

**As Che Said:**

**'Create Two, Three  
... Many Vietnams'**

**Saigon Cheers as New Government Establishes Order**

**Those 'Commitments' Ford Fought For**

**Rank-and-File Protests Spread in French Army**

**Nine Political Prisoners Executed in Iran**

**Abortion Horror Book Exposed as Hoax in Britain**

## Those 'Commitments' Ford Fought For

When Thieu in his April 21 resignation speech blamed "untrustworthy" allies in the White House for his downfall, he touched off widespread speculation. What was the "solid pledge" he had received from Nixon?

On April 30 at a news conference in New York, Nguyen Tien Hung, Thieu's former executive assistant, quoted from four letters from Nixon to Thieu and released copies of two of them. These letters dispelled the mystery. On at least two occasions in late 1972 and early 1973, Nixon secretly promised Thieu that Washington would again intervene in Vietnam in a massive way if the North Vietnamese "violated the accords," i.e., defended themselves against Thieu's forays.

The first letter was dated November 14, 1972, six days before the Paris peace talks were scheduled to resume. At that time Thieu was balking at signing any accord. He objected above all to the continued presence of North Vietnamese troops in the liberated areas of South Vietnam.

In response, Nixon wrote a letter to Thieu telling him not to worry about this or that point in the agreement. According to Thieu, Nixon told him the accords were just "pieces of paper." Here is what Nixon put down in writing:

"... far more important than what we say in the agreement on this issue [the presence of North Vietnamese troops] is what we do in the event the enemy renews its aggression. You have my absolute assurance that if Hanoi fails to abide by the terms of this agreement it is my intention to take swift and severe retaliatory action."

"Above all," Nixon wrote, "we must bear in mind what will really maintain the agreement. . . . I repeat my personal assurances to you that the United States will react very strongly and rapidly to any violation of the agreement."

Nixon warned, however, that to be able to

carry out his pledge successfully, "it is essential that I have public support and that your government does not emerge as the obstacle to a peace which American public opinion now universally desires."

The second letter, dated January 5, 1973, was written shortly after the carpet bombing of North Vietnam, an action designed by Nixon to show the kind of support Thieu could expect if he ran into trouble.

Nixon repeated in this letter that he could do nothing about the North Vietnamese troops and he warned of the "gravest consequence" if Thieu "chose to reject the agreement and split off from the United States." (Thieu recalled another warning in his resignation speech: "I also was told my life was threatened. . . .")

"Should you decide, as I trust you will," Nixon continued, "to go with us, you have my assurance of continued assistance in the post-settlement period and that we will respond with full force should the settlement be violated by North Vietnam."

The *New York Times* account of Hung's news conference summarized his remarks on the meaning of "full force" as follows:

"'Full force,' Mr. Hung said, was interpreted by high Saigon officials as meaning actions similar to the heavy bombing of North Vietnam and the mining of Hai-phong harbor in May, 1972, and the Christmas bombing." That is, they equated it with the most murderous assaults the Pentagon could dish out, perhaps even up to the use of nuclear weapons.

Confirmation of this came from another well-placed source—conservative columnist William Buckley, one of Nixon's pipelines to the press. Buckley drew attention May 1 to an item, which he said he had "reason to believe is true," in the May 5 issue of *Time* magazine.

According to *Time*, Nixon had decided in April 1973 to order bombing raids against Khe Sanh in the liberated area and "possibly against the North. The raids were to have been more intense than the Christmas 1972 bombings."

"After Nixon had given his final, formal approval to resume the bombing, however, he learned that his counsel John Dean had begun to talk to the Watergate prosecutors. . . . Loath to deal with simultaneous severe criticism on two major fronts, he rescinded his approval of the raids."

This revelation, along with publication of the letters, clears up a number of points. For example, Thieu's reference in his resigna-



Herblock/New York Post

tion speech to "untrustworthy" allies in the White House meant the Pentagon's failure to return with B-52s.

That failure is ascribed to legislation passed by Congress. But Congress voted for the restrictions because of the pressure mounted by the antiwar movement. The American public had served notice on *all branches of government* that it would not stand for renewed escalation of U.S. intervention in Vietnam.

Another item cleared up by the publication of the texts of two of Nixon's letters is the reason for Ford's bizarre behavior in the final weeks before Saigon's collapse. Ford kept insisting in statement after statement that the United States had "commitments" in South Vietnam. He said that America's "credibility" would be undermined if Congress refused to vote for an additional \$722 million in "emergency" military aid to Thieu and for permission to use American troops.

Congress, unwilling to pour more millions down the rat hole in Saigon and to OK the use of American troops, especially with an election year coming up, claimed it couldn't understand the request. Just what "commitments" was Ford talking about?

Hadn't Kissinger solemnly declared at the time the Paris accords were signed: "There are no secret understandings"? How could Washington's "credibility" be affected? This of course was precisely the question Ford could not answer in public, as every important figure in Congress undoubtedly already knew.

Ford could only repeat the lie that a stepped-up flow of weapons would help stabilize the Saigon regime.

Even after Hung released the two letters, the White House continued to deny that any secret "commitments" had been made to Thieu. On the day of Hung's news confer-

### Next Week. . .

"A Discussion With Trotsky on Latin American Questions." For the first time, the stenographic transcript of Trotsky's contributions to a 1938 discussion on such questions as permanent revolution and the struggle for democratic demands in colonial and semicolonial countries.

ence, Press Secretary Ron Nessen blandly repeated Ford's earlier statement that "nothing was promised to Thieu in private that wasn't said out loud."

The White House appeared to be arguing approximately as follows:

Were the letters secret?

Yes, but they contained no "secret agreements."

How is that possible?

Well, there are public quotations from Nixon that go even further than the language used in the letters to Thieu. Therefore it is correct to say that there were no "secret" agreements.

Then why not make all the letters to Thieu public?

No. That would destroy "confidentiality" of exchanges between governments.

Were the letters genuine? No one tried to argue that they were forgeries, even after a New York handwriting expert said that Nixon was not the one who had signed them, that it was probably his secretary Rose Mary Woods. The only response to that revelation was cynical laughter. Where were the eighteen-and-a-half-minute gaps?

Ford's attempt to continue the cover-up even after the letters were exposed merely showed how faithfully he was following the routine White House procedure—repeat the lie as long as possible. In this Ford lived up to the recommendation given him by Nixon:

"... in turning over direction of the Government to Vice President Ford I know, as I told the nation when I nominated him for that office 10 months ago, that the leadership of America will be in good hands." □

## Why Millions Starve

Is famine a product of artificial scarcities created to pay off in profits? A recent series of articles in *Intercontinental Press* by Ernest Harsch assembled a mass of facts from which only that conclusion could be drawn. (See "The New Famine—Made in the USA" in *IP* December 2, 9, 16, 1974, and January 13, 20, 1975.)

Other researchers are drawing the same conclusion. In the May 9 issue of *Science* magazine Sylvan H. Wittwer, assistant dean of Michigan State University's College of Agriculture, examined the enormous potential for expanding world food production through the application of scientific methods of agriculture.

"Despite a growing population and increasing demands of that population for improved diets, it appears that the world is not close to universal famine," he said. "That people are malnourished or starving is a question of distribution, delivery and economics, not agricultural limits."

May 12, 1975

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## Vietnamese Triumph Resounds Throughout the World

By Dick Fidler

The triumph of the People's Liberation Armed Forces in Vietnam resounded throughout the world.

The Cuban press ran headlines hailing "the greatest anti-imperialist insurrectional epic of our times." The Cuban leadership had campaigned for a united front of workers states and the international workers movement against Washington's aggression in Indochina. Their view was expressed in Che Guevara's eloquent appeal in 1967: ". . . create two, three . . . many Vietnams."

In New Delhi, the news of Saigon's surrender April 30 was greeted with cheers and desk-thumping in both houses of Parliament. The victory in Vietnam was a theme of May Day celebrations in many countries.

Antiwar activists in the United States hailed the triumph of the Vietnamese as their own. In a May Day statement the Socialist Workers party, which played a key role in building the massive antiwar movement that finally forced Washington to withdraw its troops from Vietnam, said the taking of Saigon laid the basis for Vietnam's national reunification and for "a social revolution to abolish the entire system of exploitation for private profit." (See text of the SWP statement elsewhere in this issue.)

The reaction of the U.S. ambassador to Saigon, Graham Martin, reflected the frustration in Washington. "If we had done as a nation the things I think we said we would do," Martin said, "if we had kept our commitments, we wouldn't have to evacuate."

But any attempt to carry out the secret "commitments" Washington made to Thieu would have met with massive protests from the American people, and saner officials than Martin were not prepared to pay the price. Forced to withdraw from Saigon, the administration now simply does not want to talk about the debacle. In a statement April 29, Ford, who for weeks had been blaming the Democrats in Congress for the collapse of Saigon's forces, called on "all Americans" to "close ranks, to avoid recrimination about the past," and to "work together on the great tasks that remain to be accomplished."

The president's call went unheeded.

There was even criticism from some quarters of the way the evacuation was carried out. The *New York Times* charged

in an April 30 editorial that Ford's delay in withdrawing all Americans from Saigon had helped "to obstruct the political bargain that might have prevented a final rout." *New York Times* columnist Anthony Lewis called May 1 for Kissinger's resignation to make way for a secretary of state "who could restore dignity and credibility to that office."

Reaction among members of Congress ranged from the fuming of the "hawks" to sighs of relief from the "doves."

Senator Barry Goldwater spoke of a "sense of shame, because we could have won that war." Congressman Edward Hébert, former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, said the military should have been given earlier authorization to bomb Hanoi and blockade Hai-phong.

"The only way to redeem anything from the whole nightmare is not to repeat it," said Senator George McGovern. Senate majority leader Mike Mansfield said Washington's defeat "shows that modern weapons are not the answer."

"The other side had a people who had literally nothing but a determination to defend their own country," Mansfield said. "It's a collective tragedy for all involved."

U.S. officials were generally reluctant to offer any explanation for the failure to prevent the collapse of their Saigon puppet. *New York Post* columnist Mary McGrory, a personal acquaintance of Kissinger's, reported April 30 that he refused to comment on the events but "spoke vaguely of an 'assessment of the public pressures' that could be made at some future date." She said it "sounded like a muffled reference to his old adversary, the peace movement."

Other officials and former officials referred to antiwar sentiment as a key factor inhibiting Washington in its conduct of the war. Dean Rusk, secretary of state under Kennedy and Johnson, told the *New York Times* that "the American people around 1968 decided that if we couldn't tell them when the war would end, we might as well chuck it. Part of this decision was to take the consequences, and that's what we are going to have to do now."

Pentagon chief James Schlesinger sent a message to U.S. soldiers April 29 telling them that their sacrifices in Vietnam had not "gone for naught" and that "our involvement was not purposeless."

Many soldiers had a different reaction,

the *New York Times* reported May 1. "Whoopie!" shouted a sergeant at Fort Bliss, Texas. "I'm glad it's over with. We had no business over there in the first place." A major at Fort Hood, Texas, who had served in Vietnam, said, "we underestimated our enemy to almost criminal degree, especially his perseverance."

Washington's satellite powers took due note of the heavy setback suffered by the American colossus. "It is world Communism's biggest victory, the free world's biggest defeat," said the London *Daily Telegraph*.

Washington's ambassador to Whitehall, Elliot Richardson, said that officials of the Wilson government had gone out of their way to tell him that the defeat in Vietnam should "not affect American commitments in Europe." Similar views were expressed in other West European capitals.

The European members of NATO are hoping that the U.S. disengagement from Vietnam will induce Kissinger to drop his demands that they shoulder an increasing share of the costs of maintaining the Atlantic military alliance.

French officials recalled their own defeat in Indochina twenty-one years ago. State Secretary for Defense Gen. Marcel Bigeard, a paratroops commander at Dien Bien Phu, issued a statement April 30: "This defeat was unavoidable. . . . You cannot do anything against a unanimous people. Communist or not, the idea of patriotism is an incentive to which nobody has found the equal."

With investments in South Vietnam valued as high as \$300 million, France hopes to again become the "main Western influence" in its former colony, Bernard Kaplan reported from Paris in the May 1 *Washington Post*. But Paris is moving cautiously. It was the only imperialist government not to close its embassy in Saigon. But, unlike Sweden and other West European countries, France has not rushed to recognize the Provisional Revolutionary Government. The Giscard d'Estaing government is said to have been embarrassed by the failure of its efforts to negotiate a last-minute deal with the PRG on behalf of Washington.

The Japanese imperialists, too, saw in Washington's defeat some new opportunities for increasing their own influence in Asia. "Trading companies in Tokyo were already advocating diplomatic recognition



for the new government in hopes that this would clear the way for a settlement of South Vietnamese debts to Japan," Joseph Lelyveld reported from Hong Kong in the May 2 *New York Times*. "In business circles generally, hope was expressed that Japanese industry could play a role in the economic reconstruction of South Vietnam."

A Foreign Ministry official in Tokyo said May 1 that Japan "must rectify her position of having relied excessively on the United States." But he indicated that Tokyo had no intention of renouncing its "security treaty" with Washington.

The U.S. defeat in Vietnam and Cambodia has already had a powerful impact throughout Asia. Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi saw the victory of the liberation forces as a demonstration of the force of nationalism, which, she said, the United States had underestimated. She urged the Commonwealth conference, meeting in Kingston, Jamaica, to send a message of greetings to the new government in Saigon.

Other Asian political leaders at the Commonwealth conference seemed uneasy at the PRG victory. Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak of Malaysia said the insurgents' triumph might "give some encouragement to the terrorists lurking in our jungles."

Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore expressed concern over what would become of the billions of dollars of U.S. weapons in Vietnam. They could cause "incalculable mischief," he said.

Some of the most dramatic reactions to the PRG forces' victory have been registered by Southeast Asian governments that were most closely identified with Washington's war effort. An example is Thailand, which for years served as a base for U.S. bombers in their murderous missions over Vietnam. "We've kept the United States forces on our soil for too long," said Seni Pramoj, the brother of Premier Kukrit Pramoj. "We sent our troops to fight in Vietnam. I'm sure that the Vietcong did not like our actions."

Bangkok is now negotiating the withdrawal of the 25,000 U.S. troops stationed in Thailand. The Thai government, which has already recognized the new Cambodian government, has said it will recognize any new regime in Saigon.

When fleeing South Vietnamese air force pilots flew their planes to Thailand April 29, Bangkok officials were quick to announce their intention to return the 120 planes to "the new South Vietnamese government." However, Washington claimed title to the planes, and said it would remove them from Thailand.

President Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines is another U.S. stooge now striving to present an image of "independence" from

Washington. Soon after the beginning of the rout of Thieu's forces, Marcos announced a "reassessment" of security ties and military-base agreements with the United States. He has called for a summit meeting of the leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to discuss relations with the new Communist governments in Indochina.

"On the immediate practical level," *Washington Post* correspondent Don Oberdorfer reported from Manila May 3, "the Philippines is doing all it can—short of alienating the United States—to avoid giving offense to the Vietnamese Communists in connection with the flow of refugees" through the U.S. bases there.

In addition to manufacturing a nationalist image, the Marcos regime apparently hopes to get more from Washington in the way of rent for the Subic Naval Base and Clark Air Base, which are among the most important U.S. military installations in Southeast Asia.

The Vietnamese victory has also focused attention on Laos, the only remaining non-Communist country in the former French Indochina. *Washington Post* correspondent Lewis M. Simons reported from Vientiane April 30 that leaders of the right-wing "Vientiane side" in the tripartite coalition government "are despondent and the morale of their military forces has never been lower.

"Defense Minister Sisouk Na Champassak, the nominal rightist leader, when asked how he felt about the Communist victories in Cambodia and South Vietnam summed it up in one word: 'bad.'"

Sisouk said he estimated that if the Pathet Lao were to launch an offensive with North Vietnamese support they "could take over in two or three weeks."

However, Simons reported, Peking would probably stand in the way of such moves. "There is a growing belief in Vientiane that the Chinese, like the Soviet Union and the United States, are interested in keeping Laos neutral and free of North Vietnamese domination."

Although North Vietnamese diplomats in Peking were quick to celebrate Saigon's surrender April 30, it was not until seven hours after the event that Hsinhua, the official Chinese news agency, reported it, and then only in a two-paragraph item.

"Privately Chinese officials did not appear to be gloating over the American defeat," the *New York Times* reported May 2. "A dispatch from Peking to the Times of London reported that China still believed the United States could play a positive role in Asia and had no objection to close relations between the United States and Japan."

Hsinhua highlighted a remark by Kissinger that Washington "must be very careful in the commitments we make," but

"should scrupulously honor those commitments." The bureaucrats were apparently thinking of Nixon's promises to extend full diplomatic recognition to Peking and to withdraw U.S. forces from Taiwan, which he offered in return for their collaboration in pressuring the Vietnamese liberation forces to accept unfavorable terms in the Paris accords.

In an April 30 dispatch from Peking, John Burns of the *Toronto Globe and Mail* said Chinese officials are "stressing in almost every public pronouncement on Cambodia and Laos the importance of their remaining independent and nonaligned."

Peking apparently is not pressuring its cothinkers in Korea to encourage efforts to overthrow the reactionary regime in the South, which is maintained with the support of 40,000 U.S. occupation troops. A joint communiqué issued April 28 at the conclusion of North Korean President Kim Il Sung's visit to Peking, while calling for a united Korea, emphasized that the reunification should be "peaceful." (But South Korean dictator Park Chung Hee invoked the fall of the Thieu regime as justification for continuing Seoul's repressive policies.)

Moscow responded to the news of Saigon's surrender with the same "restraint" that characterized its approach to the liberation forces' advances throughout the preceding weeks.

The first official statement, issued more than a day after the fall of Saigon, did not mention Washington's role in Vietnam. A commentary by Tass, the official news agency, said that the PRG victory meant that "a most dangerous seat of international tensions and military conflicts has been liquidated."

At the May Day parade, James Clarity reported from Moscow in the May 2 *New York Times*, American astronauts were prominently shown in attendance at Red Square "and there was ample television comment about the cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union in space." □

### One Million Jobless in Japan

Japan's unemployment rate in February stood at 2.1 percent, the highest since March 1967. The number of Japanese workers officially listed as unemployed was 1.08 million, 90,000 more than in January and up 250,000 from January 1974.

### When You Move...

Don't count on the post office forwarding your Intercontinental Press! It's against their rules.

Send us your new address. And in plenty of time, please.

### Saigon Cheers As Liberation Forces March In

By Peter Green

Three and a half hours after the last American marines were lifted from the roof of the U.S. embassy in Saigon by helicopter April 30, the liberation forces marched into the city in triumph.

They were greeted by cheers and applause from the populace. Western correspondents in Saigon reported an overwhelming feeling of relief there that the long struggle was over. The first of the liberation forces to enter the center of Saigon was a jeepload of barefoot teen-agers. Soon others were parading through the streets on tanks and captured American jeeps, cheering and waving flags. Laughing soldiers riding the tanks shouted "Hello, comrades" to bystanders and reporters.

As an unarmed member of Thieu's forces struggled to open the gates of the presidential palace, one tank, disregarding his efforts, simply smashed through one of the supporting pillars. At 12:15 p.m. the flag of the National Liberation Front was raised over the palace.

The Provisional Revolutionary Government announced that Saigon would be renamed Ho Chi Minh City in honor of the "father of the Vietnamese nation." This decree was later modified. "Ho Chi Minh" will be a "popular" name; the official name will remain Saigon.

"Within hours," the May 1 *Washington Post* reported, "the streets of the city took on a festive air, and the looting and robberies that had been going on for the previous day or two came to a halt."

Saigon itself was liberated with hardly any fighting. Many areas were littered with shoes and uniforms discarded by the puppet troops. Tanks driven along Tu Do Street in a victory celebration ground abandoned uniforms into the asphalt.

According to a Reuters report in the May 1 *Christian Science Monitor*, "A Communist colonel told one correspondent that foreign newsmen 'would be the most protected people here because you are from abroad.'

