the authorities to abandon a plan to build a chemical factory that would have discharged toxic lead dust into the air. A proposed nuclear power station—part of the French government's plan to build up to fifty reactors during the next twenty-five years—may also have to be scuttled there because of popular opposition.

Across the Rhine River in Wyhl, West Germany, opposition to the construction of a nuclear power plant has become massive. Residents of thirty villages on both the French and German sides of the border have halted construction by occupying the site since February 23.

The occupation followed an attack February 20 on 150 protesters by 700 German riot police equipped with armored vehicles, police dogs, and water cannons. Many demonstrators were arrested.

"Three days later," Nan Robertson reported in the April 9 *New York Times*, "20,000 persons overwhelmed the site, chasing the police away and taking over. Several thousand remain."

Signs in French and German were posted throughout the area, some reading: "No nuclear power plant in Wyhl!" "For life against profit," and "Together against the danger of atomic power stations in Europe."

*For a description of the environmental dangers involved in the use of nuclear energy and the currently inadequate safeguards placed on reactors, see "Profits We Can't Afford at Any Wastage," *Intercontinental Press*, March 24, p. 400.

A dispatch by Jean-Claude Guillebaud, published in the April 5 *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, described how the occupation was organized: "Thirty villages in Germany and Alsace are now taking responsibility for occupying the site. Chalets and tents have mushroomed, and a canteen has been opened next to the 'nuclear information booths.' Each evening, a meticulous 'occupation programme' is observed, whereby two villages are appointed to keep guard at the barricades of felled timber that block the forest tracks.

"At the slightest alert, a network of walkie-talkies would wake the whole of the surrounding countryside: within 20 seconds the municipal sirens would be wailing and hundreds of cars on their way."

"More important," Guillebaud continued, "on both sides of the border, in Freiburg, Colmar, Mulhouse, and Baden-Baden, dozens of meetings are being organized by the German 'Burger Initiativen' and the French 'Comites de Defence.'"

Guillebaud noted that the protesters have written new words to the tune of "Wacht am Rhein" (Watch on the Rhine), a traditional German nationalist song directed against the French:

In Baden and Alsace, for many a year,
We killed each other in defence of our country,
Now, at Wyhl and at Marckolsheim,
We are fighting together, and for each other,
We are mounting another "Watch on the Rhine."

The action has won broad support from local residents, religious leaders, and German and Alsatian ecologists. An appeal was issued by about thirty French and German committees, associations, clubs, and political parties.

"What amazes the visitor hitherto unfamiliar with the situation," Guillebaud said, "is the way in which an attitude of stubborn refusal, which only recently would have been quite inconceivable, has spread with the swift and devastating effect of wildfire."

This massive opposition to the further destruction of the environment prompted a Freiburg court to issue an injunction March 18 halting the construction of the Wyhl



plant pending an appeal by a group of German ecologists. The court ruled that the proposed nuclear reactor could change the climate and ecology and endanger the livelihood of farmers and winegrowers.

The successes scored in one country have reinforced the movement against nuclear power plants in another. The mayor of Wyhl, who is in favor of the plant, told Guillebaud, "It was Marckolsheim that made Wyhl possible." The Marckolsheim and Wyhl protests have in turn spurred opposition to Swiss government plans to build unsafe nuclear reactors.

Braving cold weather, rain, and snow, about 15,000 persons demonstrated at the construction site of the proposed nuclear power station in Kaiseraugst, Switzerland, April 6. French, German, and Dutch opponents of nuclear energy sent messages of solidarity.

In a resolution adopted by the rally, the protesters called on the Swiss parliament to close down the project. They also demanded that no legal action be taken against those who have been occupying the site since April 1, that a meteorological survey be conducted, and that a referendum on the nuclear station be organized. The demonstrators pledged to continue the occupation until the demands were met.

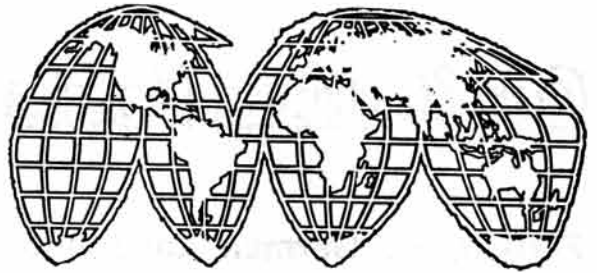
The struggle of the German and Alsatian villagers against the Wyhl plant has become a test of strength that could have far-reaching consequences. According to the *New York Times* report, Pierre Pflimlin, the mayor of Strasbourg, "said that if the Wyhl project . . . is definitively blocked, it would be almost impossible to put an atomic plant in Alsace."

Guillebaud noted that if the antinuclear battle in Wyhl is successful and spreads to Alsace, "the industrial axis of a nuclear Ruhr [Valley] could well be nipped in the bud. An enormous amount is obviously at stake." □

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AROUND THE WORLD



Chilean Cabinet Resigns Amid Growing Economic Crisis

The seventeen members of Chile's cabinet—fourteen officers and three civilians—submitted their resignations April 9, giving Pinochet a free hand to shuffle ministerial posts in an effort to surmount the serious economic crisis.

This will be the second cabinet shuffle since the right-wing military coup of September 11, 1973.

According to the semiofficial news agency Orbe, the resignations marked the end of a "free-market" economic policy associated with the three civilian ministers: Raúl Saez, in charge of economic coordination and former finance minister under Eduardo Frei; Fernando Leniz, minister of the economy and former president of the ultraconservative *El Mercurio* press trust; and Jorge Cavas, finance minister and former vice-president of the Chilean broadcasting institute. Harsher austerity measures are expected to follow.

The Chilean economy is widely recognized to be in a critical state. The inflation

rate in 1974 was 380%; by the end of March the central bank had already issued 70% of the money it was going to print in 1975. A minimum of 600,000 persons—at least 10% of the active population—is unemployed. The monthly minimum wage is a little more than 100,000 escudos (about US\$35); a sandwich, for example, costs 2,000 escudos.

Chile has also been hit hard by the world depression. Copper, selling for \$1.50 a pound on the world market at the beginning of 1974, has fallen to \$0.60.

President of Honduras Caught Taking \$1 Million Bribe from Banana Company

Following disclosures in the United States that the United Brands Company had paid a \$1.25 million bribe to "high officials" in Honduras, a commission has been set up in the Central American country to investigate the charges. It is widely believed in Honduras that chief of state Gen. Oswaldo López Arellano and Minister of the Economy Abraham Bannaton Ramos were the ones who accepted the bribe in return for a reduction of a tax on banana exports.

The commission has ordered all officials who were involved in last year's banana negotiations not to leave the country. This includes López.

Considerable pressure is building up to keep the investigation from being turned into a whitewash. Honduran newspapers have demanded in editorials that the commission report "the full truth." One carried a front-page cartoon showing López slipping on a banana peel.

In the United States, the Securities and Exchange Commission has charged United Brands with fraud for not notifying its stockholders of payment of the bribe.

Sithole Released by Ian Smith

One month after his arrest by the racist Ian Smith regime in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), African nationalist leader Ndabaningi Sithole was released April 4 to attend a meeting of the Organization of African Unity in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The announcement was made in a countrywide radio and television broadcast by Prime Minister Ian Smith. He said that Sithole was freed at the request of Bishop Abel Muzorewa, the president of the African National Council, and the governments of

South Africa, Zambia, Tanzania, Botswana, and Mozambique.

Sithole arrived in Dar es Salaam April 6 with Muzorewa and Joshua Nkomo, another nationalist leader. He was greeted at the airport by a crowd of supporters who carried him on their shoulders.

Wijeweera's Life Sentence Reduced to Twenty Years

The life sentence given to Rohana Wijeweera has been reduced to twenty years rigorous imprisonment by Sri Lanka's Criminal Justice Commission. The reduction in his sentence was approved in late January, according to a report in the January 30 issue of *Ceylon News*, which has just arrived by seamount.

Wijeweera, the leader of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (People's Liberation Front), was sentenced along with thirty-one other defendants in December 1974 on charges stemming from the 1971 uprising against the repressive Bandaranaike regime. His life term was the harshest penalty handed out. The other defendants received sentences ranging from two to twelve years rigorous imprisonment. Three received suspended sentences of two years.

101 Political Prisoners Freed in Philippines

One hundred one political prisoners were released in Manila March 29, according to a report from the government-controlled Philippine News Agency. It is estimated that an additional 5,000 political prisoners are still being held by the Marcos regime.

Peking Tells Lisbon to Keep Macao

Since coming to power a year ago, Portugal's military government has managed to sign treaties with liberation forces in its major colonies, including Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and Angola. But one remnant of the old colonial empire that Lisbon has not been able to divest itself of is Macao.

The problem, it seems, is that Mao's government does not want the enclave, although its 300,000 people are almost all ethnic Chinese.

That, at least, is the information from "knowledgeable Western diplomats" cited



Alternativa

"The thing's very simple. I invest my money only to provide employment for you . . ."

"What a sacrifice for my sake! . . ."

in a Washington dispatch published in the *New York Times* April 1.

Peking claimed Macao as "part of Chinese territory" in 1972, when there was no likelihood that the Caetano dictatorship in Lisbon would yield it voluntarily. But when Col. José Eduardo Garcia Leandro went to Macao in June 1974 to negotiate the colony's transfer to the People's Republic, he was told by Ho Yin, a millionaire businessman who operates as China's representative there, that Peking had no desire to alter Macao's status.

Several explanations have been advanced for Mao's reluctance to decolonize the enclave.

One is a stubborn desire not to enhance the image of Lisbon's new government, which Peking thinks is too friendly to the pro-Moscow Portuguese Communist party.

More important is the role of Macao as an international entrepôt for Chinese products, including textile exports. As just another Chinese city, Macao could lose this role.

In addition, Peking is said to fear that the decolonization of Macao would increase pressure for the decolonization of a more important entrepôt—Hong Kong, which is still a British crown colony.

Brazilian Regime Says Questions About Prisoners Are 'Provocation'

The parliamentary opposition in Brazil attempted to summon the minister of justice before the Congress for questioning on the treatment of political prisoners. But the summons was voted down April 10 by the ruling ARENA (Aliança Renovadora Nacional—Alliance for National Renewal) on the ground that it was a "provocation."

A few weeks before, the São Paulo section of the Catholic church's Justice and Peace Commission denounced "the inhuman, brutal and savage treatment" of prisoners, particularly by São Paulo's "antisubversive" unit.

