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Israeli Bombers Deliver a Message of 'Peace'

By David Frankel

Shortly after 10:00 in the morning on December 2, thirty Israeli jets turned east over the Mediterranean Sea and headed for Lebanon. Operating in groups of six, wave after wave of U.S.-supplied warplanes bombed and rocketed the people on the ground. Within an hour 75 persons had been killed and 160 wounded. It was the highest toll in seven years of such Israeli raids.

In Tel Aviv, Israeli military officials reported that all their aircraft returned safely. They talked about hitting "terrorist bases," and insisted that "the terrorists can't enjoy immunity."

These ghoulies could have given lessons to Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard Nixon on how to slaughter defenseless people while talking about the need for peace. Among the "terrorist bases" attacked by the Israeli planes was Nabatiyeh, a town of 50,000 in southern Lebanon. Surrounding villages were also hit. *New York Times* correspondent James M. Markham went to Kharbat Toul, a "community of about 10 families of tenant farmers." He reported:

"Two grizzled men worked on a length of waterpipe in one of the huge craters around the farm buildings. A dead black and white cow lay in the rubble of what had been a barn bulging with tobacco and hay."

The Palestinian refugee camp at Nabatiyeh was also attacked, and a primary school there destroyed. Markham described the case of six-year-old Assia Salame, whose mother and sister were killed at Nabatiyeh. He was told that "the Lebanese girl had been hit in the eye, arms and legs when a round and shiny 'ball' dropped during the raids exploded in her hands.

"A number of people told a visitor here that the Israelis had dropped objects that—according to their descriptions—were anti-personnel bombs."

In the north of Lebanon the Nahr al-Bared and Baddawi refugee camps near Tripoli were bombed and strafed. These camps house about 20,000 persons. The main Lebanese oil refinery in Tripoli was apparently another "terrorist base" in the eyes of the Israelis. It was set afire by the attackers.

On December 5 Daniel P. Moynihan, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, announced that while the Ford administration would "neither condone nor excuse" the Israeli air attacks against Lebanon, it would not back any resolution in the United

Nations that did not also condemn attacks by Palestinian guerrillas in Israel. This seemingly evenhanded stand against violence in general—taken while billions of dollars of U.S. arms-aid continues to pour into Israel—equates the individual acts of resistance by Palestinians fighting against their oppression with the terrorism of the Israeli oppressors.

The truth is that the real terrorist organization in the Middle East is the Israeli state. It drove 1.5 million Palestinians out of their homeland, and now follows a policy of calculated mass murder in hopes of terrorizing its victims into giving up the struggle against their dispossession.

Israel's Isolation

Attacks such as the recent one on Lebanon have not succeeded in intimidating the Palestinians, but they have helped to deepen Israel's international isolation. The December 2 raid, in fact, was carried out as part of Premier Yitzhak Rabin's answer to a diplomatic defeat.

Rabin chose the raid as a response to the November 30 vote in the UN Security Council to hold a debate on the Middle East in January that will include representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization. An Israeli military spokesman said that the attack on Lebanon underlined the government's policy of fighting Palestinian guerrillas "only on the battlefield," and not politically in the United Nations.

The occasion for the Security Council vote was the expiration of the mandate for the UN truce force on the Golan Heights. The Syrian regime had demanded that renewal of the mandate be linked to the Security Council debate.

The Rabin government asked Washington to veto the resolution, insisting that it was a step in the direction of recognizing the PLO. When the Ford administration declined, right-wing forces called on Rabin to expel the UN troops from Israeli-held territory—an act that would probably have led rapidly to war. But the Israeli regime was in no position to do this without U.S. backing. "Rarely have Israelis felt more frustrated and alone," Terence Smith reported in the December 3 *New York Times*. The regime was forced to take other steps instead.

On December 1 the Israeli cabinet decided that it would proceed with the establish-

ment of new settlements on the Golan Heights, which were seized from Syria during the June 1967 Middle East war. This was a calculated provocation. The December 2 *New York Times* reported in an unsigned dispatch from Jerusalem that although details had not yet been released, "a minimum of four new settlements would be authorized in the near future."

The writer added "that plans were being drawn up for 20 to 30 more settlements to be established on the Golan Heights, on the West Bank of the Jordan and in the Gaza-Rafa area during the next few years."

During the last eight and a half years, Israel has constructed fifty-five settlements in the occupied territories. "These settlements," said Terence Smith in the November 13 *New York Times*, "which range in size from paramilitary agricultural hamlets on the Golan Heights to incipient cities, represent the reality of Israeli policy. They are the tangible evidence of Israel's determination to carve out new borders of the territory taken in 1967."

The *Times* complained in a December 3 editorial about the establishment of more settlements, noting that "this practice is coming to resemble deliberate territorial expansionism."

Greater Flexibility Urged

Israel's isolation has prompted both the Ford administration and the so-called doves in its own political structure to press for greater flexibility. "Former Foreign Minister Abba Eban and leading legislators have argued that Israel must do something to reverse the negative image it is getting as a result of its refusal to consider any negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organization under any circumstances," the December 2 *New York Times* reported.

The *Times* printed four editorials in six days on the same theme. It was seconded by the *Washington Post*, which took note in its December 2 editorial of the State Department's desire "for some way to bring the Palestinians into the search for a settlement."

The *Post* recalled the testimony of Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Harold H. Saunders, who presented a policy paper before a congressional committee November 12. "What is needed as a first step," he said, "is a diplomatic process which will help bring forth a reasonable definition of Palestinian interests."

The *Post* editors commented: "By 'reasonable' Washington meant a Palestinian position that includes curbing terror and accepting Israel."

Five of the twenty-one cabinet ministers in the Israeli government have come out in favor of negotiating with any Palestinian group that agrees to support the existence of the Israeli state within "secure and recognized borders," and to renounce the

use of terrorism against Israel.

The "doves" offer to talk to the Palestinians if they will first renounce their right to self-determination and promise not to struggle against their oppression. There are some who believe that such talks would lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank of the Jordan River and in the Gaza Strip, both currently occupied by Israel. Although such a possibility cannot be ruled out, the Rabin government's decision to build new settlements and its savage attack on Lebanon were meant to convey its attitude on this question.

There can be little doubt that the imperialist rulers in Washington would like to draw the Palestinian leadership into some kind of Mideast deal. So far, however, the Ford administration has not gone beyond the Israeli "doves" in its proposals, and there is no evidence that it is really in favor of the idea of establishing a Palestinian state. Such a proposal, in any case, would be held in reserve as a maximum concession from Washington's point of view.

The calculations of the imperialists were spelled out in a *New York Times* editorial December 2 that said: "The politics of the Palestinian movement—including within the P.L.O. itself—are so fragile and fragmented that, at the first sign of being taken seriously, a wide range of interests and settlement proposals would likely come into the open."

The *Times* editors repeated the point on December 7, arguing that "once a negotiating process actually begins, extreme positions on both sides are whittled down in normal give-and-take of diplomacy."

It must be emphasized that even if the maximum concession of a Palestinian state alongside Israel were granted, the basic problem in the Middle East would remain. Because it was created at the expense of the Palestinian people, the Israeli state is irrevocably tied to imperialism. It depends for its survival upon the weakness and backwardness of the Arab world.

In the long run, the existence of the Israeli colonial-settler state is incompatible with the most elementary demands of the Arab masses for social and economic progress and independence from imperialist domination. The Israeli leadership, including the "doves," are well aware of this fact. That is why they continue in their bloody attempts to terrorize the Palestinian people while talking about their desire for peace.

If All Else Fails

TORONTO, Dec. 5 (Reuters)—Ontario information officers were carefully briefed on how to handle the news media before the provincial elections last September.

A report on their briefing, in an information officers' newsletter just published, says: "In a crisis situation the best policy is honesty—but try everything else first."

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Aftermath of the Attempted Ultraleft Coup

By Gerry Foley

Since the November 25 ultraleft putsch, which it smashed in short order, the Portuguese military regime has moved rapidly to take advantage of its victory.

According to Communist party deputies in the Constituent Assembly, plainclothes cops arrested leftist militants in Oporto who were trying to build a united-front demonstration. The police did not even bother to identify themselves. They just pointed pistols at the workers and hauled them off to jail, where, the CP deputies charged, they threatened the prisoners with death.

The only place protests were lodged against this was on the floor of the Constituent Assembly. Last summer, the Socialist party deputies managed to establish the principle that this body has the right to investigate governmental actions. At the time, the CP opposed this. When one SP deputy demanded an explanation of the illegal arrest and imprisonment of a Maoist, the CP representatives even marched out, giving the clenched-fist salute, in protest against this "insult to the MFA."¹

Whether the CP will now defend the democratic rights it sneered at during its campaign for "direct democracy" and "revolutionary authority" remains to be seen. Yet the freedom and personal safety of its own members and all working-class and socialist activists may, to a large extent, hinge on what the CP does in this respect.

The government's intentions are clear: On November 30, President Costa Gomes called all the legally recognized parties to the Belém palace, including the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI—Internationalist Communist League, the Portuguese sympathizing group of the Fourth International). According to the official Portuguese news agency, he demanded: (1) that the parties call on their members and sympathizers to turn in all arms and radio transmitters; (2) that they prevent any demonstrations or other functions that might "disrupt the public order"; (3) that they "stimulate productivity, without which the socialist revolution can have no viability."

A purge of the news media has already struck deep. On December 5, the government confirmed the "dissolution" of all the administrations and "collective bodies" on the nationalized newspapers.

1. Movimento das Forças Armadas (Armed Forces Movement).

Two Oporto papers in which the government gained a controlling interest after nationalization of the banks were allowed to begin republishing when the state of siege was lifted December 1. They were *O Comércio*, dominated by rightists, and *Jornal de Notícias*, where the CP had some influence but did not dominate.

The CP-dominated Lisbon papers remained shut down, and indications are that they will not reappear unless the CP and left journalists are removed or bow to the government. The most Stalinist of the evening papers, *Diário de Lisboa*, has argued, however, that two-thirds of its capital is held by private stockholders and that therefore it should be exempted from the government's measures.

República, which was taken over in May by ultraleftists supported by the CP, continues to publish, since formally the majority of its stock is in private hands. It is maintained by a de facto coalition of far-left tendencies.

The government has sought to justify its measures against the CP-dominated press by saying that the reporting was heavily partisan and that as a result the circulation of these publications plummeted and the state had to pick up the tab for the resulting financial losses.

Unfortunately, the government's statements are true, and everyone who has followed these papers knows it. Not only were they larded with Stalinist propaganda, they were used outright as instruments of CP policy, to build demonstrations and magnify their effect.

After the fall of Vasco Gonçalves, when the position of the CP administrations and journalists became uncertain, this Stalinist rhetoric was heated to a glowing red. Ultraleftists on these staffs also followed the example of the Stalinist mandarins more or less, taking advantage of what they evidently thought was their chance to "teach the masses."

Cunhal Runs for Cover

The CP leadership must have known that this could not last. But they chose to encourage these deluded journalists for the sake of short-term objectives. When the crunch came, it was every man for himself.

"Even the Communist Party secretary general, Alvaro Cunhal, appeared in no mood to defend the far-left press," Marvin

Howe cabled December 5 from Lisbon to the *New York Times*. The dispatch continued:

"He went so far as to accuse some of the press organs of being pushed by 'sectarian and leftist propaganda' and said that the Communist Party had warned them against this.

"We have stated several times that if by chance the Portuguese Communist Party ran the press, the reports of some papers would be more serene and more objective," Mr. Cunhal declared."

In the radio and television network, where thirty-four employees had already been suspended as of December 2, the government could make similar charges. However, the bourgeois military chiefs are hardly likely to prevent abuses such as those committed by the Stalinists and ultraleftists. Instead, they will restore a consistent probourgeois bias to replace that of journalists who, despite their sectarianism and opportunism, at least had to claim to be, and to some extent be, on the side of the workers. The purge is thus a blow to the workers movement as a whole.

Despite the sharp blows dealt to the Stalinists and their allies in both the press and the military, the Portuguese CP has not abandoned its support for military rule. In his speech December 7 to the first CP rally since the state of siege, Cunhal pledged to support the government.

Moreover, the *New York Times* reported: "Mr. Cunhal made it clear that even though most of the known leftists in the military have been purged, he still felt that the military must lead the revolution."

MFA for Continued Military Rule

The setback of the CP and the ultraleftists identified with the plan for "direct democracy" under the tutelage of "progressive" officers has not ended the MFA's perspective of maintaining demagogic military rule. The leading spokesman now for the "MFA above parties" is Major Melo Antunes, the leader of the Group of the Nine, which is considered by the CP and the ultraleftists to be "Social Democratic" and a spearhead of European "imperialism."

While the Stalinists are still prepared to support military rule, even headed by figures who previously were their archdemons, the same contradictions remain between the bonapartist aspirations of the

officers and the parliamentary ambitions of the SP, which has begun again to raise demands for reducing the limitations imposed by the pact it signed in April making the political parties subject to the MFA.

Some sectors of the right have also stepped up protests against "military rule," apparently as a way of mobilizing opposition against what they consider to be "excesses" in the demagoguery of the MFA.

It is not yet clear how deep the purge of the armed forces will go. But it is obvious that the government's immediate primary objective is to reduce the armed services to a hard professional core that can be counted on as an instrument of capitalist repression. The reactionary commander of the Amadora Commandos, the elite unit that spearheaded the government's attack on the putschists, has said that he is still "not satisfied" with the situation in the military.

Suicidal Policy of the SP

The SP leadership, moreover, has denounced all opposition to the hierarchy in the military as part of a CP-extremist plot against "their" sixth government. As Social Democrats, they look forward to all the organs of the government obeying their orders in a "disciplined" way when they win elections.

In fact, the SP has had good reason to fear uncontrolled actions by the military. Demagogic strongmen like Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho and others threatened to shatter their parliamentarist and electoralist hopes, to say nothing of running roughshod over the democratic rights of the majority of the Portuguese workers.

The maneuvers by these demagogues and the Communist party, as well as the initiatives undertaken by the ultraleftists, who sought to bypass the problem of winning majority support by means of the daring and determined actions of revolutionary minorities, increased the fears of military dictatorship among the SP ranks. At the same time, this made it possible for the SP leaders, who certainly had a better understanding of the limitations of these actions, to rally mass support for imposing "discipline" in the armed forces.

Thus, the struggle between the CP and the SP over the composition of the sixth government, and the role of ultraleftists, who hoped to push what they thought was the CP's "left" course out of the control of the Stalinist leaders, gravely distorted the question of democratic rights for soldiers in the eyes of a large part of the masses.

Now the right-wing commanders such as Pires Veloso and Jaime Neves are taking advantage of this confusion to try to ban all demonstrations by soldiers or civilians against repression in the armed forces.

The attitude of the SP leaders toward the restoration of "discipline" in the armed

forces is suicidal. It is precisely the restoration of hierarchical authority that will create the conditions for a more effective kind of military bonapartism than the MFA has so far been able to establish. Stable



COSTA GOMES: Moved rapidly to take advantage of victory.

military dictatorships have nearly always been based strictly on the high command, although at times more energetic conspirators among the lower officers have risen to the top through a coup.

Conversely, divisions within the command are the greatest danger to any military dictatorship. These can arise through conflicts of interest between different sections of the capitalist class. In addition, when there is strong pressure from the masses, they can arise from struggles between different teams seeking more effective formulas for harnessing the mass movement. In such cases, also, individual demagogues and adventurists can seek to utilize such mass pressures in an attempt to propel themselves to the top of the military heap.