"Nevertheless, many journalists walked about town festooned like prize chickens with their national colors draped around their arms, small flags pinned to their lapels, and large pieces of paper stuck to their chests.

"A Reuter correspondent read 'Bao Chi Phap' (French newsmen) and elicited friendly waves from the young guerrillas."

A Vietnamese who had been supplying

photographs to the Associated Press for three years entered the agency's office with a Communist friend and two North Vietnamese soldiers and said, "I guarantee the safety of everybody here."

"I have been a revolutionary for 10 years," he said. "My job in the Vietcong was liaison with the international press." The AP bureau chief served his visitors Coca-Cola and cake.

The last president of the puppet regime, General Duong Van (Big) Minh, announced total surrender a few hours after the U.S. marines and officials had left. According to Hanoi radio, when the liberation forces entered the presidential palace they found General Minh and others seated in two rows of chairs.

"The revolution has come," General Minh is quoted as having said. "You have come. We have been waiting for you this morning to hand over power."

The broadcast said that an officer of the liberation army replied:

"The revolution has seized complete power. The former Administration has been overthrown. No one can hand over what they have lost."

General Minh was detained by the PRG forces and released five days later.

#### Including the Kitchen Sinks

Immediately after the last U.S. marines were airlifted from the embassy, thousands of Vietnamese looted and sacked the building. Tear-gas grenades lobbed down the elevator shaft by the departing marines did not deter them.

"The six-story U.S. Embassy in Saigon withstood a determined Viet Cong commando attack in 1968, and five Americans died in its defense," reported Associated Press correspondent Peter Arnett.

"Today, without its armed guards, the embassy was no match for thousands of Saigonese getting their last American handout.

"They took everything, including the kitchen sinks and a machine to shred secret documents.

"The bronze plaque with names of the five American servicemen who died in the embassy in 1968 was torn from the lobby wall. It lay amid piles of documents and furniture on the back lawn. We carried it back to the Associated Press office.

"'It is our embassy now,' said a laughing young Vietnamese soldier as he pranced

gleefully along the littered hallway of the administrative building."

The embassy was set ablaze. Most other buildings deserted by the Americans were also ransacked. The rest of Saigon was barely scratched in the take-over.

Washington's final evacuation of its embassy officials, military advisers, and other American citizens and their dependents was delayed so long that it became a very risky operation. The threat was not from the advancing liberation forces, who halted just outside the city and held their fire during the evacuation. According to Sarah Webb Barrell in the May 1 *New York Daily News*, "The consensus was that angry and disillusioned South Vietnamese soldiers were more dangerous than Communist shells."

The American consul general in the Mekong Delta escaped by boat down the Mekong River, along with a contingent of U.S. marines, sixteen other Americans, and 100 Vietnamese. Adrift in the South China Sea, they were attacked by South Vietnamese helicopters, and had to call in U.S. planes to drive them off, a report in the April 30 *Washington Post* said.

Washington reported that about 130,000 refugees had fled the country. Some puppet troops organized their own evacuation. About 125 air force planes carrying officers and their families landed in Thailand. Dozens of helicopters fled in search of U.S. ships. There was not enough room for them all to land on the decks. Some were ditched in the sea; others landed on helipads and were then thrown into the sea to make way for more. Armed American marines disarmed the Vietnamese soldiers, and the U.S.-manufactured weapons were tossed over the side. "It's all over for you; you won't need these anymore," said one marine.

American television commentators noted that each ditched helicopter cost nearly \$1 million. It was small potatoes, however, compared with more than \$5 billion in military equipment left behind and now in the hands of the PRG.

#### 'Only When the House Burns . . .'

"There is a Vietnamese saying," wrote *Washington Post* correspondent Terry Rambo in an April 29 dispatch from Clark Air Base in the Philippines, "that 'Only when the house burns, do you see the faces of the rats.' This phrase, often cited in Saigon in the last few weeks, is again being repeated by Vietnamese observing the most recent loads of refugees arriving here from Tan Son Nhut airport."

Those passing through included high-ranking former Saigon government officials, former ministers, and members of wealthy Saigon families.

"A number of wealthy businessmen,

*Intercontinental Press*



dressed in expensive foreign-made clothing, carry small but obviously heavy bags with them at all times," said Rambo. "Knowledgeable Vietnamese say these are filled with gold." A three-star general airlifted out with the Americans in the final evacuation carried a suitcase loaded with gold, the April 30 New York *Daily News* reported.

"Many of Saigon's more affluent and well-connected bar girls and prostitutes were somehow among the first persons evacuated," said *Wall Street Journal* reporter Norman Pearlstine April 30 after his own evacuation from Saigon to Guam.

Apart from himself and an American employee of Chase Manhattan Bank with nine Vietnamese women and children in his custody, said Pearlstine, "almost everyone else on the plane was related to a South Vietnamese air-force fighter pilot. . . .

"Sources in Saigon say the pilots had threatened to shoot down the evacuation planes or stop flying themselves if their families weren't evacuated."

Among the refugees was "one former cabinet official, known to Saigon businessmen as 'Mr. 10%' because he demanded that much of any deal he approved while in office. . . ."

Former dictator Nguyen Cao Ky also fled with the last of the Americans. A few days earlier he had told a Saigon rally, "If Hanoi refuses to negotiate . . . we will fight to the death. Our backs are against the wall now. . . . So let the cowards who are leaving with the Americans go and let those who love South Vietnam stay and fight."

#### PRG Announces Nationalizations

On the day Saigon was liberated, representatives of the PRG in Paris issued a statement hailing it as "a victory of historic significance." The statement said the new government would follow a foreign policy of "peace and nonalignment," and gave assurances that the lives and property of foreigners would be protected.

The same day the PRG radio broadcast a revised version of its ten-point policy for South Vietnam (see *Intercontinental Press*, April 14, p. 511, for the earlier text):

1. Existing agencies and organizations must carry out a policy of "revolutionary government." Abolition of the old system and its laws, dissolution of "all reactionary parties and other organizations serving imperialism and puppet regimes."

2. Sexual equality and freedom of thought and worship.

3. Prohibition of all divisive activity and a "call to unity" to "build the new life."

4. Guaranteed right to work and universal "obligation to support the revolution."

5. All property of the "puppet administration" will be controlled by the PRG.

6. "National duty" to care for orphans and the infirm.

7. Encouragement of rural areas to increase production.

8. Cultural bodies, hospitals, and schools run by foreigners should continue serving the people. Talents useful in building the country will be nurtured.

9. Welcome and kindness for soldiers who desert enemy ranks.

10. "Except for those who oppose the revolution—and they will be punished—foreign persons and property will be guaranteed safety."

In the earlier version point 6 read: "The property of industrialists and shopkeepers is protected."

Both the French and Japanese embassies reported that the city had returned to normal and the situation was very calm.

Decrees were broadcast May 1 forbidding the publication of all newspapers, books, and other printed material by private citizens, and banning prostitution and dance halls.

"Anyone acting like Americans or participating in such American-style activities as opening night clubs, brothels or other places of entertainment will be punished," the radio said.

Another broadcast announced the nationalization of factories, farms, and businesses, and on May 2 the headquarters of the Confederation of Labor was reportedly seized by 3,000 workers. The radio said a revolutionary trade-union organization was being formed. All members of the old confederation were ordered to report within twenty-four hours.

On May 3 the PRG announced that "Revolutionary People's Committees" were being formed throughout the country, with the aim of protecting government property. The radio announced that 5,000 people in the Saigon area had signed up for duty.

Saigon was now being administered by the "Committee of the Military Management of Saigon-Gia Dinh" said the radio. Heading the eleven-member committee was Gen. Tran Van Tra, former head of the PRG delegation to the military talks with the puppet regime.

The government also announced May 5 that the release of political prisoners held by the former regime was under way. Prisoners already freed and the families of prisoners were urged to join in plans for a welcoming ceremony for those released from the "tiger cages" of Con Son island.

No news has been received as yet of the approximately 10,000 French nationals remaining in South Vietnam. The new government's attitude toward French investments there—estimated in Paris financial circles to be as high as \$300 million—is likewise unknown.

Until recently, when most of the trees

were destroyed by bombing and the use of herbicides, rubber from the French-owned plantations made up the biggest export sector in the South Vietnamese economy. The Michelin tire company owned 200,000 acres of rubber trees. Only 10 percent are believed to be still standing today.

Associated Press correspondent Daniel De Luce filed dispatches from Hue and Danang on life in the liberated areas. He reported that "there seemed to be no overwhelming emotion except relief" among the residents of those two cities. Urban life quickly resumed its usual activities, he said. Most shops were open.

"My impression is that people are getting along quite well with the new regime," Thomas Hoskins, an American doctor who remained in Danang, told De Luce.

"A bloodbath in this region? Not in the least," Hoskins said. "I speak some Vietnamese, and I go to the market frequently, and I would have heard people who were afraid of liberation and would have spoken their fears."

Hoskins witnessed the liberation of Danang on March 29. The days before were "frightening," he said.

"The city general hospital was a sorry sight indeed. It had been extensively looted and vandalized in the last 48 hours. Medicine supplies had been broken open, strewn about, smashed, stolen. Catholic sisters were still on duty in three wards, but most of the hospital's patients had fled."

Hoskins was working in an emergency ward and went outside for a break. He noticed that people were back on the streets, and that the shooting had stopped.

"Then I saw a huge American-made tank. Schoolchildren were clinging all over it, waving Buddhist flags. Suddenly it dawned on me: The city is liberated.

"At the foot of a flagpole I saw Vietnamese throwing their weapons on the ground. The mound of weapons grew rapidly—carbines, rocket launchers. Then I saw 10 liberation cadres emerge from the shadows and lay arms on this pile. It was an awesome moment to see finally men laying down the tools of war. . . ."

A government functionary in Hue told De Luce he felt much the same emotion when he heard on April 30 that Saigon had been won.

"It is over. But what a cost," he said. "Thirty years of people being killed and our land destroyed. Now there is much to do."

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### Nine Political Prisoners Executed in Iran

By Ernest Harsch

Nine political prisoners have been executed by the shah's police. According to a communiqué published in Tehran newspapers, they were killed "while trying to escape." No date was given.

The account claimed that the nine had tried to stir up other prisoners in the penitentiary. While being transferred, the communiqué said, they attacked two of their guards and attempted to escape. Armed police, who had been posted in two escort vehicles, opened fire, executing all nine.

According to the April 22 issue of the Paris daily *Le Monde*, the prisoners were Abbas Sorky, Bijan Jazani, Ahmad Jalil Affhar, Aziz Sarmadi, Mashaof Kalantari, Mohammad Choopan-Zadeh, Hassan Zia-Zarifi, Mostafa Javan Khoshdel, and Kassem Zol-Anvar. Most of them were part of a group of fourteen political prisoners who were sentenced to hard labor after a military trial in 1969. Their case received international publicity at the time.

Originally arrested in early 1968, the dissidents involved in that case were held incommunicado for more than six months. The first acknowledgment by the regime that they were in jail was a November 21, 1968, announcement by the military prosecutor, General Farseou. He said that "the defendants, numbering fourteen . . . are accused of Communist activities and plotting against public order and the security of the state."

In the course of the trial, which began December 30, 1968, ten of the political prisoners testified that they had been subjected to "physical and mental torture" during their imprisonment. A number of the defendants had signed "confessions" after being tortured by agents of SAVAK, the Iranian secret police.

Some of the defendants retracted their "confessions" before the trial. A November 3, 1968, statement by the Iranian Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, affiliated to the World Confederation of Iranian Students, pointed out that the political prisoners were originally to be tried under Clause 63 of the Military Judiciary Codes. This section covers "subversive activities" and carries a penalty of three to ten years imprisonment.

"But after they denied any responsibility for the forced confessions, and announced their intention of bringing a law suit against their torturers," the statement said,



SHAH: Chief executioner.

"the Army Interrogator suddenly switched the clause to No. 317 for eight of them. This is for armed uprising and carries the death sentence, and is probably meant to teach a lesson to other political prisoners who might likewise denounce their forced confessions."

At the trial, the defendants were accused of seeking to organize a guerrilla base in the country, after having given up the idea of trying to assassinate the shah. The prisoners pleaded not guilty to these charges on January 3, 1969.

The three principal defendants in the case, Bijan Jazani, Abbas Sorky, and Hassan Zia-Zarifi—all of whom were executed during the recent "escape attempt"—told the court on January 12, 1969, "Our only aim was to reestablish a real democracy in Iran under which all individual liberties would be respected." They denied being partisans of "Communist ideology." Jazani declared, "To condemn people for their speeches is not worthy of the Iranian people or of the present stage of human progress."

The denunciation of torture by the defendants, as well as the international publicity given to the case, forced the prosecutor to reply to the charges. He presented a medical report signed by four court doctors, in which he claimed there was no evidence of torture. However, the January 9, 1969, *Le Monde* reported that the medical affidavit did say that two "of the accused complained

of ear trouble, one of pain in his eyes, several of either rheumatism or pain in their kidneys or heart. And, lastly, two complained of pain in the genitals, one of them with passing of blood."

Although eight of the defendants faced the death penalty, a worldwide defense campaign organized by the Iranian Students Association, with the support of Bertrand Russell and Jean-Paul Sartre, among others, prevented the dictatorship from summarily executing them.

The fourteen political prisoners were convicted of "plotting against state security." On January 15, 1969, they were sentenced. Jazani, who was called the leader of the group, was sentenced to fifteen years at hard labor. Seven of the defendants received ten-year sentences at hard labor, and the remaining six drew prison terms ranging from three to eight years. One of the prisoners was later reprieved after declaring his support to the shah. The appeals of the thirteen others were turned down.

Mme. Henri Garidou, a Paris lawyer affiliated with the International Human Rights Federation, was the only foreign observer permitted to attend the appeal proceedings in Tehran February 28, 1969. She noted at a news conference in Paris afterward that the defendants had been denied a jury trial, although they were entitled to one under Article 79 of the Iranian constitution. They were not allowed to choose their own lawyers, but instead had to pick three retired officers as their "representatives." Moreover, no witnesses were called to support the regime's charges. The case rested entirely on SAVAK reports.

When news of the murder of the nine political prisoners became known, the Confederation of Iranian Students (National Union) issued an appeal, part of which was published in the April 22 *Le Monde*.

"These revolutionaries," the appeal said, "were murdered in cold blood by the dictatorship; the incredible story of a collective escape is designed to cover up the crime. About thirty other militants known to be in prison are also threatened by this policy of liquidation. We call the attention of all democrats of the world to the grave danger that threatens these militants, and we ask them to use all possible means to save their lives." □

#### When You Move...

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## Lisbon Celebrates on Eve of the Election

By Gerry Foley

LISBON, April 25—The electoral campaign here culminated in a dramatic competition in the streets between the Communist and Socialist parties, with each trying to out-mobilize the other in giant rallies and demonstrations. At least here in the country's main center, this rivalry has overshadowed everything else.

The walls are dominated by CP and SP posters. The great majority of the political emblems the people in the streets wear are those of these two parties. CP and SP caravans have been roaming the streets, with horns blowing and red flags flying from their windows.

The street vendors specialize in trinkets bearing the hammer and sickle of the CP and the clenched, raised fist of the SP.

As far as outward signs go, the bourgeois forces seem almost out of the contest. Probably their support at this stage is mostly passive—waiting to be expressed at the ballot box. In any case, they have not yet shown the capacity or the desire to mobilize large numbers of people. At the same time, both the conservative and liberal-bourgeois parties have apparently taken advantage of the campaign to accelerate the formation of goon squads.

The rightist Centro Democrático Social (CDS—Social Democratic Center) had distinguished itself for some time by such activity. On April 17, the liberal Partido Popular Democrático (PPD—Democratic People's party) staged a commando raid against students in the Padre António Vieira High School here, a center of left-wing activity.

### The SP Rally April 20

In the last week of the campaign, the SP effort picked up momentum and appeared to catch up somewhat with the CP activity. The SP's last spurt of energy culminated Sunday, April 20, in a march through the city ending in a rally in the Estádio Primeiro de Maio. This is the huge soccer stadium on the outskirts of the city that was the focus of the vast demonstration held a year ago to celebrate the fall of the Salazarist regime. The organizers of the SP demonstration estimated the number of participants at more than 100,000. The bourgeois papers in Lisbon, which no longer try to give definite estimates of the size of crowds at political affairs, said only that "tens of thousands of persons were present."

### Results in Portuguese Election

The following are the official results of the April 25 election for the Constituent Assembly, as reported in the April 30 *Le Monde*. More than 5.6 million, 91.7 percent, of about 6 million registered voters cast a ballot. The figure in parentheses after the name of each party indicates the number of districts contested, out of a maximum of twenty-two.

Party	Votes	%	Deputies Elected
PS—Socialist party (22)	2,145,392	37.87	115
PPD—Democratic People's party (22)	1,494,575	26.38	80
PCP—Portuguese Communist party (22)	709,639	12.53	30
CDS—Social Democratic Center (21)	433,153	7.65	16
MDP—Portuguese Democratic Movement (22)	233,362	4.12	5
FSP—Socialist People's Front (15)	66,161	1.17	--
MES—Movement of the Socialist Left (15)	57,682	1.02	--
UDP—Democratic People's Union (10)	44,546	0.79	1
FEC—Electoral Front of Communists (12)	32,508	0.57	--
PPM—People's Monarchist party (14)	31,809	0.56	--
PUP—People's Unity party (7)	12,984	0.23	--
LCI—Internationalist Communist League (4)	10,732	0.19	--

The slogans started up by party activists left no doubt that the SP, like the CP, was intent on making a show of strength: "Assim, se conhece a força do PS" (So, you see the power of the SP), "Aqui vai só um, o PS e mais ninguém" (We're all SP here, there's nobody else).

Like the CP demonstration at the Palácio de São Bento a few days before, the SP rally was billed as a demonstration of gratitude to the Movimento das Forças Armadas (MFA—Armed Forces Movement) for the latest nationalizations.

In his speech closing the rally, the party's general secretary, Mário Soares, said: "Today comrades, we dedicate this demonstration to our comrades in the MFA, to tell them that we are with them in freedom, with the revolution, with the progress of our country, with the socialist reforms—but in tranquillity, in order, in peace, and above all in liberty."

The theme of "order" has been an undertone in the SP campaign. In fact, at times SP leaders have said that the greatest danger to the country is not dictatorship but "anarchy." However, "liberty" has apparently been the party's biggest drawing card. The SP cars touring the city for the last few days have been broadcasting the slogan "Vota PS, vota liberdade."

The friction between the MFA and the SP has not been discussed as much or as openly in the Portuguese papers as it has in

the international press. But there has been an undercurrent of rumors and oblique references to this. It was widely believed on the left, and apparently by some members of the party itself, that the official report on the March 11 attempted coup would implicate some SP members. The report, which was released two days before the elections, did not do so, however. Instead, it reestablished the SP as a "party of the revolution" by saying that the plotters had intended to liquidate the two main SP leaders, Mário Soares and Salgado Zenha.

In its report on the April 20 rally, the new Lisbon daily *Jornal Novo*, which is close to the SP, stressed the rapprochement between the party and the MFA. "This constant preoccupation with reasserting the alliance with the MFA has been one of the keynotes of the campaign, although this has been attenuated by a concern for making clear the independence of the party, as shown by these words of the general secretary at the rally. 'Many persons have tried to stir up intrigues between the SP and the MFA. This is futile. To demonstrate our alliance with the MFA, we Socialists do not have to go every day to lick the boots of our soldiers.'"

### The CP Outdoes the SP

In any case, the SP could hardly outdo the CP in adulation of the MFA. The CP



final rally on April 23 was completely dedicated to showing (1) the strength of the CP; (2) the CP's dedication to the MFA. The most popular chant was "O povo 'stá com o MFA!" (The people are with the MFA!). I could hear this refrain being beeped out by thousands of car horns as the bus I was on came near the Estádio Primeiro de Maio.

The CP had brought out an immense crowd. It was impossible to estimate the numbers of such a multitude with any hope of accuracy, especially after dark. But the soccer stadium was entirely filled, and the crowd stretched out into the street. People kept streaming in until about 10:30, an hour after the rally was scheduled to begin.