10 War Criminals Freed by Peking Thank Mao for His 'Magnanimity'

Ten of the 293 reactionary opponents of the Chinese Revolution released from prison March 19 by the Mao regime left Peking April 13 on their way to Taiwan. The ten, all war criminals who supported the former Chiang Kai-shek regime, include two of Chiang's lieutenant generals.

According to Hsinhua, the ten have been given money to cover expenses of the trip and "round-trip traveling permits," in case they wish to return to China. Before leaving Peking, they expressed their gratitude for Chairman Mao's "magnanimity."

In contrast to the gracious treatment given to those counterrevolutionaries, the two hundred Trotskyists jailed by Mao in 1952 and 1953 are still held in prison. These revolutionary-socialist political prisoners

include many former leading activists in the Chinese Communist party, a number of whom had earlier been jailed in imperialist-ruled China and by the Kuomintang.

Informer Reveals that FBI Spied on Attica Defense

At a news conference in Buffalo, New York, April 12, Mary Jo Cook declared that she had been a paid informer for the Federal Bureau of Investigation and had provided the FBI with information on the legal strategy of the defense for the Attica prison inmates being tried in connection with the September 1971 uprising. Cook said she had originally been hired to infiltrate the Vietnam Veterans Against the War and later worked on the jury-selection aspects of the Attica defense.

William Kunstler, one of the Attica defense attorneys, said that if Cook's disclosure was true, the court should dismiss the charges against John Hill, who was convicted April 5 on murder charges, and codefendant Charles Joseph Pernaslice, who was convicted on a charge of attempted assault.

In another development, Malcolm Bell, a former chief assistant Attica prosecutor, released a 160-page report charging that Anthony Simonetti, the top Attica prosecutor, had interfered with Bell's attempts to investigate the crimes of the police during the massacre at Attica prison on September 13, 1971. Thirty-nine inmates and hostages were killed in the bloody police attack, ordered by then New York State Governor Nelson Rockefeller.

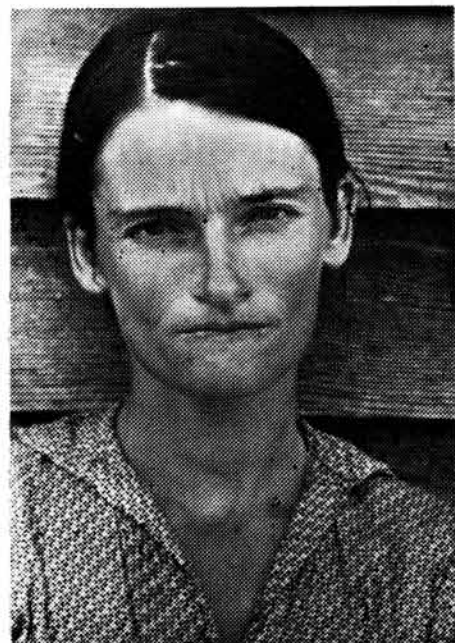
Lebanese Rightists Gun Down Twenty-Seven Palestinians

Twenty-seven Palestinians were killed and nineteen injured when members of the Kataeb (Phalangist) party opened fire on a bus in Beirut, Lebanon, April 13. The right-wing party, led by Pierre Gemayel, a member of the Lebanese parliament, has an armed force of several thousand and is opposed to the presence of Palestinian guerrillas in Lebanon.

Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasir Arafat called the attack a "bloody massacre" that "could lead to serious consequences." He charged that the Phalangist party was being "used by imperialism and Zionism" to create a political crisis between Palestinians and Lebanese.

House of God

About thirty Black students from the University of Alabama were barred from a white church in Tuscaloosa April 13. The Reverend Dorsey Blake, who led the group to the church, said they were told "that the church did not seat colored and there was a nigger church around the corner."



Walker Evans

Tenant Farmer's Wife, Hale County, Alabama.

Photographer Walker Evans Dies

Walker Evans, the American photographer famous for his stark photos of sharecroppers and tenant farmers during the Great Depression of the 1930s, died in New Haven, Connecticut, April 10. He was seventy-one years old. At the time of his death he held the post of professor emeritus of graphic arts at Yale University.

Evans's work first became widely known when thirty-one of his photos appeared in 1931 in Carleton Beals's *The Crime of Cuba*, a book about the conditions of working people under the dictatorship of General Gerardo Machado y Morales.

From 1935 to 1938, Evans worked for the photographic unit of the Farm Security Administration, recording the grinding poverty of American farmers ruined by the depression. He later worked for *Time* magazine and *Fortune*.

Evans was a meticulous craftsman. Most of his pictures were taken with a view camera, equipped with one of the fine old lenses of slow timing but high resolving power.

Does That Mean It's Illegal?

Attorney General Edward H. Levi has reversed a Justice Department recommendation to Congress that called for requiring every U.S. citizen to carry proof of residence when applying for a job. One aim of the "domestic passport" proposal was to make it more difficult for immigrant workers to obtain jobs.

In reversing the proposal, Levi said April 3 that such a measure "would come close to a violation of something akin to a constitutional right."

The Struggle for Women's Liberation in Puerto Rico Today

[The following interview with Ana Rivera and Maritza Durán was conducted by *Intercontinental Press* in New York March 5. Rivera and Durán are members of the editorial board of *El Tacón de la Chancleta*, a Puerto Rican feminist newspaper. The second issue of the monthly, published in February, had a press run of 6,000 copies.

[The idea of publishing *El Tacón de la Chancleta* came from members in the feminist group *Mujer, ¡Intégrate Ahora!* (MIA—Women, Join Together Now!) who began to feel the need for a newspaper that would represent broader currents of Puerto Rican feminist thought than MIA did.

[Subscriptions to *El Tacón de la Chancleta* cost \$3 a year in Puerto Rico and \$5 elsewhere. They can be ordered from Apto. 21515, Estación U.P.R., Río Piedras, Puerto Rico 00931.

[The interview was conducted in Spanish and has been translated by *Intercontinental Press*. Rivera and Durán have not had the opportunity to check the edited text.]

* * *

Question. There have been reports in the press here about the campaign in Puerto Rico to sterilize women. What facts can you give us about this?

Answer. In 1974 the government announced that it would lower the birth rate from 24 per 1,000 inhabitants to 15 per 1,000. This was announced at the beginning of the year, but everyone in Puerto Rico knows that the government had already begun the campaign despite official denials. Proof of this is that one-third of Puerto Rican women between fifteen and forty-nine years of age have been sterilized.

Q. How did the government manage to carry out sterilizations on such a massive scale?

A. In large part by taking advantage of ignorance. There was a campaign in the public hospitals. Every woman who had three children was told that she should get sterilized, and many accepted it without being fully conscious of what they were agreeing to. The majority of these mothers were sterilized.

Q. Are any other birth-control options presented to women? Abortion, for example.

A. No, because the government wants a

quick, cheap solution. And the quickest, cheapest method is sterilization.

Q. You mean that despite the U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, it is still not possible to get a legal abortion in Puerto Rico?

A. In spite of the fact that the Supreme Court decision should apply in Puerto Rico, the government has refused to accept it. You can get abortions in private hospitals, but they are very expensive, from \$250 up. Or you can resort to the dangerous, unhygienic methods that poor women use.

Q. How does the government justify not applying the Supreme Court decision?

A. They don't try to justify it; they just ignore it. The government has followed a policy of saying to the Puerto Rican people that it was a Yankee decision. They use the nationalism this can generate among the Puerto Rican people to argue for not applying the ruling.

On the other hand, when the issue was taken into the courts in Puerto Rico, they said it was simply a question of the doctors. But if you go to a hospital, there isn't a single doctor willing to perform an abortion. And the hospitals haven't obtained the equipment necessary to perform them because they say it is discriminatory against people who need other types of operations.

It is very interesting that in Puerto Rico the controversy about abortion has been argued in political terms. At no time has the question of a woman's right to control her body been raised. The discussion revolves around the question of Puerto Rico's status in relation to the United States.

For example, in the two cases that were brought to the courts, the points raised were designed to expose the political situation of Puerto Rico. They didn't deal with the woman's right.

Q. What do you mean when you say the issue has been treated in "political" terms and when you speak of "nationalism" as being something the government counterposes to the right of women to get abortions?

A. Well, when it suits the government to apply some U.S. ruling to Puerto Rico, it does so—for example, when it wants federal funds. But when something goes against

the supposed traditional morality of the Puerto Rican people, then the government trots out this so-called principle of Puerto Ricanness and poses it as an argument in the government's favor.

In this case, they said that the abortion ruling would be violating all Puerto Rican tradition. They used this, along with all the nationalism that goes with it, as if abortion was a cultural imposition by the American people on us in Puerto Rico, and not a woman's fundamental right.

Q. How have the left and the feminist movement responded to the sterilization campaign and the abortion question?

A. The left has always maintained that both are part of a genocidal plan directed against Puerto Rico. That is, any attempt at birth control is seen as one more attempt by the imperialists to suppress Puerto Ricans.

What is happening in Puerto Rico is that there has been a terrible lack of planning by the government. Puerto Rico has recently undergone a change from an agricultural society to an industrial one. A large number of persons were driven off the land and left without work because of government indifference. For that reason many went to the United States and stayed there.

There are a lot of people. In reality I think there are thirteen times as many people per square mile in Puerto Rico as in the United States, and 60 percent more than in India. If you add the poor distribution and government fumbling to this population density, it makes for quite a load.

The government does not acknowledge this. Instead it says, let's sterilize people; that's the solution. They completely ignore the fact that planning has been botched for a long time.

Q. Are there groups in the feminist movement that call for the right of women to control their own bodies?

A. Yes. *Mujer, ¡Intégrate Ahora!*, which was formed three years ago and was the first feminist group to arise in Puerto Rico in this period. One of the first things MIA got involved in was a public campaign on the right of women to control their own bodies. This includes access to abortion and other contraceptive methods. MIA also criticized the government's plan for mass sterilization, since the plan views women as one more object to be used for the govern-

ment's own ends and opposes their full integration into society.

Q. What type of activities has MIA carried out in this campaign?

A. We collected a large number of signatures to send to the legislature when the courts were arguing the question of liberalizing the abortion law. We have sent press releases to newspapers and magazines giving our views, and we conducted a campaign on radio and television.

Q. Have any demonstrations been held in Puerto Rico on this question?

A. Not against sterilization, but there were two against liberalizing the abortion law organized by the Catholic Church.

Q. Is there interest and action around the issue of working women?

A. There has been interest in this issue since the beginning of the century. Luisa Capetillo dates from that period. Her story is in the new issue of *El Tacón de la Chanclera*.