In any case, it is dangerous to any military dictatorship to allow the officer corps as a whole, and still more so, the ranks, to become involved in a political process. That tends to lead to divisions, thereby destroying both the claims of the military to speak for the society as a whole and its ability to control the political process from above.

Furthermore, political divisions in an armed institution always pose the question

of civil war. That is at least one of the reasons why the SP leaders and the heads of some bourgeois parties can argue that continued rule directly by the MFA means "anarchy." In a certain sense, they are right. It would mean that political conflicts would continue to be fought out on the level of confrontations among military forces.

Following the defeat of the left-wing units and the eclipse of the most outspoken demagogues, one of the leaders of the bourgeois Partido Popular Democrático, Emidio Guerreiro, argued in the Constituent Assembly that the MFA no longer exists. But at the same time, he pointed out that the Revolutionary Council, formally the highest body of the MFA, continues to be a reality. The Revolutionary Council is directly representative of the high command.

Thus what Guerreiro wants, apparently, is an end to the involvement in politics of larger sections of the armed forces. Such a tendency has obvious dangers for bourgeois "order," regardless of the political situation. For example, it created serious problems even after the right-wing coup of 1926 that prepared the way for the Salazar regime, as the authoritative liberal historian Oliveira Marquês pointed out:

"Lacking capable administrative and organizational experts and enjoying scant respect, the commanders in theory often followed the dictates and suggestions emanating from veritable soviets of lower officers, where for a time the real power lay. In the summer of 1927, for example, Lieutenant Morais Sarmiento was able even to invade the Belém palace and insult and even physically assault the ministers meeting in council, without any serious consequences for himself."²

A Long Experience

Portugal has had a long experience with turbulent military involvement in politics. Presumably both the military tops and the politicians are aware of its dangers. But because of the weakness of the capitalist class, it is also unavoidable, and the Portuguese rulers have learned to live with it to what might seem from the outside a surprising extent. For example, the fact that Costa Gomes was involved in a plot to overthrow Salazar in 1961 did not prevent him from rising to the position of chief of staff under the same dictator and later participating in a coup that did overthrow Salazar's successor.

However, the contradictions of the military playing such a role are also unavoidable. To rule the country directly, since the other institutions of the bourgeoisie were crippled by the April 1974 coup or by the mass upsurge that followed it, the officers need some kind of political cover and some

2. A.H. de Oliveira Marquês. *Historia de Portugal*, Vol. II, p. 332.

kind of a political apparatus of their own.

This need became more acute when the MFA began to be split by the pressure of the mass movement in Portugal and the nationalist movements in the colonies. Furthermore, the structure had to be broadened somewhat in order to co-opt the radicalization that was developing in the armed forces and give the MFA leaders the kind of pivot they needed to balance among the existing political forces.

This move held great dangers. It gave a certain legitimacy to political activity and organization throughout the armed forces, although the MFA leadership intended to keep this under tight control through a system of transmission belts. Ultimately, everything was to come from the top, and absolutely no freedom of initiative or political independence was to be left to the lower levels.

The left groups that saw the attempt to extend the MFA as offering an opportunity to advance democratic organization in the armed forces were not wrong. The contradictions in the scheme and the weakness of the MFA leadership could have been exploited to good effect, as later developments showed.

The problem was that nearly all these groups and currents allowed themselves, despite the denials of some, to be drawn too much into the MFA's framework. They did not simply exploit the MFA's contradictions; they fell, to one degree or another, under the spell of the illusions the MFA demagogues were trying to create.

They came to believe that the most outspokenly demagogic wing of the MFA itself would actually advance the process of organizing the masses, of building "soviets." These illusions eventually led the left groups and personalities most committed to this perspective into a tragic blind alley.

'People's Power' in Command

The end of this road came when Major Barroso, the director of the national radio-TV network under Vasco Gonçalves, resumed "command" of the Lisbon studios at 7:00 p.m. on November 25. He told the radio-TV employees: "This is an armed insurrection. People's Power is giving the orders now."

The CP and the MFA proposed the "People's Power," or direct democracy, scheme, after the April 25 elections to the Constituent Assembly showed that their popularity was waning rapidly among the broad masses of the Portuguese people.

The ultraleftists placed their hopes in this scheme because they saw it as a way of leaping directly to "soviet democracy" without passing through the stage of winning the political support of the masses for a socialist revolution. Against the right of the masses to decide about the govern-

ment, they counterposed workers and people's organizations that were still only embryonic.

In some cases, such as the neighborhood commissions, the idea that they could represent the masses was pure fantasy. The ultraleftists were misled by the fact that in the conditions of the upsurge, these commissions could carry out actions that were very radical in form and popular among sections of the masses.

Other organizations of "People's Power," such as the workers commissions, were more representative, although this varied and still varies widely. Furthermore, they were still very much ad hoc bodies that could spring up in one period and die the next, to be replaced by a new kind of workers commission. At the Lisnave shipyards, for example, this process has occurred at least three times since April 1974.

The effect of presenting the workers commissions as organs of power was far worse than the illusions about the neighborhood commissions. It led in fact to splitting the working class and crippling the development of its organizations.

Presenting such fragmentary forms, still dominated in most cases by relatively small groups, as the building blocks of "power" led a large section of the population to suspect, and rightly so, that some political forces, under false pretenses, were trying to impose the will of a minority.

In fact, this apparently seemed to be such a good gimmick that a number of different minority forces tried to set up their own "organs of power," conducting a furious struggle against the others. The overall result was an orgy of sectarianism.

Some groups were so intoxicated by the idea of exercising "power" directly that they came to reject the idea that workers could still struggle for any partial demand. That was the case, for example, of the Partido Revolucionário do Proletariado (PRP—Revolutionary party of the Proletariat), which started issuing calls for an armed insurrection two weeks before the November 25 attempted coup.

This group had formed its own "soviets," the Revolutionary Councils of Workers, Soldiers, and Sailors, last spring; after which it announced that the "phase of struggle for partial demands has been superseded" and that now the "soviets" could simply act directly to solve any problems.

In fact, the "People's Power" project of the MFA and the CP that was supposed to be based on these bodies proved strictly dependent on the political fortunes of the Stalinists and their bourgeois allies. It would have fizzed out like a wet firecracker after the fall of the Vasco Gonçalves government if it had not been for the sudden advance of a struggle for "partial demands" that no one expected, the con-

struction workers' strike of November 12.

This abrupt explosion of a long-smoldering labor dispute, heated up by the deepening of the economic crisis, brought the sixth government to the brink of collapse. More profoundly, it showed the bourgeoisie that its time was running out. A new upsurge of labor struggles under the impact of the crisis might not be containable.

At the same time, the construction workers' action revived the hopes of the ultraleftists who were tail-ending the People's Power plan. A demonstration called for November 16 in the name of the CP's workers commissions drew 100,000 persons, whereas one called by the same forces two weeks before had brought out only the CP hardcore.

This demonstration was also somewhat broader than the previous one because, in the situation, it tended to become a rally against the sixth government's austerity program. Apparently, it restored the faith of the People's Power advocates in their "revolutionary mandate."

The paratroopers obviously expected to touch off a general rising of the "revolutionary forces." Officers associated with the rebellion seized radio and TV stations in the name of "People's Power." The appeal of the rebels at the Tancos base published in the November 30 issue of *República* reflected this hope and the bitter disappointment it led to:

"We have been waiting for twenty-four hours for the so-called Portuguese left. So far we haven't seen them. But revolutionists must fight for the revolution. We will not surrender. We continue, fully mobilized, ready to follow through to the end.' This was the dramatic statement made to us by a member of the Paratroopers Struggle Committee at the Tancos base at 10:00 a.m. November 25. Understandably sparing in words, this soldier added: 'We are not afraid of threats and slanders. Those who want to fight for the revolution are always slandered and threatened. Join this struggle.'"

No one joined. This sort of thing went far beyond what the Stalinists had in mind. They just wanted to make threatening gestures to show the government that it "could not govern the country without the Communist party and still less against it," as the CP parliamentary chief Octavio Pato said in the Constituent Assembly after the construction workers' action.

It went beyond what Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, the hero of the rebels, wanted. He went to the Belém palace, where he was summoned after the rising, and stayed there during the crisis. In short, he behaved exactly as he had on September 28 when he was summoned by Spínola and held during the general's attempted coup. But this time there was no mass pressure to force his release.

Although the most exposed military demagogues, Carvalho, Coutinho, and Fabião, were removed from their commands after the putsch, they were also given a clean bill of health by the officers now on top. They may be needed again.

As for "People's Power," the putsch revealed what a snare and delusion it had been. The Lisbon artillery regiment was the organizational center of the most important "People's Assembly." It grouped about twenty workers commissions and a larger number of neighborhood commissions in the Olivais-Sul area of Lisbon.

"The bitter disappointment that yesterday's uprising was not backed by widespread street action by civilians," Paul Ellman reported in the November 27 *Financial Times* of London, "was nowhere more apparent than outside the headquarters of the Lisbon Light Artillery Regiment, Ralis, this afternoon as truck and bus drivers edged their vehicles through an angry mob gathered outside.

"Stones and insults were hurled at the vehicles as the soldiers inside the barracks, a hotbed of militant Left activity, desperately tried to organize the crowd in building barricades and calling up support to block the way against the cavalry regiment, which had moved out of its barracks 45 miles north-east of Lisbon at Santarem, and was standing poised 12 miles up the highway from the Ralis base at the northern approaches to the capital."

República of December 2 gave a similar picture of the reaction to "People's Power":

"We must ask what the working class did. We visited some factories in the Lisbon belt and saw that the strikes some unions called did not take place.

"We saw, moreover, that after a certain moment, a relative disorientation developed. The Workers Commissions asked for instructions from the unions and got *nothing*. They tried to decide on an orientation in the Workers Commissions, and the result was *nothing*. They went to the gates of the barracks, and got *nothing*—neither arms, nor instructions, nor information.

"The present political-military crisis, as a worker pointed out to us, shows that we have no parties, no unions, and no Workers Commissions. The working class has to organize."

The Balance Sheet

That seems to be the balance sheet of six months of trying to represent fragmentary forms of workers organization as "organs of power." The result is that the task of building organizations that can genuinely unite and lead masses of workers in struggle is incomparably more difficult now than it might have been.

Nonetheless, the bourgeois state in Portugal remains very weak, and the bourgeoisie is politically in a very debilitated state.

December 15, 1975

Furthermore, the military is still divided, and the government is still prey to the contradictions of the reformist parties that continue to represent its main political props. The experience of the vast democratic ferment of the last two years will not quickly fade. Although the government can now strike hard blows at selected targets, it could go down if it tries to strike out at really broad movements.

The main task now is to help the workers unite around immediate demands that all of them support, regardless of their political opinions. Few workers are going to go into struggle willingly if they think any move they make may provoke violent sectarian wrangling and pose the question of a civil war, with terrified and infuriated petty-bourgeois masses marching against them from the North. On the other hand, as long as the government rests politically on the reformist workers parties, it will find it very difficult to mount a violent response to struggles that enjoy genuinely broad working-class support.

The independence of the workers organizations from the state and military must be reasserted. The workers struggles cannot be seen as subordinate to the interests of the capitalist state or to the interests or ambitions of any military clique or demagogue.

It has to be made clear to the Portuguese people that when the soldiers and workers organize it is to assert their democratic rights and not to take away the democratic rights of others by claiming spurious "mandates" as representatives of "People's Power."

In particular, when soldiers organize they must make it clear that their aim is to uphold the democratic rights of the great majority of the people as well as their own, and not to impose any political schemes on the country or to support adventurers.

If these points can be made effectively to the Portuguese masses in a new wave of struggles, soviets can emerge able to lead millions on the class-battle front and win the right to represent these millions politically.

Councils of the soviet type may develop out of the embryonic forms already existing, or completely new ones may arise. But one thing is certain. Such organs of workers power will be superior to anything that has existed so far in Portugal.

For soviets to develop on such a scale as to transform Portuguese society, a revolutionary leadership is needed that can show the workers concretely, in day-to-day struggles, how to unite their forces and develop their power.

The first task of this leadership will be to sweep away the clutter, confusion, and wreckage left by the ultraleft charlatans who transformed the theory of workers power into a set of nostrums so abstract

they could be turned against the workers movement by bourgeois demagogues and by the Stalinist betrayers, who used these delusions to lead the ultraleftists and their own followers to the brink of disaster for their own opportunist ends.

The debacle of November 25-27 did not affect the strength of the working class as such, since it was not involved. But to the extent that this incident enabled the government to strengthen its repressive forces and put it in a position to strike blows at sections of the left and the labor movement, the outcome is a grave setback for the Portuguese working class. It is a loud and clear warning of what can happen if the damage done by the "People's Power" campaign is not repaired. □

That Shark 'Repellant' Was a Fish Story

The chemical shark "repellant" that has been used by thousands of shipwrecked American sailors and downed pilots since World War II served mainly as a "psychological crutch," according to Dr. C. Scott Johnson of the San Diego Naval Undersea Center. It is virtually useless in warding off sharks.

In fact, tests have shown that the black dye, which was standard equipment on all armed-service life jackets, was sometimes eaten by sharks, he told a conference of shark experts in Orlando, Florida.

A report on the conference in the November 30 *Los Angeles Times* did not note whether sharks' appetites were whetted by such an hors d'oeuvre. But one of the creators of the "repellant" defended it by pointing out that "at least the dye kept the person in the water from seeing any approaching sharks."

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Lisbon Faces Up to the Coup

By Charles Michaloux

[The following article appeared in issue No. 324 (undated) of *Rouge*, the weekly newspaper supported by the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (Revolutionary Communist League). The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

The setback to the revolutionary soldiers and officers gives the government a breathing spell. But the working class had no illusion that an insurrection would be an easy matter, and its potential for struggle and organization remains intact.

* * *

It is almost incredible. Ten days after the immense November 16 demonstration, less than two weeks after the crushing victory of the construction workers when the government reeled under the blows of several workers demonstrations and the Council of the Revolution tottered in face of the extraordinary militancy of the soldiers, Lisbon is under a state of siege.

After interrupting their broadcasts, which were relayed from Oporto, the radio and television stations in the capital transmitted nothing but official announcements from the high command. The newspapers stopped coming out. The ferment that marked Lisbon and the industrial belt abruptly came to a halt.

And those "red" regiments, mobilized, armed, and impregnable, were broken by 400 paratroop commandos from Amadora and 1,000 men from the Santarém cavalry school!

Was the coup so serious that the streets of the capital of the Portuguese revolution, yesterday live with workers and soldiers, today remain empty and silent?

The Illusion of an Irresistible Upswing

Since April 25 and particularly since the end of 1974, the mass movement in Portugal continued to rise almost without interruption. In fact, there seemed to be no resistance to the mobilization of the workers and people. September 28 and March 11 saw the bourgeoisie go down to defeat before even being able to engage in battle. The establishment of the sixth provisional government following the summer crisis proved just as unsuccessful, because this time it was the army that met each

governmental initiative with actions in solidarity with the workers (particularly those in the media) who were supposed to be brought under "law and order."

The army seemed to have—and it was so to a great extent—passed over to the side of the generalized challenge to the authority of the bosses, the military, and the state that is ravaging Portuguese society. In the vanguard sectors of the working class the illusion was thus created that a semispontaneous and semiconscious movement could overcome all obstacles without leadership or a clear orientation.