Another thing that made it difficult to estimate the number was that the crowd was so fluid. It was not a disciplined demonstration, but a kind of carnival. There was a constant coming and going. After about 10:30, there were more people leaving than coming. And the exodus started at 11:00, when the party leader Alvaro Cunhal had barely started his speech. Inside the fence, but outside the stadium proper, there was plenty of room and people did not seem to be paying much attention to what was going on at the speakers stand. Nonetheless, there must have been at least 80,000 persons there at the height.

As an electoral rally, the affair was well organized. There were a large number of party activists who succeeded in sticking CP election labels on nearly everyone. If you did not have one, other activists kept coming up and trying to get you to wear one. However, the activists did not try to prevent other political groups from selling their papers. One of the groups that claims allegiance to Trotskyism, the Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers party), sent a few activists who sold several hundred papers. The CP press was also sold, but it did not seem to be exactly snapped up by the multitude.

The most enthusiastic participants seemed to be those who were marching under the banners of various fronts of work, like a group of workers from the Sorefame plant, a huge complex that builds deep-sea oil-drilling rigs. The CP cells in various papers marched under their own banners. I saw one group from the CP cell in *Diário Popular*, a tabloid-like Lisbon paper.

Some groups marched into the stadium behind brass bands. One person marched around beating a drum.

After the chants hailing the MFA, the most popular one was just "PCP" (Partido Comunista Português, Portuguese CP), followed by "Assim, se vê a força do PC" (This shows the strength of the CP).

The rally did show that the CP has become a real mass party. Many buses brought people from outside Lisbon, but

apparently only from other places in the district like Setúbal. The crowd seemed to be a good cross section of the population. If a fourth or a fifth of the demonstration last May 1 had been divided off at random, it would probably have produced such a group. It was impressive to see such a large and representative crowd of people wearing hammer-and-sickle emblems and standing around under hundreds of red flags. Many of the adults and children also had small red flags that they were waving.

The sight must have certainly had its effect on the Portuguese bourgeoisie and the conservative-minded. To these, some of the crowd's slogans may have sounded challenging and threatening: "Crush reaction!" "Fascista, escuta, o povo está em luta" (Listen Fascists, the people are fighting), and "People's Vigilance." The SP, on the other hand, has stressed its peaceful nature.

### No Action Slogans

As I was leaving the stadium later, I noticed some persons in the neighborhood who seemed upset at the sight of so many Communists. The Portuguese bourgeoisie cannot help but be nervous as it watches what it long viewed as a shadowy threat transformed into great masses of people. On the other hand, the more astute of the bourgeois strategists must realize how soft the CP is, how easily it could be smashed at the decisive moment.

The CP is in a deadly contradiction. It poses as a great proletarian army, while in reality using semimobilized, loose aggregations of people as a means of pressure within the framework of the capitalist system. The rally in the Estádio Primeiro de Maio did not project a single slogan or directive for struggle.

Instead, one speaker after another got up to hail the Portuguese people, the workers, the women, the youth, the progressive intellectuals and artists, etc. The speaker just before Cunhal did raise the idea that the workers should participate in the administration of the nationalized enterprises, but only in the vaguest way.

The CP press has said in fact that the workers in the recently nationalized industries must work harder because most of these were operating in the red (in the capitalist sense) and their deficits had been made up by state subsidies, which the government can now ill afford to pay.

As for Cunhal himself, he projected the idea that under the patriotic military, assisted by the CP, Portugal is advancing toward a free and equal society and that the main danger on the path ahead is from the ultraleft.

The ones most impressed by the CP's show of strength were apparently the members themselves. "E imponente, pá!" (Wow, it's impressive!), one CPer said as he

got off the bus in front of me and saw the lines of people streaming into the stadium. Inside, the platform kept announcing, apparently not conscious of any irony: "The Avenida dos Estados Unidos [USA Avenue] is still full of comrades on their way here."

### Spontaneous Celebrations

The constant adulation of the MFA in such mass rallies clearly had its effect on the spontaneous celebrations that swept Lisbon after midnight April 24. The crowds that started to gather in the central square chanted the CP's slogans. The example was carried throughout the city. Everywhere, crowds were chanting "O povo está com o MFA," "MFA," "Abaixo a reacção!"

They gathered in the squares and in the parks. Lines of cars honked their horns in unison, while people leaned out of the windows giving the clenched-fist salute or the victory sign. Youths rode in the open trunks of cars, shouting and waving. In the Belém park area, near the national palace, soldiers and civilians danced together in rings, chanting the praises of the MFA. The crowds were celebrating the fall of the Salazarist dictatorship and the atmosphere of freedom and hope that exists in Portugal today.

The spontaneous outbursts were reminiscent of May 1, 1974. They continued almost all night throughout the city. The outburst of popular feeling was genuine and deep, but it was not inevitable that this would focus on adulation of the MFA. That was the work of the opportunist workers parties, above all the CP.

### Maoists Denounce 'Electoral Farce'

In this context, the most sectarian of the Maoist groups, the Movimento Reorganizativo do Partido do Proletariado (MRPP—Movement to Reorganize the Proletarian Party), called a demonstration for April 18 to denounce the "electoral farce" and the "military dictatorship." It did so, moreover, only two days after the report on the March 11 attempted coup had accused the MRPP of provocations during the putsch.

It was a small crowd of Maoists that gathered in Rossio Square, several hundred perhaps. They were almost submerged by people attracted by the announcement. The rally did not look like the usual MRPP shows, with disciplined activists chanting slogans from under thousands of red flags with yellow stars.

I was standing in the midst of the Maoists when I heard other chants from a distance. "Revisos," someone said. Those who were not MRPP members began to move quickly out of the way. "Comrades must stay in their lines," an obviously nervous young woman activist said.

The organizers were apparently seeking the sharpest possible political confronta-



tion. They started up chants of "No support for the provisional government," "Down with the military dictatorship," "Neither fascism, nor social fascism, a people's government."

The demonstration grew in size rapidly, however, as the crowd started to march around Rossio. It was at least a couple of thousand by the time the last contingents entered the Rua de Ouro. At the Palácio de São Bento, the destination of the march, there may have been 5,000. They formed on the steps up to the palácio and filled at least half the square below.

As I came into the square from a street on the level below, a rush began. The waiters in the restaurant at the base of the steps leading up to the level above barred their doors. A crowd pushed me into the lobby of an apartment building. But nothing happened.

I went back into the street. One of the restaurant waiters tried to push me indoors. "It's dangerous. Heads are going to be broken. Chop, chop." He motioned with his hands. But the tension seemed to relax. As I made my way through the crowd of onlookers, I could see that the military police and Copcon (Comando Operacional do Continente—Continental Operational Command, Portugal's security forces) had set up a cordon on the street leading down into the hollow at the base of the palácio. At the top of the hill a crowd had gathered and was shouting, "O povo está com o MFA."

But the line was not tight. I made my way through it into the other group, which was chanting CP slogans. "Down with the fascists!" they screamed at the Maoists. "Death to the CIA," "Go to work." Again and again they sang "Grândola, Vila Morena," the hymn of the April 1974 coup. They also sang the Portuguese national anthem.

There was a certain irony in the confrontation. Two sets of Stalinists were trying to wave the Portuguese flag at each other. The Maoists shouted: "The heroic Portuguese people will resist both imperialism and social imperialism and raise high the red flag of national independence."

The counterdemonstration was rather cohesive and had a definite political character. But it did not seem to be organized or encouraged explicitly by any political force. It never reached very large proportions, remaining smaller than the Maoist rally. It seemed to be composed of passersby and people from the poor neighborhood at the foot of the palácio. This is an area with a high percentage of Africans, and there were many Blacks among the counterdemonstrators. But the fact that such a crowd could gather so quickly seemed to indicate the political momentum that is building up.

One middle-aged man leaned out of a window in a building overlooking the square to shout "MRPP." The counterdem-

onstrators began screaming that he was a fascist and a reactionary. In a window higher up, a woman holding a baby began



Manifesto

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waving her fist and shouting emphatically: "O povo está com o MFA."

The Maoists were caught in a trap if the military wanted an incident. It would be hard to get a large group out of the pocket at the bottom of the hill very quickly. They made a compact target for stones.

## Office Seriously Damaged

### GRS Protests Attack on Its Paris Headquarters

[The following communiqué, issued by the Groupe Révolution Socialiste (GRS—Socialist Revolution Group) and the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR—Revolutionary Communist League), appeared in the April 19 issue of *Rouge*, the French Trotskyist weekly. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

At about 8:45 this morning, April 16, the offices of the Société Internationale d'Édition [International Publishing Company] at 95 Faubourg St-Martin were attacked. The offices were being used by the émigré section of the Groupe Révolution Socialiste, the Antilles section of the Fourth International, to edit its newspaper *Libération-Antilles-Guyane*. The office was seriously damaged, and some material was stolen.

Tenants of the building noticed a group of

However, things had not yet come to that. The attitude of the military police and Copcon was to keep a low profile. Apparently a decision had been made to avoid any incidents. And there was no element in the crowd that seemed to want to start a charge.

The political ferment that has been so good-natured in general since April 1974 may begin quickly to take violent forms. Many of the currents in motion point to sharper confrontations. But even with the most massive campaign of demagoguery, the government and its opportunistic supporters will have a difficult time in recreating an atmosphere of political intolerance. The ferment of free thought has gone too deep.

After the demonstration, I stopped for a cup of coffee. One youth was inveighing against the MRPP. "They don't want to work, that's why they're against the MFA."

A companion said: "They're just scapegoats. If they're silenced, it'll lead to the end of political life. It'll be like it was before. There's some truth in what they say about a military dictatorship. No matter who wins the elections, General Costa Gomes is going to stay as president. How many ordinary soldiers do you think there are on the Conselho da Revolução [Council of the Revolution]? Only two."

An older woman, apparently the mother of the anti-MRPP youth, said: "I'm fifty-six years old, and I'm just beginning to learn about life. Before I never knew anything, never understood anything." She kept saying that, and she apparently made her point. □

persons fleeing a few seconds before fire broke out.

No group has so far claimed responsibility for the attack, but it follows fascist attacks against the offices of *Révolution!* and the Comité de Défense des Appelés [Committee for the Defense of Draftees], attacks against immigrant workers, and just the night before this latest attack, against anti-imperialist militants returning from the demonstration in support of the Indochinese liberation fighters. Undoubtedly it was the work of one of the tiny extreme right-wing groups.

The Groupe Révolution Socialiste and the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, the French section of the Fourth International, call on all the workers organizations to protest these fascist attacks, and the strange indifference toward them on the part of the authorities. □

## Ferment in Portugal Upsets West European CP Leaders

By Dick Fidler

The situation in Portugal has naturally aroused widespread interest in the left throughout Western Europe. This is especially true in Italy, France, and Spain, where the Communist parties have hopes of being called on in the near future to serve in bourgeois coalition governments. The entry of the Portuguese CP into the government a year ago was hailed by these parties as a model of what should be done in their own countries.

Lately, however, the CP leaders have become more reserved, even defensive, in their public statements on Portugal, and in the case of the Italian CP at least, openly critical of their Portuguese cothinkers.

This unease has intensified with the rapid evolution of the situation in Portugal since March 11, when Spínola attempted his coup.

One incident that attracted much attention was the banning<sup>1</sup> of the right-wing Christian Democratic party, on the grounds of its complicity in the putsch. The ban was supported by the Portuguese CP and sharply criticized by the Socialist party.

In other West European countries, the banning of the Christian Democrats was seized on by some commentators as "proof" that the Communists had no intention of collaborating with bourgeois forces, despite their promises to the contrary.

This propaganda barrage has no doubt embarrassed the Spanish Communist party, which in July 1974 announced the formation of a "Democratic Junta" with some Social Democrats, monarchists, and even former officials of the Franco regime.

The junta recommends the "restoration of a democratic regime in Spain." Its program, which includes such demands as "political neutrality and purely professional operation of the armed forces," and Spain's "integration within the European community," is strictly limited to the framework of bourgeois property relations.

### Italy: The CP Shows Its 'Independence'

Although it had not been intended that way, the revolutionary upsurge in Portugal was a major issue at the congress of the

1. The ban, formally a "suspension" from political activity until after the April 25 election for the Constituent Assembly, was decreed March 18 by the military's High Council of the Revolution. Also included in the edict were two Maoist parties.



BERLINGUER: Would prefer that Italy "leave the capitalist system gradually."

Italian Communist party (PCI) which opened March 18. As its answer to the problems of Italian capitalism, the PCI is campaigning for a "historic compromise," a class-collaborationist coalition between the PCI and the parties of the existing governmental alliance, in the first place the Christian Democratic party.

The Christian Democrats, weakened and divided as a result of recent setbacks, including the defeat in last year's divorce referendum, have so far shown little inclination to accept the PCI's offer.

PCI General Secretary Enrico Berlinguer spelled out the party's proposal in an opening speech to the congress. The historic compromise, he said, offered Italy "a new phase of democratic development" that "would introduce some elements of socialism into the structures of society." It would enable Italy to "leave the capitalist system gradually."

It was more than a proposal for government, he said, although that was an "essential element." It was a means to resolve the most serious and urgent problems facing the country.

There was no substantial opposition from delegates to this reformist proposal, which is now being presented as a "strategy and a method."

On the day the PCI congress opened, however, the Portuguese military rulers banned the Christian Democratic party. The Italian Christian Democrats saw an opportunity to embarrass the PCI. How could Berlinguer propose collaboration in the government, when in Portugal his cothinkers refused to tolerate even the existence of the Christian Democrats? their leaders indignantly asked.

In his introductory report to the PCI congress, Berlinguer took his distance from the Portuguese CP. Italy is not Portugal, he emphasized. That country is going through "a rather complicated political process, part of the difficult task of building and consolidating a truly democratic system."

This disavowal failed to placate the Christian Democrats. Their observers—it is traditional in Italy for the parties of the "constitutionalist arc" to send observers to each other's congresses—staged a walkout and did not return. It was their action, not Berlinguer's arguments for coalition, that captured the headlines.

In his closing speech to the congress March 23, Berlinguer protested the "inconsiderate and rude gesture" of these bourgeois politicians. Then, referring to the ban on the Portuguese Christian Democrats, he said:

"We Italian Communists do not agree with some decisions in which correct and necessary actions aimed at punishing persons directly involved in reactionary attempts at a coup were confused with other actions restricting the parties those persons belonged to. . . . We cannot refrain from recalling the principled positions we cherish and that our party cannot depart from, whether in its activities in Italy or in its judgment of events in other countries."

One of these principles, said the PCI's general secretary, is "the necessity to guarantee full exercise of political rights to all formations of the left, the center, and the right, to all citizens, whatever their opin-



ions, as long as they do not commit openly subversive acts against democratic institutions."

These comments were vigorously applauded by the 1,124 delegates.

"The leading group of the PCI," wrote Livio Maitan in the April 12 issue of *Bandiera Rossa*, the fortnightly of the Italian Trotskyists, "could not be unaware that an indecisive or vague attitude on Portugal would offer their opponents an easy polemical argument. In an attempt to turn the situation to their own advantage, they utilized the Portuguese case to provide a new and startling proof of their 'independence' in relation to other Communist parties and the Soviet Union, as well as their commitment to the concept of the democratic and gradual transition to socialism. . . . It was another step forward on the 'Italian road to socialism'. . . ."

#### France: Marchais Says It's a 'Special Situation' in Portugal

In Italy the CP, with its 1.6 million members, dominates the reformist left; in France this is not the case.

The Portuguese events have served to aggravate strains in France's Union of the Left. This electoral coalition, which includes the Communist party, the Socialist party, and the Left Radicals, is based on wheeling and dealing in the electoral arena on a program of class collaboration.

The Socialist party sees its alliance with the CP as a means of increasing its voting base in the working class, and thereby its credibility as a candidate for government.

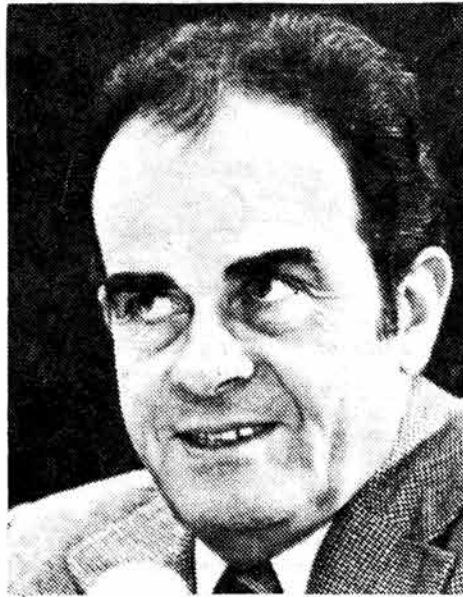
The Communist party needs its identification with the SP to give it an opening to the middle classes and to certain layers of the working class, and to show its readiness to cooperate with other forces in running capitalist society.

Both the CP and SP have actively sought the collaboration of the bourgeois Left Radicals as proof of their determination not to go beyond capitalist property relations.

Within this electoral framework, the parties compete for members and votes. And in recent months, as the SP showed signs of increasing its electoral standing at the expense of the CP, the competition has become considerably sharper. While the SP continues its efforts to build an "all-inclusive" Social Democratic party, opening its ranks to elements on both its left and its right, the CP leaders have been obliged to adopt a more militant stance in order not to lose their audience and support among their traditional trade-union base.

The CP's increased resort to independent initiatives in its own name in no way marks a departure from its class-collaborationist orientation, however. It is simply that in the game of electoral politics, the Stalinists' chips consist of working-class votes.

Even before March 11 the French CP was uttering warnings that the growing conflict between the Socialists and Communists in Portugal should not overflow into France. At a Paris news conference reported in the



MARCHAIS: Stresses Portuguese CP's alliance with Armed Forces Movement.

March 7 *Le Monde*, René Piquet, secretary of the CP's Central Committee, just returned from Portugal, protested that "some leaders of the Socialist International, as they call it, have made unpleasant remarks about the left in France and are now saying the same kind of thing about Portugal. This does not facilitate the union of the Communist and Socialist parties in either country."

At a news conference in La Trinité March 18, the day the Portuguese Christian Democrats were banned, French CP leader Georges Marchais defended the Portuguese CP as "the only ones who led the struggle against fascism for fifty years." The Portuguese Socialist party, he pointedly recalled, was a latecomer on the scene, having been reconstituted only recently.

"The Portuguese Communists do not envisage taking power by themselves," Marchais continued. "No, but they are assuming their responsibilities in alliance with the Armed Forces Movement, and they have continually proposed to the Socialists that they form an entente in the struggle for economic and political democracy. . . ."

"Our Portuguese friends are right, and I don't see why their actions should embarrass the French left."

François Mitterrand, first secretary of the Socialist party and the Union of the Left's presidential candidate in 1974, has been especially fearful that the current campaign by the bourgeoisie against the leftward trend in Portugal might carry over into attempts to red-bait the French SP. Besides,

he saw another opportunity to score some points against the Stalinists by appearing as a defender of democracy.

In a March 20 television interview, Mitterrand noted that the Portuguese SP had protested the ban on some political parties. The PSP, he said, "is a party of the revolution. All its leaders were imprisoned for a long time, and in any event were excluded from political life. . . . They are participating actively in this revolution. But they want this revolution to be democratic, heading toward democracy, a revolution for democracy. . . . I consider that the Portuguese Socialist party is the guarantor of democracy in Portugal and it would be a very serious matter if they were forced to leave the government."

In the SP's weekly *l'Unité*, Mitterrand went so far as to suggest that Portuguese CP leader Alvaro Cunhal opposed free speech, a multiparty system, and even "universal suffrage."

The CP leaders reacted defensively to these attacks. The March 28 issue of *l'Humanité*, the French CP's daily, suggested that Mitterrand should "take account of the special situation that exists in Portugal. . . ."

Political democracy is not necessarily a guarantee that a country can avoid oppression or torture, "especially during colonial wars," the newspaper said. Mitterrand was a minister in the governments that carried out the Indochinese and Algerian wars.