Now it seems that some groups of union women are getting interested again in fighting for their rights. The Federación de Mujeres Puertorriqueñas¹ has a large number of members, and the majority are working women. In the main they are from trade unions.

The Federación de Mujeres Puertorriqueñas was formed in large measure in response to a declaration published by MOU [Movimiento Obrero Unido—United Workers Movement], a coalition of trade unions, which has several thousand members. MOU made a public statement supporting the rights of the working woman, and within their own coalition, they set up a committee for working women's rights. Then they wanted to involve other trade unions and interested women. That is where the Federación de Mujeres Puertorriqueñas came from.

Q. What type of demands are raised by working women?

A. The demands raised in the platform of the Federación de Mujeres Puertorriqueñas.² Of course, the main ones are for more facilities for working women, the question of protective measures, the enforcement of

1. One hundred eight invited delegates attended the February 2 founding conference of the Federation of Puerto Rican Women.

2. The platform adopted by the Federación de Mujeres Puertorriqueñas is as follows:

To activate and put into effect Article II—the Bill of Rights—of the 1952 Puerto Rican constitu-

the constitutional provision against sex discrimination, and the establishment of day-care centers for children.

Here in the United States you have the fight for the Equal Rights Amendment. I think it is important to point out that Puerto Rico's constitution already has such a provision prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex. The Puerto Rican constitution is lovely, but it is not enforced.

Q. Is there interest in the question of women's liberation among students?

A. The university students are interested. Their interest is not yet great enough to bring them into action, but clearly the students are more concerned than other sectors of the population.

Q. Did students participate in the founding conference of the federation?

A. There were some there, but the majority weren't students. The question of what students do has an impact, however, because obviously the student struggle and the workers struggle are linked. The students have always supported the workers movement.

tion, which guarantees both sexes equal treatment under the law.

To guarantee equal pay for equal work.

To fight underutilization of female labor; to win recognition for women's labor in pay increases and promotions.

To guarantee full pay and job security for pregnant women.

To eliminate the so-called protective laws for women, which in reality are discriminatory.

To revise the marriage laws, especially those that deal with the disposal of community property.

To demand that the appropriate agencies (Administración de Fomento Económico—Economic Development Administration) provide the same incentives for businesses that employ women as they do for those that employ men.

To have adequately staffed and equipped child-care centers provided for working mothers.

To totally revise the educational system—the textbooks, the programs of study, the new sex-education course, as well as other courses—to eliminate indoctrination in stereotyped roles portraying women as inferior. To eliminate discrimination in educational opportunities.

To eliminate the portrayal of women as sex objects in the mass media.

To promote the integration of women into the productive forces of the country.

To encourage the unionization of women in all areas of work, including domestic employment.

To stop immediately the use of women as guinea pigs in contraception and mass-sterilization experiments.

To link our struggle with the struggle of women internationally and to participate in international events.

To fight the use of International Women's Year as a commercial celebration and as a demonstration of some alleged gains of women, which in reality are nonexistent.

Q. Have any women's actions taken place in Puerto Rico?

A. In Puerto Rico it is very difficult to get people together. I find that in contrast to here, we have a political problem; the question of Puerto Rico's political status divides people. It comes up in all movements. We are historically backward in almost everything because of our status.

Q. As you know, one form the movement in the United States took at the beginning was the consciousness-raising group, where women discussed the character of their oppression. Do you think this is the stage the feminist movement is passing through in Puerto Rico?

A. I think so. For example, those of us in *Mujer, ¡Intégrate Ahora!* were in a consciousness-raising group together before. In Puerto Rico we are still in that phase because the majority of women don't have any consciousness of their oppression. They still have to express this fury they have inside them and that's what we are seeing.

Q. Do you think the proindependence groups see a contradiction between strug-



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gling for women's rights and for independence?

A. Yes. Up to now the proindependence groups have taken the position that any attempt to organize a feminist movement is going to interfere with the independence cause.

They view feminism as something imported from the United States, an imperialist tactic to eliminate the independence movement. They use the question of our Puerto Ricanness; they go around promoting this, along with machismo and virginity. They say that feminism is an attack on our Puerto Ricanness, an attack on Puerto Ricans.

Q. How can you explain that in all this machist, antifeminist atmosphere you succeeded in interesting some women in forming MIA and fighting for women's rights?

Rivera. That's a good question. I was the first president of the organization and now I am coordinator of it. When I talk about prejudice, many people begin to attack me saying, "You are 'neoriquen' [a Puerto Rican New Yorker]. You must have spent a lot of time in the United States and that's where you got the idea." But this is the first time I have been out of Puerto Rico! So their attacks fail on this score.

I have always had these ideas, and when I saw the opportunity to organize for them, I grabbed it.

I am studying law at the University of Puerto Rico. My father is dean of one of the schools at the university and my mother teaches in elementary school. My family didn't raise me to be interested in current events and social issues, but they did want me to read. This may have had something to do with my development.

In addition, I am one of the few Black people in Puerto Rico involved in things like this.

Durán. My case is different. I lived here for some years before. I don't think that had much to do with it, but it is true that here people tend to be more independent. A woman has to be more self-sufficient out of necessity if she is to live in New York.

My parents were divorced. I was raised completely among women. And my mother, although she doesn't understand anything about why I am a feminist and why I am concerned about such things, is a woman who always had to take care of herself, to work to support herself and me. I always remember this business about a woman not being able to carry ten pounds or put a nail into a wall or paint. My mother painted, was an electrician, and did everything in the house. I learned all this from her. I had

to do everything. I never had this dependence on men.

Rivera. The women who formed MIA came from different backgrounds. So you can't explain it by anything other than the fact that in Puerto Rico there are conscious women, capable ones. They realize what the situation is. I don't think, for example, that you can explain it by influence from the United States, as something that arose from the feminist movement here.

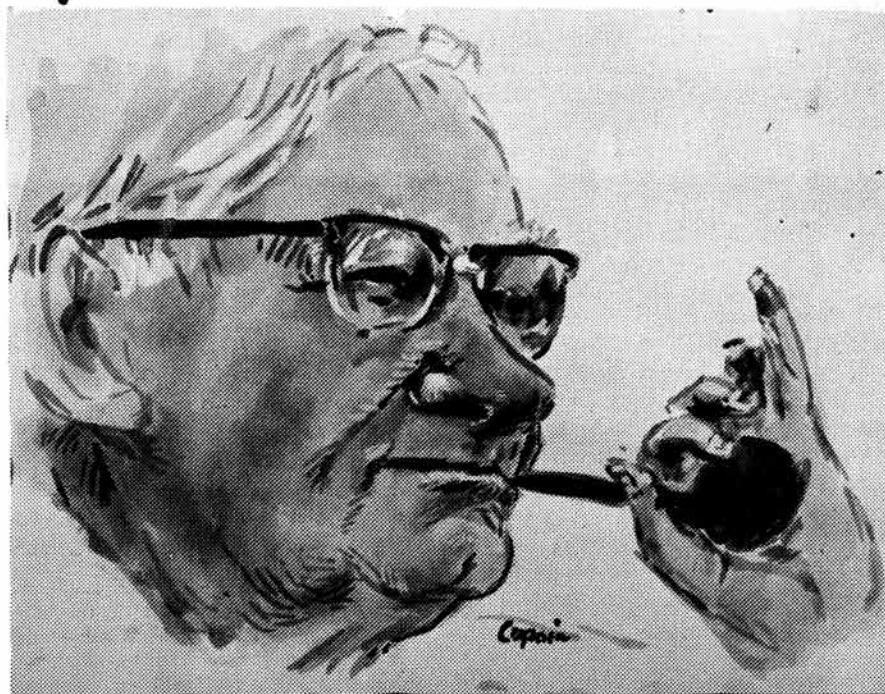
There is a tradition of feminism in Puerto Rico. There was a suffragist movement at the beginning of the century that was quite strong. The movement of women workers under the leadership of Luisa

Capetillo and Juana Colón was very strong. There is a tradition of fighting for women's rights even in intellectual circles.

Q. Is there any group on the left that has called for the liberation of women?

A. There are individuals who have, and a growing number of persons on the left have begun to get concerned about this question. They are trying to understand the feminist movement and to communicate to the left that feminism is not some imperialist attack. When it has been shown that feminism doesn't contradict the struggle for Puerto Rican independence, the left is going to fight for women's rights. □

Special Offer



James P. Cannon

To help celebrate the tenth anniversary of *Intercontinental Press*, reproductions of sketches by Copain, artist for *Intercontinental Press*, were published by the New York Local of the Socialist Workers party and bound in an 8.5" x 11" book. The aim was to use the money gained from sales to help us begin publishing articles in Spanish.

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El Porqué de la Derrota de Washington en Vietnam

Por Dick Fidler

[La siguiente es una traducción del artículo "Why Washington Could Not Win in Vietnam" que aparece en este mismo número.

[La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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No es "adecuado en estos momentos," dijo el *New York Times* en su editorial del 5 de abril, "que los críticos de la política norteamericana, actual y pasada, en el Sudeste Asiático saquen las lecciones de este fracaso. . . .

"... Intentar apoderarse del papel de la historia sería sólo perpetuar la amarga contienda de la última década en una forma nueva y más dura. Hace una generación que esta nación ya pasó por un terrible desorden político e intelectual—¿Quién perdió China? De seguro no necesita empezar otro ahora."

Los círculos más astutos de la clase dominante no quieren empezar un debate público sobre la lecciones fundamentales de su fracaso en Vietnam. Están de acuerdo en que es muy poco lo que Washington puede hacer para evitar el colapso de su títere sudvietnamita. No le ven ningún mérito el tratar de poner énfasis en esa dolorosa verdad.

Sin embargo, la magnitud de la derrota es tal que los estrategas de Washington y sus apologistas difícilmente pueden evitar discutirla. Las reacciones oficiales y semioficiales expresadas después de la estampida de Saigón no han sido lo suficientemente convincentes.

De hecho, los oficiales norteamericanos encargados de entrenar al ejército de Saigón han declarado que el comportamiento de las tropas de Thieu es "inexplicable."

Otros dicen que el colapso moral del ejército sudvietnamita se debe a la mala dirección y a la bien conocida corrupción de la pandilla de Thieu.

El gobierno de Ford ha culpado al Congreso, con su mayoría del Partido Demócrata. Algunos, sobre todo los relacionados con el Pentágono, se han quejado por la insuficiente ayuda militar y financiera a Saigón.