The "people" are for the revolution, the soldiers are "always, always on the side of the people." The weak regime is paralyzed by the challenge from the military and the people. What more is needed for taking the step that leads to seizing power?

The illusion of an easy victory also made its way among those known as the "military left," a hodgepodge of militants from certain far-left organizations and the most radical wing of officers in the MFA [Armed Forces Movement], disillusioned by the cowardice of the PCP [Portuguese Communist party] in face of the pronouncement of the military hierarchy at the Tancos assembly.*

These officers and junior officers were under the impression that they enjoyed the confidence of soldiers who question the traditional discipline inherited from Salazarism. They quickly became radicalized, in less than a year in most cases, with the help of some hasty and eclectic reading. They have above all a concept of the revolution that is technical, typically military: "people's power" exists in the factories, agriculture, and the neighborhoods; the seizure of power is just a simple military operation involving occupation of the essential nerve centers. The "people's power" will support the revolutionary soldiers, who will make it the state power.

What happened in Lisbon Tuesday night and Wednesday morning [November 25-26] was therefore not a simple "leftist coup" attempt. It was the product of both the maturity of the objective revolutionary process and the subjective limits that this process still possesses. The illusion of being

*The September 5 meeting of the Assembly of the Armed Forces Movement that removed Gen. Vasco Gonçalves and a number of his supporters from the Council of the Revolution.—IP

a force that is invincible because it is linked to the aspirations of the masses is in the last analysis a reflection of this contradictory situation.

Neither Hostile nor Enthusiastic

The Tancos paratroopers provide a good example of this paradox. Used March 11 to encircle the RAL 1 (RALis) [Lisbon Light Artillery Regiment], the paratroopers did not react against this manipulation by their officers. On the other hand, the sabotage operation of bombing Rádio Renascença's transmitter provoked a veritable trauma among the paratroop sergeants and soldiers, suddenly conscious of being victims of a maneuver by their officers to implicate them in an anti-working-class and anti-people action. What followed is well known. In less than two weeks the Tancos training base, a regiment in the rear guard of the revolution, went over to the front ranks of the challenge to the high command of the air force, the solid bastion of the military hierarchy.

On Tuesday, November 25, at 6:00 in the morning, 1,800 paratroopers from the base occupied Tancos air base No. 3, Monte Real No. 5, Montijo No. 6, and the office of the high command at Monsanto, holding in custody General Pinho Freire, commandant of the air force region.

At the same time, the military police took over Rádio Clube and Emissora Nacional while EPAM [School of Military Administration] took over the television network, 200 meters from its barracks. The RALis blocked access to Lisbon from the north while EPSM [School of Weaponry Maintenance] took responsibility for access from the south.

Militarily this plan was no worse than any other. Politically it was a disaster. The workers watched the spectacle of these troop movements—troops with whom they sympathized, to be sure—without understanding what was at stake in the deployment. The plans to oust [Gen.] Otelo [Saraiva de Carvalho] that set off the crisis were not sufficient to mobilize the working class in the suburbs and the workers in Lisbon, and, one would almost like to say, fortunately. An insurrection for a general who was to appear behind [President] Costa Gomes that afternoon when he announced the state of emergency and later the state of siege in Lisbon!

This was not a sufficient motivation to take to the streets and launch an assault on the government, as called for in a joint leaflet issued by the MES [Movement of the Socialist Left] and the PRP [Revolutionary party of the Proletariat] the evening of Tuesday, November 25.

The workers did not move. The few groups that assembled were rapidly dispersed once the tanks of the Amadora

Intercontinental Press

commandos began to patrol the city.

In face of the lack of participation by workers, the operation foundered in a couple of hours. The soldiers realized that they had not been followed and after a weak resistance—particularly in the afternoon, resulting in four deaths, including two among the commandos under Jaime Neves—the officers left for the Belém palace, following an ultimatum from Costa Gomes.

The workers, particularly the workers of the industrial belt, were neither hostile nor enthusiastic but nonetheless mobilized during the night. Not to participate in the “insurrection,” but to defend their factories against any possible reactionary assaults like those that were being prepared in the North of the country. The workers of Lisnave, Setenave, Soreforme, and the national steelworks spent long hours on guard behind their barricades.

The next morning, after a curfew that was little respected, it was possible to draw an initial balance sheet.

All this reorganization that the Council of the Revolution and the government would not have dared even to dream of a week ago will give the government a respite, assuring it that one of its crutches has not been totally smashed.

But Costa Gomes and those in whom he has re-inspired hopes of order and discipline cannot stretch this operation out for too long a time. Continuation of the state of siege would be tolerated with difficulty by the workers. In local areas they have already begun to show their hostility, as at Setúbal and on the south side of the Tejo River, where several strikes occurred Wednesday.

At the same time, this “return to order” cannot be carried out in a few days. It involves the major part of the Portuguese army, its sector most involved in operations, that is, tens of thousands of men, including “suspect” units in the North, Center, and South of the country.

It is not excluded that the soldiers may benefit from this contradiction in the timing and take a step forward before the cleansing operation is ever carried out. In the meantime, however, important gains have been lost, including the central arsenal at Beirolas, which had been under the control of the soldiers and workers commissions and was retaken by the EPC [Cavalry School]. That alone is sufficient to characterize as adventurist the attitude of the organizations of the FUR [Front for Revolutionary Unity] (with a special mention for the MES and PRP), which have called for weeks for the organization of “the insurrection.”

A Setback but Not a Defeat

The consequences of these two days are

at present difficult to predict.

What could occur is a sort of March 11 in reverse, this time to the benefit of the bourgeoisie. But contrary to the jolts that March 11 produced, the working class was



CARVALHO: Appeared with Costa Gomes during announcement of state of siege.

not affected by the defeat of the operation carried out by regiments in Lisbon. At no moment were its forces ever engaged. The level of mobilization by workers who had begun to rebuild their unity around objectives of anticapitalist struggle was not affected by the counteroffensive of the military hierarchy.

Indirectly, to be sure, the workers will pay the price of the setback suffered by the revolutionary soldiers and officers. The tightening up of the army in Lisbon, facilitated by the state of siege giving all power to Costa Gomes, has already included arrests, transfers, and changes. Tomorrow it will probably include the dissolution of some military units.

At the same time, however, Costa Gomes and the Council of the Revolution have no interest in playing the role of the apprentice sorcerer. The exceptional measures, if prolonged, will work to the advantage of the maneuvers of the reactionary right and far right, as has been shown by the demonstrations and roadblocks organized by the PPD [Democratic People's party, the main bourgeois party], the CDS [Social Democratic Center, a right-wing bourgeois party], and the fascist bands in their northern fiefs.

This is why the officers on the Council of the Revolution will probably take the opportunity offered by the state of siege to

press their advantage and take immediate measures in the army. But they will quickly return to a more normal functioning of the bourgeois institutions they are trying to construct.

The new conjuncture following the setbacks of the last few days has not resolved the crisis that began with the sixth government's strike-resignation-blackmail.

To be sure, the ground that has been regained by the Council of the Revolution will be used to resolve the governmental crisis in the most favorable way possible.

The CP gained a few points in respectability by breaking its silence and agreeing to bow before the rules of the state of siege, and by reworking its proposals for a reorganization of the MFA around which a “progressive” governmental reshuffle could be carried out—that is, an MFA-CP-SP government.

During the entire crisis the SP was careful to refrain from attacking the CP to safeguard the possibility of negotiating a governmental agreement from a position strengthened by the recent events.

The temporary setback, and perhaps the temporary demoralization accompanying it, will enable various officer clans in the MFA and the reformist leaderships of the SP and CP to carry out these parleys with a little less haste.

But a big question mark remains over the next few days. If the workers, once the moment of surprise and disarray has passed, reassemble their still intact forces, if the soldiers once again refuse to allow any attack on their right to organize as workers who happen to be in uniform, then the blow they have just suffered will help them draw lessons for the future.

To the extraordinary militancy of the Portuguese proletariat and its civilian and uniformed vanguard has just been added the clear consciousness of the objectives and the means for attaining them. After taking this blow the Portuguese revolution will be ready to deal one of its own.

November 27, 1975

17.1 Million Out of Work in Major Capitalist Countries

Unemployment in the major capitalist countries has soared to 17.1 million workers, the highest level in forty years, according to figures released by the International Labor Organization November 28.

“This represented a massive increase of six million, to a level of 5.2% of the total labor force, compared with September, 1974,” the ILO said.

The regional breakdown of the total number of workers officially without jobs was 8.1 million in the United States and Canada, 2.9 million in western Europe, 2.7 million in southern Europe, 2.1 million in northern Europe, and 1.3 million in Japan, Australia, and New Zealand.

For a United Front of the Masses in Reply to Reaction!

[The following article is from the November 26 issue of *Luta Proletária*, the newspaper of the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI—Internationalist Communist League, the Portuguese sympathizing organization of the Fourth International). The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

1. The barricades set up by the farmers in Rio Maior, Bombarral, Porto de Mós, Carregado, and other places; the provocations by Jaime Neves and the so-called High Revolutionary Council (the encirclement of the Military Police barracks, the GDACI [Detection and Interception Group], and the studios of the national radio and television network, the threat to bomb the transmitter of Rádio Clube Português [the station most completely controlled by the CP], the declaration of a "partial state of siege," and so on), show how far the bourgeoisie is prepared to go in its attempt to wipe out the gains the workers have made.

2. The events of November 24-25 were the culmination of the offensive by the reactionaries in the military. The most outstanding events that led immediately to this assault were the attempt to shut down CICAP [the military transport unit in Oporto that resisted the transfer of some radical personnel], the creation of the AMI [Agrupação Militar de Intervenção—Military Intervention Group], the transfer of thousands of soldiers to inactive duty, the occupation of Rádio Renascença's transmitters in Buraca and their subsequent dynamiting, and the issuing of heavy weapons to the PSP [Polícia de Segurança Pública—Public Security Police] and the GNR [Guarda Nacional Republicana—Republican National Guard, the riot police].

3. The proliferation of terrorist bombings by the ELP/MDLP [Exército de Libertação Portuguesa/Movimento Democrático de Libertação Portuguesa—Portuguese Liberation Army/Democratic Movement for the Liberation of Portugal, the rightist underground led by General Spínola] and the reactionary demonstrations of the CDS/PPD [Centro Democrático Social, Partido Popular Democrático, respectively the right-wing and more liberal bourgeois parties], as well as the reactionary language that has appeared in the broadcasts of the national radio network from the moment it came under the direct control of the bourgeoisie, have not only increased the boldness of the counterrevolutionaries,

These developments also show that capitalist reaction is already clearly preparing to strike a decisive blow against the workers movement and its organizations and to drown its most determined and combative sections in blood.

4. The fact that various strata of the toiling masses were manipulated in reactionary actions shows the deepening of the split between the working class and its potential allies. This division will be used by the bourgeoisie in its plans for a coup, if the revolutionists fail to recognize the importance of this problem and to provide an effective answer.

5. The policy of the PCP [Portuguese Communist party] is limited to trying to move the framework of class collaboration more or less toward the left. In particular, in these long, difficult, and dramatic hours for the workers movement, it has refused to call a mass mobilization to defend the comrades in uniform who have fallen victim to the provocation staged by the Revolutionary Council, Jaime Neves, and Pires Veloso, to defend the news media that have been on the side of the workers.

Once again the PCP has shown that it can betray in the decisive moments and divide and confuse the proletariat, sowing the most profound consternation and demoralization in its ranks.

6. Trying to prove to the bourgeoisie that it does not need the terrorism of the ELP/CDS to assure the reestablishment of bourgeois discipline and the capitalist reorganization of the economy, the Socialist party has found itself forced to rely on the sixth government, on Pinheiro de Azevedo, on Vasco Lourenço, on the fascist Jaime Neves. It has found itself forced to lead mass mobilizations that have had an anti-Communist and reactionary dynamic. The SP has succeeded not only in bringing the petty bourgeoisie over to anti-Communism (a development that can only be fully exploited by a PPD, a CDS, or an ELP/MDLP) but in deepening the split within the toiling masses. Thus, it has sold out the independent struggle of the workers for better conditions, a better life, and for a socialist revolution in return for Willy Brandt's deutsche marks, which can only benefit the capitalists who today in the most diverse forms and the most diverse camps are conspiring against the toilers.

7. It is impossible to carry out a socialist revolution without the participation of the broadest masses of workers, without winning the most combative workers for the revolutionary camp, without a prior central-

ization of the independent organs of the workers, without the arming of the toilers on a large scale. It is wrong to confuse the relationship of forces the revolutionists may enjoy on the military level (however limited it may be to one or another area) with the overall relationship of forces between the proletariat and its organizations on one side and the bourgeoisie on the other. It is an error to think that a victorious proletarian revolution can be achieved without winning the leadership of the working class and its struggles away from the reformists. But this does not mean that the place of revolutionists is not in the forefront of the struggle where the bravest sons and daughters of the proletariat are fighting and showing their willingness to die for their liberation and that of their class.

However, it is the duty of revolutionists to call on the workers, toilers, peasants, soldiers, and sailors to discuss these errors, which most often are the result of petty-bourgeois analyses of concrete situations, in order to assure that light-minded triumphalism, impotent impatience and adventurism, are not once again substituted for patient and painstaking preparation of the conditions for a victorious revolution.

Those who fail to draw the necessary conclusions will be irredeemably condemned to lose their historical bearings, and it must be said, they will merit their fate.

8. Following a partial victory by the civilian and military forces of the bourgeoisie (a victory that may result immediately in the transfer of thousands of soldiers to inactive duty, the application of the disarmament law with provocative searches of factories, and so on), the treacherous policy of the PCP, which has once again been revealed for what it is, and the services offered to the bourgeoisie by the SP leadership, may open the way for a further advance of the reactionary and fascist forces. So, revolutionists must implacably expose the workers parties and organizations that betrayed. But at the same time we need to wage a still more determined struggle for a working-class united front against reaction and capital, for workers control, for the centralization of the independent organs of the workers, for workers self-defense and arming, for advancing the agrarian reform, for decent housing and transportation for every working-class family.

9. The fight to build a leadership for the working class, which is the fundamental prerequisite for the victory of the proletari-

an revolution, is at the same time a fight for uniting in struggle the broadest ranks of the proletariat.

10. It is necessary to organize a coordinated response to the provocations of the bourgeoisie, it is necessary for the workers to combine their forces to build the kind of massive mobilization that can force the bourgeoisie, the Jaime Neveses, the Pires Velosos, and the Morais e Silvas to retreat. We must advance resolutely toward a general strike. It is urgent that all workers call on the Provisional Secretariat of the Workers Commissions of the Lisbon Industrial Belt and Intersindical to launch a general strike against the declaration of the state of siege, for purging the reactionaries from the barracks, against the appointment of Vasco Lourenço as commander of the Lisbon Military Region, for workers control over the news media, and against the class-collaborationist sixth government. It is necessary and urgent to hold mass actions and rallies in front of the left-wing military units and the offices of the media.

It is urgently necessary to advance in centralizing and organizing the self-defense and arming of the organs of workers and people's power.

• For a general strike, for mass rallies in front of the left-wing military units and the offices of the news media!

• Organize meetings of the organs of workers and people's power, in particular the soldiers and workers commissions, in order to establish workers control over the news media!

• Centralize the workers commissions and organize their self-defense and arming!

• Forward to the proletarian socialist revolution!