Referring to the Italian CP leader's implied criticism of the Portuguese CP's policy, Marchais said in an April 7 television interview, "I do not agree with Berlinguer. Each [Communist] party is completely free to determine its own policy. . . . That is what the Portuguese CP is doing, in abnormal conditions."

As for the banning of the Christian Democrats, "In Portugal, they have simply done what we say in the Common Program [of the Union of the Left]: 'Movements using violence and engaging in illegal acts will be banned in accordance with the 1936 legislation.'<sup>2</sup> Why all the protest?"

#### The Name of the Game is Détente

The difference in the respective stances of the Italian and French CPs is only superficial. Both parties agree with the general orientation of the Portuguese CP. The cornerstone of the latter's strategy is to adhere as closely as possible to the policies of the Armed Forces Movement and the

2. This is the legislation, adopted by the Popular Front government, that was used in 1973 to ban the Ligue Communiste, then the French section of the Fourth International. *L'Humanité's* report of this interview on April 8, attributed to Marchais the following words, which he did not in fact say: "They also banned leftist parties in Portugal. That was not justified."



military rulers, resisting all tendencies to go beyond the framework of bourgeois legality in the direction of dual power and the establishment of a workers state.

This has meant supporting the regime's nationalization of banks and some industries, enacted under the pressure of a mass upsurge, even when those measures were not in the CP's program. The Portuguese Stalinists have been forced to adopt some demagogic "left" rhetoric in order to preserve their credibility—and to retain the possibility of strangling the revolution.

The basic framework of the CP strategy in Portugal, as in Italy, France, Spain, and elsewhere, is to strive to preserve the détente between Moscow and Washington by doing nothing to upset the relationship of forces between imperialism and the workers states.

Here is how *Le Monde's* Moscow correspondent, Jacques Amalric, summarized what the Kremlin leaders are telling the Portuguese Communists. "The Soviet Union is not presently interested in the establishment of a Communist regime in Lisbon, at least unless you were to win a 75 percent majority in the elections. . . . Not only would such a development lead to civil war, but it would also be a considerable setback to détente in the world in general and especially in Europe. From that standpoint, it could lead to a grave defeat of the 'peace policy' defined by the last congress of the Soviet Communist party."

The Portuguese CP understands this perfectly. In the March issue of *World Marxist Review*, the Stalinist monthly magazine, Cunhal described the present "crucial stage" of the revolution as "the first steps toward the goals of the national-democratic revolution." He defined these as "democratic freedoms, liquidation of the big monopolies, agrarian reform, development of culture, substantial improvement of living standards, an end to imperialist tutelage, independent economic development and realization of the right to self-determination and independence of peoples formerly under Portuguese colonial rule."

And socialism? It is not in Cunhal's list. Portugal, if he has his way, will not achieve socialism in the foreseeable future. The Stalinist leaders in Italy, Spain, and France can agree wholeheartedly with that. □

### Tokyo Said to Have Okayed U.S. A-Bombs in Japan

Japanese Foreign Minister Kiichi Miyazawa has reportedly agreed to allow U.S. nuclear weapons to be based in Japan in the event of an "emergency" affecting either Japan or South Korea. According to the Tokyo daily *Yomiuri Shimbun*, which quoted a source close to the ruling Liberal Democratic party, the pledge was made during Miyazawa's visit to Washington in April.

## Aftermath of the Kidnapping of Peter Lorenz

### Witch-hunt in West Germany

By Siegfried Kreisler

[Translated by Russell Block]

FRANKFURT—Since a coalition of Social Democrats and liberals<sup>1</sup> took over the administration of the West German government in 1969, one of the Christian Democratic opposition's favorite targets has been the government's alleged permissiveness and softness on "terrorism" and "extremism." It is hardly necessary to emphasize that this is a grotesque distortion of reality.

It was the present government coalition that used the terrorist activities of the Baader-Meinhof group as an excuse for carrying on civil-war-like military maneuvers and for an attack on democratic rights. Thus, for instance, the basic right of freedom of political activity was denied to all public servants by refusing to hire those suspected of being radicals. Laws were passed restricting the right of the accused to free choice of counsel, and much more.

Yet all these measures did not succeed in appeasing the right wing; instead they allowed the right wing to step up its offensive.

After the February 27 kidnapping of Peter Lorenz, the Christian Democrats' leading candidate, three days before the West Berlin senatorial elections, the right wing went whole hog in their demagoguery. While Lorenz was still in the "people's prison" of the June 2 Movement<sup>2</sup> somewhere in Berlin, the offensive began.

The vice-president of the Bundestag called for restoring the death penalty. The editor in chief of the influential conservative daily *Die Welt*, Herbert Kremp, lamented "the excessively liberal approach toward civil order and the refusal to include the kidnap victim being killed as part of the defensive calculations," and demanded that "the counterattack be accorded strategic depth." (*Die Welt*, March 3, 1975.)

Immediately following Lorenz's release, an extended "punitive expedition" was launched with raids on hundreds of homes and mass arrests of arbitrarily selected persons, mostly leftists. The operation turned up no evidence whatsoever, and of

the 175 persons arrested, 175 had to be released.

In recent years the chairman of the Bavarian CDU,<sup>3</sup> Franz Josef Strauss, has made a name for himself as the "strong man" of the opposition. Within the opposition a number of leaders are competing for the position of candidate for chancellor, although they cannot be distinguished from one another on the basis of program. Only Franz Josef Strauss has been able to convert himself into a kind of symbol for the decisive struggle against the working class, the trade unions, and the "liberal approach to civil order." At the present time he can be regarded as the most influential leader of the CDU/CSU.<sup>4</sup>

It was Strauss who knew how to give "strategic depth" to the counterattack. On March 9 the text of a secret speech in which Strauss laid out his strategy was leaked to the press.

After going into the events in Berlin around the death of Holger Meins and the assassination of Judge Günter von Drenkmann,<sup>5</sup> Strauss declared: "To say here in democratic solidarity that we democrats in the SPD/FDP and the CDU/CSU are sticking together in this situation, that we must save the government based on law and order—this is pure rubbish! We must declare that the SPD and FDP are handing the state over to political and criminal gangsters. And that there is not the slightest difference between criminal and political gangsters. They are—all of them—lawbreakers. And if we step in and straighten things out so that none of these bandits dares to open his mouth for the rest of this century. . . . Even if we can't totally maintain this, we have to give people that impression." (*Frankfurter Rundschau*, March 12.)

But he did not stop at ridiculing the Social Democrats' favorite proposition—the solidarity of all democrats against terrorism. He tried to tie in terrorism with the Social Democracy itself: "Only when they see that they are losing votes, then they go through the motions for awhile. But as soon

1. Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands—Social Democratic party of Germany. Freie Demokratische Partei—Free Democratic party.

2. The name is taken from June 2, 1967, the day the student Benno Ohnesorg was shot during a confrontation between students and police.

3. Christlich-Demokratische Union—Christian Democratic Union.

4. Christlich-Soziale Union—Christian Social Union.

5. See *Intercontinental Press*, December 16, 1974, p. 1667.

as the voters have calmed down enough to go on in the same old way, well then I'd like to know how many sympathizers of the Baader-Meinhof criminals there are in the SPD and FDP delegation in Bonn. There are a whole lot of them."

Concerning the attorneys for political prisoners held in isolators (extreme solitary confinement) who attempted to direct public attention to the untenable situation of their clients, Strauss had the following to say: "And along with this you have, for example, these lawyer-criminals—what else can you call them?—they are the ones who steer the prisoners rather than advise them. . . . they're criminals, pure and simple, these 'lawyers.'"

The rest of the speech dealt with economic questions and the tactics of the opposition. Strauss supported the thesis that at the present time the opposition should make no concrete proposals, since it could always be shown that they would do no good.

He clearly indicated the goals and the means for achieving them: "The principal goal is to unseat the present federal government. And here there is certainly a possibility that a change will take place before 1976 [the date of the next federal elections]."

The means: ". . . stirring up the emotions of the population, that is, their fears and apprehensions, painting a grim picture of the future on the level of domestic as well as foreign policy."

On March 13, the Bundestag met to debate the question of "internal security" for the Bundesrepublik. The Social Democracy tried to avoid anything that might have led to a confrontation. Instead of exposing the fact that the CDU would gladly see its party leaders dead in order to get more mileage out of the affair, instead of making it clear to the masses who those responsible for permanent violence in this society are, instead of mounting a determined opposition to all restrictions on democratic rights, the Social Democratic leadership concentrated completely on the theme Strauss had so cynically ridiculed—"the solidarity of all democrats" against terrorism. And nevertheless, a sharp confrontation took place.

SPD Chairman Willy Brandt called upon CDU Chairman Helmut Kohl to take his distance from Strauss. Kohl, however, staunchly defended Strauss. Only Chancellor Helmut Schmidt succeeded in winning the applause of the opposition with a government declaration that was completely in the spirit of the CDU's line.

The March 14 *Mannheimer Morgen* described the chancellor's speech as follows: Schmidt "adopted the kind of language that the opposition likes to hear with reference to the 'strong state'—'put behind bars,' 'surveillance,' 'infiltration,' 'exhausting all legal means for wiretapping,' creating a

federal criminal police force, 'a fight on a political and ideological level'. . . . From time to time the irritated SPD delegation had difficulty keeping up with the stormy applause from the Union benches."

Schmidt drew the line against the opposi-



STRAUSS: "Strong man" on the right.

tion only by insisting that the anarchists were "misguided sons and daughters of bourgeois families" and thus could not be connected with the Social Democracy.

The CDU/CSU, however, did not let this conciliatory attitude prevent them from seeking a confrontation. Their contributions to the debate attempted to establish a connection between terrorism, extremism, and challenges to the status quo. They denounced the government coalition as the ideological pacesetter for such a challenge.

Brandt claimed that the SPD was the party of the underdog and the leader in the fight for peace and freedom against demagoguery and terrorism, which play into each other's hands and are the worst enemies of the Social Democracy.

The speech by Herbert Wehner, the SPD Bundestag delegation chairman, caused an uproar. Wehner characterized Strauss as an "ideological terrorist" who turned terrorism to account for his own power politics. He was interrupted from the floor by cries of "Marxist." He replied that the CDU used the term "Marxism" in the same way that Nazi propaganda minister Goebbels did. The CDU/CSU raised an uproar and walked out.

At the end of the debate, the following proposals were sent to committee:

- Two draft laws from the CDU/CSU "for the protection of the community." They involved making the law governing demonstrations much more restrictive.

- A draft law from the CDU/CSU "for the protection of the administration of justice," further restricting the rights of defendants.

- A draft law from the government setting up penalties for advocating and inciting serious acts of violence.

The confrontation, which was not desired by the Social Democracy, shows that the honeymoon granted to the coalition by the bourgeoisie is over. Insofar as was possible, it has ameliorated the difficulties facing West German capitalism because of its success in getting the trade unions and the working class to make sacrifices "of their own free will" up to the point where this would have meant self-destruction.

This has had an effect in weakening the working class, which at present is unable to mount an effective defense despite a massive attack by the bourgeoisie on the living standards of the working masses. However, the dissatisfaction in the ranks of the trade unions and the Social Democracy is constantly growing. One expression of this has been the heavy voting losses suffered by the SPD in the regional elections during the past year. Today the Social Democratic-led government is no longer able to guarantee social peace. It is for this reason that the bourgeoisie wishes to unseat it, if possible "even before 1976."

The task of the revolutionary Marxists in this process is to explain to the masses that the danger that the right will assume power cannot be averted by sacrifice and trust in the government, but only through the development of independent struggles of the working class and its allies.

As an immediate answer to the wave of repression following the kidnapping, the Political Bureau of the GIM,<sup>6</sup> the German section of the Fourth International, listed the tasks of revolutionary Marxists in a statement issued February 27:

"The effect of the alleged or actual kidnapping will be to strengthen the reactionary right and to help isolate the left—especially the revolutionary left—from the working class. . . . there must be a broad campaign against using such events to limit democratic rights and intimidate oppositional movements. This requires exposing the bourgeois class character of the 'law and order' demagoguery, and exposing its importance as an instrument for isolating, intimidating, and suppressing not just the organizations of the revolutionary left, but all class-struggle currents in the working class that oppose subordination to the bourgeoisie's 'stabilization policy,' and all progressive movements in general."

The GIM calls for utilizing every possible opening to bring this message to the organized workers movement. □

6. Gruppe Internationale Marxisten—International Marxist Group.



## Draftees Win Wide Support in Campaign for Democratic Rights

By F.L. Derry

PARIS—The struggle for democratic rights in the French armed forces, launched about a year ago, is continuing to broaden. On the geographical level, several of the recent actions have occurred among French soldiers stationed in Germany. On the political level, the number and variety of soldiers' demands have grown. Besides this, new sectors have become involved; permanent soldiers and lower officers of the professional army are adding their weight to the movement begun by draftees.

The single most important development is best illustrated by the recent soldiers' demonstration in Nancy. This action was wholly organized by the Communist party, the first time that the CP has taken an active part in the soldiers movement.

For the first four months of the soldiers movement, from May 1974 to early September, the major activity consisted solely of circulating the Appeal of the One Hundred,<sup>1</sup> which had launched the movement. Then came the soldiers' demonstration in Draguignan,<sup>2</sup> the first such action.

For the next four months attention focused on the aftermath of Draguignan. At first the government wavered, unable to decide what its response should be. Finally, three of the leaders of the action were arrested. The broad national defense effort forced even the CP and the Socialist party to come to the support of the Draguignan Three. The trial ended in a victory in early January: one defendant was acquitted; the two others received suspended sentences.

The focus of events then shifted rapidly, as the following chronology shows.

**January 7-8.** The trial of the Draguignan Three. The CP and SP testify for the defense. The trial, including the testimony of the defendants, is broadcast on French radio and followed attentively by large numbers of soldiers.

**January 13.** Several hundred French soldiers stationed in Karlsruhe, West Germany, demonstrate in the streets. Within a week, the French government announces a

plan to provide soldiers based in Germany with a limited number of free train rides home while they are on leave—one of the demands of the demonstration.

**January 29.** "Disorders" take place at a French military base in Tubingen, West Germany. One week later, nine soldiers are arrested.

**January 31.** The French cabinet is reshuffled. Both the minister of defense, Jacques Soufflet, and the minister of post and telecommunications, Pierre Lelong, resign. The soldiers movement, on the one hand, and the crushing of the six-week postal workers' strike last October and November were the obvious grounds for dispensing with the services of these two ministers.

The new minister of defense is Yvon Bourges, described by *Le Monde* as "an official with authority" and "an administrator of the colonial type." Indeed, much of his thirty-three years as a French administrative officer was spent in the French colonies in Africa. He will be assisted in his new assignment by Gen. Marcel Bigeard, the new "secretary of state responsible for the condition of the army." Bigeard has been widely denounced for his use of torture in the Algerian War, not to mention his five years in the French war in Indochina. He too is known as a "harsh taskmaster," but one who can "mobilize and inspire his men."

The next day General Bigeard announces that he will be "very liberal," that "it is better to see people and have things out with them. . . . France cherishes its army, I am convinced of that."

On February 7, the new defense minister, Bourges, affirms that the soldier is a citizen, adding "the French army must be fraternal and bring a new style to military service. . . . the citizen-soldier is part of a standing army, fully conscious of his rights, inasmuch as this is permitted by his belonging to a community that of necessity imposes certain reservations or limits. . . ."

**February 14.** A former sergeant, claiming that his name was added to the list of signers of the Appeal of the One Hundred without his permission, announces the launching of "Counterappeal of the Two Hundred" in support of the army, as well as the beginning of a "Comité de Défense de l'Armée" (Committee for the Defense of the Army) in answer to the Comité de Défense des Appelés (Committee for the Defense of Draftees).

Later, another sergeant with the same name is discovered to have been the real signer of the Appeal of the One Hundred. Many of the organizers of the counterappeal have now been shown to be members of organizations of the fascist right. Ominously, however, they also include high officers in the French army as well as some leading right-wing intellectual figures.

**February 17.** Between 50 and 100 soldiers march in civilian clothes in Nancy, in the first such demonstration organized by the Communist party. The soldiers first attend a news conference held by Jean-Michel Catala, general secretary of the Mouvement de la Jeunesse Communiste (Communist Youth Movement). They then march and distribute leaflets in support of the Communist party's electoral project, the Statut du Citoyen-Soldat (Citizen-Soldier Bill). No mention is made of the Appeal of the One Hundred, neither in the form of support nor in the form of criticism.

**February 19-20.** A heated debate opens on the role of the CP in the demonstration in Nancy. On February 19, the new defense minister accuses the CP of "duplicity," and on the next day adds, "the Communists have never given a centime for improving conditions in the army." He associates the CP's action with the "campaign of Krivine."<sup>3</sup>

The Socialist party, in the person of Charles Hernu, their spokesman on military affairs, comes to the aid of the CP: "To construct an amalgam between the Front Communiste Révolutionnaire<sup>4</sup> and the Communist party constitutes a provocation, since the Communist party has never spoken out against the existence of a modern army at the service of the nation. As for ourselves, we socialists reject antimilitarism and irresponsible forms of action. . . ."

Communist party leader Laurent Salini continues this defense in the February 20 issue of *l'Humanité*, the CP daily: "Mr. Bourges . . . would prefer to confront 'antimilitarists,' those who oppose the

1. A petition demanding democratic rights in the army, originally signed by 100 soldiers and made public just before the second round of voting in the presidential elections May 19, 1974. See *Intercontinental Press*, February 24, p. 286, for the text of the appeal.

2. Two hundred soldiers marched through the streets of Draguignan September 10, 1974, to publicize their grievances.

3. Alain Krivine is a leader of the French Trotskyist group, Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (Revolutionary Communist League). The LCR has played an active role in the antimilitarist movement.

4. The former name of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire.





Soldiers at Draguignan discuss their grievances with an officer during September 1974 demonstration.

military as an institution. Since he is faced by soldiers who *want* an army, and a democratic army, he now accuses the Communists of 'duplicity.'" (Emphasis added.)

While the CP is busy defending itself against the charge of "antimilitarism," 150 soldiers march in the streets of Verdun February 19, followed by a second demonstration at Sissonne. The day before, twenty-year-old Serge Camier had been crushed to death by a tank while on maneuvers. "The truth about Camier's death!" "The army is a murderer!" and "Against the army of Bigeard and Bourges!" the marching soldiers chant.

The action begins with a new tactic, a "grève du silence" (silent protest strike), the first time this sort of action has been used by the soldiers.

("Accidents" are common in the French army, as is the officers' lack of concern for the safety of the soldiers. In 1972, fifty-six soldiers died; the next year, forty-two. As Gen. Maurice Henry was quick to explain, "accidents cannot be avoided, even in the army." But how can one avoid the protest actions that follow?)

February 24. Five draftees are arrested in Nancy in the aftermath of the CP-organized demonstration.

May 12, 1975

February 27. The CP begins a campaign to "explain" its position on the army: in particular, to dissociate itself from all forms of "antimilitarism" and to reaffirm support for the army. Apparently the Communist party, like General Bigeard, "cherishes their army." A major news conference, involving many leaders of the Communist party, is featured prominently in *l'Humanité*.

March 4. The *prêt du soldat* (soldiers' wages) will be doubled, the new defense minister announces.

(Last July, following the initial success of the Appeal of the One Hundred, the *prêt du soldat* was raised to the magnificent level of 2 francs a day (1 franc equals about US\$0.24). It was raised again to 2.5 francs a day in January. Thus the new rate, scheduled to begin in April, is to be about 5 francs a day, roughly the amount paid to inmates in many American prisons.)

Early March. A series of fascist attacks begins against public meetings of pacifists, draft resisters, antimilitarists, and revolutionists. The headquarters of the Comité Antimilitariste (Antimilitarist Committee) and *Revolution!*, a left-wing group, are attacked and sacked by fascist raiders, leaving several persons injured.

The headquarters of the Comité de Défense des Appelés is bombed. A bomb explodes in a train station in Paris as many soldiers are boarding a train to return to their bases. One soldier is killed in the attack.