Tales "explicaciones" tienen una lógica en común. Atribuyen la derrota de Saigón a deficiencias militares. Aseguran que ven una posible solución si se otorga más poderío militar.

Pero, ¿qué tanto pueden afectar otros 700 millones de dólares de equipo militar? Según datos del Pentágono, solamente la guerra de Vietnam, es decir, haciendo a un lado el dinero que se ha gastado en la lucha en Laos y Camboya, ha costado a los Estados Unidos 110,000 millones de dólares—más de 3,000 dólares *por segundo*, cada segundo, durante diez años. El costo real de la intervención de los Estados Unidos en Indochina se calcula conservadoramente en 400,000 millones de dólares.

Entre 1965 y 1973 los Estados Unidos detonaron 15 millones de toneladas de bombas en Vietnam del Norte y del Sur, el equivalente aproximado de más de 500 bombas atómicas como la que se lanzó en Hiroshima. Aproximadamente 50,000 toneladas de defoliantes químicos y más de 200,000 toneladas de napalm se arrojaron sobre los vietnamitas antes de que se estableciera el cese al fuego en 1973. Toda esta inversión en muerte y destrucción no podía evitar una derrota aplastante.

El *New York Times* brindó una evaluación más realista de los problemas de Washington en su editorial del 6 de abril. "Los eventos de las últimas semanas," dijo, han probado "que Vietnam del Sur no podía prevalecer militarmente al menos que lo asistieran los bombardeos norteamericanos y probablemente también necesitaría de las tropas norteamericanas."

Pero el pueblo norteamericano, dijeron los editores del *New York Times*, han "determinado que ese precio tan alto no lo volverán a pagar en el Sudeste Asiático."

Una Derrota Política

La razón por la cual Washington tiene atadas las manos es política.

1. La guerra de Vietnam es fundamentalmente una guerra civil. El colapso de las fuerzas del régimen títere muestra que no tiene apoyo popular. El régimen de Thieu no tiene la base necesaria para sobrevivir por sí mismo.

2. La oposición antibélica, especialmente en los mismos Estados Unidos, ha minado la base política del gobierno de los Estados Unidos.

Diez años después de que Lyndon B. Johnson empezara a escalar la guerra, virtualmente toda la clase dominante norteamericana está convencida de que cualquier reinicio de la intervención militar masiva precipitaría una crisis social de

grandes proporciones en los Estados Unidos que muy bien pudiera sobrepasar con creces la crisis que se dio durante el clímax de la agresión norteamericana.

Kissinger se refirió indirectamente a este hecho, en una conferencia de prensa el 26 de marzo, cuando dijo, "Hemos pasado por la experiencia de Vietnam, por la angustia de Watergate. Yo creo que el efecto acumulativo de casi una década de desórdenes domésticos está empezando . . . a causar bajas."

Washington aprendió sólo de mala gana esta lección. En el proceso se masacraron cientos de miles de vietnamitas; más de 56,000 soldados norteamericanos perdieron sus vidas antes de que la maquinaria guerrera del Pentágono fuera forzada a retroceder. Nada de esto sorprende a los socialistas revolucionarios, he aquí algunas de las cosas que dijimos:

Los Pronósticos de los Trotskistas

El 19 de febrero de 1965, *World Outlook*, antiguo nombre de *Intercontinental Press*, citó una conversación publicada en 1961 entre el Presidente John Kennedy y el general Douglas MacArthur, que había comandado las tropas en Corea. MacArthur le había hecho una profecía a Kennedy que con el tiempo todo el Sudeste Asiático se iría al comunismo "por demanda popular."

"La verdad es," señaló *World Outlook*, "que Washington no tiene ninguna esperanza real de salvar su posición en Vietnam del Sur. Sabe que si le quita su apoyo militar, el régimen títere de Saigón se desplomaría de la noche a la mañana.

"Además, Washington sabe que su posición militar se ha vuelto desesperada. . . .

"El Pentágono se encuentra incapacitado para contener la revolución en ascenso, excepto por medio de una guerra total. Pero, ¿puede ganar un conflicto que inevitablemente involucre a China y la Unión Soviética? Usar armas nucleares sería suicida; no usarlas significaría ser derrotado por la revolución. El curso del futuro está con el comunismo 'por demanda popular' a escala mundial. En lo más profundo de su ser los generales lo saben. Simplemente no pueden admitirlo—públicamente."

Hasta la fecha no pueden admitirlo.

Los doctores Insólito sólo pudieron ser derrotados por la organización de un movimiento masivo de solidaridad internacional. Esto fue señalado el 5 de marzo de

1965 en *World Outlook*:

"... cualquiera de estos dos giros inmediatos posibles pueden lograr que la Casa Blanca vacile e inclusive retroceda—un ascenso de la revolución en Vietnam del Sur o el envío de ayuda masiva soviética a Vietnam del Norte. Cualquiera de estos dos giros, o ambos, no harían que el imperialismo norteamericano abandonara sus planes bélicos a largo plazo, pero sí haría que los agresores en Washington volvieran a preguntarles a sus computadoras electrónicas si no habrían equivocado el frente y la hora, como hicieron en Corea.

"Así la atención se volvió a Moscú, donde los dirigentes de la burocracia soviética enfrentan actualmente un problema quizá más grave que en 1938-39 cuando Hitler se preparaba para su eventual ataque contra la Unión Soviética.

"Mientras tanto, surgen otras presiones contra los agresores de Washington. En los Estados Unidos mismos, los dirigentes no han llegado a un acuerdo sobre si es aconsejable lanzarse ahora. Entre el pueblo, algunas voces valientes se están haciendo oír, y se están efectuando algunas manifestaciones. . . .

"Estas fuerzas, si se hacen oír lo suficiente, y si son lo suficientemente enfáticas, pueden fortalecer y alentar a la oposición en los Estados Unidos a tal grado que convenga al texano [Johnson] que está jugando a la ruleta rusa que las posibilidades no son cinco contra una, sino al contrario."

Moscú y Pekín Capitulan

La Unión Soviética y la República Popular China, grandes potencias mundiales con gran influencia en el movimiento obrero mundial, tenían el poder de parar al imperialismo norteamericano en frío. Si hubieran advertido claramente a Johnson que no tolerarían ataques contra el estado obrero norvietnamita, si hubieran provisto a los vietnamitas con el armamento suficiente para que se defendieran, si hubieran llamado a la movilización de los partidos stalinistas de masas a escala mundial, el Pentágono hubiera sido forzado a retroceder desde mediados de la década de los sesenta.

Pero en vez de unirse en un frente único contra la peligrosa intervención de Washington, Moscú y Pekín no tomaron ninguna medida para contrarrestar la agresión de los Estados Unidos. Actuando dentro de la estructura de la "coexistencia pacífica," Moscú limitó su respuesta a denuncias verbales contra la interferencia de Washington y Pekín se concretó a ridiculizar al imperialismo norteamericano llamándolo "tigre de papel."

La reacción de los burócratas soviéticos y chinos era un factor de primer orden que los estrategas de Washington tomaban en consideración en cada etapa de su intervención progresiva en Vietnam. La escalada,

paso a paso, estaba planeada para evaluar esa reacción. En cada ocasión en que no hubo una respuesta de importancia, los imperialistas escalaban más su intervención.

Los documentos del Pentágono registraron lo que los socialistas revolucionarios constantemente habían dicho sobre esta política. La siguiente cita, por ejemplo, es la evaluación del Pentágono de la reacción inicial al bombardeo de Vietnam del Norte después del incidente de Pleiku* en febrero de 1965:

"... la propaganda de Pekín, aunque está llena de belicosidad y amenazas, y le ha dado publicidad a mítines masivos contra los Estados Unidos, organizados en las principales ciudades de China, cuidadosamente ha evitado amenazar con una intervención directa por parte de China. . . .

"La respuesta de Moscú fue aún más restringida. . . . Al mismo tiempo que indicó que 'la defensa de RDV' [República Democrática de Vietnam] sería fortalecida, algunas emisiones de radio señalaron el creciente interés en los Estados Unidos y en todas partes en un acuerdo negociado en Vietnam."

Ya avanzada la guerra, Washington consiguió la ayuda tanto de Moscú como de Pekín para imponerles a los combatientes vietnamitas un cese al fuego y condiciones onerosas. La naturaleza crucial del papel que jugaron los burócratas ha sido apreciada totalmente por los círculos dominantes en los Estados Unidos. Esto se demuestra hoy por la ausencia de cualquier intento de atribuir la actual avanzada de los insurgentes vietnamitas a presiones hechas por parte de China o la Unión Soviética.

Los triunfos obtenidos actualmente por los vietnamitas contra su formidable enemigo imperialista son aún más impresionantes en vista del papel contrarrevolucionario que han desempeñado las dos burocracias stalinistas.

El Crecimiento del Movimiento Antibélico

Una gran ventaja que tuvieron los vietnamitas fue el apoyo y aliento que les dio el movimiento antibélico internacional—sobre todo el poderoso movimiento en los Estados Unidos. Contrastando fuertemente con los movimientos pacifistas tradicionales que se derrumbaron con el inicio de la guerra, este movimiento empezó a desarrollarse con la primera escalada de la intervención norteamericana en 1965. Creció y se profundizó con el transcurso de la guerra, atrayendo a sectores cada vez más amplios de la

*Ataque guerrillero contra una base de helicópteros que fue usado por Johnson como pretexto para ordenar bombardeos aéreos en Vietnam del Norte, iniciando una guerra no declarada y la escalada de la agresión norteamericana.

población norteamericana en protesta activa.

Al contrario de los apologistas burgueses de la intervención contrarrevolucionaria, los activistas antibélicos tienen muchas razones para estudiar y propagandizar el balance de la experiencia de Vietnam. Como el centro de la contienda entre el imperialismo y la revolución colonial por más de una década, Vietnam mostró la dificultad que enfrenta el imperialismo norteamericano en su intento de derrotar la revolución en otros países. La lecciones de esa experiencia serán útiles a los luchadores antimperialistas en cualquier parte del mundo.

El crecimiento del movimiento antibélico internacional fue documentado semana tras semana en las páginas de *Intercontinental Press* y en otras publicaciones del movimiento trotskista internacional.

La primera gran manifestación contra la guerra movilizó 20,000 personas. Se llevó a cabo el 17 de abril de 1965 habiendo sido llamada por los Students for a Democratic Society [Estudiantes por una Sociedad Democrática]. En aquel entonces, miles de "consejeros" de los Estados Unidos estaban en Vietnam del Sur. El llamado de los SDS describía la guerra del Vietnam como una guerra civil y llamaba a que finalizara la intervención norteamericana. Invitó a participar a los grupos de izquierda, incluyendo al Partido Comunista y al Socialist Workers party [Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores]. En respuesta al llamado del SDS, se efectuaron acciones de solidaridad internacional en una serie de países.