• Everybody out for the demonstration called by the Coordinating Committee of Soldiers and Sailors Committees for Friday [November 28]! □

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Position of 'Combate Socialista'

Balance Sheet of a Tragic Week

[The following article is from the November 29 issue of *Combate Socialista*, the fortnightly newspaper of the Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers party, a Portuguese group that has declared its adherence to the Fourth International). The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

1. On the morning of November 25, the "paras" [paratroopers] were tricked into attempting a coup whose immediate declared objective was to force a change in the air force high command and in the representatives of this service in the Revolutionary Council. This action, which amounted to a coup because it was launched completely behind the backs of the masses, was the culmination of conflicts at the level of the state apparatus. In these disputes, the improperly termed "revolutionary military officers," who were enthusiastically supported by the PCP [Partido Comunista Português—Portuguese Communist party], the FUR [Frente de Unidade Revolucionária—Front for Revolutionary Unity], and to a certain extent, by the UDP [União Democrática do Povo—People's Democratic Union, a Maoist organization evolving toward anarcho-sindicalism], were trying to regain positions lost with the collapse of the fifth government.¹ Along with the Gonçalves, Otelos, Fabiões, and Coutinhos, it is these political forces that bear responsibility for this anti-working-class adventure, regardless of whether they participated directly in the coup. They are responsible because all of them, along with their military "idols," tried to impose a government behind the backs of the workers and people, or more precisely, *against* the will of the majority of the population. Above and beyond all the superleft and anticapitalist declarations, the coup was aimed at setting up a regime based on repressive force and bureaucratic control of the mass organizations. On this basis, Portugal would not evolve toward socialism but toward an openly totalitarian capitalist regime.

2. Above and beyond its anti-working-class objectives, the coup was carried out in such a way that it amounted to a pure

1. The provisional government formed after the Socialist party went into opposition on July 11. The only political party that remained in the cabinet was the Communist party; and the government was headed by the CP's ally Vasco Gonçalves.—IP

provocation against the working masses. Taking advantage of the political weakness of the embryonic organs of workers power, ignoring the need for them to function democratically, and excluding the majority of the mass movement from their decisions in an ultrabureaucratic way, the authors of this coup tried to present it as an action emanating from these bodies. The Comissões de Trabalhadores [CTs—Workers Commissions], Comissões de Moradores [CMs—Tenants Committees], Intersindical [the CP-dominated national union federation], and most importantly, the bodies that reflected the radicalization in the armed forces themselves, were exploited for this purpose. The fact that this provocation managed finally to draw in only a few sectors of the military units, which, moreover, were tricked into carrying out the actions they did, is explained largely by the following factors: The soldiers assemblies and the ADUs [Assembleias de Delegados de Unidade—Unit Delegate Assemblies] were relatively isolated. The soldiers committees that were forming were manipulated. The ultraleftists devoted their efforts to sparking "changes by spectacular actions based on the barracks. Also, there was an understandable impatience on the part of the "paras." In addition to this, the attempts to mobilize sections of the mass movement to provide a cover for this maneuver were quashed at the decisive moment by the quiet but unmistakable pressure of the great majority of the population and of the workers themselves.

3. The hatred earned by the antilabor government of Vasco Gonçalves and the discredit into which the Stalinist bureaucracy has fallen led broad strata of the population immediately to reject their antidemocratic propositions. Such opposition on the part of the population was the main reason for the failure of the coup. Isolation led to divisions in the ranks of the "rebels" and paralyzed many of those implicated in the action, while the opposite happened on the government side. When Costa Gomes decided to back the sixth government and turn the Lisbon Military Region over to the Group of the Nine, in opposition to the demands of the putschists, he could present himself and his officers as "democrats," free for the first time from the hostile pressure of the workers. It was not Jaime Neves's² military genius but this

2. The leader of the Amadora Commandos who played the major role in crushing the November 25 putsch.—IP

combination of circumstances that explains the commandos's success and this new and much more serious defeat for those who sought to move toward a repressive bonapartist regime.

4. Unfortunately this time the defeat of the Stalinists and their ultraleft allies had a certain impact on the mass movement. The provocation sowed confusion and managed to draw in some groups of soldiers, who were later abandoned by their "revolutionary" "leaders" in the adventure. As a result, important sections of the masses came to view such soldiers as a threat to their democratic rights. So, the way was opened for the military hierarchy to launch an attack against the long and difficult struggle waged by the soldiers for democracy and the right to organize. Now the hierarchy is in a much better position to try to wipe out these gains.

5. During the recent period in the workers movement the PCP has tried to support some of the just struggles that have developed against the economic policy of Pinheiro de Azevedo. But at the same time, it has sought to deprive these struggles of a correct political perspective and use these mobilizations to back up its policy of restoring Vasco and other officers to the political scene. In fact, significant sections of the working class in the South and of the rural proletariat in Alentejo were deluded into believing that there would be a rapid "seizure of power." Today the main reaction of these workers is confusion, since these illusions have been transformed into defeat and betrayal. The triumphalism and bureaucratic control that the PCP maintained in the mass movement—with the more than merely objective support of the FUR—and all its perspectives of alliances with the "progressive" MFA have suffered a grave defeat. A similar defeat was suffered by the UDP. Despite all its anti-Cunhal talk, it came finally to be committed to defending Otelo's military positions, and was also, to a certain extent, implicated in the adventure. When the PCP saw that the coup was defeated, it resorted to desperate maneuvers, seeking new points of agreement in order to maintain itself in the government at any price. But these maneuvers will only magnify its political defeat and the discredit into which it has fallen.

6. The majority of the Revolutionary Council, now joined by the president, have won more than a military victory. We can also expect that their political position will be reinforced to a certain extent. With the help of the SP leadership they present themselves as the guarantors of democracy and a force that can prevent a civil war, which is all the more feared inasmuch as in the eyes of the people armed clashes appear to have no justification. The broad masses that identify with the SP and look with

apprehension on the military control of political life may be led for some time by Mário Soares to believe that it is correct to trust Costa Gomes and the Revolutionary Council and accept pacts and restrictions on democracy. This will strengthen the Social Democratic maneuver, which is opposed to the Stalinist one but has the same objective: The bourgeois government and its army will be presented as the guarantor of a democratic transition to socialism. The aim is to keep the exploited masses from seeing that their own fighting organizations (the Workers Commissions and other organs of the popular will) are the decisive tools in the struggle for democracy and socialism. This road will be presented as a democratic one, although it leaves intact the fundamental weapon of capitalist dictatorship, the state and its repressive institutions. The objective will be to crush the nascent workers power between the anvil of semidemocracy and the hammer of repression that will be used with all possible violence against those who do not abide by the rules of the game or who get out of control. This perspective explains why today they have resorted to a state of siege. In the final phase of this counterrevolutionary plan, once the workers are demobilized, there might be an attempt to impose a fascistlike solution, and in such conditions, it could have a chance of success. For the present, however, nothing indicates that this will be the inevitable direction of events, because the upsurge of the mass movement has by no means been defeated. As long as the masses maintain their strength, all the government's plans will remain simply plans.

7. Either out of political deception or cretinism, some organizations have been maintaining that the defeat of the "progressive" officers and consolidation of a government in which the SP plays a large role would be synonymous with the crushing of the revolution. The reality is completely different. With the relative exceptions mentioned above (especially in the case of the soldiers), the mass movement has not suffered any decisive defeat. The defeat of the totalitarian plan by which the Stalinists hoped to uphold capitalism is in no way a defeat for the workers. None of the workers' gains have been lost. The mass organizations and embryonic forms of workers power, especially at the plant level, continue to hold intact all their potential. There is no reason for demoralization or pessimism, because the road is open for the revolution to advance.

8. What is more, it is possible that the defeat suffered by the bureaucrats of the Secretariat of the Workers Commissions of the Lisbon Industrial Belt and Intersindical in a struggle rejected by the working class will open up new possibilities for the

workers to organize democratically and breathe life into bodies that the PCP intended to make into a mere transmission belt. The masses are ready to advance in a revolutionary direction. They may bring many illusions and errors to the Workers Commissions and other bodies. But real mass participation in these bodies is what will guarantee that workers power will be strengthened, centralized, and tempered in the struggle against the antilabor Economic Plan and its effects, in the struggle for the defense of democratic rights for the masses, in the struggle to assure that the popular will is really respected.

9. Millions of SP workers think that their leaders can lead them in the struggle for the aims they want to achieve—the democracy that will enable us to decide which direction we are going to follow, that is, how to end exploitation. We Trotskyists do not believe in Soares. We believe in the revolutionary capacity of the masses. Alongside the masses, we are going to try to fight for democracy in the unions and in the country. In this struggle, we will show that we are able to defend the right to vote against any totalitarian threat, and we are certain that the most effective way to defend this right, as well as any other, is not making pacts or accepting the authority and discipline of a president, a government, and a Revolutionary Council that nobody voted for.

10. Since this is our position, since this is our fight, we can repeat to every worker what we said before this tragic week began.

What we propose, comrade, is this:

Let us unite to assure that no Workers Commission, no union, and no delegate takes any steps without a mandate from a representative assembly. Unity to assure workers democracy.

Let us unite to make sure that the Workers Commissions and unions make it clear that they have had enough of plans and governments that no one voted for. Unity so that we workers can say no to Costa Gomes, no to the Revolutionary Council, no to Copcon, and impose our own government.

Let us unite so that together with the soldiers and sailors we can demand that no group in the military get away with imposing its opinions by manipulations. Unity with the workers in uniform so that we can put an end to demagoguery by direct election of officers and commanders in unit assemblies, thereby eliminating the putschists that no one elected or controls.

Let us unite to struggle for a government democratically elected by the masses without "pacts" or conditions. Unite to assure that this demand is incorporated through resolutions of assemblies in the program of the Workers Commissions and of other organs of workers and people's power.

Let us unite to counter the crisis and the

antilabor Economic Plans by developing forms of workers control designed to combat unemployment, inflation, and scarcity, measures that must be discussed by the ranks and coordinated centrally by the Workers Commissions.

Let us unite to build a national congress of Workers Commissions and other organs of people's will on a democratic basis, where, by combining the strength of our fighting organizations, we will have the necessary power to assure the election of a

government and to take steps to prevent the economic disaster that has been prepared by the capitalists.

If you don't agree, comrade, let's unite to get the state of siege called off and then we can discuss our differences freely. □

Declaration of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International

The Civil War in Angola

[The following statement by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International was issued November 23, 1975.]

* * *

The peoples of Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau dealt a serious blow to imperialist domination in Africa by overthrowing Portuguese colonialism. The struggle of the Angolan masses has opened a breach in the reactionary bastion of southern Africa, under the hegemony of the racist regime in Pretoria. The revolutionary rise of the working class in the metropolis prevented the Portuguese bourgeoisie from responding effectively and healing this breach through a successful neocolonialist operation.

Given this situation, and given the prospect of the dynamic of the mobilization of the Angolan masses developing toward objectives that are not simply anti-imperialist but anticapitalist as well—especially in Luanda, where the workers component has significant weight—all the partisans of colonialism, both old and new, and all the defenders of imperialist interests, both North American and European, have blocked together to crush the Angolan revolution and impose the establishment of a reactionary regime through a civil war. The leaderships of the FNLA and UNITA, which defend tribal and regionalist positions and the interests of bourgeois layers in formation, are taking part in this operation. They have established a common front with the imperialists, the racists, and the neocolonial regimes in Zaïre and Zambia, a sort of holy alliance, under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity, against the effective independence of Angola and the struggle of the Angolan toiling masses. The fact that China is aiding this reactionary front in practice through its long-standing aid to the FNLA and its present attitude is additional proof of the nefarious consequences of a policy that regards the USSR as the main enemy and aims at reaching a compromise with American imperialism.

The workers and revolutionary movements of the entire world denounce the counterrevolutionary operation that has been launched in Africa. In the present civil war these movements stand in the camp of the Democratic Republic of Angola proclaimed by the MPLA on November 11. The workers states and all workers organizations must make sure that the Angolan fighters receive political solidarity and material support. A defeat for the forces of the Democratic Republic would be a serious defeat for the revolution in Africa; it would represent a strengthening of imperialism and neocolonialism and would be accompanied by a bloody repression. On the other hand, the victory of the Democratic Republic, since it can be achieved only through a very deep mobilization of the masses, would create favorable conditions for the complete elimination of imperialist domination and for a socialist dynamic of the struggle of the workers and peasants.

The Fourth International chooses the camp of the Angolan Democratic Republic against the holy alliance of imperialists, racists, and indigenous reactionaries. In the civil war the Fourth International stands with the masses who are mobilized to defend the independence that has been won through fifteen years of stubborn struggle, to defend their fundamental interests against all foreign and "national" exploiting classes, for the expropriation of the capitalists and landlords, and for the construction of a new state based on revolutionary democratic committees, direct expressions of the masses.

Such an attitude does not mean that the Fourth International and African revolutionary Marxists give up their criticisms of the leadership of the MPLA, which they consider to be petty-bourgeois nationalist and not proletarian and communist. Alignment in the same camp and commitment to a common struggle are not in contradiction with the battle for political clarification necessary for a victorious outcome of the war and for the construction of a proletarian revolutionary Marxist leadership.

Against the holy alliance of imperialists, South African racists, neocolonialists of Zaïre and Zambia, and the reactionary leaderships of the FNLA and UNITA! Defend the complete independence of Angola! Defend the Democratic Republic proclaimed by the MPLA! Reject any attempt at Balkanization! Immediate withdrawal of all forces of American and European imperialism, of South African racists, and all neocolonial governments!

Organize an international campaign of solidarity! All workers states and all trade-union and political organizations of the proletariat must mobilize on the side of the Angolan fighters by assuring them political solidarity and material support! Boycott the sending of arms to the reactionary bloc of the FNLA and UNITA! □

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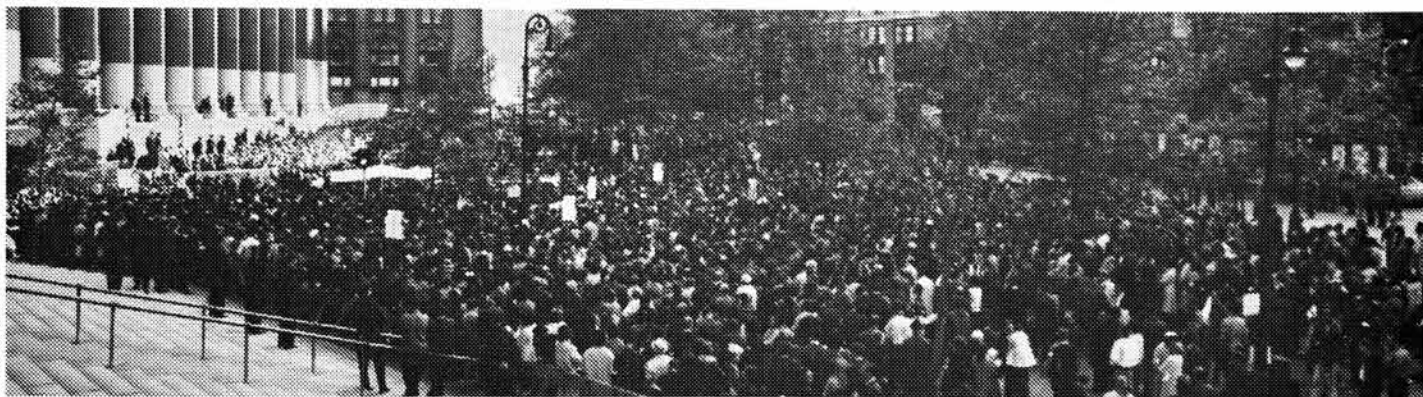
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Informer Reveals FBI's Role in Ku Klux Klan Attacks

By Nancy Cole



Militant

New York demonstration of more than 10,000 September 22, 1963, protesting the bombing a week earlier of a church in Birmingham, Alabama, by the Ku Klux Klan. Four young Black women attending Sunday school in the church were killed in the explosion. According

to a report in the November 30 *Los Angeles Times*, FBI informer Gary Rowe "worked on" the bombing. Although Rowe gave the FBI the names of eight persons "suspected of involvement in the bombing," the *Times* report said, the case was never "solved."