March 4. A twenty-year-old soldier, Jean-Pierre Méliot, is found dead in his prison cell at the military base in Lunéville. He had been placed under arrest for having refused to wear his uniform or to carry out his military duties.

Méliot had attempted suicide February 10 but was nevertheless denied medical attention and kept in isolation until his second attempt succeeded.

More than 350 soldiers meet that evening—virtually the entire unit—and decide to march. However, a large number of police, CRS,<sup>5</sup> and Garde Mobile<sup>6</sup> block the exits from the post. Forced to remain on the base, the soldiers hold a general assembly for two hours and then disband, having first approved a motion calling on the "trade-union and democratic organization of the workers movement to form a

5. Compagnies Républicaines de Sécurité, the state security police.

6. Another branch of the security police.

commission of inquiry to establish the truth" about Méliot's death.

\* \* \*

Clearly this wave of demonstrations and other protest activity reflects widening support among draftees for the soldier-activists.

The semiclandestine soldiers committees have spread and solidified. The number of mimeographed soldiers newspapers has grown. More important, the soldiers committees have begun to develop a real working relationship with the ranks in the army and are receiving more consistent support.

Actions have been built around a wide variety of local issues concerning the repression and the lack of democratic rights, as well as the conditions of daily life. The logic of such a struggle is to lead broad layers of the ranks of the army, as well as of civilians in general, to question the basis for the existence of the army itself. Questions concerning the bourgeois army lead naturally to questions concerning the role of the bourgeois government and the capitalist state that command it.

One of the most important indications of the true scope of the movement is the fact that the Communist party has been obliged to enter it. The new role of the Communist party, as well as the continued growth of the movement itself, has helped to spark an important discussion on tactics, strategy, and program among the many groups and parties participating in the soldiers' struggle.

What are the differences between the CP's "Citizen-Soldier Bill" and the Appeal of the One Hundred, which launched the soldiers movement? What is the relative role of the struggle for democratic rights in building a revolutionary movement? Should the soldiers movement have a more explicitly "antimilitarist" approach, or is a struggle

for democratic rights sufficient in itself?

In this general sense the debate bears some resemblance to the one that took place

between the different tendencies in the American movement against the war in Vietnam. □

## London 'Sunday Times' Investigates 'Babies for Burning'

### Book of Abortion Horror Stories Exposed as Hoax

By Phyllis Hamilton

LONDON—*Babies for Burning*, a book of abortion horror stories that has played a special role in the current parliamentary review of Britain's liberal 1967 abortion law, has now been found to be full of inaccuracies and dubious allegations. The exposure appeared in the March 30 issue of the London *Sunday Times*.

*Babies for Burning*, which was published in December 1974, was made out to be the report of an "investigation" by two journalists, Michael Litchfield and Susan Kentish, into the workings of the 1967 abortion law. During the last year, anti-abortion forces have made full use of their alleged findings to whip up hysteria over the liberalized abortion law in Britain.

Labour Member of Parliament James White, sponsor of the 1975 abortion law amendment bill, which aims to restrict the grounds on which a woman may terminate a pregnancy, used the "evidence" gathered by Litchfield and Kentish as his main source of material.

Litchfield, who was a Conservative parliamentary candidate last year, claims to have worked for *Life* magazine in the United States and to have won a Pulitzer Prize for an article published by *Life*.

The main charges made by Litchfield and Kentish are that fourteen urine samples (seven from each of them) were declared positive by seven pregnancy testing agencies; that abortions were offered without attempts to establish a legal basis; that live fetuses were offered for sale by a London doctor with Nazi sympathies; and that "scandalous murders" of viable fetuses have been committed in the United States, practices revealed to the authors by a certain "Dr Malcolm Ridley" of Boston.

The initial investigation of the "evidence" offered by Litchfield and Kentish was carried out by Dianne Munday of the Abortion Law Reform Association.

The *Sunday Times* took up Munday's work and fully exposed the book.

First, the *Sunday Times* established that Litchfield had spent less than six days in the United States and thus was unlikely to have served as *Life* magazine's Miami bureau chief, as he claims. The paper also

established that no Michael Litchfield ever won a Pulitzer Prize.

Second, the story about the urine samples could not be validated. Litchfield claims that he used the name "Mrs Duffy" on the samples, and he does have letters from the agencies confirming that "Mrs Duffy" is pregnant. But this claim is dubious as well. The pregnancy agencies did receive samples from a "Mrs Duffy," but this was on February 13, three days before Litchfield says he posted his own samples. Perhaps Litchfield sent more than one set of samples.

Litchfield's claim that while posing as a manufacturer he persuaded a gynaecologist, who made favorable references to Hitler, to sell him aborted fetuses to be made into soap was also exposed as a hoax. The *Sunday Times* interviewed the gynaecologist who had the conversation with Litchfield, and the doctor recalls discussing the disposal of foetal tissue for medical research. This is perfectly legal. Furthermore, the gynaecologist said that money was not mentioned, and that he pointed out that Litchfield would need the sanction of the Department of Health before he could obtain foetal tissue.

As for the alleged favorable references to Hitler, the doctor is a Jew who lost his wife and son in Auschwitz concentration camp, was himself imprisoned in Dachau and Buchenwald, and was a founding member of a kibbutz in Israel. It seems unlikely that he would have made such references to Hitler.

As for the scandals of American abortion practices, the *Sunday Times* found when it tried to contact "Dr Malcolm Ridley" that no such doctor was registered either in the United States or anywhere else in the world.

Such exposures of trumped-up abortion horror stories are of great importance now that the government has set up a Select Committee to investigate the so-called abuses of the 1967 abortion act. The National Abortion Campaign can make good use of such disclosures in its fight to defend the existing law and extend its scope to ensure that abortion becomes a woman's right to choose. □

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## On the Situation in Peru

[The following interview was obtained in Europe by the *Young Socialist* in late January. Although it took place before the police strike for wage increases that was smashed by the Peruvian army February 5 and the popular outburst that followed,<sup>1</sup> the interview provides background information helpful for understanding the current situation in Peru.

[Hugo Blanco, well-known Peruvian revolutionist, led a movement to unionize peasants in the department of Cuzco in the 1960s. For his role in this movement, he was sentenced to twenty-five years in prison. After spending more than seven years in various jails, he was freed by the current regime in December 1970 as the result of national and international pressure. In 1971 he was deported to Mexico for having supported a teachers' strike. Later he went to Argentina, where he was once again jailed. From there, he was deported to Chile, where he lived until the September 1973 coup, when he took asylum in the Mexican embassy. He currently lives in Sweden.

[The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

*Question. Who does the current Peruvian regime represent?*

*Answer.* The current government represents sectors favoring industrial development in Peru. Previously the Peruvian economy was heading toward a severe crisis because of its antiquated structures. Like many other countries in Latin America, our country was used fundamentally for the extraction of raw materials and as a market for goods manufactured in the imperialist countries. The coming to office of the current regime meant a qualitative step toward industrial development. It came in to push industrial development forward.

This does not mean it is independent of the imperialists, because industrial development on the whole is taking place with the support of or under the control of the imperialists.

*Q. Are there conflicts between the current regime and the imperialists?*

A. There certainly are big conflicts with the imperialists, especially with the United



BLANCO

States. However, sectors of the European, Japanese, and even American imperialists supported industrialization. You have to understand that almost the entire country was in the hands of the American imperialists. The European and Japanese imperialists could penetrate only the new sectors, that is, the industrial sectors. In addition, industrial development also suited the interests of the Yankee imperialists who produce machinery.

Some sectors of the army that wanted to strengthen the national bourgeoisie took advantage of this. They give a bourgeois-nationalist tint to the regime, but to do it they have to implement certain populist policies; they have to get support from the masses.

*Q. What populist measures has the government taken?*

A. The government has nationalized several basic industries and some banking sectors. It is okay with us that they have been nationalized; we give critical support to these nationalizations. We defend them in principle, but we also explain why the bourgeois regime carries them out. Their reasons are different from ours. We also explain the limitations of the expropriations.

For example, we generally demand that the imperialist companies, which have been exploiting us for years, not be compensated. We also demand that the firms be put under workers control to improve management.

*Q. What are the aims of the nationalizations and other reforms the government has carried out?*

A. Within the general framework of capitalism, nationalizations do not, of course, succeed in freeing the country from imperialism. Although the imperialists are not in the nationalized sectors, they have holdings in the developed ones. Above all they are active in industry and trade—for example, in Sears, which is owned by Rockefeller. Moreover, they have entered the economy through loans, patent rights, and other forms of penetration.

The Peruvian government knows very well that it cannot free itself from imperialism and it doesn't try to. What it does try to do is to get an increasing share of what the imperialists obtain by exploiting the people. As we say, they want a bigger piece of the cake. So there is a dispute, haggling with the imperialists, especially the American imperialists.

All the measures taken by the regime can be explained from this point of view—the agrarian reform, the Industries Law, the Education Law, and so on.

The regime's populism can be explained by the fact that it wants to have a social base of support to enable it to drive a harder bargain, to improve its bargaining position with the imperialists. That is why its measures have always been accompanied by tremendous anti-imperialist, nationalist demagoguery aimed at winning mass support.

For example, a few days after this government took office, it nationalized an oil field with a great display of troops. This was done in an unnecessarily ostentatious way to make it seem as if it was almost at war with the imperialists, a war that it was winning. Nonetheless, the government has surrendered larger oil fields, especially to Japanese imperialism.

There is also the Industrial Community Law, copied from European participation schemes, through which it tries to deceive the worker into believing that slowly, little by little, he is going to become owner and administrator of at least half the factory. This is done so that the worker, believing that the factory belongs to him, won't go on strike or fight for wage increases. The agrarian reform has also been accompanied by a lot of demagoguery.

All these steps and the government's demagoguery have not been enough to win the mass support of the people. At times some sectors of the population have given support, even substantial support. It has never

1. See *Intercontinental Press*, February 17, p. 213.

lasted very long, however, because the people quickly realized that nothing more than hot air, rhetoric, and demagoguery were involved. That happened with the sugarcane workers, for example.

When the government turned the big sugar companies into cooperatives, saying that they were going to be turned over to the workers, the workers became very progovernment. But after a year they realized that the only thing they had done was to change masters: instead of a boss, they now had a state bureaucrat. Their standard of living remained the same as before and they had no power to make decisions affecting the company. On several occasions they went on strike. These strikes were paradoxical because the supposed owners were going on strike against themselves.

Just as in this case, other sectors of the population have given the government temporary support, but never ongoing, enthusiastic support. The Peruvian people have certain hopes, but only hopes. In this sense we cannot compare the support given to this government with the popular support that the Perón or Allende governments enjoyed.

*Q. What is the status of the Peruvian peasantry and what effect has the Agrarian Reform Law had?*

A. I should point out that the agrarian situation in Peru is very complex. In the Amazon jungle we have primitive communism—tribes that still have not been smashed by capitalism. We have modified versions of the indigenous communities that existed in the time of the Incas. We have estates with many feudal features, an unpleasant carry-over of the form of relations the Spaniards brought to Latin America. We have the huge industrialized agricultural complexes and many intermediate or combined forms of all of these.

Moreover, there are very different problems in the various climatic regions of Peru—the desert coast with very little water, where it never rains; the mountains with very mixed terrain, where there is rain but also periods of cold weather that damage the crops; the rocky high Andean plateau; and also the Amazon forest, which has the features of a jungle. All these things make the Peruvian agrarian problem very complex.

To characterize the nature of the Agrarian Reform Law, we have to consider it in relation to the general character of the government, a government whose support to industrial development has nationalist and populist features. We can then see that the Agrarian Reform Law is designed to integrate the peasantry as a buyer and seller in the capitalist market and also to win strong social support for the govern-

ment from one sector of the population.

*Q. Has this law been carried out?*

A. It has not been applied equally throughout the country. Even this limited law passed by the government, a law that provides for paying compensation to the landowners, has not been applied or enforced.

Of course, it is very difficult to pay the landowners; there is no available money. And, on the other hand, the majority of landowners oppose the Agrarian Reform Law. Many have political influence or can bribe functionaries, thus managing to delay enforcement of the law in their regions.

We also have to take into account that where there is a peasant organization and peasant struggles the Agrarian Reform Law is at times applied to appease the peasants and prevent an upsurge.

So the differing economic situations, relations of production, climatic and geographic conditions, social situations, and even the different political situations at the local level in different parts of Peru make the application of that law very uneven. The general point that can be made is that it has not been carried out even in the form in which the government claimed it would be: in a very limited way serving their interests as capitalists.

There is one more general point: The peasantry continues to be the poorest sector of the country and still has a very low standard of living. That is the situation of the Peruvian peasantry.

*Q. How has the international crisis affected the Peruvian government?*

A. The government has conflicts with the imperialists on one side and with the masses on the other. It has succeeded in delaying the crisis the country was entering, but it has not succeeded in eliminating the roots of the crisis. In the current situation, when we are entering a crisis on a world scale, when there are countries like Bangladesh, where the people are starving to death, the contradictions in Peru are becoming sharper too, as much between the government and the imperialists as between the government and the masses.

Last June there was a cabinet crisis that reflected this. Economic crises are reflected in political ones. These, in turn, are reflected in the very ranks of the army, which represents the bourgeoisie in general. Thus the conflicts among sectors of the bourgeoisie are reflected within the army. And the conflicts emerged within the cabinet itself.

*Q. What form did the cabinet crisis take?*

A. The minister of the navy was ousted along with the minister of housing.

*Q. Who did these ministers represent?*

A. The ultraright.

*Q. How has the ultraright developed?*

A. The ultraright has begun to raise its head, and it is trying to take the offensive. For example, APRA<sup>2</sup> and Acción Popular—Belaúnde Terry's party—are trying to form a bloc to demand that elections be held. That is the demagoguery the ultraright uses to fight this government.

People don't get very enthusiastic about this, because the governments that have come to power through elections have all been worse than this one.

Moreover, in December a car carrying Premier Mercado Jarrín, Minister of Fisheries Tantaleán Vanini, and another general was attacked. And a bomb was placed in Naval Minister Taura's house six hours before he was to be sworn in.

These were clearly rightist actions, because the previous naval minister had been thrown out precisely for being a right-winger.

I should also mention the shooting of a writer for the trade-union page of *Correo*; the fires at state-owned Minero Perú, at a government-owned food distributor, at a cotton warehouse, and at another site in the north.

The ultraright began publishing a new weekly newspaper, *Opinión Libre*, involv-

2. Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana—People's Revolutionary American Alliance.

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ing all the journalists from the papers that had been expropriated. It urged the formation of a rightist front. It too has been closed down recently.

In addition, a campaign is being carried out abroad. The Sociedad Interamericana de Prensa [Interamerican Press Society] of Belaúnde Terry, Ulloa, Ravines, de la Jara Urueta, and Vargas Prada—representing the oligarchy and imperialism—is campaigning against the government.

Many naval maneuvers took place at the end of the year because of these internal conflicts. This is how the ultraright is escalating its attacks against the government.

*Q. What is the current situation of the masses?*

A. Workers and students struggles are on the rise, as I said. Neither the workers nor the students were ever convinced that this was their government. They have fought steadily for an improvement in their standard of living. In the last few months a certain lull has occurred in this struggle, but it can be explained in part by the vacations.

Most probably the upswing will continue, because the working class has not been defeated. At the end of 1973 big general work stoppages took place in several departments in the south of the country.

*Q. How has the government responded to this situation?*

A. The government represses both sectors—the right wing and the masses. For example, it has deported some rightists, nationalized the right-wing dailies, and taken such steps as the naval maneuvers.

To deal with the masses, it has issued a decree banning mobilizations. It has repressed many strikes by firing their leaders and jailing them; on some occasions it has carried out massacres.

It massacred the peasants of Huanta and the miners at Cobriza. It conducted a massacre in Puno and another one in Arequipa in 1973. Added to all this is the latest massacre in the south of the country. This massacre was nothing special; it was one of the regime's customary repressive responses.

*Q. There has been speculation about a coup in Peru. Is there anything to this?*

A. At present in Peru there is the danger of a coup. Not an immediate one, but the threat of an ultrarightist Pinochet-style coup does exist.

*Q. How does the government view this danger?*

A. The government has taken some inconsistent repressive measures. Recently it gave five rightist exiles permission to return. However it has not permitted the return of any of the leftists, who were deported for having supported the demands of the masses—Breña and I, who were deported for having supported the teachers' strike; Napuri and Cuentas, for having supported the miners' strike; and those who were deported for having participated in the mobilizations in Arequipa.

In addition to the government law against mobilizations and the brake that this places on the mass movement—the surest way to aid a coup—is the government's suicidal position on the question. We saw clearly in Chile that the only way to stop a putsch is by developing the power of the masses, the mobilization of the masses against the coup. What the Peruvian government does is to put a brake on the masses in the same way but to a different extent than was done by the Unidad Popular in Chile, by Perón in Argentina in 1955, by Arbenz in Guatemala in 1954, by Torres in Bolivia, and so forth.

As we have seen in Latin America, this paves the way for the triumph of the right. A right-wing victory is guaranteed if you tie the hands of the masses. No other force can stop a coup. Unfortunately the government itself has taken charge of deceiving the masses into thinking that there is no threat of a coup, that the government is all powerful.

*Q. How has the left reacted to the danger of a coup?*

A. The reformists say the same thing as the government; the Communist party tells the masses the government is strong. The ultralefts say the regime is fascist or something like that, therefore a rightist coup is impossible. What they are actually doing is confusing the masses about the increasing danger of a coup in Peru.

*Q. What role should revolutionists play in the struggle against a coup?*

A. I think the role of revolutionists is to point out the danger of a coup and that the only way to oppose and smash it is through the independent mobilization of the masses. I say independent because this government, which is confusing the masses about the danger of a coup and which is passing laws to repress mass mobilizations, is not one you can rely on to lead that kind of mobilization against a coup. It would rather commit suicide than mobilize the masses. The role of revolutionists is to point this out.

On the other hand, we have to understand that in Peru as well as in other Latin American countries the struggle against a coup is combined with the steps workers take in winning their own conquests. The struggle must be as much for the defense of gains that have already been won as it is for the achievement of greater ones.

In essence the workers and the masses in general have to carry out the same struggle, whether under governments where proimperialist coups have already triumphed, as in Chile, or under governments like Peru's, where a coup is being prepared.

[To be continued]

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## How Belgian Unionists Battled Layoffs

[Workers at the Glaverbel-Gilly glass-works in Charleroi, Belgium, refused to accept the bosses' decision to phase out their plant, eliminating 589 jobs. Instead they organized a militant six-week strike that forced the parent company, the French multinational trust BSN-Gervais-Danone, to shelve its planned "rationalization." During the strike the workers occupied the plant, continued production under supervision of the strike committee, and arranged for the sale of the glass they produced.]

[The agreement ending the strike was signed at the end of February. The far-reaching terms of the settlement and an account of how the strike was organized are given in the following interview with two members of the Glaverbel-Gilly strike committee. André Henry, who was a leader of the strike, is a member of the Ligue Révolutionnaire des Travailleurs (LRT), the Belgian section of the Fourth International.]

[The interview was printed in the April 2 issue of the Swiss revolutionary-socialist fortnightly *La Brèche*. It was translated for *Intercontinental Press* by Barbara West.]

*Question.* After six weeks on strike, how do you size up the results?

*Henry.* I think that we really made some gains from the strike, that we won a victory.

Take, for example, the first demand in our manifesto, "No dismissals, no shutdown." First of all, no one has been fired. As for the demand to halt the shutdown, we can say that at least two-thirds of the employees will be assured of a job in the factory within at most one year. The important thing is that this two-thirds of the work force includes the core of the union activists in the plant. Up to the time when jobs are reclassified, a year at most, all the workers now on the payroll will remain, and work will be shared through partial layoffs. All the workers will get their full salary (along with full benefits). Thus, to the extent to which layoffs can be "turned around," we have a chance to stay together for a year, get our bearings, and plan additional actions.