La dirección del SDS desafortunadamente pronto abandonó la lucha contra la guerra. Pero los trotskistas persistieron en su empeño de organizar un movimiento de protesta masivo y antibélico. El 22 de noviembre de 1965, en el *Militant*, el órgano semanal del socialismo revolucionario, Fred Halstead, candidato presidencial por el Socialist Workers party en 1968 y prominente dirigente antibélico, predijo el curso que tomaría el movimiento antibélico.

"El aumento de conciencia en la juventud estudiantil," dijo Halstead, "es el anuncio de un aumento de conciencia a escala mucho mayor, entre la juventud obrera, entre los jóvenes que han sido forzados a ser soldados y entre amplios sectores de la población en general.

"Está totalmente dentro de las posibilidades que no solamente unos cuantos cientos de miles, sino millones de norteamericanos se comprometerán activamente en la lucha contra la guerra de Vietnam. Un movimiento de ese alcance, aunque solamente se centre sobre la demanda contra la guerra, tendrá los efectos más profundos en todas las estructuras sociales del país, incluso los sindicatos y los soldados en el ejército.

"Lo más probable es que también resulte en el ascenso general de la conciencia

radical en muchos otros aspectos, así como ya ha tenido su impacto contra el anticomunismo. Pero sobre todo, podrá ser el factor clave que obligue a terminar con la guerra genocida del Pentágono en Vietnam. Las vidas de miles y miles de hombres, mujeres y niños vietnamitas y de soldados norteamericanos depende de esto. Eso en sí mismo es razón suficiente para hacer a un lado las diferencias sectarias para unirse y participar en la construcción de una organización nacional que pueda abarcar a cualquiera que esté dispuesto a oponerse a la intervención norteamericana en Vietnam, sin importar su posición o falta de ella, respecto a otras cuestiones."

Esta perspectiva se realizó en la práctica. En los años subsiguientes, el movimiento antibélico llegó a ser de tremendas proporciones, llegando a movilizar en un día a casi un millón de personas en ciudades importantes de los Estados Unidos como Washington y San Francisco.

Las protestas internacionales también fueron bastante grandes. Ciudades como Londres, París, Melbourne y Tokio presenciaron conglomeraciones de hasta 100,000 personas o más. Muchos manifestantes antibélicos, además de demandar la retirada incondicional e inmediata de las tropas norteamericanas en Indochina, también presentaron demandas contra la complicidad de sus "propios" gobiernos—ya fuera en forma de ayuda material o diplomática a la ofensiva guerrera de Washington.

Cómo se Construyó el Movimiento

Aunque los estudiantes fueron la espina dorsal del movimiento antibélico, la oposición se extendió a otras capas de la sociedad norteamericana. Los negros en su gran mayoría se oponían a la guerra. Referendos en ciudades como Dearborn, Michigan, mostraban un fuerte apoyo de la gente trabajadora a la retirada inmediata de las tropas norteamericanas de Vietnam.

El sentimiento antibélico empezó a desarrollarse entre las filas del ejército.

Un artículo escrito por Fred Feldman que apareció el 5 de febrero de 1973 en *Intercontinental Press* describía cómo fue construido el movimiento de masas.

"La movilización de masas hubiera sido seriamente cercenada en muchas ocasiones si no hubiera sido por la existencia de un ala combativa de izquierda en el movimiento antibélico, basada principalmente en las universidades," escribió Feldman. "En el centro de esta ala de izquierda estaban los trotskistas, que vieron la defensa de la revolución indochina como su principal tarea. A la inversa de los sectarios de varios tipos, nunca hicieron del apoyo a sus demandas o tácticas una condición para participar en acciones antibélicas unificadas."

Durante el transcurso de la guerra,

Intercontinental Press publicó las declaraciones de la Cuarta Internacional, el movimiento internacional trotskista, que analizaban cada fase sucesiva de la lucha revolucionaria y resaltaba la necesidad de la solidaridad internacional.

Los miembros del Socialist Workers party y de la Young Socialist Alliance [Alianza Juvenil Socialista] "lucharon por un movimiento único antibélico y amplio, abierto a todo aquél que quisiera participar en manifestaciones antibélicas," dijo Feldman. "En esto se opusieron tanto los reformistas, que querían excluir a los 'izquierdistas,' como los ultraizquierdistas, que creían que los dirigentes procapitalistas o reformistas podrían ser derrotados políticamente impidiéndoles hablar en las manifestaciones.

"Las tácticas de los trotskistas eran destinadas a movilizar a las masas independientemente de los partidos capitalistas en las manifestaciones contra la guerra. Se opusieron a las proposiciones confrontacionistas de los ultraizquierdistas que creían que la acción combativa por parte de pequeños grupos 'pararía la maquinaria bélica' o que las confrontaciones con la policía templarían a las masas."

Lucharon contra los intentos de los reformistas, incluyendo a los stalinistas, de canalizar el sentimiento antibélico en apoyo a los políticos capitalistas.

Como defensores del derecho de autodeterminación de los vietnamitas, los trotskistas lucharon para que la demanda de retirada inmediata e incondicional de las tropas norteamericanas y sus aliados de Vietnam fuera la consigna central unificadora del movimiento antibélico. Defendieron esta demanda en contra de los que llamaban a la "negociación," que querían limitar al movimiento para ganarse la gracia de los políticos liberales a los cuales veían como los dirigentes naturales del movimiento. El efecto desorientador de la consigna "¡Negociación ahora!" fue evidente cuando el mismo Johnson apoyó la "negociación," en un esfuerzo para confundir y desarmar al movimiento antibélico.

El tiempo, la experiencia y la educación paciente convencieron a la mayor parte de los activistas antibélicos de lo correcto de la consigna "¡Retirada ya!"

División en la Clase Dominante

El ascenso del movimiento antibélico agudizó las divisiones tácticas dentro de la clase dominante norteamericana. Temiendo la profundización de los conflictos sociales internos si la escalada en Vietnam continuaba, periódicos y representantes políticos capitalistas importantes empezaron a abogar por una retirada táctica de Vietnam. En cada giro importante de la guerra se mostraba el poder de la resistencia vietnamita y del movimiento antibélico de protesta norteamericano que obligaba al imperia-

lismo norteamericano a hacer concesiones importantes.

Un ejemplo fue la ofensiva del Tet en 1968. El 30 de enero el Frente de Liberación Nacional lanzó ataques simultáneos en veinte y seis capitales de provincia en todo Vietnam del Sur. La ofensiva fue una impresionante derrota militar y política para Washington, destruyó de un golpe el mito de que estaba "ganando la guerra" y "pacificando" el campo vietnamita. Los reportajes noticiosos describieron el asombro y la perplejidad que embargaba a los altos círculos gubernamentales en Washington. Joseph Hansen escribió el 9 de febrero de 1968 en *World Outlook*:

"El ambiente en Washington no es nuevo. De hecho la historia nos enseña a esperar este tipo de ambientes entre los círculos dominantes cuando se enfrentan a ascensos revolucionarios que para ellos siempre son 'algo totalmente extraño e inexplicable.'

"El Pentágono, el Departamento de Estado y la Casa Blanca han sido hipnotizados por el tablero militar. No importa con que brutalidad intervengan en este juego, sus reglas siguen siendo las reglas de la guerra. Aceptando la lógica de la guerra los vietnamitas debieron haber sido aplastados hace mucho tiempo. Lo que los estrategas de Washington no tomaron en cuenta es que la lógica de la guerra tiende a transformarse en la lógica de la revolución, que reemplaza a la guerra. Esto se aplica con mucha más fuerza a Vietnam donde la intervención norteamericana ha sido la intervención en una guerra civil ya muy avanzada."

Una observación similar podría adecuarse muy bien a la actual reacción oficial ante la estampida de Saigón.

La clase dominante presintió que era necesario un cambio de táctica. El pedido del general William Westmoreland de 200,000 soldados adicionales fue rechazado, y el comandante general de las fuerzas norteamericanas en Vietnam fue destituido de su puesto.

Por primera vez, periódicos importantes de los Estados Unidos empezaron a hablar de la posibilidad de que Washington perdiera la guerra. Un editor del *Wall Street Journal* advirtió que "el pueblo norteamericano" más valía "que estuviera preparado a aceptar la posibilidad de que todo se fuera por el resumidero no importa que haga nuestro Gobierno."

El Senador Robert Kennedy admitió públicamente que los Estados Unidos no podían ganar la guerra de Vietnam.

Temores de que el imperialismo norteamericano estaba sobrepasando su capacidad militar iban acompañados por una creciente preocupación de que los Estados Unidos enfrentarían una revuelta de grandes proporciones si la escalada continuaba. Una clara mayoría de la población se oponía a la guerra. Hasta la fecha, las manifestaciones

y protestas del 26-27 de abril de 1968 han sido las más grandes. Habían cada vez más indicios de un gran descontento entre la tropa, tanto en Vietnam como en otros lados.

La Casa Blanca decidió llevar a cabo un giro, e inició negociaciones con Vietnam del Norte y el Frente de Liberación Nacional. Como un soborno más al movimiento contra la guerra, Johnson prometió no presentar su candidatura para ser reelegido como presidente.

Estancado militarmente, Washington trató de buscar un acuerdo tipo Corea, que le permitiera mantener al régimen títere de Saigón apoyado permanentemente por un ejército de ocupación norteamericano. Pero mientras el sentimiento antibélico crecía entre la tropa, este plan, también, tuvo que ser desechado. En noviembre de 1969, el sucesor de Johnson, Richard Nixon, anunció la estrategia de la "vietnamización": retirada gradual de las tropas norteamericanas, y su remplazo por las tropas mercenarias títeres apoyadas por el uso masivo de la fuerza aérea norteamericana.

Washington continuó tratando de llegar a un acuerdo con Moscú y Pekín que le permitiera mantener a Vietnam del Sur como una base imperialista.

La Crisis Más Profunda del Siglo

La vietnamización creó ilusiones de que en realidad Nixon estaba disminuyendo la guerra. Pero el sentimiento antibélico no disminuyó. Esto se demostró de la manera más clara cuando Nixon anunció el 30 de abril de 1970 que estaba enviando tropas a Camboya—ésta era la escalada más seria de la guerra desde la decisión de Johnson de bombardear Vietnam del Norte. En unos cuantos días los Estados Unidos se sumergieron en una crisis que ha sido descrita como la más profunda en este siglo.