[The following article appeared in the December 12 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist newsweekly published in New York.]

* * *

WASHINGTON—During the civil rights movement in the 1960s, the FBI conspired with Southern cops and the Ku Klux Klan in murderous assaults on Blacks and others fighting for civil rights.

This is the story told by one FBI informer, Gary Rowe, in testimony before the Senate Committee on Intelligence December 2 and in interviews. Rowe, an FBI operative in the Klan for six years, gave a detailed description of the May 14, 1961, brutal beating of freedom riders in Birmingham, Alabama.

Sixteen freedom riders had boarded two buses in Atlanta. The first bus was waylaid by a racist mob in Anniston, Alabama, and burned.

The second reached Birmingham, where the local Klan and cops had planned a "reception" for the freedom riders.

Rowe said he had been introduced by a Birmingham detective to a local cop who explained the setup to him. "We were promised fifteen minutes to beat them, bomb them, burn them, shoot them, do anything we wanted to with absolutely no intervention whatsoever by police," said Rowe.

"But after that time they would have to make a show of force to keep the government from sending the troops in."

One of those most seriously injured in the attack was New York pacifist James Peck, who wrote about the experience:

"Upon arrival in Birmingham, I could see a mob lined up on the sidewalk only a few feet from the loading platform. Most of them were young—in their twenties. Some were carrying ill-concealed iron bars. A few were older men. All had hate showing on their faces. . . .

"As we entered the white waiting room and approached the lunch counter, we were grabbed bodily and pushed toward the alleyway leading to the loading platform. As soon as we got into the alleyway and out of sight of onlookers in the waiting room, six of them started swinging at me with fists and pipes. Five others attacked [Charles] Person a few feet ahead. Within seconds, I was unconscious on the ground."

After the fifteen minutes were up, Rowe told the Senate committee, "one hundred police officers came on the scene. We had clubs, chains, and pistols—not one officer asked us what was going on."

Later, Birmingham police chief "Bull" Connor told reporters that police hadn't been there earlier because it was Mother's Day, and the police were at home with their mothers!

Three weeks before the planned attack, Rowe had informed the FBI of all details. They told him to set up another meeting with the cop, which he did at a local restaurant. FBI agents sat at the next table while Rowe and the cop discussed plans for the attack.

Rowe said that the only action the FBI took was to have several agents on the scene taking "unofficial" movies of the assault.

When he pressed his superiors for a reason for their nonintervention, "They told me, 'We're an investigative agency, all we do is collect information.'" Besides, they asked, who were they going to give the information to since the local cops were involved?

This was just one of what Rowe estimates as in the "high dozens" of incidents where he warned the FBI of Klan violence in advance. Only twice, he said, did the FBI take any action to prevent the violence.

Thus, as in other cases revealed recently, the government, determined to disrupt and destroy dissident movements and groups, gave the go-ahead to racist police departments and ultrarightist terrorist groups.

The pattern is similar to the recent disclosure of the Chicago Legion of Justice's campaign against socialists, antiwar activists, and others. There, federal agencies, including Military Intelligence, cooperated with Mayor Richard Daley's cops in directing and financing the right-wing paramilitary Legion's attacks.

According to Rowe, Birmingham Klansmen had access to police files on civil rights activists and frequently cruised in cop cars during their "night rides."

Thus, under the subterfuge of "infiltrating the Klan," the FBI was able to expand its war on the Black and civil rights movements.

Rowe also told the Senate committee of other Klan incidents. One involved an integrated country club. With FBI approval in advance, local police provided Klansmen with illegal liquor, which they "planted" at the club. At the signal from two deputies inside, cops raided the club, arrested people there, and padlocked the building.

Rowe participated in the 1965 murder of Viola Liuzzo, a white civil rights worker from Detroit. Four Klansmen, including Rowe, shot Liuzzo from a cruising car.

On the night Liuzzo was killed, Rowe reported to the FBI that a Klansman had told him, "This is the night you've finally made the big time."

It was after this, Rowe said, that he quit the Klan. He then surfaced to testify against the other three killers.

Throughout the years of the civil rights movement, activists consistently called upon the federal government to act to apprehend the lynchers, arsonists, and

snipers. After the 1961 Birmingham assault, these demands intensified.

However, instead of using the powers of his office to take action against the racist murderers, attorney general Robert Kennedy appealed to the freedom riders for a "cooling-off period." This was rejected by civil rights leaders.

Instead, they demanded that the federal government act to enforce the law equally and to protect the rights and physical safety of the freedom riders and other activists. As the "federal law enforcement agency," the FBI became a logical target for the demands of the civil rights movement. One of the FBI's most prominent critics was Martin Luther King.

Rowe's FBI contact told him that bureau head J. Edgar Hoover hated King with a "purple passion." Hoover transformed that passion into a vendetta against King, as recent revelations show.

At the Senate hearing this week, FBI official James Adams characterized the agency's participation in the Klan during the civil rights movement as its "finest hour." Under questioning he put the FBI membership in the Klan during that period as 6 percent of the total membership.

Adams claimed Rowe is lying about the bureau's instructions on joining in violence. But Adams admitted that Rowe did alert the FBI of planned violent actions. In all cases, Adams asserted with a straight face, the information was relayed to the local cops—the very instigators of the violence to begin with!

"The FBI had no authority to make an arrest without authorization from the Justice Department, and for that we would have had to show that those who initiated the action acted in conspiracy," explained Adams. "We were just as frustrated as anyone else." □

Largest Demonstration Since 1968

150,000 March in Mexico City for Trade-Union Democracy

By Cristina Rivas

MEXICO CITY—More than 150,000 persons demonstrated here November 15 in support of the struggle waged by the Democratic Tendency in the electrical workers union, SUTERM.*

The fight of the electrical workers in support of trade-union democracy is not a new one; it goes back to the nationalization of the electrical industry in 1960. At that time the government created a decentralized body, the Comisión Federal de Electricidad (CFE—Federal Electricity Commission), and nationalized the Compañía de Luz y Fuerza del Centro (LyF—Central Mexico Light and Power Company). These two bodies were entrusted with administering the electrical industry.

The LyF continued to function as a cover for direct imperialist penetration, since involved in it was the U.S. Light and Power Company, whose name it took. The workers in this enterprise were organized in the Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas (SME—Mexican Electrical Workers Union).

The workers at the CFE were split between two unions, the Sindicato Nacional de Electricistas, Similares y Conexos de la República Mexicana (SNESCRM—National

Union of Workers in the Electrical Industry and Allied Occupations of the Republic of Mexico) and the Sindicato de Trabajadores Electricistas de la República Mexicana (STERM—Electrical Workers Union of the Mexican Republic).

The SNESCRM was a typical "charro" (labor gangster) union, totally integrated into and subordinated to the government and the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI—Institutional Revolutionary party). Naturally, it was an antidemocratic union in which the workers were permitted to play no role.

The STERM was a rather democratic union, although its leadership was not politically independent of the government.

The conflicts began at the end of 1971, when the "charro" bureaucracy of the SNESCRM tried to deprive the STERM of its bargaining rights. The "charros" decided that they had to wipe out a dangerous center of democratic infection that might spread to other electrical workers and other sections of the proletariat.

Since the STERM represented a minority of the workers in the CFE, a purely legal struggle did not promise positive results. So, the union leadership found itself forced to mobilize the ranks in order to save the life of the organization.

In 1972, the STERM organized demon-

strations in all the important cities of the country, with the exception of Mexico City. Not just electrical workers from the STERM went to these rallies; workers from small factories, students, slum dwellers, and in some places, peasants, began to join in the struggle.

In November 1972, these constant mobilizations bore fruit; the "charros" and the government temporarily abandoned their aim of breaking the democratic tendency among the electrical workers. They offered a compromise—unification of the two unions and formation of a United Electrical Workers Union (SUTERM).

Needless to say, the STERM accepted the compromise. This provoked a chorus of abuse from the Mexican ultraleftists, who accused the union leadership of being betrayers. Once again these ultraleftists showed their inability to understand the most elementary problems of the class struggle.

At the time, revolutionists supported the unification of the two organizations but pointed out that the methods employed in this process were not democratic.

Subsequently, the national leaderships and all the locals and local leaderships fused. Thereupon, the compañeros who had belonged to the STERM began to spread their democratic ideas and their experience

*Sindicato Unico de Trabajadores Electricistas de la República Mexicana (United Electrical Workers Union of the Mexican Republic).

in mobilization throughout a broader segment of workers in the electrical industry.

In this way, they won the majority of the workers in the SUTERM for their struggle.

From the time of the unification in 1972, the government posed the need for a fusion between the SUTERM and the SME, so that there would be only one electrical workers union. Now perhaps some people in the government realized that this was not as good an idea as it first seemed.

The SME has strong traditions of democracy and struggle, but it has become the most narrowly economist union in Mexico. The result has been a hesitation on the part of the rank and file toward unification. Furthermore, it is controlled by a bureaucrat who very much resembles the "charros," although he is not so brazen.

Nonetheless, the advance of the democratic tendency in the SUTERM and the SME members' strong feelings against the "charros," led the "charros" in the SUTERM to move once again to get rid of the democratic elements.

To this end, they resorted to provocations, terror, and finally a "convention," where they decreed the expulsion of the leaders of the democratic tendency who were members of the National Executive Committee of the SUTERM.

It was at this time that the Democratic Tendency (Tendencia Democrática) formally took that name.

Mobilizations started up again throughout the country. But this time the struggle had to be harder and more determined because the government had recognized the rigged "convention" and "legally" ratified the expulsion of the compañeros.

The "charros" resorted to getting workers belonging to the Democratic Tendency fired, shooting at them, and sending gangsters against them.

There had already been demonstrations of 10,000 to 30,000 persons in many cities, and there were only two things left that the Democratic Tendency could do to win reinstatement of the compañeros who had been fired as well as recognition of their leaders—a mass mobilization in Mexico City followed by a nationwide strike.

However, for the march to be a demonstration of strength and not weakness, it had to attract more than 60,000 persons. If the attendance had not gone over this figure, harsher repression against the Democratic Tendency would have been facilitated.

The electrical workers who supported the Democratic Tendency began to publicize their struggle and seek solidarity in all quarters. In Mexico City, the most prominent role in this work was played by the SUTERM Secciones Nucleares (the sections of the union that include workers in the nuclear industry, who are distinguished by their militancy and political activity) and

the Liga Socialista (LS—Socialist League, a Mexican sympathizing organization of the Fourth International).

The rise of the class struggle we have begun to witness in Mexico made it possible for the electrical workers to achieve their goal. Many unions gave their support, as did almost all the left political organizations, the students, and some sections of the slum dwellers and peasants.

All these sectors joined forces to build the biggest and broadest demonstration this country has seen since 1968. On November 15, there were 150,000 persons in the streets. The majority were members of unions who have taken up the struggle to regain control of their organizations and drive out the corrupt "charros."

The political importance of this demonstration lies in the fact that one of the fundamental sections of the Mexican working class, one that holds a key position in the country's functioning, has now taken a step that no lesser force could have taken. It has brought tens of thousands of persons into the streets and created a center around which the various sectors can organize their struggles.

The working class and its allies have begun to regain confidence in their own strength, a confidence they lost with the defeats of the railroad workers' strike in

1958-59 and the student struggle in 1968.

The next step in the struggle of the Democratic Tendency—if the government and the "charros" do not reinstate the workers who have been fired and recognize the democratic leaders—is a national electrical workers' strike.

Of course, several important unions may go out on solidarity strikes. This might be the response, for example, of the Sindicato de Trabajadores y Empleados de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (STEUNAM—Union of Personnel at the Autonomous National University of Mexico).

The SUTERM leaders have also proposed forming a Movimiento Sindical Revolucionario (MSR—Revolutionary Union Movement), which would embrace all democratic currents and opposition groupings in the union movement. However, so far they have done little to put this proposal into practice.

The leaders of the Democratic Tendency encourage the workers to believe that the government is going to solve their problems. They do this because they are not politically independent of the PRI. However, the fight they have been forced to lead is a resounding demonstration of the dynamic that the struggle for trade-union democracy has in Mexico. □

55 Political Prisoners Tortured to Death in Brazil



GEISEL: Claimed tortured political prisoners were shot while trying to escape.

Brazilian political prisoners have accused the Geisel regime of torturing to death at least fifty-five political prisoners since 1969, the Reuters news agency reported from Rio de Janeiro December 6.

In a signed document smuggled out of prison, thirty-five political prisoners in São Paulo said they themselves had witnessed the torture of sixteen victims. They gave

details of more than twenty forms of torture they had been subjected to and cited the names of 233 torturers, including an army general and other high officers.

According to Reuters, "The 35 prisoners said they themselves had suffered beatings, electric shocks, the 'ice box,' a tiny cubicle with temperatures changing from searing heat to freezing cold, immersions in water and sexual abuse."

Among those named as having been killed under torture was Joaquim Alencar de Seixas. Arrested in 1971, he was subjected to electric shocks and his screams were heard for hours, the prisoners said. He was eventually killed in front of his sixteen-year-old son.

Another prisoner arrested in 1971, Aluisio Palhano, was tortured for five days before he died, the prisoners said.

The prisoners said the government tried to disguise most of the deaths by claiming that the victims were shot while trying to escape. □

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Growing Pressure for Democratization in Spain

By David Frankel

What can the Spanish masses expect from King Juan Carlos I? This question was answered when the king announced an "amnesty" November 26.

"The hopes that had been inspired in all Spain with the announcement of amnesty . . . were transformed into profound disenchantment and barely repressed indignation when the true scope of the clemency measure became known," according to a dispatch from Madrid in the November 27 issue of the Buenos Aires daily *La Opinión*.

Opposition groups were unanimous in denouncing the phony amnesty, which was actually a graduated reduction of prison sentences. Even this concession did not apply to those accused of terrorism or of membership in terrorist groups, although the threat of the death penalty was lifted from those charged with terrorist acts before August.

The king explained in his decree that his action was meant as "homage to the eminent figure of generalissimo Franco," who issued eleven similar pardons during his rule. "It was apparent that the King and the Government had taken account of possible reactions among members of the police and the civil guard if the clemency measures were made too liberal," Henry Giniger said in the November 26 *New York Times*.

But if the old fascists were satisfied, they were just about the only ones. This was "not an amnesty," one leading Christian Democrat complained. He added that it was so restrictive that "many who have not committed violence and had nothing to do with terrorism will not benefit."

The Commission on Peace and Justice, one of the principal lay bodies of the Catholic church, called on the king to grant "a wide amnesty for political prisoners and exiles that goes beyond the restrictive pardon already granted."

Two hundred members of the Madrid Bar Association declared November 28 that the decree "in practical terms excludes from the benefits of the pardon almost all the political prisoners and defendants in Spain."