The job changes provided for in the settlement will be voluntary and agreed-upon by the unions and individuals involved.

G. I think that what we won, without loss

of wages, is unique in all union struggles that have taken place to date.

*Q.* In the present context of deep crisis in the capitalist system, what significance does this victory have for the workers movement?

*Henry.* To the best of my knowledge, what was just won at Gilly in face of a threatened shutdown represents something new.

When you realize that we won our demands on such important points as no layoffs, creation of jobs at the Gilly site, continuing payment of wages at the same level, and all this at a time when the workers movement faces a crisis and an increasingly firm response from the bosses—well, I think that news of this victory should be spread far and wide so that it can become an inspiration to others.

Furthermore, the fact that we won these demands from a multinational corporation, BSN, makes us appreciate the results of our fight even more. We know that BSN chose Gilly precisely because it was a pacesetter in union activity. They thought they could crush us. But it didn't work out that way. And that is going to pose a problem for BSN. How are they going to refurbish their policy of rationalization after this initial unsuccessful attempt?

*Q.* Can you briefly tell us about the methods you used in organizing your struggle, particularly their importance for the development of the struggle and for raising the workers' consciousness?

*Henry.* They say that at Glaverbel-Gilly new forms of struggle are becoming a tradition! The truth of the matter is that we are perhaps the only plant to have launched four strikes, three of which were very important: the first and part of the second against attacks on the right to engage in trade-union activity, the rest of the second in May 1974 around the list of demands, and the third today.

Each time the entire work force elected a strike committee, which this time was backed up by workers committees. Each time we held daily meetings. In this strike, it is especially important to emphasize the bold move that was taken in selling the glass. Finished products have been sold before (watches, vases, and so forth) but never an industrial product. Of course, we knew from the beginning that it would not

be an easy job, but it was the best way to show our determination in the struggle, to assert the power of the workers against the power of the bosses, and to provide ourselves with the means for a strike fund.

New forms of struggle also appeared in the contacts we made and the actions we carried out with other BSN subsidiaries, such as the occupation of the Boisfort offices, contacts with the Danone plant at Janche, and the visit to the Boussois comrades with whom we initiated the demonstration at BSN's central headquarters in Paris. It was the first Europe-wide demonstration and had been planned by the workers. The demonstration was a great success. We occupied the offices and forced BSN's chairman of the board to explain their position to all the demonstrators, and to come to Charleroi the following day to face the union representatives and strike-committee members at the negotiating table.

I would like to clarify a point about the role of the strike committee. Some union delegates from other plants have said, "If I'm on my own in peaceful times, no one is going to tell me what to do in time of war."

But the strike committee is not set up to keep check over union delegates. It simply takes on responsibilities during a strike, and the union delegates play their role as a part of this committee.

G. The strike committee is not set up because of any lack of confidence in the union delegates. It is simply the best way to strengthen and organize the struggle. Delegates who have the workers' confidence certainly have nothing to fear from the election of a strike committee.

*Henry.* On top of that, the strike committee helps increase workers' confidence and militancy. Electing their own representatives, subject to recall at any time as is the case at Gilly (the workers recalled one strike-committee member during the strike), is a measure of their confidence in and commitment to the movement.

With a strike committee holding daily meetings, the workers follow the strike from day to day and take the initiatives that are necessary. It is the workers who take charge of and direct their strike.

*Q.* How did political organizations respond to your strike?

*Henry.* The PSB<sup>1</sup> and the Communist party issued statements of solidarity and raised the question in parliament, but it must be said that in the actual struggle few of their members were seen taking part in the effort to build the solidarity movement.

In all objectivity, it should be pointed out

1. Parti Socialiste Belge—Belgian Socialist party.



that the LRT worked very hard in support of our strike. They made a major effort, and the Gilly comrades could see the role and importance of a political organization that, on the national level, put all its resources into getting out the facts about the strike and organizing solidarity for it.

As for the Maoist comrades of the UCmlB,<sup>2</sup> who for years have consistently rejected the line and the methods of struggle at the heart of our action at Gilly—such as workers control—these comrades go so far as to speak of a defeat, indeed even a betrayal, because we are not continuing the fight to keep the jobs of all 589 workers in the plant.

What they fail to understand is that we are now entering the second phase of the struggle: seeing that the agreements are carried out and in the process forcing the company to keep the maximum number of workers on the job.

For that we have to be vigilant; we have to elect a committee to oversee such things at Gilly as new investments, subsidies, and so forth. We are going to hold weekly meetings to maintain a spirit of vigilance and militancy.

To continue the strike to keep every last employee would mean taking a great risk and would probably end in defeat. For it is absolutely certain that a strike by all the workers in the region would be necessary to win *immediately* that second round. In the present situation, given the position that has been taken by the union leaderships, by some shop stewards, and even by many workers, that would without doubt mean taking a great risk and perhaps even losing what we have won so far. If we had been able to link these two phases of the struggle together into one, we would have done so. But the relationship of forces at a given moment has to be taken into account. □

2. Union des Communistes (marxistes-leninistes) de Belgique—Union of Belgian (Marxist-Leninist) Communists.

### Protests Force White House to Give Up Air Base in Greece

Eight days after a demonstration of 300,000 persons demanded the removal of U.S. and NATO bases in Greece, Washington was forced to give up an air base near Athens and home-port facilities for Sixth Fleet destroyers.

According to a joint communiqué issued by the U.S. and Greek governments April 29, other U.S. bases will be placed under Greek commanders while negotiations continue. The expectation is that agreement will be reached "on the elimination, reduction and conservation of other United States facilities in Greece." Among them are installations for missiles with nuclear warheads.

## Arab Students in Israel Protest Police Abuse

[The following appeal was issued in February by the Arab Students Committee of Tel Aviv University. It was reprinted in the April issue of *Palestine Digest*, from which we have taken the text.]

\* \* \*

There are approximately 300 Arab students (Israeli citizens) studying at Tel Aviv University. As a national minority the Arab students for the past five years have been represented by an elected committee. Its function is to deal with Arab students' problems emanating from the fact that they are a national minority in Israel.

During that period the Arab Students Committee received from the official Students Association of Tel Aviv University and from the University the use of halls for social and political activities.

The beginning of the current academic year saw a drastic change in policy: The University administration and the official Students Association refused to allow the Arab students to organize a symposium concerning the Palestinian question. The immediate policy is to refuse accommodations for any social or political activities initiated by the Arab Students Committee.

In the daily paper, *Yediot Achronot* (27/1/75), the Prime Minister's Advisor for Arab Affairs, Shmuel Toledano, said: "It is not desirable that independent Arab student's committees shall be formed on campuses."

We regard the existence of national minorities students committees, or organizations, in every university in the world, as one of the corner-stones of democracy.

The numerous attempts of the Israeli establishment to violate and circumscribe the basic and elementary rights of the Arab students to elect their own representative committee, whose purpose is to deal with their specific problems (a result of the establishment's policy), is added verification of the Government's overall policy to snuff out the Arab voice.

In addition to the mentioned above, the Arab students face various problems:

The policy of quotas enables only about 20 Arab students to habitate the University dormitories (it is worth mentioning that the quota system similarly applies to certain Faculties such as: Medicine and Geography).

After repeated outcries from the Arab students, the University administration helped to rent several rooms in the Tel Aviv area for fifty Arab students, who could not, by their own means, find Jewish landlords willing to have Arab tenants.

During the last two months, these fifty

students were faced with a new problem: Members of the Israeli Police Force started and continue to make regular "house calls" in the late hours of the night.

The police justify their recurrent visits at such hours with the groundless and absurd claims: 1) That the Arab students must continually identify themselves. 2) That the premises must continually be searched.

Below are listed a number of "incidents":

A. Within a period of six weeks the Israeli Police Force "visited" six times, sixteen Arab students living in their rented rooms at Jabotinsky Street 50, Ramat Gan. When the police were asked what were the lawful grounds for their visits, they responded: "The law is not intended for your protection, force is the sole language which you (Arabs) understand."

B. On the 18/11/74 at 3:00 A.M. the police "called" on the Arab students residence, Pincas Street 9, Tel Aviv.

C. On the 16/1/75 three Arab students were arrested while taking a walk on Ben Yehuda Street. They openly underwent a body-search in the street. The students were then taken into custody and brought to the police station. Once there, interrogations were accompanied by beatings and cursing. The accusation brought against them was "the theft of various personal articles from girls on the nearby beach." After some hours the students were released, and the police expressed their "deep regrets" regarding the "tragic mistake."

D. The most recent "house call" with which the above mentioned Arab students were faced occurred on 30/1/75 at 3:00 A.M. Two students were arrested and held in custody for six hours, without any formal accusation.

In light of the above, we have decided to approach various organizations in Israel and abroad for support of our struggle against the premeditated maltreatment undertaken against us by the Israeli government, Police, University administration and the official Students Union.

These actions are:

A. Refusal to recognize the Arab Students Committee

B. The unlawful searches

Both of which clearly negate the most elementary right of organization, and the action of the police clearly infringe elementary human rights of a democratic state.

Solidarity with our struggle could best be manifested by sending protests to: Tel Aviv University; Minister of Police; The Prime Minister's Advisor for Arab Affairs; and the Israeli Student Union.

*The Arab Students Committee  
Tel Aviv University*

# AROUND THE WORLD



## Ali Shariatti Released in Iran Following International Campaign

Dr. Ali Shariatti, a prominent theologian and writer, was freed from prison in March, following an international campaign in his behalf. He was arrested in September 1973 by SAVAK, the shah's secret police.

During his eighteen months of imprisonment, SAVAK continually attempted to force him to retract his dissident political views. He refused to do so.

A May 1 press release from the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran stated, "Dr. Shariatti's freedom is a clear victory for all Iranian political prisoners and for those whose concern for the fates of dissident artists and intellectuals has made this possible."

Although Shariatti is now free, the Iranian dictatorship is still blocking all channels through which he could express his views. Hosseinieh Ershad, a Muslim theological institute in Tehran at which Shariatti had been the educational director, has been closed since 1972; he has also been dismissed from the University of Mashhad.

The CAIFI statement pointed to the undemocratic nature of these restrictions and said, "The government of Iran must allow Dr. Shariatti to teach and must halt all abridgments of his right to make known his views through any means he feels necessary."

## Spanish Cardinal Looks Ahead

Vicente Cardinal Enrique y Tarancon, head of Spain's Roman Catholic Church, has warned that the church must try to



Mundo

Closed on account of strike.

avoid being closely identified with the Franco regime.

Since Spanish society is entering a new era, the cardinal said, a failure to make the shift might mean the church would lose its influence.

## New Issue of Samizdat Journal Reported Circulating in Moscow

A new issue of the Soviet samizdat journal *Chronicle of Current Events* is reported to be circulating in Moscow. Dated March 31, issue No. 35, it contains sixty-three pages of typescript. Included is an account of the trial this year of Anatoly Marchenko.

## What About the Terrorists Who Put Them There?

Some of the 8,000 nuclear weapons the Pentagon maintains in Europe have been stored in the basement of an office building and other such places, according to a report by two U.S. senators made public May 1. Senators John Pastore and Howard Baker complained about the practice, not because of the danger to office workers or residents of the cities where the bombs are kept, but because they might be stolen by "terrorists."

## Secret Trial Begins for Thirteen in Chile

Thirteen persons, including Arturo Villavela, a member of the political commission of the MIR (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria—Movement of the Revolutionary Left), went on trial before a secret military court in Chile April 21. They are charged with illegal possession of weapons.

Two American attorneys, who were asked by the Center for Constitutional Rights and by relatives of the accused to observe the proceedings, were barred from attending the trial.

## High Official Admits 'Some Torture' of South Korean Political Prisoners

In response to widespread reports that South Korean political prisoners are subjected to brutal torture, Foreign Minister Kim Dong Jo has admitted there may be some truth to the charges.

"There might be some torture, I have to admit," he said May 1. There was a

possibility that an "excited, crazy investigator" might have tortured prisoners. But, he claimed, "the basic policy of this Government is that we never permit torture."

Twenty-one political prisoners sentenced last year on charges of spying for North Korea and aiding student demonstrations against the Park regime argued persuasively that torture is a basic government policy. During their trial the defendants denied the charges and said that they had "confessed" under torture.

## Canadian MPs Reward Themselves With a Fat Pay Increase

The Canadian House of Commons voted April 30 in favor of a 33.3 percent pay increase for all federal legislators, giving themselves a higher salary than 99.5 percent of Canadian wage earners. The vote was 175 to 25, with two members of the New Democratic party, Canada's labor party, supporting the measure.

Although the pay increase has been protested as cutting across the government's own anti-inflation program, this is not viewed as a major obstacle in winning the required endorsement of the governor general and the Senate.

The pay hike will give Prime Minister Trudeau \$67,900 a year, which includes a tax-free expense allowance of \$10,600. Members of Parliament will get \$24,000 in salary plus tax-free allowances of \$10,600 for members of the House of Commons and \$5,300 for senators.

A Canadian worker would have to make \$44,000 to take home the same paycheck as a member of Parliament. The average yearly wage in Canada is \$9,984. It is being eaten away by inflation, which is now running at the rate of about 12 percent.

## Blacks Stage Protest in South African Court

Thirteen Africans arrested in late September 1974 after police broke up demonstrations in support of Frelimo (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique—Mozambique Liberation Front) entered the Pretoria Supreme Court April 21 singing a protest song and shouting, "Power!" They gave clenched-fist salutes to the Africans in the gallery, some of whom returned the salute.

The trial, which had been postponed from



March 12, was put off again until May 5 after attorneys said the defendants needed more time to prepare their cases. The thirteen defendants, who face charges under the Terrorism Act, belong to the South African Students Organization and the Black People's Convention.

### U.S. Air Force Colonel Reveals CIA Plot to Assassinate Castro

L. Fletcher Prouty, a retired air force colonel, revealed April 27 some of the details of a CIA plot to assassinate Fidel Castro. Prouty said that in "late 1959 or early 1960," while he was serving in the Defense Department's Office of Special Operations, he handled a CIA request for a specially equipped air force plane to drop two Cuban counterrevolutionary exiles near Havana.

The plane was flown by CIA-paid mercenaries, and the two assassins were "equipped with a high-powered rifle and telescopic sights." The assassins, Prouty said, "knew how to get to a building in Havana which overlooked a building where Castro passed daily." As far as he knew, the two were picked up shortly after being dropped off.

Prouty also said he was "positive" that former CIA director Richard Helms knew about the plot. Helms, who is now U.S. ambassador to Iran, was at that time in almost total control of the CIA's clandestine operations against the Cuban government, Prouty said.

### Demonstration in New York Demands Better Care for Mentally Retarded

Almost 1,000 mentally retarded persons and their supporters demonstrated in front of New York Governor Hugh Carey's Manhattan office May 2, demanding that a separate government office be established to take care of their special needs. They called on the governor to sign a bill authorizing this. Carey has proposed instead that the Department of Mental Hygiene look after their needs.

Pointing out that Carey's proposal would combine care for the mentally retarded with that of mentally ill persons, State Senator William Conklin said:

"The retarded need training, education and jobs. They are not going to get them on a psychiatrist's couch."

### Gulf Oil Admits \$4 Million Payoff to Officials of Unnamed Country

In a replay of the "bananagate" scandal in which United Brands paid a \$1.25 million bribe to officials in Honduras for tax concessions, it has now been revealed that Gulf Oil spent more than \$4 million bribing officials in an as-yet unnamed country.

According to a report in the May 2 *Wall Street Journal*, Gulf officials admitted the

bribes in secret testimony before the Securities and Exchange Commission. Gulf Chairman B.R. Dorsey asked that secrecy be maintained. He said that public disclosure of the names of the recipients of the cash "contributions" could jeopardize Gulf's investments of as much as \$700 million in the country involved.

On three different occasions, Dorsey said, "I know there were specific and absolute demands made for contributions to a political party. Now that political party still exists, and the leader of that political party is still in office."

Although the country Dorsey referred to was not publicly identified, the *Wall Street Journal* noted that according to Gulf's annual report for 1974, its foreign property investments exceeded \$700 million in only three areas of the world: Canada, Latin America, and Europe. Of the \$792 million invested in Venezuela and Ecuador, the *Journal* pointed out, the amount invested in Venezuela was by far the larger.

### Cold Shoulder for Kenyatta

Reflecting the growing discontent with the Kenyan government and harsh economic conditions, a May Day rally in the port city of Mombassa gave President Jomo Kenyatta a cold reception. After announcing an increase in the national minimum wage, Kenyatta asked: "Why are you not applauding?"

The crowd replied by shouting, "Kidogo! Kidogo!" a word in the Kishwahili language that means small or tiny. Some in the audience shouted a word meaning hunger.

After conferring briefly with advisers, Kenyatta declared that the minimum wage would be increased to about \$50 a month in urban areas. The crowd applauded loudly.

However, in a "clarification" issued by the government news agency after the rally, it was announced that the \$50 figure was a mistake. The increase would actually amount to only \$1.43, bringing the minimum wage up to about \$43 a month.

### 840,000 Jobs Lost Each Year in U.S. Because of Spending for Armaments

Instead of creating more jobs, as the Pentagon claims, the massive amount of money squandered on the U.S. war budget has actually resulted in the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs a year.

This is the conclusion of a state-by-state analysis made by Marion Anderson of the Michigan-based Public Interest Research Group and reported in the April 28 *New York Daily News*.

Anderson found that in the years 1968-72, the average of \$80 billion spent on armaments cost the country 840,000 jobs annually. This was the difference between the number of jobs created by arms spending and the number of jobs that could have



Pierotti/New York Post

been created by eliminating the Pentagon budget and simply earmarking the funds for other, less wasteful, sectors of the capitalist economy.

Of course another point could be made. Simple arithmetic shows that if you eliminate the capitalist middleman, the same \$80 billion would provide incomes of \$10,000 a year to eight million of America's unemployed workers.

### U.S. Unemployment Highest Since 1941

The official U.S. unemployment rate rose to 8.9% in April, the highest since 1941. According to Department of Labor statistics, this reflected an increase of 3.3 million jobless workers since August 1974. Black teen-agers remain the hardest hit, with 40.2% unemployment.

The official unemployment rate, however, does not include those who have given up the search for work. The Department of Labor estimates that 1.1 million workers are in this category, a jump of 73% since last fall. About 30% of these "discouraged" workers are Black and about 70% are women.

### How Cheap Can You Get?

Louisiana's last surviving widow of a soldier who fought in the Civil War almost lost her pension when the state adopted a new constitution January 1. The legislators neglected to maintain the section providing for pensions for the widows of soldiers who fought in the Confederate Army.

When the legislature met in a special session to rectify the oversight, it took pains to see that no money would be "wasted." The new law stipulates that the pension will be discontinued if the ninety-eight-year-old widow remarries.

### Cómo se Formaron Comités en los Cuarteles

[La siguiente es una traducción de la versión en inglés de la entrevista "How Committees Were Set Up in Portugal's Armed Forces" publicada en *Intercontinental Press* el 5 de mayo.

[La entrevista fue concedida a Gerry Foley el 9 de abril en Lisboa por un activista de la organización trotskista portuguesa, la Liga Comunista Internacionalista.

[El entrevistado no ha tenido la oportunidad de revisar ninguna de las dos traducciones que fueron hechas por *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

*Pregunta. ¿Qué pasó en tu cuartel el 11 de marzo, cuando hubo el intento de golpe?*

*Respuesta.* El 11 de marzo los soldados en mi división se enteraron que había aviones pasando por ciertas instalaciones. Mi división, ya que pertenece a la policía militar, tiene características especiales. Es cien por ciento funcional. El personal se reunió en el cuartel y decidió tomar el cuartel mismo, ya que los oficiales no dieron instrucciones.

Los camaradas decidieron montar una guardia para vigilar el cuartel y evitar cualquier desarrollo que pudiera ayudar a los reaccionarios, y vigilar el arsenal donde se guardan los rifles y otras armas. También mantuvieron vigilada a la gente en el área para prevenirse contra cualquier actividad de los oficiales reaccionarios.