El 4 de mayo la Guardia Nacional acribilló a estudiantes, matando a cuatro de ellos, en una manifestación en la Universidad Estatal de Kent en el estado de Ohio que protestaban contra la decisión de Nixon. Millones de estudiantes expresaron su sorpresa y rabia ocupando las universidades y convirtiéndolas en centros de movilización antibélica. El alcance de la protesta no ha tenido precedente. Hubo manifestaciones en el 89 por ciento de todas las universidades independientes, y en el 76 por ciento de todas las públicas. El número de estudiantes en huelga se calcula conservadoramente en más de cinco millones.

Bajo el impacto del ascenso estudiantil empezaron a aparecer las primeras señales importantes de movilización en los sindicatos. En la ciudad de Nueva York, la primera manifestación antibélica organizada por los sindicatos atrajo a 25,000 en una marcha por las calles—importante desquebrajadura en el apoyo monolítico a la guerra por parte

del movimiento laboral que el presidente de la AFL-CIO [la central obrera de los Estados Unidos] George Meany había intentado mantener.

Representantes dirigentes de la clase capitalista abiertamente expresaron sus malos presentimientos por las implicaciones revolucionarias que podría tener este ascenso masivo de descontento interno. McGeorge Bundy, una de las personalidades centrales del gobierno de Johnson, responsable por la escalada de la guerra en 1965, dijo:

"El problema es bien sencillo, cualquier acción de importancia de este tipo en general, si se lleva a cabo de la misma forma en que se llevó a cabo esta decisión en Camboya—ahora que los efectos internos de esa decisión son visibles—se desbarataría al país y al gobierno en pedazos. De menos el Congreso suspendería el dinero para la guerra, y la posibilidad de un levantamiento general interno sería bastante real."

Un dirigente republicano, John W. Gardner, dijo: "... evaluándolo desde el punto de vista más estricto de la seguridad nacional, nuestra participación en el Sudeste Asiático va irremediamente en contra de nuestros mejores intereses."

El ex jefe de la Suprema Corte de Justicia Earl Warren habló sobre "una división en nuestra sociedad a tal grado de intensidad que no ha tenido paralelo en los últimos cien años."

Citando estas declaraciones en un artículo el 25 de mayo de 1970 en *Intercontinental Press*, Joseph Hansen señaló que era "claramente la opinión de... los círculos dominantes que la intervención norteamericana en la guerra de Vietnam ha llevado a una división civil y disensión tales que el país puede estar a punto de una revolución."

Aunque la retirada de las tropas en los meses siguientes convencieron a algunas personas de que Nixon en realidad estaba planeando el fin de la guerra, las manifestaciones que se realizaron en Washington y en San Francisco el 24 de abril de 1971 superaron inclusive el despliegue masivo de noviembre de 1969. Grandes contingentes de veteranos de la guerra de Vietnam y de chicanos mostraron que la protesta organizada había extendido su base social más allá del movimiento estudiantil.

El Ejército 'Hacia un Colapso'

Otro foco de preocupación para los gobernantes de los Estados Unidos fue el profundo impacto que el sentimiento antibélico de la población en general tenía en la moral de ejército norteamericano. En 1971 la efectividad combativa del ejército de los Estados Unidos se había de hecho derrumbado. El coronel Robert D. Heintz Jr. (ret.), historiador de los Marines, hizo la siguiente

evaluación el 7 de junio de 1971 en la *Armed Forces Journal*:

"La moral, la disciplina y la capacidad de combate de las Fuerzas Armadas de los Estados Unidos están, con algunas excepciones notables, por debajo y peor que nunca en este siglo y posiblemente peor que en cualquier otra ocasión en la historia de los Estados Unidos.

"Todos los indicios concebibles nos demuestran que nuestro ejército que aún permanece en Vietnam está en un estado que se aproxima a un colapso, con unidades individuales evitando o rehusándose a combatir, asesinando a sus oficiales y a sus suboficiales, plagada de drogas y con la moral baja donde no está al borde de amotinarse.

"En las demás partes la situación es casi tan peligrosa como en Vietnam."

Al tener Washington que encarar una retirada total de sus tropas de combate en Vietnam del Sur, su principal preocupación era la de asegurar la preservación de un gobierno anticomunista en Saigón. Para llevar a cabo este fin confió en los burócratas de Moscú y Pekín. A cambio de concesiones comerciales y diplomáticas que garantizarían el no aumentar la capacidad de combate de las fuerzas libertadoras, para que así no peligrara la existencia del régimen de Thieu. El resultado de este intercambio ha sido una de las traiciones más grandes en la historia de la lucha por la liberación.

La profundidad de la traición fue más notable en los primeros meses de 1972 por la recepción otorgada al jefe del imperialismo norteamericano en Pekín y más tarde en Moscú, mientras que los aviones norteamericanos bombardeaban Vietnam del Norte. Cuando el ejército de Thieu empezaba a desmoronarse, bajo los golpes de las fuerzas de liberación, durante la ofensiva de primavera ese año, Nixon inició el bombardeo más grande hasta la fecha en contra de Vietnam del Norte y minó sus puertos y canales, cosa que Washington nunca antes se había atrevido a hacer.

La disposición de Brezhnev de recibir a Nixon detuvo las protestas masivas antibélicas que se empezaban a desarrollar. La pasividad de la actividad antibélica no terminó hasta que Nixon empezó las redadas de bombardeos masivos sobre Hanoi y Haiphong en diciembre de 1972. Pero durante el discurso de toma de posesión, por segunda vez, de Nixon en Washington el 20 de enero de 1973, más de 100,000 personas se reunieron al pie del monumento a Washington para expresar su oposición a los bombardeos asesinos.

Los "Acuerdos para Terminar la Guerra y Restablecer la Paz en Vietnam" le dejaron a Thieu la tercera fuerza aérea en el mundo, un ejército de un millón de soldados, grandes cantidades de ayuda norteamericana y la garantía de la fuerza naval y aérea

de los Estados Unidos en las costas de Tailandia.

Al mismo tiempo, el alto al bombardeo, la última retirada de tropas norteamericanas y el reconocimiento de la presencia de las fuerzas de liberación en Vietnam del Sur representaban las ganancias del movimiento antibélico y de los insurgentes vietnamitas.

El título del artículo que analizaba los acuerdos, publicado en *Intercontinental Press* el 5 de febrero de 1973, sintetizaba el verdadero significado de estos: "Nada Se Ha Resuelto." Una guerra civil no puede ser terminada por medio de acuerdos—sobre todo cuando en la guerra intervienen dos sistemas sociales en conflicto.

"Ninguno de los puntos básicos por los cuales se llevó a cabo la guerra civil en Vietnam del Sur se resolvieron. . .," escribió Jon Rothschild.

"La lucha del pueblo vietnamita por la independencia nacional y el socialismo no ha sido ganada; solamente ha llegado a un punto decisivo. Los Estados Unidos están listos para reiniciar su agresión militar en cualquier momento, y su interferencia política, económica y militar continuará de todas maneras."

Ni bien se habían firmado los acuerdos cuando Thieu inició una ofensiva, aparentemente dirigida a eliminar focos de apoyo al Gobierno Provisional Revolucionario, y a "reinstalar" aproximadamente 750,000 refugiados en áreas bajo control de Saigón. Estas maniobras fueron seguidas por el aumento en la ofensiva del ejército sudvietnamita. De hecho Saigón aumentó su control de territorio y de gente cuando se efectuó el alto al fuego.

Una "ofensiva" subsecuente llevada a cabo por las fuerzas de liberación en la primavera de 1974 parece no haber tenido más intención que la de recobrar el territorio perdido a las fuerzas de Saigón durante el período desde el alto al fuego.

Inclusive los relatos de observadores hostiles han indicado que el GPR trataba de cumplir los acuerdos, y no utilizaba las aperturas que se le presentaban para extender la resistencia en contra de los ataques de Thieu. En un artículo en el ejemplar del mes de enero de 1975 del trimestral *Foreign Affairs* escrito poco antes de los recientes reveses sufridos por Saigón, Maynard Parker, antiguo encargado de la agencia noticiosa de *Newsweek* en Saigón, escribió:

"... Aunque en algunas regiones, particularmente en el norte de Vietnam del Sur, donde poseen una fuerza arrolladora, los norvietnamitas han preferido quedarse dentro de los perímetros de los acuerdos de paz de París intentando generalmente no ocupar territorio que estaba firmemente bajo control de Vietnam del Sur cuando se llevó a cabo el alto al fuego. Y a pesar de

que los norvietnamitas tienen veintenas de tanques y 130 unidades de artillería agrupadas cerca de la mayoría de las principales ciudades sudvietnamitas, no han usado esas armas en contra de las ciudades. . . los norvietnamitas han inclusive adoptado ocasionalmente una política de acomodación limitada en medio de la batalla. Durante una batalla en Dak Pek esta primavera, una unidad del ejército sudvietnamita que estaba totalmente rodeada, le fue permitido salir ileso."

Parker atribuyó la "reticencia de Hanoi" a iniciar una ofensiva a varios factores. Los dirigentes norvietnamitas habían pospuesto el objetivo de unificar Vietnam a cambio de la reconstrucción de la economía del Norte. Ellos creían que el régimen de Thieu se desmoronaría desde adentro y caería por sus contradicciones internas.

"Pero el factor más crítico, y quizás el más determinante de la reticencia de Hanoi," dijo, "es el hecho de que mientras el Norte podría soportar militarmente una guerra total, diplomáticamente no puede darse ese lujo. Aunque Vietnam del Norte tiene suficiente material bélico para aguantar la primera ronda de una ofensiva importante, no tiene la garantía por parte de la República Popular de China o de la Unión Soviética que ese material sea reemplazado. De hecho, desde el alto al fuego la Unión Soviética y China han sido de lo más discretos, y aunque ambas potencias han aumentado el nivel de la ayuda económica, en realidad han disminuido la ayuda militar a Hanoi. . ."

La ayuda recibida por Hanoi por parte de los estados obreros siempre ha sido cualitativamente inferior a la que Washington otorga a Vietnam del Sur. En 1971, por ejemplo, el total de la ayuda militar soviética a Vietnam del Norte se valuó en sólo 100 millones de dólares, mientras que la cifra oficial de los Estados Unidos del gasto en la guerra fue de 9,000 millones de dólares—noventa veces la cifra soviética. La asistencia militar china a Hanoi en 1971 fue catalogada en la cifra aún inferior de 75 millones de dólares.