"This famous amnesty is an insult," Marcelino Camacho said November 30, only hours after he was released from the Carabanchel prison in Madrid. A leader of the illegal labor movement—the Workers Commissions—who was jailed for his trade-union activities, Camacho told reporters that the commissions would campaign for a

Marcelino Camacho Rearrested

Marcelino Camacho, a leader of the illegal labor movement in Spain, was arrested again December 7, one week after being released from Madrid's Carabanchel prison. According to the government television network, Camacho was accused of directing a demonstration for amnesty for political prisoners that took place outside Carabanchel, although he was not at the protest.

New York Times correspondent Henry Giniger reported that about 200 arrests were made by police trying to stop the demonstration. "Around the prison riot policemen deployed one of the biggest forces seen in the Madrid area in years

and used clubs and tear gas to break up anything that looked like a gathering," Giniger cabled from Madrid December 7.

The atmosphere he described was not conducive to illusions about King Juan Carlos I and his plans for "democratization." "Helicopters clattered overhead, police cars rushed through streets with roof lights flashing and sirens screaming, mounted policemen galloped over fields chasing demonstrators, youths were lined up against walls and hit and cafes were summarily emptied of people who tried to take refuge in them."

Neither Camacho's wife nor his lawyer was allowed to see him following his arrest.

real amnesty for all political prisoners.

Camacho insisted that no more than 200 of what he estimated to be 2,000 political prisoners in Spain would be freed by the royal pardon. "It is just a drop in the ocean of repression," another released prisoner said.

The head of the Catholic church in Spain, Cardinal Vicente Enrique y Tarancón, added his voice to the many critics. During his sermon at the November 27 mass celebrating Juan Carlos's accession to the throne, the cardinal called for a system that "will offer to all citizens free and active participation in the life of the country."

While the cardinal was speaking, 3,000 demonstrators organized by the Madrid Workers Commission gathered outside the Carabanchel prison where they demanded amnesty. They were attacked by police using tear gas and clubs. Similar demonstrations were also reported in Barcelona and in the Basque city of San Sebastián.

A sign of bigger forces moving into action was indicated December 4 when the workers commissions in Barcelona called on workers in the Catalán region to hold a twenty-four-hour general strike on December 11. The strike was called to protest government wage controls as well as to support demands for amnesty and democratic rights. The call for the strike was supported by other opposition forces in Catalonia, which also demanded Catalán autonomy.

The imperialist rulers in Spain and

abroad make no secret of their fear that the new king may lose control of the situation. Britain's financial weekly the *Economist* urged in its November 29 issue that Juan Carlos "should move fast," because "he is never likely to have more authority, or more favourable conditions to introduce democracy into Spain, than he has right now."

As the *Economist* sees it, "The danger is that King Juan Carlos will try to introduce change gradually. If he does, he will steadily build up resentment against him among conservative officers, while adding fuel to the smouldering impatience of Spain's opposition groups. Another reason for striking quickly is that the deep recession which is likely to hit Spain next year would provide the worst possible background for any attempt to introduce freedom by belated stages."

In fact, the economic squeeze is already being felt by the working class. A dispatch from Madrid in the December 5 *New York Times* noted, "Even the official state-run unions have been protesting throughout the country against what leftists assert is an effort to make the workers pay for the economic crisis."

Washington Says, Go Slow

Washington, however, has apparently concluded that the best chance of avoiding a blowup is to keep the dictatorship intact. Miguel Acoca reported in the November 25 *Washington Post* that the Ford administra-

tion "has advised the king that a fast break with the 36-year dictatorship Franco imposed could lead to chaos similar to that which erupted in neighboring Portugal following the downfall of its rightist regime 19 months ago."

The State Department declined to comment on Acoca's report.

An indication of Juan Carlos's own view on the matter was given in the November 21 issue of *La Opinión*, which quoted an interview with José María de Areilza, one of the new king's close advisers.

Areilza explained, "To our right are the *integristas*, the immovables, who refuse to undertake really democratic initiatives. To our left are those who demand a 'break' with the Francoist regime. We, for our part, remain part of the constitutional reality and will bring about the necessary democratic transition legally."

What this has meant in practice has been shown by other events since the king's fake amnesty in honor of the late dictator. In one action, the regime suppressed four articles in the news magazine *Cambio 16* that were deemed "contrary to the institutions and principles contained in the fundamental laws" bequeathed by the fascist dictatorship. The government had earlier delayed publication of the magazine because it contained an opinion poll showing that most persons in Spain favor restoration of universal suffrage and freedom of expression.

A representative of the magazine said the censorship showed that "from Franco's day to today, only one thing has changed—the head of state. The government and the bureaucracy are still the same."

In another repressive move the Ministry of Information prevented a news conference scheduled for November 26 by the outlawed Spanish Socialist Workers party (PSOE—Partido Socialista Obrero de España) from being held by threatening to arrest anyone who attended. It also closed for five days the Madrid Foreign Press Club, where the conference was to have been held.

The capitalist press in the United States has tended to focus attention on the question of which Francoist politicians the new king will pick for his government. This reflects Wall Street's hopes that developments in Spain will remain confined within the straitjacket of fascist legality. But the moves made by Juan Carlos so far offer little prospect that even the miserably pinched and timid versions of "democratization" being advanced by the procapitalist editorialists and commentators will actually be enacted.

Juan Carlos made his first important appointment December 2, when he named Torcuato Fernández Miranda, a veteran of the clerical-fascist movement of the 1930s, to two high posts, speaker of parliament and chairman of the Council of the Realm.



JUAN CARLOS I: Franco's heir proves more adept at repression than "democratization."

New York Times correspondent Henry Giniger termed this "a gesture toward the extreme right," and delicately noted in passing that Fernández "has proposed a form of national socialism for Spain."

This was followed December 5 by the decision to retain Carlos Arias Navarro as premier for the rest of his term. By keeping Arias on for another three years, Juan Carlos is underlining his effort at maintaining the continuity of Franco's regime. Arias, for example, presided over the recent execution of five anti-Franco militants. These moves will not help the standing of those forces urging the workers to give Franco's heir the benefit of the doubt.

Both the Stalinist and Social Democratic leaders in Spain have been trying to sell themselves as the most capable defenders of capitalist order. PSOE leader Felipe González spelled out the Social Democratic argument November 24.

"Many Western countries want to see a step-by-step political change, thinking this will avoid the risks of upheaval such as in Portugal," he told *New York Times* reporter Flora Lewis.

However, González explained, the extreme right "doesn't want the least change in this country, no movement toward Europe. But if the King tries to confront the extreme right, he will have to displace his base and seek support elsewhere in the country."

"Elsewhere," of course, means at his address, as far as González is concerned. The PSOE leader warned that Juan Carlos must "make clear his intentions for a democratic transformation within a month, or the pressures will mount inexorably against him."

While demanding a place in the royal government, the Social Democratic chief also appealed directly to Washington and the European imperialists, saying: "The problem of the United States and Western Europe is that they want Juan Carlos to be able to make the political transformation of Spain without trauma. To make the transformation, however, he has either to have a broad social-economic base of support or use rigid, dictatorial methods."

The Stalinists are at a disadvantage in this game because Juan Carlos has publicly ruled out legalization of the Spanish Communist party. As a result, they have been cultivating a different wing of the royal family, the one headed by Juan Carlos's father, Don Juan de Borbón.

"This is not, as may first appear, a kind of monarchist nit-picking," the American Stalinists said in the November 26 issue of their newspaper, the *Daily World*. They pointed out that Don Juan is represented in the CP-led Junta Democrática by Rafael Calvo Serer, who bills himself as part of the "civilized right."

But the eagerness of the reformist leaders to make a deal with the monarchy will not be enough to prevent the Spanish masses from intervening in the evolution of their country. Juan Carlos, Don Juan, and the rest of the Borbón tribe were obsolete two hundred years ago. The age of "enlightened despotism" ended with Frederick the Great, and a similar system is not about to solve the problems of a modern industrial country. □

British Labour Government Ends Internment in Northern Ireland

The British government declared the end to internment, or detention without trial, in Northern Ireland December 5. The last forty-six persons held under the detention policy, which was first adopted in August 1971, were released. In the four years during which it was used, 1,981 men and women, the majority of whom were republicans, were held without trial.

A government official said the detention policy had "outlived its usefulness." The right-wing Protestant leader Rev. Ian Paisley, who supported the end to the detention policy, was more specific about the reasons for its abandonment: "Detention without trial threw the entire Roman Catholic population into the hands of the I.R.A. [Irish Republican Army]. It was the best bonus the I.R.A. ever received."

In announcing the decision to end internment, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Merlyn Rees declared that republican "terrorists" will not "escape the punishment due to them." Since the beginning of the year, 1,260 persons have been tried on charges of terrorism. "This is the accepted and tested method that we want to use instead of detention," Rees said.

Capitalism Fouls Things Up



'Like Jumping Into a Cesspool'

The Buenos Aires environmental and health inspection department held a news conference November 26 to warn inhabitants of the area against bathing in the Río de la Plata. Health officials explained that this would "create the danger of catching illnesses ranging from respiratory to intestinal and including muscular and optical ailments, sinusitis, and laryngitis, among others."

The Buenos Aires daily *La Opinión* reported November 27 that the river has been contaminated for more than ten years with industrial wastes. These include "phenols, which give the water a bitter taste, and hydrocarbons, which cause the disagreeable and nauseating smell."

In addition, the article noted, "Jumping into the waters of the Río de la Plata is like jumping into a cesspool."

World's Largest Sewer

Pollution threatens to kill every living thing in the Mediterranean Sea except bacteria and viruses, according to French oceanographer Jacques Cousteau. He told a news conference in New York that if pollution continues, the inhabitants of Barcelona, Marseille, Nice, Genoa, Naples, and the rest of the coast of southern Europe will have to move many miles inland. Most of the coastal areas have already been depleted of fish, he said.

According to a report in the December 3 *Christian Science Monitor*, Cousteau said that wastes from more than 400 million persons living in an arc stretching from the Ural Mountains in the Soviet Union to Lake Victoria in central Africa eventually flow into the Mediterranean.

Too Busy Inventing Poisons for CIA

Scientists for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have not been able to give sufficient time and attention to the effects of low levels of pollution on cancer and heart disease, an agency executive, Dr. Roy Albert, said November 10. Time pressures "tend to force overly hasty work" by scientists and others writing U.S. air and

water pollution regulations, he said.

Dr. Albert, who recently became the agency's acting deputy assistant administrator for health and biological effects, testified before the House Subcommittee on the Environment and the Atmosphere.

He did not mention particular pollutants, but he did refer to research indicating that relatively low levels of various chemicals have led to chronic diseases whose symptoms could take years to appear.

"There is very strong evidence that environmental factors play an important role in the causation of cancer and chronic pulmonary disease and similar evidence is beginning to accumulate for arteriosclerosis," he said.

It was not reported whether Dr. Albert had sought to tap the considerable scientific resources of other departments of the federal government. A precedent he might have cited is the fact that the year of scientific work it took to produce the Central Intelligence Agency's deadly shellfish toxin was done by the U.S. Public Health Service.

You Need More Than an Umbrella

Areas located downwind of big cities are likely to get a third more rain, twice as much hail, more pollution, more cloudy days, and more foul odors than the city itself or upwind areas.

These are some of the findings of a nearly completed five-year study by a group of U.S. scientists on how cities change the weather. The research focused on St. Louis, but the scientists said it applies to most of the world's cities.

According to a report in the November 25 *Christian Science Monitor*, the study found that warm air rising from the cities carries with it microscopic particles of pollution from coal-burning factories, auto exhaust, and other sources. Raindrops forming around the particles produce clouds that release their moisture downwind of the city.

Most of the extra rain, hail, and pollution fell within about twenty-five miles downwind of St. Louis. On a few days, however, pollution from the city was monitored as far as 350 miles away.

Since winds in the United States general-

ly move from west to east, pollution generally increases from western cities eastward. One result is the phenomenon of "acid rain," rain containing a high degree of sulfuric acid, stemming largely from city pollution.

According to Currie Downie, coordinator of the St. Louis study, research has shown that clouds formed over Chicago, St. Louis, or Detroit can, for example, drop rain three to four times more acidic than normal on places as far away as Boston.

One study, he said, shows rain "fallout" from Britain and Germany has made some forest soils in Sweden so acidic that "trees are not growing like they used to."

The Killer in Little Elk Valley

Since 1969 four of the 400 residents of Little Elk Valley in Maryland have died from lymphatic cancer. This is as much as 100 times the normal death rate from this relatively rare form of cancer.

All four of the victims lived within a mile of the Galaxy Chemical Company, and two lived less than 200 yards from the plant, whose fumes have brought complaints from residents of the valley.

A report compiled by a government health team suggests that the deaths may have been caused by the fumes, but it stresses that a sure link between the incidence of cancer and the chemical plant has yet to be established.

Doctors on the team explained that the plant's chemical emissions are well below the maximum levels set as "safe" by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration. In the meantime, the plant keeps operating with no additional safeguards.

New Continent Forming?

"Waste dumped by New York and other East Coast cities has combined with tanker discharges to form a constant sludge of oil and plastics one million square miles out into the Atlantic and down to the Caribbean as far as the Yucatan."

—Richard A. Frank, in an article entitled "The Law at Sea" in the May 18 *New York Times* magazine.

The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom

Reviewed by David Russell



In March 1971 the office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Media, Pennsylvania, was broken into by a group calling itself the "Citizens' Commission to Investigate the FBI."

Media, a town of less than 6,000 persons not far from Philadelphia, was hardly a center of radical activity. Moreover, the FBI did not lack offices in the larger cities nearby. Yet the files taken from this office, which later circulated publicly, had a peculiarly one-sided character. Forty per-

COINTELPRO: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom. New York: Pathfinder Press, 1975. 190 pp. \$1.95

cent of them concerned cases of political surveillance and the use of agents provocateurs against dissident groups. Another 14 percent dealt with draft resistance and "leaving the military without government permission," while 30 percent were devoted to routine procedural matters.

What was reflected in the Media files was the fundamental character of the FBI. It is a secret political-police agency whose job is to suppress opinions viewed with disfavor by the White House.

Most of what is known about the FBI's day-to-day activities against dissident groups and individuals has come to light as one of the consequences of a lawsuit initiated by the Socialist Workers party and Young Socialist Alliance in 1973. As a result of the suit, 4,000 pages of FBI Cointelpro (Counterintelligence Program) documents have been turned over to the socialists, who are demanding an end to illegal government surveillance, harassment, and disruption.

COINTELPRO: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom is a selection of some of these FBI documents. It also contains background material and articles on the various aspects of the FBI's operations written by Nancy Cole, Nelson Blackstock, and Baxter Smith. This is the most extensive presentation of this material now available in book form.

In his introduction to the book Noam Chomsky, the well-known linguist and writer, says: "The SWP Disruption Pro-

gram, put into operation during the Kennedy administration, reveals very clearly the FBI's understanding of its function: to block legal political activity that departs from orthodoxy, to disrupt opposition to state policy, to undermine the civil rights movement."

The Cointelpro documents touch on every aspect of the radicalization of the 1960s. The FBI was at work trying to derail the desegregation struggles in the South, the organization of Blacks in the northern ghettos, the student protests on campuses, and the mass antiwar demonstrations. The files detailing the FBI's intervention in these events will constitute an important source of information for historians. For revolutionists, however, they have a more immediate significance.

As Chomsky explains, "In comparison with these revelations, the whole Watergate affair was a tea party. The documents and depositions made public . . . lay bare a systematic and extensive program of terror, disruption, intimidation, and instigation of violence, initiated under the most liberal Democratic administrations and carried further under Nixon."