Después fueron a ver al comandante y le exigieron que definiera su posición política. Cuando se rehusó a tomar posición, los camaradas soldados exigieron que fuera purgado, al día siguiente fue quitado del mando.

*P. ¿Qué formas de organización surgieron a raíz del golpe abortado?*

*R.* Después del 11 de marzo se llevó a cabo una asamblea general de soldados. No sólo fueron purgados el comandante y su asistente, sino que también fueron expulsados todos los oficiales spinolistas hasta el grado de sargento. Un primo del general Galvão de Melo, que era sargento segundo, también fue purgado.

Los camaradas vieron la necesidad de avanzar y tomar control del cuartel. Decidieron formar varios comités en la asamblea general. Resintieron la falta del derecho de reunirse y discutir dentro del cuartel. Esta necesidad se sintió más agudamente entre algunos escuadrones que se encarga-

ron de vigilar los ministerios y otros lugares. Así es que decidieron formar un comité de educación política. Este comité no podía, por supuesto, dar una educación política completa. Sin embargo se dieron conferencias y se organizaron discusiones donde los soldados podían discutir los eventos principales nacionales así como los internacionales.

Los primeros temas que se trataron fueron los siguientes: la ocupación de los edificios, la ocupación de la tierra que los capitalistas han mantenido fuera de producción, ocupaciones llevadas a cabo por grupos de campesinos armados, que tomaron las armas para defender la tierra que ocuparon; y la necesidad de luchar junto a los obreros.

Se mostraron recortes de periódicos que trataban sobre estas cuestiones, y los camaradas vieron claramente la necesidad de establecer vínculos con los obreros y trabajadores y sus organizaciones independientes tales como las Comissões de Trabalhadores y las Comissões de Moradores.

Uno de los primeros temas de discusión fue la naturaleza del imperialismo, sobre todo el papel que la NATO juega en nuestro país.

*P. ¿Se ha establecido algún vínculo entre los comités en el cuartel y los comités en las fábricas y las vecindades?*

*R.* Aquí no se han desarrollado vínculos como los que se desarrollaron en una base de operaciones que conozco donde los soldados salieron a buscar a las Comissões de Trabalhadores para que les dieran permiso para salir a la calle. Esto no ha pasado en mi cuartel.

Pero los camaradas ven la necesidad de cierto tipo de control sobre las órdenes que reciben para así poder negarse a llevar a cabo órdenes inadecuadas. También han visto la necesidad de efectuar una asamblea general primero, en caso de un nuevo 11 de marzo, cuando pudiera ser necesario movilizarse masivamente, para que los objetivos de la acción puedan ser clarificados.

*P. ¿Qué tipo de relaciones existen entre los diferentes rangos en tu cuartel? ¿Qué le ha pasado a la jerarquía militar?*

*R.* El comandante y su asistente que fueron expulsados, ambos eran tenientes coroneles. Sus puestos fueron ocupados por un mayor y un capitán. Ahora ambos son mayores. El segundo cambio ocurrió

porque se efectuó una fusión entre la Segunda de los Lanceros y la Séptima de la Caballería. Este regimiento combinado se llama simplemente Regimiento de Policía Militar. Esta fue parte de la reorganización del ejército.

Después de la purga, la jerarquía militar se rompió, ya que los oficiales expulsados fueron reemplazados por oficiales menores. Un comité de soldados en el cual también estaban representados los oficiales y sargentos se reunió para escoger un nuevo comandante. De la lista de setenta tenientes coroneles, sólo en dos confiaron.

Uno de ellos había estado en las colonias y el otro participó en la reorganización de la PSP [Policía de Segurança Pública—policía común y corriente] y la GNR [Guarda Nacional Republicana—policía antimotines]. De esta manera la fuerza de la jerarquía no se dejó sentir en el cuartel en esta ocasión, ya que el orden de prioridad no fue respetado al haber seleccionado a un oficial menor para ser el comandante.

Con respecto a la organización del cuartel, tenemos un comité que se encarga de los problemas antes de que surjan. Es decir, es un comité que recaba información. Cuando se enfrentan a algo que va más allá de la esfera de actividad normal de la policía militar, se pone a discusión en una asamblea general. Y cualquier decisión que se tome será tomada por la asamblea general.

Actualmente la relación de fuerzas hace posible llevar a cabo movilizaciones desde adentro. Además, debo agregar, hasta la fecha no hay vínculos entre los oficiales profesionales y los soldados organizados en varios comités, pero hay un sentimiento general aceptado de que los soldados deben de poder confiar en los oficiales.

Con lo que respecta a los oficiales de la milicia [no profesionales], que han estado en el ejército poco tiempo, no han desarrollado ningún vínculo con los soldados. Tienen miedo de ser identificados como izquierdistas. Tienen miedo de que los oficiales profesionales los expulsen. Creo que tienen un punto de vista equivocado. Deberían darse cuenta de que si se unen a los soldados, podrían establecer una relación de fuerzas que haría imposible que los transfirieran a otros regimientos de servicio.

Creo que debo enumerar otros comités de soldados que se formaron. Otro fue un comité de asuntos exteriores. El objetivo de éste era el de vincular a todos los cuarteles, intercambiar información y coordinar las movilizaciones. A este comité se le encargó que se pusiera en contacto con los comités de trabajadores y los comités de moradores en las vecindades.

Estos no son comités clandestinos; tienen una especie de semilegalidad, ya que el personal de oficiales sabe que existen y les permite funcionar. Otro comité fue un



comité deportivo, cuya tarea es asegurar que el regimiento practique deportes tales como judo, volleyball, basketball y football.

Otro era el de "mejoramiento profesional." La razón por la cual se formó este comité es porque después de un cierto período de entrenamiento y especialización, los soldados nunca vuelven a tomar un fusil. Sabemos que en las condiciones actuales, es posible que volvamos a enfrentar otro intento de golpe por los oficiales carreristas, por lo tanto tenemos que estar preparados, tener las armas en buenas condiciones y las tropas tienen que ser entrenadas para defenderse.

Se organizó otro comité para prestar ayuda técnica a las actividades de los soldados, preparar asambleas generales y dar exhibiciones de cine. Un programa de exhibiciones cinematográficas ya empezó. Por ejemplo, esta tarde a las cuatro, exhibieron *Potemkin*.

Otro comité se formó para el bienestar y la salud y para purgar a los derechistas. Este se encarga de los problemas del cuartel tales como la comida y la expulsión de oficiales y sargentos reaccionarios. Los reaccionarios son aquellos que muestran con su comportamiento que no están de acuerdo con una serie de medidas que han establecido un tipo de relación entre los soldados y los oficiales que actualmente debe de ser mantenida.

*P. ¿Están esos comités en realidad funcionando en estos momentos?*

R. Sí, pero todavía no funcionan al cien por ciento. Algunos de ellos acaban de empezar a funcionar, tal como el de educación política y el de salud y bienestar y la purga de los derechistas. Todos los comités han sido establecidos, y sus programas y actividades definidas. Se van a establecer reuniones regulares de estos comités en días definidos para que puedan llevar a cabo este proceso.

Se va a formar un comité para coordinar todas estas actividades a nivel de regimiento y preparar asambleas generales cada dos semanas donde todo este trabajo se discuta.

Debo señalar que la iniciativa viene desde abajo en todo esto. Es un proceso de autorganización obrera, de autocontrol de los trabajadores en uniforme, los camaradas soldados. Pero hay un peligro que estos comités sean incorporados en estructuras como la asamblea general del Movimiento das Forças Armadas [MFA]. Muchos camaradas soldados no se dan cuenta de este problema.

*P. ¿Qué porcentaje de soldados rasos hay en estos comités?*

R. Los soldados aún no están en mayoría.

Los sargentos de la milicia también participan. En dos reuniones del comité de educación política, fue el sentir general que los soldados rasos deberían estar en mayoría en todos estos comités. Llegamos a la conclusión de que la razón por la cual esto no se había logrado era por la incapacidad de movilizar a los soldados en la asamblea para la formación de los comités. Esta no se llevó a cabo de la manera adecuada.

Ahora éstas se están llevando a cabo donde los soldados están, en sus cuarteles, en el comedor de los soldados rasos. Y han visto la necesidad de integrarse a los comités y convertirse en la mayoría. Por ejemplo, se ha llamado a una asamblea para mañana para que estos camaradas se integren a los comités.

*P. ¿Qué posibilidades tienen los oficiales conservadores de utilizar a la policía militar para reprimir las actividades políticas entre los soldados?*

R. En estos momentos no creo que los oficiales conservadores tengan ninguna posibilidad de hacer eso. Por ahora la policía militar no está operando dentro de otros cuarteles, se quedan dentro de sus propios cuarteles, y por lo que respecta a este cuartel, no digo que no haya oficiales reaccionarios. Puede ser que haya algunos que simpatizaron con el intento de golpe del 11 de marzo pero que decidieron ser reservados cuando vieron que la cosa no marchaba bien. Pero no se atreven a levantar la cabeza.

Por el momento no veo obstáculos a la actividad política entre los soldados. Todavía evitan que se vendan los periódicos de los grupos revolucionarios e inclusive los de los reformistas. Pero el tipo de discusiones que mencioné muestran que ya no operamos dentro de la estructura legal tradicional. Estamos discutiendo la ocupación de las casas y las prácticas de los capitalistas que destruyen las casas para mantener los alquileres caros; estamos discutiendo la ocupación de la tierra por campesinos armados. Hemos visto concretamente lo que es NATO. Hemos señalado qué países pertenecen a NATO y cuáles son sus intenciones, qué posibilidades hay de que intervengan en Portugal.

No pueden parar la discusión ahora. Estoy convencido de que si lo hicieran crearían un peligro mayor, porque los soldados se unificarían pidiendo el derecho a discutir.

A los soldados ya no sólo les interesan estas cuestiones, es decir, el derecho a discutir y a organizarse en los cuarteles, sino también problemas tales como porqué no ganan el salario mínimo nacional y porqué los soldados que son llamados al ejército no tienen el derecho de mantener vínculos con sus sindicatos. Otro problema

es que los soldados rasos no tienen el derecho a entrar y salir del cuartel en ropa civil, mientras que los sargentos y los oficiales sí tienen este derecho.

Otro problema concreto es que mientras que la policía militar, la PSP y la GNR pueden viajar gratis en autobuses y trenes, nosotros tenemos que pagar el pasaje. Ganamos 250 escudos al mes [aproximadamente 10 dólares], esto no nos alcanza para la transportación.

*P. ¿Qué probabilidades crees que haya de que se pueda imponer la democracia en las fuerzas armadas, por ejemplo, la elección directa de los oficiales?*

R. Por el momento creo que esa posibilidad es algo remota. Pero lo que no es remoto, como ya dije, es ejercer el control sobre los oficiales. He mencionado la purga y expulsión de comandantes de escuadrón. Esto sucedió en mi regimiento. Pero no veo la posibilidad de imponer la elección de los oficiales en las fuerzas armadas en general, porque la relación de fuerzas varía enormemente. La movilización por ese tipo de demanda no se permitiría.

Sé del caso de un camarada que hizo una pregunta en una *sessão de esclarecimento*, sobre el papel que juega el MFA, ésta causó dudas. En muchos casos oficiales progresistas dirigieron estas sesiones. Pero esta vez fue el comandante mismo. Hubo represión directa contra este camarada. Se le quitó su licencia de fin de semana. No puedo ver el tipo de democratización en el ejército que les permitiera a los soldados elegir a sus propios oficiales.

*P. ¿Es verdad que ya hay un comité en la marina que ejerce control sobre las órdenes de los oficiales? ¿Crees que este ejemplo pueda extenderse?*

R. No veo que esto se vaya a generalizar. Ha habido intentos de organizar asambleas

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generales en los servicios, por ejemplo en la marina. Se está haciendo un intento de lograr una asamblea general de soldados. Pero no sé que tanto podamos lograr.

He explicado cómo esperamos que se empiece a organizar nuestro cuartel. Pero no sé de las fuerzas armadas en general. Porque sabemos que todavía hay muchos oficiales reaccionarios. Hay oficiales reaccionarios en todos los cuarteles.

Por ejemplo, en mi regimiento, aparecieron dos comunicados. Uno era del Grupo Coordinador de Ação Anticomunista. Es un grupo en el norte. Dicen que el MFA es comunista, que son un montón de rojos, y que las sessões de esclarecimiento cumplen la misma función que los Comités Rojos en el ejército ruso.

El otro comunicado también se suponía venir de algunos oficiales, del llamado Movimento Democrático das Forças Armadas. Estas son maniobras para crear divisiones en los cuarteles.

Otro factor es que hasta el intento de golpe del 28 de septiembre, había habido una constante baja en la matriculación en las escuelas militares para el entrenamiento de oficiales profesionales. Después de eso hubo incremento repentino en las matriculaciones. Podríamos sacar varias conclusiones de esto.

Por otro lado, se han hecho grandes avances. Hubo una reunión donde el comandante y su asistente explicaron que el golpe de estado fallido del 16 de marzo de 1974 fue un intento de los spinolistas de descabezar el golpe de los capitanes y explicaron el papel de los oficiales reaccionarios. Ahora los oficiales han tomado la posición de llamar a la "vía portuguesa al socialismo." No creo que estén preparados a retroceder. Sí creo que hay una oportunidad de forzar la elección de los oficiales en los regimientos más politizados, si no es que en el ejército en general.

*P. ¿Qué tanto control político tiene el MFA sobre las bases de las fuerzas armadas? ¿Aceptan los soldados su dirección en forma acrítica?*

R. Hasta ahora, el MFA no tiene control directo en los cuarteles, porque no ha llevado a cabo un programa educativo o hecho cambios en los cuarteles mismos. Creo que están tratando de hacerlo ahora, pero aún no lo han hecho. Ellos dicen ahora que reconocen la necesidad de democratizar el ejército, pero esto no se ha hecho.

La influencia que tienen se siente sólo por medio de las consignas que plantean desde afuera, como la de la necesidad de una alianza entre el MFA y el pueblo. Aparte de las sessões de esclarecimiento y las sessões de dinamização que están llevando a cabo por todo el país no han tenido influencia política. Pero los soldados sí sienten la necesidad de defender al MFA.

*P. En este contexto, ¿qué impacto ha tenido la campaña electoral de la LCI? ¿Ha tenido impacto alguno en tu cuartel?*

R. La LCI aún no ha llevado una campaña destinada a las fuerzas armadas, aunque tengo entendido que tal campaña ha sido planeada. Hasta ahora el impacto de la campaña no ha sido muy grande.

Pero la LCI tiene una implantación en la vecindad donde está mi cuartel. Participa en el comité de moradores. Ha habido ocupaciones. La policía militar ha dado apoyo tácito, de hecho no ha habido represión. Algunos camaradas, inclusive camaradas reformistas, me han dicho que la LCI tiene razón al respecto de algunas medidas concretas que deberían de ser llevadas a cabo por un frente obrero único. Esta no es una situación general pero sí incluye a un determinado número de individuos en el cuartel, una media docena de personas con las que hablo regularmente. Entienden la necesidad de que haya vínculos entre los comités de soldados, los comités de obreros y los comités de moradores. Ellos ven que sólo unificando a los soldados y a los trabajadores se puede crear una sociedad nueva. Aun los camaradas reformistas que mencioné pueden ver, no en la práctica sino en la discusión ideológica, que la única solución es un Portugal socialista.

*P. ¿Cuáles son las consignas centrales de la LCI con respecto al MFA?*

R. Hay dos consignas centrales, tal como lo veo. La consigna "Trabajadores, soldados, la misma lucha" tiene la misma dinámica que la consigna del frente único obrero.

*P. ¿Cuál es la segunda consigna?*

R. El llamado a un frente único obrero.

*P. ¿Cuál es la relación de fuerzas en tu cuartel entre la derecha y la izquierda, y entre los varios grupos de izquierda?*

R. En estos momentos no podemos hablar de relación de fuerzas entre la derecha y la izquierda. La derecha no puede levantar la cabeza. Mencioné el caso del primo del general Galvão de Melo. Una asamblea general decidió purgar a esta persona y no tolerar su presencia en el regimiento ni un solo minuto más. Eso muestra la relación de fuerzas entre la derecha y la izquierda.

En la izquierda, la relación de fuerzas es primero entre los reformistas y la extrema izquierda. La fuerza más poderosa en mi cuartel es el Partido Comunista. Pero cuando hablamos con estos camaradas, vemos que entienden la dinámica de todo una serie de consignas, de la lucha que es

necesario llevar a cabo.

Entre las fuerzas no reformistas, hay una línea maoísta y una línea revolucionaria marxista. Los marxistas revolucionarios son una corriente pequeña, quizá dos o tres en mi cuartel. Entre los maoístas, el grupo más prominente en el cuartel es el MRPP [Movimento Reorganizativo do Partido do Proletariado]. Estas son las fuerzas reformistas y de extrema izquierda que existen en el cuartel. Pero esto no puede ser tomado fuera de contexto.

Los camaradas que pertenecen a todos estos grupos están unidos en los distintos comités. Por ejemplo, en el comité en el que trabajo, el de educación política, los camaradas reformistas, los camaradas maoístas que apoyan la línea del MRPP y los camaradas trotskistas participan en él. Nosotros seguimos la línea del frente único obrero. Discutimos antes de tomar una decisión. Hay problemas debido a las diferentes concepciones ideológicas. Los camaradas del MRPP son profundamente sectarios. No aceptan ninguna otra explicación de los hechos que la que les da su propio grupo. Pero cuando tratamos con los problemas prácticos que enfrentan los soldados, entienden en la práctica lo que es el frente único obrero.

*P. ¿Cuántos soldados participan en el comité de educación política en tu cuartel?*

R. Hay aproximadamente doce o trece soldados y sargentos de la milicia. No hay oficiales de la milicia. Estos doce o trece se reúnen antes de hacer cualquier trabajo político y discuten políticamente. De estos, seis o siete son soldados rasos. No hay mucha diferencia entre los soldados rasos y los sargentos de la milicia.

*P. ¿Cuántos hay de cada una de esas dos categorías en tu base?*

R. Hay aproximadamente 500 soldados rasos. Hay de 80 a 100 sargentos. Tenemos aproximadamente 25 oficiales, es decir oficiales de la milicia, y hay alrededor de 6 oficiales profesionales.

*P. ¿Hay algún organismo que centralice la información a nivel de las fuerzas armadas en su conjunto?*

R. Hay al nivel del MFA. A nivel de la base no hay. Pero hay contactos entre los regimientos más avanzados políticamente. Es en base a esto que nuestro comité de relaciones exteriores funciona.

*P. ¿Cuántos ejemplares del periódico de la LCI vendes en tu cuartel?*

R. Como ya mencioné, aún no se permite vender periódicos de izquierda dentro del cuartel. Pero yo vendo alrededor de cinco



periódicos de la LCI a los camaradas con los que discuto políticamente. Con lo que respecta al periódico *Frente de Soldados e Marinheiros Revolucionários*, sólo he visto un ejemplar. Sin embargo este periódico no se vende sino que se distribuye gratuitamente. Se dejan ejemplares en los cuarteles para que la gente lo lea, como una forma de iniciar discusiones.

*P. ¿Hay diferencias entre los varios sectores de las fuerzas armadas? Por ejemplo, hay muchos soldados negros con sus propios problemas?*

*R.* Entiendo por qué haces esa pregunta. Ciertamente ése es un problema en los Estados Unidos. Pero no aquí. En mi cuartel, donde hay más de 500 hombres, hay sólo un negro, y nunca ha tenido ningún problema con nadie.

*P. ¿Hay diferencias entre los soldados de procedencia campesina y los soldados de procedencia urbana?*

*R.* Esta diferencia es notable. Los elementos más politizados son los que vienen de Oporto o Lisboa, que tienen contacto con varias luchas. Los otros, es frecuente que sean indiferentes a las cuestiones políticas. Pero esta indiferencia no prevaleció el 11 de marzo. Todos los soldados entendieron la necesidad de resistir el intento de golpe. La movilización fue total.