El ejército de Thieu se derrumbó por las contradicciones internas del régimen, no bajo los golpes de ninguna ofensiva masiva de las fuerzas del GPR.

A pesar del apoyo masivo norteamericano a Saigón, la situación en Vietnam del Sur se ha deteriorado rápidamente durante los últimos dos años. Una tasa inflacionaria de cerca del 90 por ciento en dos años ha incitado una caída del 45 por ciento en el ingreso per cápita. Casi un millón de personas están desempleadas. El estancamiento económico ha inspirado inquietud política. En septiembre de 1974 los budistas empezaron a agitar por la paz y la reconciliación nacional con los comunistas, mientras que los católicos, unas semanas más tarde, empezaron una campaña en contra

de la corrupción del gobierno.

Si el colapso de las fuerzas de Saigón sucedió más rápido, y a un nivel más extenso del que se esperaba, la total podredumbre del régimen no debe sorprender a nadie. Lo único que lo sostenía eran las armas, los soldados y el fuego aéreo norteamericanos. Su retirada bajo la presión dual de las masas vietnamitas y el movimiento internacional antibélico es la causa fundamental de la derrota de Saigón.

Significativamente, al igual que otros que han seguido favoreciendo el apoyo de los Estados Unidos al régimen títere, Parker puso énfasis en su artículo en *Foreign Affairs* que tal apoyo "no debe bajo ninguna circunstancia involucrar a los Estados Unidos en una acción militar."

Si, dijo proféticamente, "el vigor del ejército sudvietnamita fracasa y Vietnam del Sur empieza a desquebrajarse militarmente, los Estados Unidos no deben intentar detener tal derrota por medio del reingreso de las fuerzas aérea y naval norteamericanas, y mucho menos por medio de fuerzas terrestres. Si . . . el gobierno de Saigón se disuelve en un tumulto político, no debemos intentar componer la situación, sino aceptar la realidad que al final surja."

Esta precaución con respecto a la intervención militar en Indochina en estos momentos constituye uno de los triunfos más notables del movimiento antibélico. La intervención directa de las tropas norteamericanas a gran escala en cualquier parte, fuera de los Estados Unidos, hoy en día, de seguro se enfrentaría a una oposición interna combativa, y lo más probable es que esta oposición se extendiera rápidamente hasta constituir una fuerza colosal.

Es por eso que la burguesía preferiría no tener un debate público sobre las lecciones políticas del fracaso en Vietnam. Esas lecciones sólo pueden inspirar y educar a toda una nueva generación de combatientes por la liberación nacional y social. □

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Fermento Político en la Campaña Electoral de Portugal

Por Gerry Foley

[La siguiente es una traducción del artículo "Political Ferment Mounts in Portuguese Election Campaign" que apareció en *Intercontinental Press* el 14 de abril de 1975.

[La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

LISBOA, abril 3—La campaña para las elecciones de la Asamblea Constituyente se inició formalmente ayer. *Diário de Lisboa*, uno de los cuatro diarios vespertinos de la ciudad, relataba los resultados de la "guerra de los carteles."

En el centro de Lisboa, por lo menos, el Partido Comunista Portugués parecía que la estaba ganando. Sus carteles cubren toda la región, excluyendo virtualmente a todos los demás partidos. En los centros industriales al sur del Río Tejo, los carteles del Partido Comunista cubren todo el espacio disponible.

El PC fue el único partido en la contienda que inició su campaña con un mitin central. La mayoría de los carteles en las paredes de las principales plazas de aquí anunciaban el mitin que realizaron anoche en el Palácio de Desportos. En los primeros días de la campaña aquí en Lisboa, el aparato del PC muestra una clara superioridad sobre la maquinaria electoral de los demás partidos. Aunque las encuestas estiman que el Partido Socialista tiene más seguidores que su principal rival en la izquierda, su campaña aquí se ve más débil.

La situación en los centros de provincia podría ser diferente. Puede ser significativo, por ejemplo, que el Partido Socialista realizó el acto de apertura de su campaña en Faró, ciudad principal en Algarve, la provincia más al sur, por supuesto, una de las áreas menos industrializadas de Portugal.

En los pueblos pequeños y las áreas rurales donde aún vive la mayoría de la población, los grupos de la extrema derecha parecen sentirse lo suficiente fuertes como para atacar aun los mítines del PS. El 1 de abril, *Diário de Lisboa* publicó una declaración del PS quejándose de "la campaña anticomunista y antisocialista en Panafiel."

La declaración protestaba por el ataque a un mitin el 27 de marzo, llevado a cabo por los seguidores del partido burgués más liberal, el Partido Popular Democrático (PPD). El periódico también destacó una



SOARES

queja del PC contra un ataque a sus locales en São Tiago da Luz.

En el centro de Lisboa, la gente en la calle está obviamente interesada en la campaña política y no parece temer el expresar sus opiniones. Un gran número usan distintivos políticos. En un café, noté que un camarero usaba un distintivo del PS y otro usaba el emblema del PC. No temían el discutir con los clientes que apoyan a los partidos burgueses. Sin embargo, ha habido informes de que en las áreas rurales y los pueblos y ciudades pequeñas hay indiferencia y suspicacia hacia la actividad política.

Después de dos intentos fallidos de golpe de estado por parte de las fuerzas conservadoras burguesas en su esfuerzo por detener el fermento y el proceso de radicalización, esta campaña se lleva a cabo en un contexto político muy avanzado. Los partidos burgueses están a la defensiva, y el Partido Socialista empieza a tratar de desasociarse del PPD. El PC también ha adoptado una postura más radical. Uno de sus carteles más comunes dice: "¿Quién teme al Partido Comunista? Los parásitos."

Los reportajes de la campaña en la radio están llenos de términos marxistas tales como "explotación capitalista" y "los intereses del proletariado." El Partido Socialista está poniendo énfasis a que es un "partido marxista."

Sin embargo, a pesar de su fraseología "marxista" y algunas posiciones radicales, el Partido Socialista causa sospechas entre los sectores de la población que estuvieron a la vanguardia de la resistencia contra el intento de golpe. La razón fundamental estriba en el hecho de que la burguesía se debilitó tanto por su fracaso al intentar "restaurar el orden" que la existencia del capitalismo se ha puesto en duda, esto le trae problemas agudos al PS por sus relaciones y perspectivas internacionales.

El hecho de que un columnista cripto-stalinista y tímido escribió el 3 de abril en *Diário de Lisboa* sobre la necesidad de que las masas defiendan al país, "con las armas en la mano," en contra de la intervención imperialista es una indicación de la presión que se está acumulando.

En esta situación, los vínculos del PS con la Social Democracia de Europa Occidental y por lo tanto con el imperialismo tienden a resaltar. Sus consignas centrales "socialismo y libertad" y "independencia nacional" tienen implicaciones anticomunistas y pro "mundo libre," aunque los dirigentes del PS buscan ponerlas en términos más aceptables tales como una "tercera vía," o "vía independiente" al socialismo.

En el mitin del 1 de abril en Faró, el dirigente del PS Mário Soares dijo: "El PS puede garantizarle al MFA [Movimento das Forças Armadas] que avanzaremos sobre la vía original revolucionaria no sólo por nuestros vínculos con la Social Democracia europea, sino por los que existen con todos los partidos socialistas europeos y con muchos partidos comunistas tales como el rumano, el yugoslavo, el italiano y el español. Sin el PS, el MFA sería condenado a ser el prisionero del PC, la vía portuguesa sería condenada a ser una vil copia de las democracias populares de Europa Oriental o de Cuba."

El fermento de las ideas revolucionarias que ha aterrorizado a la burguesía desde la caída del régimen salazarista continúa y puede llegar a nuevo nivel. Aunque el periódico del MFA ha adoptado algunas formulaciones omnisos respecto a los grupos a la izquierda de la coalición de partidos, la única represión ha sido contra

el Movimiento Reorganizativo do Partido do Proletariado (MRPP), secta maoísta cuyas manifestaciones semimilitaristas y su lenguaje y posturas extremistas son vistas como exóticas y aterrantas por la mayoría de los trabajadores portugueses.

Dos agrupaciones maoístas están participando en la campaña electoral, la União Democrática do Povo (UDP) y el Frente Eleitoral Comunista (Marxista Leninista). El segundo grupo utilizó el martillo y la hoz como emblema electoral. Esto fue cuestionado por los funcionarios debido a la similitud con el símbolo del PC. Sin embargo, los periódicos anunciaron el 2 de abril que las autoridades habían permitido al FEC (ML) usar el símbolo que consistía en dos pequeños martillos y hoces dentro de dos estrellas amarillas de cinco puntas. La organización festejó esta decisión como "una derrota al revisionismo."

La Actividad Electoral Trotskista

En comparación con las "elecciones democráticas" en los Estados Unidos, los medios de comunicación han proporcionado una información impresionante a los doce partidos que participan con candidatos. Esto le ha dado a la nueva organización trotskista, la Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI—sección simpatizante de la Cuarta Internacional en Portugal), una oportunidad de tener un impacto inmediato internacional.

Los jóvenes activistas de la LCI se movilizaron rápidamente para aprovechar esta apertura. Consiguieron a más de 5,000 personas que firmaron como partidarios de su organización y ocuparon un edificio grande en la Rua da Palma, que convirtieron en su local general.

Es un edificio grande y viejo con dos palmas gigantescas enfrente, que puede ser visto desde dos kilómetros y medio de distancia. Está en un distrito bastante transitado en Lisboa en la principal línea del metro y a solo unos minutos de la plaza central de Rossio. Una gran bandera con letras rojas cuelga de lado a lado al frente del edificio. De hecho es uno de los locales centrales más impresionantes y accesibles.

Ya que la mayoría de los locales centrales son edificios que han sido ocupados por activistas, los recursos mayores de los partidos grandes les han dado menos ventaja que de costumbre en este terreno.

La LCI es el único partido en la campaña que ha llamado a profundizar la movilización de masas que derrotó los intentos de golpe del 28 de septiembre y del 11 de marzo, llama a que el gobierno de la sociedad esté basado en ese tipo de movilizaciones.

El 2 de abril, *A Capital*, diario de Lisboa, en su sumario de las posiciones de los partidos empezó con la LCI. Citó al representante de la LCI Adelino Fortunato

diciendo: "Es necesario consolidar el movimiento de masas, basándose en las victorias que se han alcanzado. Lucharemos por la nacionalización de todas las fábricas en el país y atacaremos los fundamentos del poder político del gran capital."