There is a growing mass of proof that government agents were involved in many of the burglaries, fire bombings, shooting incidents, and explosive bombings that have been carried out against left-wing groups in cities across the United States. As the files on the Black movement in particular indicate, the ultimate logic of Cointelpro was murder.

The censored documents released by the FBI focus mainly on lower-level forms of disruption. For example, FBI agents tried to stir up animosities inside the SWP by mailing a racist letter, supposedly from another party member, to a Black SWP member. The letter asked, "Why don't you and the rest of your fellow party monkeys hook up with the Panthers where you'd feel at home?"

The FBI was especially upset by any sign that the SWP was making gains in the Black movement. It carried out a number of operations designed to sabotage a defense committee the SWP was involved in, including circulating charges that SWP members were stealing money from the committee. A

1965 letter expressed dismay that "a rather close relationship has developed between the SWP and the followers of the late Malcolm X," and proposed that FBI agents in the Black movement work "to drive a wedge between the followers of MALCOLM X and the SWP."

Another area of concentration for the political police was the antiwar movement. The FBI's main concern here was in attempting to provoke splits in the movement and in urging actions that would enable the government to victimize the participants. One anonymous red-baiting letter the FBI sent to a number of antiwar groups in 1968 combined these tasks, singling out for attack the idea of mass demonstrations. "We suspect that any SMC [Student Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam] activity in the future will be in the form of YSA street meetings—zero contributions to the ending of the Johnson war. While the Trotskyites talk and talk, the war goes on and on," the FBI said.

Another anonymous red-baiting effort was a leaflet put out by the FBI in 1970, ostensibly from an antiwar activist. The New York FBI office explained, "The leaflet is designed to cause disruption in the peace movement, primarily in the New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, and to minimize the growing influence of the SWP in the movement."

The secret-police author urged in the leaflet, "If the peace movement in Amerika is to survive, the crap influence of the Socialist Workers Party and its bastard youth group—Young Socialist Alliance—must be flushed from New Mobe once and for all."

Other documents detail how the FBI intervened to get SWP members fired from teaching jobs because of their political views, and how the FBI attempted to hamper SWP election campaigns.

Although Cointelpro continues to this day under different names, broad publicity exposing these plans of harassment and disruption has helped put the government on the defensive. It has had to disavow publicly some of its previous tactics, making them harder to use in the future.

This is a gain for the working class as a whole. Antiwar militants, Black activists,

trade unionists, and supporters of women's rights are also victimized by the FBI, not only socialists.

In addition to setting back the government's attempts to label socialism a subversive doctrine and to put in question the legality of socialist organizations, the SWP suit has helped to reveal some of the grimmer realities of American politics. The idea that the U.S. government is run by well-meaning public servants has lost standing in spite of the efforts of the Republicans and Democrats to focus attention on the crooks in Nixon's entourage.

In trying to defend their practices, representatives of the FBI have pointed to precedents. Thus, William C. Sullivan, who was the late FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover's assistant for many years, argued:

Such a very great man as Franklin D. Roosevelt saw nothing wrong in asking the FBI to investigate those opposing his lend-lease policy—a purely political request. He also had us look into the activities of others who opposed our entrance into World War II, just as later Administrations had the FBI look into those opposing the conflict in Vietnam.

Statements like this have not helped the capitalists in maintaining the fiction that the violations of democratic rights exposed during the last two years were an aberration of the Nixon era. The continuing revelations prompted Henry Kissinger to plead November 25 in defense of his criminal involvement that it is time “to end the self-flagellation that has done so much harm.”

Kissinger added that “it is high time that they [the FBI and CIA] be given the opportunity to go back to their business and not spend all their time preparing themselves, explaining events that happened five or 10 years ago.”

The Trotskyists of the SWP and the YSA have been the only ones in the American left to take advantage of the climate of opinion generated by Watergate to launch a major campaign against the criminal activities of the government's political police.

The impact of this campaign has been undeniable. Every single major newspaper in the United States has carried at least one story on the Cointelpro documents released as a result of the SWP's suit. There have also been dozens of editorials denouncing the illegal harassment carried out by the FBI.

In spite of this widespread publicity, most left-wing tendencies have attempted to avoid any comment on the SWP's legal challenge. One exception was the Workers League, the American followers of Gerry Healy, who took the suit as another proof that “the leadership of the SWP has moved further and further to the right.”

In the August 13, 1973, issue of its newspaper, the *Bulletin*, this group denounced the lawsuit, saying that “in the

midst of the greatest crisis in history, when the independent struggle of the working class is a question of life and death, the leaders of the SWP go into court to ‘sue Nixon.’”

Although the class struggle in the United States has not yet reached the pitch proclaimed by these sectarians, the ruling class is well aware of the potential for a mass socialist movement. The construction of a political-police agency charged with disrupting leftist groups is one of the means designed to block such a development. Although it has been forced to make some retreats, the government has by no means changed its basic aim. The ultimate logic of its position is to declare revolutionary Marxist ideas illegal. In the meantime, the

FBI continues to fight for legalization of such disruptive activities as spying on and sending agents into socialist groups.

One FBI representative was pressed November 18 to justify the bureau's spying on the SWP. “It's my recollection,” he told the House of Representatives Select Committee on Intelligence, “that Leon Trotsky established the Fourth International in 1938 and the party here in the United States was established at the same time. . . . I regard [the SWP] as a party that follows the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism as interpreted by Leon Trotsky.”

The publication of the Cointelpro documents is an important step in the ongoing struggle to defend democratic rights in the United States against the imperialist rulers.

Demand End to Racist Assaults and Expulsions

African Students in USSR Protest Discrimination

African students studying in the Ukrainian city of Lviv issued a public protest in early November against the racist treatment they have been subjected to. The African Student Union in that city asked African ambassadors in Moscow to help stop racial assaults on them and arbitrary expulsions of Black students from the university.

The ASU cited nine separate incidents in which African students were attacked, including one in which a pregnant Nigerian student was assaulted. In a memorandum the ASU described one incident that occurred in April, when “a Nigerian, Mr. Adeogba, was attacked by a drunken Soviet citizen with a chisel while sleeping in his room.” He was rescued by two friends, but all three Nigerians were expelled for “attacking and beating up a Soviet citizen in Mr. Adeogba's own room.”

“The ASU complained about insults by Soviet hosts, lack of recourse to correct grievances, disregard of permission from African embassies in Moscow to travel to Moscow or abroad, forced participation in politics, and harassment in the form of constant new regulations,” according to a report by Elizabeth Pond in the November 11 *Christian Science Monitor*.

The ASU asked the African ambassadors to “please let the Russians know that if they want our respect, they should respect our countries and peoples,” and to “keep in contact with us so as not to give the Russians the idea that we are outcasts.”

The Lviv protest came shortly after about 500 African students in Kiev, another Ukrainian city, went on strike at the university there and marched on the Cze-

choslovak consulate. They were protesting the withdrawal of the scholarship of a Czechoslovak woman who married a Nigerian, and the lifting of her residence permit by the Soviet regime.

The last such public protests occurred during the 1960s. In 1964, after a Ghanaian medical student was found dead near Moscow, Africans marched through Red Square claiming that he had been murdered. They carried signs charging that “Moscow Is Another Alabama.”

A year later, after a large group of Africans marched through Baku, twenty-nine Kenyans were expelled and immediately flown home. One of the students complained, “They just don't like black people. Waiters in restaurants ignored you and if you tried to dance with a Russian girl, you were beaten up.” □

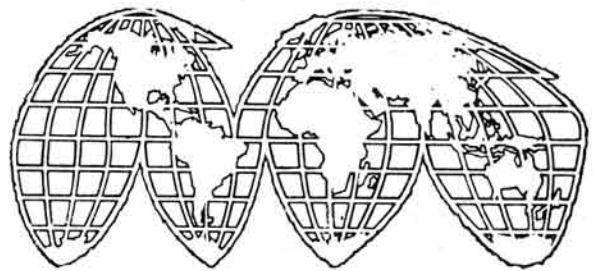
860,000 Japanese Workers Strike

About 860,000 railway, telephone, postal, and other Japanese government employees walked off their jobs November 26 to press their demand for the right to strike. The strike was scheduled to last ten days.

The government workers called for the return of their right to strike, which had been abolished in 1948 by the U.S. occupation authorities. The strike was prompted by a government report recommending the continuation of the ban for railway and postal workers.

Premier Takeo Miki denounced the strike as “illegal” and Yasuhiro Nakasone, the general secretary of the ruling Liberal Democratic party, termed the workers' defiance of the strike ban “a challenge to constitutional government and democracy.”

AROUND THE WORLD



10,000 Women March in Rome for Right to Abortion

Ten thousand women marched through central Rome December 6 demanding legalization of abortion. A dispatch from Reuters said the action was the largest such demonstration ever held in Italy.

In parliament a few days before, the Christian Democrats were defeated in an attempt to amend the abortion bill under consideration. They sought to maintain the classification of abortion as a legal offense, but one that would not be punished under certain circumstances. These would include danger to the pregnant woman's physical or mental health, danger of deformity if the pregnancy were carried to term, economic hardship, incest, or rape.

The draft bill, according to Reuters, "would permit abortion under just these circumstances during the first 90 days of pregnancy." It has been strongly criticized by women's groups as insufficient because it gives doctors, rather than the women concerned, the right to decide whether an abortion should be performed.

Guyanians Protest French Plans to Send In 30,000 Settlers

Several organizations in the French colony of Guyane (Guiana) have issued a joint statement protesting plans of the French government to settle tens of thou-

sands of persons in the colony. The statement was issued October 23 by the Mouvement Guyanais de Décolonisation (Moguyde—Guyanain Movement for Decolonization), the National Guyanain Movement, the Union of Guyanain Students, and the Union of Guyanain Workers.

The plan was put before the general council of the French Overseas Department August 2 by Olivier Stirn, the secretary of state for Overseas Departments and Territories of the French government.

Under the guise of promoting Guyanain economic development, the Stirn plan aims to transplant as many as 35,000 migrants from France to the colony, which at present has 55,000 inhabitants.

"In order to move [into Guyane]," the statement says, "France is resorting to a vast immigration of French colonizers through which some 30,000 will be installed at first. It amounts to a vast operation of population substitution, like in Palestine; for, at the same time, the easy and free emigration to France of the living forces of Guyane, above all its youth, is being systematically organized by the office of Migration for the Overseas Departments."

The protesters denounce "this racist attempt at the eleventh hour by a desperate colonial government to smother the unshakable will of the Guyanain people for national liberation."

They point out that while land is being readied for the French immigrants, it is "at the detriment of Guyanians who have no land and cannot acquire it. . . ."

The French government plan for Guyanain "economic development" has the support of Léopold Héder, a member of the Senate and general secretary of the Guyanain Socialist party.

Why Foreign Companies Like to Invest in Brazil

The multinational companies operating in Brazil are draining the country of its wealth, according to a report prepared by members of the Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (MDB—Brazilian Democratic Movement, the official opposition party in the Brazilian parliament).

The MDB report was drawn up as a reply to the government's claim that foreign capital and technology contributed to the country's development. It has not yet been

published, but an account of its findings was given in the December 1 *Los Angeles Times*.

According to the MDB report, one American company, Johnson & Johnson, has taken out of Brazil in profits and payments for technology thirty-two times the amount of capital it has invested in the country. Esso, the giant U.S. oil company, took out nearly twenty-five times the amount it invested.

Alencar Furtado, president of the investigating committee, reported at the end of November that the ten largest foreign companies in Brazil invested \$98.8 million in the country in the past ten years but sent \$774.5 million abroad.

U.S. Investment in Egypt Stalled

Although four U.S.-proposed deals are almost ready for final Egyptian response, Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat's "open door" policy toward foreign investment has had less than spectacular results. In eighteen months Cairo has failed to attract a single "significant" U.S. investor, according to officials in Washington. However, about forty U.S. companies are said to maintain an "active interest" in building plants in Egypt.

Washington claims the reason is delay on Cairo's part in defining what terms it will give U.S. investors. It may also be that the terms are clear, but the imperialists think they can get better.

All Charges Dropped Against Brisbane Three

All charges against the Brisbane Three, three activists in the Black movement in Australia, were dropped November 25. The Queensland judge presiding over the case of Lionel Fogarty, John Garcia, and Denis Walker accepted the defense motion that insufficient evidence had been provided by the prosecution to justify continuing with the trial.

Fogarty, Garcia, and Walker had been charged with conspiracy to obtain money with threats and menace, and faced fourteen years in jail if convicted. (See *Intercontinental Press*, October 6, p. 1327.)

Commenting on the importance of the case, the November 27 issue of the



New York Times

revolutionary-socialist fortnightly *Direct Action* said: "The release of the three is a great victory for Blacks facing police attack around the country, and for the national movement which was built to defend the Brisbane Three."

Labour Party Defeated in New Zealand Elections

The Labour party in New Zealand was dealt an unexpected defeat in the November 29 general elections. Its strength in the House of Representatives dropped from 55 seats to 34. The conservative National party, whose leader, Robert Muldoon, is to become the new premier, polled 53 seats, compared with its previous 32.

The inflation rate, which rose from 6.6 percent in 1972 to 14.8 percent this year, was considered one of the major factors in the defeat of the Labour government.

The National party government will face similar problems. The December 1 *Christian Science Monitor* noted that "New Zealanders can expect higher prices, more unemployment, and industrial unrest in 1976."

People's Democratic Republic Established in Laos

The People's Democratic Republic of Laos was proclaimed December 3. The move followed a congress of the Central Committee of the Lao Patriotic Front (Pathet Lao), which decided to abolish the monarchy and the nineteen-month-old coalition government composed of Pathet Lao, neutralist, and rightist representatives. The rightist wing within the coalition regime had collapsed after the defeat of the U.S.-backed regimes in neighboring Vietnam and Cambodia earlier this year.

Prince Souphanouvong, the titular head of the Lao Patriotic Front, was named the president of the new republic. Kaysone Phoumvihan, the general secretary of the People's party of Laos (Phak Pasason Lao, the Laotian Communist party), became the premier.

King Savang Vatthana, who abdicated his throne shortly before the proclamation of the republic, was retained in the new regime as an "adviser," as was Prince Souvanna Phouma, the former head of the coalition regime.

Peso Shortage in Argentina

The inflation rate in Chile for the first ten months of 1975 totaled 280%, compared with 375% for 1974. Argentina's inflation rate for the ten-month period was 287%, giving it the worst inflation in the world.

The rightist junta in Chile is dealing with the inflation through a deliberately induced recession, with increasingly high unemployment. In Argentina the Peronist regime has

covered government deficits by simply printing more paper money. However, this policy is leading to difficulties.

As the November 4 issue of the Buenos Aires daily *La Opinión* explained, given the expected government deficit and its cash needs, it will be necessary to inject 100 billion pesos into the economy by the end of the year.

"That possibility is remote," *La Opinión* noted. "At the rate of production of 28 million pesos per hour [the government's maximum rate], some 40 billion pesos will be produced by December 31, less than half the necessary amount."

Report MIR Orders Execution of Two Former Top Leaders

The underground Chilean organization Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR—Movement of the Revolutionary Left) has expelled and condemned to death two of its top leaders and ordered "its militants and . . . revolutionaries of the entire world, to execute the sentences however, whenever and where they can," according to an Associated Press dispatch from Santiago printed in the December 1 *Los Angeles Times*.