*P. Los soldados aún siguen siendo enviados a las colonias, por ejemplo a Angola. ¿Cuál es la actitud de los soldados ante ese problema?*

*R.* Los soldados no han tomado ninguna actitud hacia este problema. En el período después del 25 de abril de 1974, cuando las luchas aún se estaban llevando a cabo con los spinolistas, que se oponían a la descolonización y querían una forma más clara de neocolonialismo, cuando todavía se hacían envíos masivos de tropas a las colonias, hubo algunas luchas. Algunos grupos de soldados se rehusaron a ir.

Ahora sólo un pequeño porcentaje se está enviando, y los soldados no se están resistiendo. A los soldados no les gusta ir a Angola; hay luchas en la calle en esos lugares. Pero el período de servicio militar se está reduciendo y se reduce más si se hace el servicio en ultramar. Una compañía de la policía militar, por ejemplo, está próxima a ir a Angola. Estos camaradas dicen: "Bueno, tendremos que estar ahí alrededor de ocho meses, pero podremos salir del ejército después de sólo catorce meses."

*P. ¿Creen los soldados que el problema de las colonias ha sido resuelto? ¿Creen que la guerra en las colonias ya terminó?*

*R.* No ha habido mucha discusión sobre el colonialismo en mi cuartel. Las personas con las que he hablado personalmente piensan que la lucha continuará en una forma u otra.

*P. ¿Piensan los soldados que hay una verdadera posibilidad de intervención extranjera en Portugal?*

*R.* Sí piensan que hay posibilidad de intervención extranjera. Ha habido una discusión sobre una posible intervención de la NATO en Portugal. Pero los soldados piensan que no hubo intervención el 11 de marzo porque no fue favorable para los reaccionarios. Piensan que si los reaccionarios pueden crear un clima de guerra civil, esto sería usado como una justificación para una intervención de la NATO.

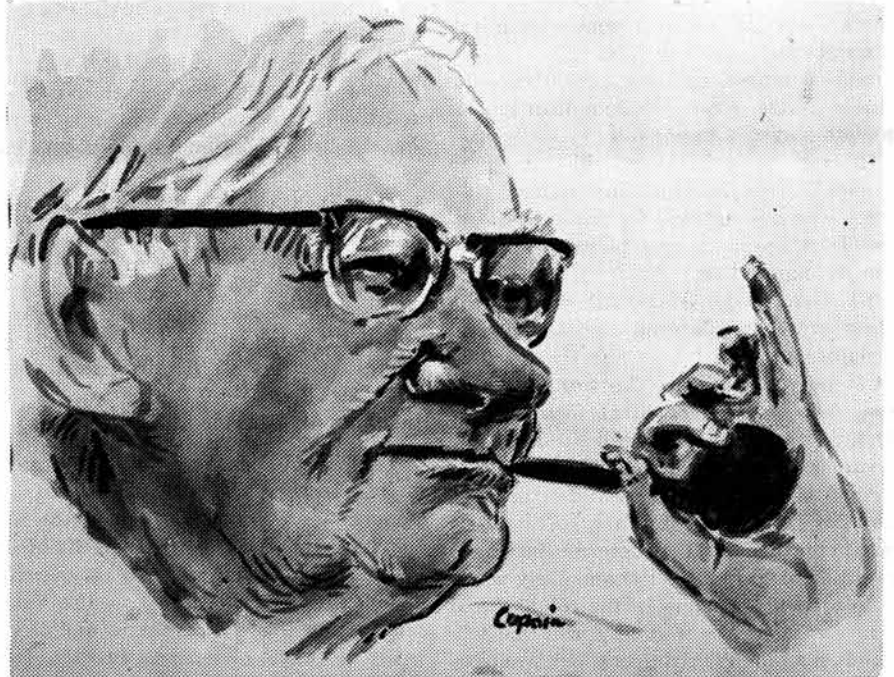
*P. ¿Se dan cuenta los soldados que actualmente están en la vanguardia del proceso revolucionario mundial?*

*R.* Sí, sí se dan cuenta.

*P. ¿Crees tú que si hubiera una intervención por parte de las fuerzas armadas de los Estados Unidos, los soldados portugueses estarían dispuestos a dar la lucha?*

*R.* Sí. Estoy seguro que si hubiera una intervención ya fuera por parte de la NATO o los Estados Unidos, los soldados portugueses darían una lucha masiva hasta la muerte. Y dado a la lucha en las colonias, posiblemente hay alrededor de un millón de hombres en este país que han tenido entrenamiento militar. □

## 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.

The drawings, of various sizes, include portraits of Hugo Blanco, Malcolm X, James P. Cannon, Che Guevara, Cesar Chavez, Leon Trotsky, and many more, some of which are suitable for framing.

A limited number of copies of this collection of drawings are now available for only \$5.

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## Vietnam: A Victory for All Oppressed

[The following statement was adopted May 1 by the National Committee of the Socialist Workers party, meeting in New York City.]

\* \* \*

On this May Day the world working class is celebrating the history-making victory of the Vietnamese rebels, who have succeeded in expelling the last contingent of imperialist armed forces from their country.

The Socialist Workers party hails this victory, which has come after decades of heroic struggle against a succession of imperialist powers. The triumph is a powerful reaffirmation of what May Day itself represents to the workers movement: worldwide solidarity of all the oppressed. This solidarity found powerful expression in the international antiwar movement, the strongest component being right here in the United States, where the American revolutionists played a major role.

The victory in Vietnam will inspire the peoples of the colonial and semicolonial world who are fighting for national liberation from economic and political domination by imperialism.

It is a victory for all those throughout the world who are fighting oppression and exploitation.

For nearly ten years the war in Southeast Asia was the central focus of the struggle between imperialism and the advancing world revolution. The U.S. rulers decided to contain the revolution in Vietnam by American military means and entrenchment of a counterrevolutionary government in South Vietnam. They wanted to show the peoples in the colonial and semicolonial areas that any who tried to stand up against U.S. imperialism would be crushed. But although Washington's mighty military machine pounded this tiny country year after year, it could not defeat the popular resistance.

The victory of the Vietnamese people over imperialism was long delayed by the policies of Moscow and Peking. In 1945, after the defeat of Japanese imperialism, the Vietminh swept into power. Under Stalin's agreements at Yalta and Potsdam, however, Indochina was to remain in the imperialist "sphere of influence." The Vietminh, whose leaders were trained in the Stalinist school, accepted the reentry of imperialist forces, which ushered in the

next phase of the war.

After the French were defeated by the Vietminh in 1954, both Moscow and Peking pressured the Vietnamese to accept the division of their country and the creation of the artificial "country" of South Vietnam, this time under Washington's aegis.

Moscow and Peking refused from the beginning of Washington's escalation to provide adequate material aid for the Vietnamese rebels or to take the initiative in organizing international mass actions in their behalf. This betrayal was condemned in 1967 by Che Guevara, who warned that the Vietnamese were "tragically alone" in their struggle and that in addition to the guilt of U.S. imperialism, "they are likewise guilty who at the decisive moment vacillated in making Vietnam an inviolable part of socialist territory. . . ."

This treachery took its most blatant form in the spring of 1972, when Nixon was toasted in Moscow while he was carrying out the brutal bombing, mining, and blockade of North Vietnam. It was under this pressure that the Vietnamese were forced to accept the continued presence of the Thieu puppet regime in the 1973 accords.

But despite these obstacles, which greatly increased the cost in blood and suffering for the Vietnamese people, their revolutionary aspirations pressed the struggle forward.

### International Movement

The heroic resistance of the Vietnamese helped promote the radicalization of a new generation of youth throughout the world. An international antiwar movement developed, with hundreds of thousands of demonstrators taking to the streets throughout the United States and in cities such as Tokyo, Melbourne, London, Berlin, Mexico City, and Paris.

The brutality of the Pentagon's military onslaught revealed for the whole world the terrible lengths to which Wall Street will go in order to maintain and advance the capitalist system. Millions of Vietnamese were killed. One million Cambodians, one-seventh of the population, were killed or wounded. The countryside of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos was devastated.

The military cost alone for bringing about this death and destruction amounts to an estimated \$400 billion. More than 56,000 American soldiers lost their lives.

As the U.S. military commitment deepened, and the economic and social costs of the war at home rose, the rulers found it harder and harder to use the old anticommunist arguments to justify their brutality. At each turn, they were exposed as brazen liars.

Washington put all its political and military authority on the line in Vietnam, but the White House strategists miscalculated badly. They underestimated the determination of the Indochinese people to be rid of foreign domination and their capacity for struggle to achieve that goal. And they underestimated the deep antiwar sentiments of the American people and their ability to see through the government's lies about its aims.

The defeat of the imperialists in Vietnam thus represents something new. It is the first war of such size that the United States, the world's strongest imperialist power, has lost. It is also the first war that has led to the development of a mass antiwar movement inside the United States. It is this overt antiwar sentiment that left the White House with no choice but to accept defeat and to withdraw to a new line of encirclement of the colonial revolution in Southeast Asia.

President Ford and others in ruling-class circles are bemoaning the rise of what they call "isolationism." They are trying to persuade the American people to support the "internationalism" of a world police force, of B-52s, of secret wars, and of organizations like NATO and the CIA.

### A Common Enemy

But the American people's opposition to imperialist military adventures is not "isolationism." Just the opposite. It is part of the internationalism of the oppressed and exploited all over the globe who have a common interest in struggling against a common enemy.

As a result of the political education the American people have gained from the war and the antiwar movement, the options open to the top cops of international capitalism have become more restricted. They now must bring into their calculations the likely opposition of masses of Americans—including GIs—to new U.S. military operations to prop up dictatorships threatened by popular rebellions.

They can no longer rely on the American people bowing passively to the defense of imperialism under the banner of anticommunism. As all the opinion polls now show, the American people are opposed not only to intervention in Vietnam but also to U.S. military intervention in other areas of the world.

The antiwar movement played a crucial role in helping to bring about this change in American political consciousness. This



movement began ten years ago as a small minority of the population. But it won over the majority of the American people.

### Role of the SWP

The Socialist Workers party is proud of the role it played in leading and organizing the antiwar movement in the United States. From the very beginning, the SWP recognized the importance of this movement and threw its energies into it.

In the November 22, 1965, issue of the *Militant*, Fred Halstead, a leader of the Socialist Workers party and a prominent antiwar organizer, predicted the course the antiwar movement would follow:

"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 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 on 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 understanding of the significance and impact of the antiwar movement guided the activities of the Socialist Workers party throughout the course of the war. Building this movement was seen as our foremost task.

### Perspective for Vietnam

What is the perspective now opening before the Vietnamese masses with the defeat of U.S. intervention?

The Vietnamese people have been fighting for more than thirty years for national and social liberation. This irrepressible struggle—generated by the intolerable conditions of life of the masses of peasants and workers—took its first leap forward with the Vietnamese defeat of Japanese imperialism at the end of World War II. It continued after the war, first against the French, and then against the United States.

This fight for national liberation against imperialist domination was closely intertwined with popular struggles for an end to repression, an end to onerous taxation, for

land reform, and for other social gains.

The leaders of the Vietnamese liberation forces have often compared their struggle to that of the revolutionary fight of the American colonies against Britain two centuries ago.

The parallel is valid, but unlike the American Revolution, which occurred when capitalism was on the rise as a world system, the Vietnamese revolution is occurring when world capitalism is in its death agony. The fight for national liberation in Vietnam has been a fight *against* the most powerful capitalist countries and their puppet regimes, and it has an anticapitalist logic and potential.

The indigenous capitalist and landlord class within Vietnam was so stunted by the imperialist domination of the country that it has always been completely dependent on the imperialists for support. This has meant that the struggle against foreign capitalism has also been a struggle against its domestic agents and counterparts.

With the defeat of the Saigon army, and with Washington's options severely limited by antiwar sentiment at home, the objective possibility now exists for achieving the long-strived-for goal of national unification and self-determination of Vietnam. The objective conditions also exist for a social revolution to abolish the entire system of exploitation for private profit.

The needs of the masses of workers and peasants of Vietnam run directly counter to the interests of the landlords and capitalists and their military machine, which supported the U.S.-created puppet government. A workers and peasants government independent of these elements is needed to carry out such tasks as land reform, lowering of taxes, and reunification of the North and South.

The upsurge in South Vietnam and the crumbling of the puppet Saigon government have already carried the Provisional Revolutionary Government well beyond its stated program of "reconciliation" with the now collapsed Saigon regime. "Reconciliation" with the remaining capitalist-landlord forces is impossible without going against the desires and interests of the masses of peasants and workers.

After years of suffering and war, the Vietnamese masses deserve the full fruits of their victory. The task ahead is unification with the workers state of North Vietnam and the establishment of proletarian democracy. A government based on soviets as exemplified in the October 1917 revolution in Russia would inspire the masses throughout Asia and throughout the world and would bring appreciably closer the victory of socialism on a global scale.

This is the perspective we as revolutionary socialists support as we celebrate the victories now being won in Vietnam. □

## Israeli Trotskyists Hold Third Congress

[The following statement was issued by the Revolutionary Communist League (formerly Matzpen Marxist), the Israeli Trotskyist organization. Translation from the French is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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The third congress of Matzpen Marxist was held in Jerusalem on February 21 and 22. The agenda was as follows: the political and organizational balance sheet since the second congress (July 1973); discussion of new programmatic documents and statutes; the tasks of the organization in face of the crisis of Israeli society; and election of a new leadership.

The congress was preceded by a long period of discussion and a special general assembly in September to facilitate clarification of the subjects under discussion. During the debate two tendencies were organized around a number of programmatic documents that were published in internal bulletins and served as the basis of congress resolutions. The discussion dealt with the most fundamental points, among others: the nature of the Arab revolution and the nature of the state of Israel, the

working class in Israel and the class struggle in Israel, and the concept of Arab unity.

It is no secret that the differences were profound and had to a certain extent paralyzed the organization in recent months. In order to resolve the political crisis that the organization was going through, we had to carry out a thoroughgoing political discussion, even to the extent of reducing our political intervention, in order to enable the congress to adopt clear resolutions on the questions in dispute.

Many persons outside our organization gleefully rubbed their hands and predicted a split. They were incapable of understanding that such a political debate was the logical consequence of the new situation created by the October war *for the entire left*. Nor did they understand that only an organization functioning according to the norms of democratic centralism could conclude the debate without undergoing a split, within the framework of democratic discussion and resolutions taken democratically by a congress. The unfolding of the debate and the conclusions of the congress can serve as an example for the whole left

on how a democratic debate can be conducted without damaging the unity of the organization or its ability to function on a clear political line defined by the majority.

The congress opened by commemorating the memory of our comrade Jabra Nicola (A. Said), who died two months ago, and by reading greetings from the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, from our comrades of the Revolutionary Communist Group of Lebanon, and from other groups linked with the Fourth International. After that a presiding committee was elected and the final agenda of the congress was adopted.

On all points where two opposing resolutions were presented, the discussion time was divided equally between the two tendencies. After a discussion lasting seven hours, the programmatic documents were put to a vote; the majority of the congress voted for the three programmatic documents presented by the "Revolutionary Communist Tendency":

- The document "The Arab Revolution, Balance Sheet and Perspectives," prepared by the leaderships of the groups supporting the Fourth International in the whole Arab region;

- Some brief theses added to this document, to clarify certain points;

- The theses on Israeli society and the class struggle in Israel.

These documents will now serve as the programmatic base for our organization. In addition to these documents, the congress adopted unanimously the report by the Revolutionary Communist Tendency on the "Perspectives for Building the Revolutionary Organization in Israel." The report put forward the following priorities for our political work: stepping up our activity in propaganda and political education, directing our intervention more toward the masses and no longer primarily toward the student youth, gearing our newspaper to this objective, and reorganizing the structures of the organization.

The congress also discussed the situation facing the International in the world and particularly in the Arab region. New statutes were adopted as well as a resolution changing the name of the organization to Revolutionary Communist League. Before electing a new Central Committee and a Control Commission, the congress sent greetings of solidarity to:

- The Trotskyists in Argentina and Spain, who are today victims of severe repression.

- Rohan Wijeweera, leader of the JVP [Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna—People's Liberation Front] in Ceylon, condemned to life imprisonment by the repressive Bandaranaike regime.

- Abraham Serfaty, Moroccan revolutionary leader, indicted for his revolutionary activity against the Hassan regime.

- Israel Shahak, against whom the Israeli government and press are waging an unprecedented campaign.

In adopting clear political resolutions and electing a new leadership, the third congress of the MM-RCL put an end to a long

## 'Daily World' to the Rescue

## Stalinists Explain That Blade in Back of Kurds

By David Frankel

One of the more sordid aspects of Soviet policy in the Middle East has been Moscow's support to the crushing of the Kurdish rebellion in Iraq. In view of the repercussions, the U.S. Communist party ran three articles in a row this March in order to explain why knifing the Kurds in the back was really a service to humanity.

In the March 21 issue of the American CP's *Daily World*, Tom Foley, unwilling to admit that people in the CP have been asking questions, wrote:

"Many people in the U.S. are confused about the Kurdish problem in Iraq. They remember the long (1961-70) Kurdish war waged earlier in Iraq, in which the Kurdish forces were also led by [Mustafa al-] Barzani. During that war, there was a certain sympathy for just Kurdish aspirations among progressive people here and abroad."

Indeed there was. For instance, the Soviet news agency Tass issued a statement on June 15, 1963, saying:

"No honest person in the world and no state that stands for respect for UN principles can fail to raise their voices in resolute protest against the brutal policy and actions of the present Iraqi leaders with regard to the Kurdish people."

As far as the Kurds are concerned, not much has changed since then. Although Kurds make up 20 to 25 percent of Iraq's population, less than 7 percent of the university students in Iraq come from the Kurdish areas.

Only 3 percent of Iraqi industry is located in Kurdish areas. Oil refineries and iron and steel plants have been built outside Kurdistan, although the raw materials for them come from Kurdish areas.

For the Stalinists, all this can now be forgotten. What counts in their eyes is that the Iraqi government signed a fifteen-year treaty with Moscow in April 1972 and that two members of the Iraqi CP were brought into the cabinet the following month.

The essence of the Stalinist argument is that previously Iraq had a reactionary government. Now, they say, a leftist regime has come to power, and the Kurdish

political crisis. Now the task is to put into practice the political line adopted by the congress and to continue to build, on firmer foundations, the revolutionary organization in Israel. In spite of the difficulties, we are certain we will succeed in this task. □

struggle is therefore playing into the hands of imperialism; in fact, they claim it is directly inspired by imperialism.

Foley cites an article by the head of the Iraqi CP that argues, "The attempts of the imperialist oil monopolies to retain their hold on our country have been frustrated; so international reaction is now pinning its hopes on the right wing of the Kurdish movement. The latter, as we know, are hostile to the progressive political line of the national authority, resist social changes, especially the agrarian reform, and are openly anti-Communist. The anti-Soviet tendencies of the Kurdish rightists gladden reactionaries of all hues."

According to the Stalinists, the Barzani leadership initiated the Kurdish revolt "due to its exploiting interests and in response to imperialist and reactionary pressures."

But Barzani has been the recognized leader of the Kurdish fight against national oppression for decades. In 1932 he led a revolt that was put down with the help of the British air force. Iraq at that time was still virtually a colony of British imperialism, and there was no "agrarian reform" or "imperialist and reactionary pressures" to explain Barzani's action.

Was Barzani acting as an agent of imperialism and international reaction when he led the army of the Kurdish Mahabad Republic against Iranian, Iraqi, and British troops in 1946? If so, why was he welcomed in the Soviet Union and given asylum there for eleven years?

The Kurdish movement supported the overthrow of the proimperialist Iraqi monarchy in 1958 and Barzani returned to Iraq from the Soviet Union. Although not a Marxist, Barzani has been in the forefront of a struggle against oppression.

In disowning this struggle by using the pretext that it has a right-wing leadership, the Stalinists are violating the elementary democratic right of the Kurds to self-determination. They are subordinating the rights of the Kurds and the interests of the Arab revolution to the governmental relations between the Soviet bureaucracy and the Iraqi Baathist regime. □