Fortunato prosiguió: "Apoyaremos un programa anticapitalista para que sea llevado a cabo por el gobierno de las masas. El último intento de golpe reaccionario fue una derrota para la derecha que le costó un valioso puntal—Spínola. Los partidos burgueses que aún están en el gobierno han sido forzados a hacer varias concesiones políticas que anteriormente no estaban incluidas en estos programas."

Esto, explicó *A Capital*, se refiere a la nacionalización de los bancos y las compañías de seguros, que el gobierno fue forzado a aceptar bajo la presión de las masas, sobre todo la de los trabajadores de estas empresas.

Fortunato definió el llamado de la LCI por un gobierno obrero de la siguiente manera: "La burguesía aún está en el camino de las masas. Nos oponemos a los ministros capitalistas que aún quedan en el gobierno (especialmente los del PPD). Proponemos un gobierno obrero en que todas las organizaciones de la clase trabajadora estén representadas (las asociaciones rurales, las asociaciones de fábrica, los sindicatos, etc.) para poderles ofrecer una verdadera garantía de que se mantendrán los intereses de las masas."

"Por lo tanto, nunca será suficiente el énfasis que pongamos en el fortalecimiento de todas las comisiones que ya han sido formadas y en la extensión del proceso, formando otras asociaciones de trabajadores que se necesitan urgentemente. Esta actividad se encuadra en una dinámica irreversible. Obtendremos la oportunidad de llevar a cabo una asamblea nacional obrera que formará un frente único de los trabajadores."

Otro representante de la LCI, Francisco Moreira, explicó los objetivos de la campaña de la siguiente manera:

"Desarrollaremos un plan para coordinar la actividad de las masas trabajadoras. En asambleas y en mítines, les explicaremos el proceso de la autodefensa y el armamento, que son las bases para la huelga general y la insurrección armada. También definiremos el tipo de socialismo que queremos y por el cual estamos luchando."

En una conferencia de prensa el primero de abril, representantes de la LCI señalaron sus intenciones de usar la campaña para promover el internacionalismo proletario. Llamaron a la abolición del pacto Ibérico, que ata a Portugal con la España franquista. Llamaron a un retiro de Portugal de NATO. Explicaron que pretenden hacer este aspecto de la campaña de la LCI más concreto incluyendo en sus actividades a

trabajadores de otros países, sobre todo España.

Un representante de la sección francesa de la Cuarta Internacional, Paul Allies, estuvo presente en la primera conferencia de prensa de la campaña.

El llamado a una asamblea nacional de obreros fue hecho en una conferencia el 29 de marzo por los partidarios de la campaña de la LCI en Leira, un pueblo pequeño, a tres horas de distancia en autobús de Lisboa. El mitin se efectuó para explicar la posición de la organización a todos aquellos que firmaron para que pudiera participar en las elecciones. Asistieron alrededor de 500 personas, la mayoría de ellos llegaron en autobuses de Lisboa y Oporto.

La LCI tiene una sección activa en Leira que se desarrolló recientemente por medio de un par de contactos estudiantiles. Las consignas de la LCI resaltaban en las paredes de las estrechas y torcidas calles que conducían al edificio donde la conferencia se efectuó, en una colina que está en frente de otra donde está un viejo castillo que domina al pueblo.

La sesión duró desde de la una de la tarde hasta las nueve de la noche. La primera parte de la conferencia fue dedicada esencialmente a analizar al Movimiento de las Fuerzas Armadas y los procesos que se están dando entre las masas. Después de varias horas de análisis político bastante avanzado, la reunión se dividió en sesiones de trabajo sobre varios temas tales como el trabajo sindical y el frente único obrero.

Predominaban los estudiantes entre los veinte y los veinte y cinco años de edad. Pero también había muchos jóvenes de menos de los veinte años y algunos viejos. La conferencia fue reportada en los principales periódicos de Lisboa.

La LCI lleva a cabo foros cada tercer día sobre los problemas claves. El que se efectuó el 27 de marzo trató del MFA. Más de setenta personas, inclusive un grupo de activistas muy jóvenes asistieron. Estuvieron por horas en el análisis del MFA.

Gran parte de la campaña de la LCI que llama a un frente único obrero ha sido dirigida en contra de la posición de los grupos maoístas que sostienen que el PC es "social fascista." Este aspecto va a adquirir más importancia cuando se desarrolle más la campaña, ya que tanto el PC como los grupos maoístas se están acusando mutuamente de ataques físicos.

El 2 de abril *A Capital* publicó una declaración del Frente Revolucionaria dos Estudantes Portugueses que informaba que su local central en Rua Fernão Lopes había sido atacado por los equipos del PC que pegan carteles. Por otro lado, la organización estudiantil del PC dijo que su local central había sido atacado en la madrugada del día 2 de abril por setenta miembros del MRPP. □

FROM OUR READERS

Allen Myers, our former managing editor, dropped us a note from Sydney, Australia. After studying our new type style, he commented: "Great. I counted the number of lines per column and can't figure out how you're saving much space, but it looks more professional than the old 9-point. If the staff really are polishing their glasses more often, it's probably just a sign of increased air pollution in New York. I find I can even read the new 8-point (6-point? 4-point? 1-point?) footnotes without even using my glasses." (It's 7-point, in case anyone wants to know.)

To make up for that crack about New York's air pollution (the city is still only the second dirtiest in the world), Allen added: "We're enjoying IP. Between our departure from New York and arrival here, not seeing IP was like being on another planet."

S.E. of Philadelphia found room at the bottom of his renewal notice to write: "The IP is definitely the best left publication I've seen. Keep up the good work. It's appreciated."

W.J. of Winnipeg, Canada, sent us a money order to cover a subscription by first-class mail, adding the following explanation: "I've been reading a friend's copy; but I get frustrated because I can't make notes and mark important articles, so send me my own copy."

Enough said to other supporters of IP? Keep loaning out your copy until your friends get frustrated.

Mike Anderson of Prince Rupert, British Columbia, sent us the following short note explaining why he can no longer renew his subscription: "For me it is impossible. Had no job for 23 years and being 83 years of age there could be no change in my financial position."

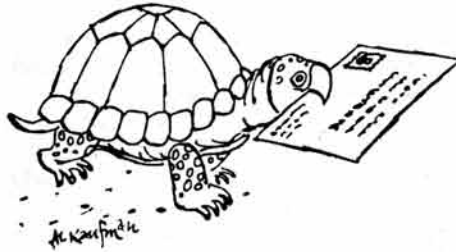
Would anyone like to help keep this subscription going to a person who really appreciates Intercontinental Press?

Sandy Peck of the Militant Bookstore in Detroit (3737 Woodward Avenue) ordered a bundle of copies of the December 23, 1974, issue of Intercontinental Press. That's the one containing the documents of the last world congress of the Fourth International (\$2.50 or £1 a copy). But they never arrived.

After making various checks without results, Peck asked for a duplicate order.

Then it was discovered that the bundle had been sitting in the post office all the time. "We had never even received a notice for it."

No good came from that goof. The postmaster hadn't even been thoughtful enough to pass out copies so that the postal workers could bone up on world politics while IP was being aged before delivery.



Kaufman/New York Times

The editors of the New York Times received a letter from a reader of that newspaper, W.J. Bailey of Red Bank, New Jersey, who expressed outrage that the Postal Service has awarded \$500,000 in contracts to "outside" companies to find out why the U.S. mail does not move faster.

The answer is already known to thousands of "inside" senior personnel, Bailey wrote; but the bureaucrats ignore them. The reason for the slowness of the mail is simple—local postmasters are under orders to curtail personnel and service.

"If the local authorities, responsible for and informed in service needs and deficiencies, could circumvent the obstacles in the internal labyrinthine communications chimeras," the letter continued, "better answers would be available much faster."

Bailey also made a practical proposal that deserves widespread support:

"Wouldn't the Postal Service be a good place to utilize many of the men and women who are out of work and improve the quality of the service from its present low estate, instead of spending all that money to discover causes already visible?"

Bill Gottlieb of New York City sent us the following letter:

"In Ernest Harsch's otherwise excellent article on Ethiopia (IP, March 24), I found one point that was ambiguous and could conceivably lead to some misunderstanding. According to the article, 'Armed clashes have taken place between different military units, some of whom reportedly favored a civilian regime. Whether any of these forces in the military realize the necessity of mobilizing the masses and establishing a workers state to successfully end imperialist economic control is still unknown. The pressure of events may yet push some in that direction, as it did in

Cuba, where the revolutionary leadership quickly learned that its initial nationalist program was insufficient to break the U.S. grip on the country.'

"If the writer means by this the possibility that rank and file soldiers might be considering the need to mobilize the workers and poor peasantry to create a workers' and peasants' government that would lead to the creation of a workers' state in Ethiopia, there would not be any disagreement. It is even possible that lower ranking officers could be drawn into such a movement.

"However, under no circumstances could leaders of the armed forces, working through the military apparatus, create such a government. Fidel Castro had to smash the old Cuban army in a civil war, creating at the same time a new army of workers and soldiers as the first step in a process that made possible a workers state. The most that the leaders of the old army could accomplish would be a regime of the Nasser type which would remain within the limits of a capitalist state. This would not of course rule out important reforms or anti-imperialist measures which would be supported by revolutionists."

When we asked Ernest Harsch about this, he said, "No comment."

However, we noticed that his typewriter, which is usually bouncing at ninety words a minute, was gone. Sent to the Typewriter Training Center for a week's reinforcement, we were told. It was letting words open to misunderstanding slip into otherwise excellent articles.

To which we might add that in the world of today it is hazardous to exclude the possibility of individual prominent figures in the armed forces of countries in upheaval in the semicolonial world from breaking away and taking the path followed by leaders like Castro and Guevara. In the case of the Dominican Republic, for instance, the turn made by Col. Caamaño Deñó in the 1965 uprising in Santo Domingo should induce caution about using formulas like "under no circumstances."

Egyptian Torture Victim Awarded \$75,000 in Damages

An Egyptian court has ruled that Minister of War Gen. Mohammed Abdel Ghany el Gamasy must pay \$75,000 in damages to Ali Greisha, Cairo newspapers reported April 5. Greisha was tortured in 1965 and 1966 at the Cairo Military Prison under the regime of President Gamal Abdel Nasser.

The verdict was believed to be the first of its kind in Egypt, and the fact that it was reported in the government-controlled press was seen as an indication that the Sadat regime intends to continue its moves toward easing political repression.