In a declaration sent to Santiago newspa-

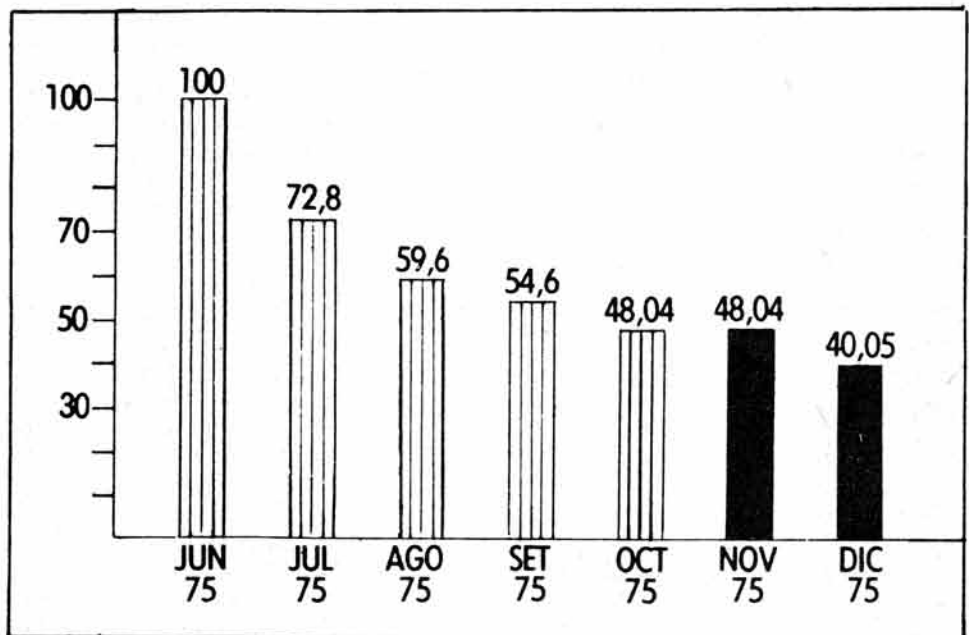
pers and foreign news agencies, the MIR said that the two leaders, Andrés Pascal Allende and Nelson Gutiérrez, violated standing orders when they sought asylum in two Santiago diplomatic missions November 7. Pascal Allende, who is a nephew of the late Chilean President Salvador Allende, and Gutiérrez were both founding members of the MIR.

Also ordered expelled from the organization were Mary Ann Beausire, who sought asylum in the Costa Rican embassy with Pascal Allende, and María Elena Bachman, who took refuge in the Vatican diplomatic mission with Gutiérrez.

According to AP, the declaration charged the two former leaders with "treason against the party, the working class and the people and also desertion and cowardice." It said they were condemned to death for "gravely damaging the development of the Chilean and worldwide revolutionary movement and also for the fact that their seeking of asylum effectively helps the junta dictatorship."

"The MIR declaration," AP reported, "said both men had gravely hurt the organization since only they knew the whereabouts of hidden stocks of arms and money for operating expenses."

Sharp Decline in Real Wages Hits Argentine Working Class



La Opinión

According to a report in the November 16 issue of the Buenos Aires daily *La Opinión*, real wages in Argentina are dropping at a phenomenal rate.

If real wages as they stood in June are taken to represent a level of 100, by November they had fallen to 48.04.

The projected figure for December is 40.05. The buying power of the Argentine workers was thus cut to less than half of what it was six months ago.

La Opinión cites inflation as the "general cause" of the deterioration in real wages. □

Revolution and Counterrevolution in Portugal

By Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, and Ernest Mandel

[First of two parts]

Two Different Interpretations of the Political Conflict Since May 1975

Contrary to what is alleged in the article "For a Correct Political Course in Portugal" (*Intercontinental Press*, October 13, 1975), we did not charge Comrades Foley and Hansen with having given full political support to the Portuguese Socialist party. We accused them of completely and disastrously misreading the fundamental significance of the specific political and social conflict that has dominated the Portuguese scene since May 1975. They thought that the basic conflict was over the question of bourgeois democratic rights and that the Socialist party, even if unwillingly and partially, was defending democratic rights, the major conquest of the Portuguese revolution. We thought, and still think, that the fundamental conflict was over the *defense of the revolutionary conquests of the working class going beyond the limits of bourgeois democracy*: factory occupations, workers control, "indiscipline" among the soldiers, arming of the workers, "anarchy" in the factories and barracks, new extensions of the nationalizations. Further, we held, and still hold, that on these key issues the SP leadership was leading a bourgeois counteroffensive against the revolution. In their reply to us, Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack have little to say about *that* charge. And this is not surprising, for events have heaped refutation upon refutation on their thesis.

The Soares-spearheaded offensive was successful on the government level. The Gonçalves government was brought down. In fact, the October 1975 issue of *Le Monde Diplomatique* referred to the new government headed by Vice-Admiral Pinheiro de Azevedo as "a Soares government without Soares." This government has the full and enthusiastic support of the SP leadership. But Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack themselves consider it a government that is "to the right" of the Gonçalves government. They admit that this government has initiated a series of repressive actions (which we had predicted and which the Melo Antunes wing of the Armed Forces Movement had pushed for). These repressive measures have included such acts as: tightening press censorship; trying to eject the Rádio Renascença workers from the radio station they had occupied, a station that had become a means by which to inform the Portuguese working class about the activities of dozens of workers and tenants committees throughout the country, a station that had been transformed into a workers cooperative during October; trying to forbid radio and television broadcasts critical of the government and the MFA. In the October 17 issue of the *Militant* Comrade David Frankel summed up the situation this way:

"Authority, discipline, and order; under these watchwords the government of Premier José Pinheiro de Azevedo is stepping up its attempts to curb the deepgoing radicalization in Portugal.

"Admiral Azevedo's top priority is clearly the reimposition of discipline throughout the military and the setting out of clear lines of authority, especially in the volatile Lisbon area," noted an approving editorial in the October 5 *New York Times*.

"The latest events broke on September 29, when Azevedo declared a 'de facto state of emergency' throughout Portugal.

Military units were put on alert, leaves were canceled, and bases were isolated from the public. At the same time, troops were ordered to occupy the radio and television stations in the Lisbon area.

"The justification given for this action was that the media had been obstructing the stabilization of the country. According to a September 30 dispatch in the *New York Times*, Azevedo denounced a 'provocative campaign of seditious attitudes that endanger the revolution.'

"This crude attack on freedom of the press was wholeheartedly supported by the Portuguese Socialist party. SP leader Mário Soares led a demonstration in Lisbon September 30 in order to back what he hailed as 'a government of the left and a government of hope.'

"Azevedo set the theme of the action, calling out, 'Discipline, discipline.'

"It is necessary to reestablish discipline to overcome the anarchy which this country has lived through,' he told the crowd, estimated at 20,000 to 30,000. . . .

"Every serious political and military figure here agrees that restoring order in everyday life and discipline in the military is the first and biggest problem to be solved,' *Washington Post* reporter Bernard Nossiter cabled from Lisbon September 26."

For us, of course, this was no surprise. As early as June 5, 1975, Comrade Mandel wrote:

"The ominous implications of the *República* incident are therefore somewhere else than where most commentators have sought them. *They could open the beginning of a concerted attack against the manifold attempts at workers control that have dominated the revolutionary process in Portugal during the last months.*

"That the pressure of Portuguese and international capital goes in that direction is self-evident. The European capitalists are called upon to bail out the Portuguese economy from its greatest crisis. They are ready to make a gesture, provided they can wring the maximum concessions from the Portuguese government. And the No. 1 concession they call for is reestablishment of discipline in the plants! Otherwise, they indicate, they would be just throwing money into a bottomless pit.

"That an important sector of the MFA leadership wants to act in the same direction is no less obvious. 'Restore discipline' has been one of its main propaganda slogans for a long time. . . .

". . . the Social Democrats . . . now shout for 'an end to anarchy,' a 'restoration of order,' 'the rule of law,' a 'digesting period' for nationalizations (i.e., a stop to the extension of nationalized enterprises), and other slogans of a clearly counterrevolutionary content. *They now try to oppose the process of consolidating bourgeois-democratic state institutions and bourgeois law against a further unfolding of the revolution*, centering their attacks upon initiatives of workers control, under the demagogic cloak of 'defending freedom.' This risks being the main objective result of the *República* incident. It is obviously the main threat to further progress of the Portuguese revolution." (*IP*, June 23, 1975, pp. 869-70.)

In the light of Comrade Frankel's article in the *Militant*, which gives a good summary of the present situation in Portugal, this analysis and prediction stands up rather well four months after it

was written. As do the analysis and predictions contained in our article of August 10 (*IP*, September 8, 1975, p. 1167):

"We, on the other hand, believe that the political struggle in Portugal today centers essentially not around the counterposition 'military dictatorship versus bourgeois democracy,' but instead around the issue 'for or against socialist revolution.' Since the last few months of 1974, and especially since the defeat of the Spinoist putsch of March 11, 1975, the revolutionary mass movement, based fundamentally on the working class, has gained in momentum and has begun to escape the control of the bourgeoisie and its military and reformist stooges. It is beginning to go beyond limits that are compatible with the maintenance of capitalist property relations and the bourgeois state apparatus. This has created universal fear, even near panic, among the Portuguese and international bourgeoisie. Hence the unanimous battle cry of all bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, and reformist forces: 'The revolution has gone too far; stop the revolutionary process; restore the authority of the (bourgeois) government and of the (bourgeois) state,' combined with the assisting slogan 'Down with Communist dictatorship!' It is around these issues that the class forces in Portugal (and throughout capitalist Europe) are aligning and realigning. It is on these issues that revolutionary socialists have to take an unambiguous stand."

Comrade Foley's analysis and predictions stand up less well against the test of events of early November. Here is what he wrote in the August 4, 1975, issue of *Intercontinental Press*:

"... to defend the Constituent Assembly and its parliamentary perspectives, the moderate, thoroughly unrevolutionary Socialist party was forced to mobilize hundreds of thousands of workers, toilers, and radicalized petty bourgeois against the government. It was not a course on which the SP leaders willingly embarked. They tried every way possible to avoid it. But the Socialist party was forced to fight for its life.

"The SP had been denied any voice in the government. It had been pushed back into a precarious bridgehead in the press. With the help of the government and its own machine, the Communist party had gained overwhelming predominance in the mass media. All forms of parliamentary pressure had failed to wrest concessions from the regime. The military was now preparing to do away with any pretense of parliamentary government or political democracy." (p. 1109.)

The idea that the key issue in Portugal was the threat of the destruction of elementary forms of political democracy, the establishment of a full military dictatorship, and the destruction of all democratic rights of the masses comes through even more strongly in Comrade Foley's "news analysis" published in the July 21, 1975, issue of *Intercontinental Press*:

"The military were evidently divided on how far the attack should be pushed. Should they go further than silencing *República* for the moment? Should they draw back temporarily? They proceeded cautiously in their foray, testing the ground in their attack on the democratic rights of the masses and not forgetting to maintain a heavy smokescreen of 'socialist' demagoguery.

"On such a course there was no returning after a certain point. If the objective was not won, the military regime would be destroyed. All the currents in the Armed Forces Movement now appear to have agreed on taking this gamble." (p. 1011.)

In the same "news analysis" the basic political conflict is clearly and explicitly defined as one counterposing the military on the one hand and the Socialist party on the other:

"Unlike the monolithic CP, the Socialist party, despite its equally class-collaborationist and opportunist line, was unreliable from the military's point of view. It was too loosely organized, too heterogeneous, and vulnerable to pressure from below. Its perspectives, electoralist to be sure, depended on being popular with the masses. Its special selling point was to offer 'socialism with liberty.'

"Thus, the SP stood in the way of the objectives of both the military and the CP. The attempts of the SP to play an autonomous role had to be ended." (p. 1010.)

In the "news analysis" printed in its July 28, 1975, issue *Intercontinental Press* went so far as to make an analogy between the MFA and the Nazis, comparing the "stance" of the Portuguese ultraleftists of "supporting the MFA against the Social Democrats" with "the notorious Prussian plebiscite in the 1930s, when the ultraleft Communist party joined with the Nazis against the Social Democrats, who were defending their parliamentary positions under bourgeois democracy." (p. 1059.)

Subsequent events have proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that Comrades Foley and Hansen's analysis was wrong from top to bottom. No, "all" currents of the MFA were not united in their desire to "crush" the SP or eliminate its "democratic rights." No, the SP did not stand in the way of the "objectives of the military." On the contrary, the majority of the MFA officers wound up rallying to the political proposals made by the SP, as we predicted they would. Far from being "unreliable" from the military's point of view, the SP proved to be rather more reliable than the CP in implementing the fundamental strategy of the Portuguese bourgeoisie.

It therefore follows that the central issue in Portugal between May and August 1975 was not military dictatorship versus Social Democracy (or bourgeois democracy). Indeed, the central issue was so-called anarcho-populism (a code word for the spontaneous continuation of the socialist revolution) versus restoration of "law and order," that is, the reconstruction of the bourgeois state and the capitalist economy.

And in the fight around this key issue—recognized as such by "every serious political and military figure" in Lisbon (but not by Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack)—the military hierarchy, the SP leadership, and the Portuguese and international bourgeoisie were all lined up in one camp, while a growing section of the Portuguese workers, soldiers, and poor peasants stood in the opposing camp. *By failing to understand the class nature of the confrontation*, Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack came close to being drawn into a camp that was supposedly "defending bourgeois democracy against military dictatorship," but was actually organizing a campaign for the restoration of "law and order" alongside the military and the entire bourgeoisie and against the advanced workers.

How pathetically Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack continue to cling to their wrong analysis of May-August is indicated by the fact that as late as September 30 they were still trying to cover up for Soares, claiming that "the words cited by Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel [Soares's calling upon the army to eject the *República* workers from their printshop] do not appear" in "the text of the statement made by the SP upon withdrawing from the government." (*IP*, October 13, p. 1371.) In fact, we were quoting not from the short communiqué reproduced in *Intercontinental Press* (July 21, 1975), but from the lengthy statement by Soares (four entire pages of the newspaper *Jornal Novo*) entitled *Proposta de Acção Imediata* (Proposal for Immediate Action) submitted to his July 28 press conference. (*IP*, September 8, p. 1173.)

But all this shadowboxing is of little importance. What is most relevant is that Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack failed to understand the *main thrust* of Soares's offensive in July and failed to notice the *main thrust* of the Melo Antunes document supported by Soares in August. Even at the end of September, they do not want to admit that Soares was in fact opening up a campaign for the restoration of bourgeois "law and order" under the cover of "defending democratic rights." And this at the very moment when the military, with the frenetic support of the SP, was carrying out the demands of Antunes-Soares, occupying radio and television stations to impose censorship, throwing the Rádio Renascença workers out of their radio station, and beginning to

arrest "anarcho-populist" soldiers. The abysmal fraudulence of such a supposed "defense of democratic rights" has since become obvious even to many SP workers. But it is still not obvious to Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack.¹

Political analysis is a complicated and complex business. Very often events present a combination of contradictory aspects in which it is difficult to separate basic class reality from surface appearances. The materialist dialectic helps us to solve such difficulties, but it is no guarantee of success. Mistakes can be made. Events can prove an analysis to have been wrong. It is then necessary to make corrections. There is nothing tragic in having been wrong. Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky made many errors. There is not and there will never be a superbeing known as the revolutionary party that has always been correct and is automatically guaranteed to be correct in the future. That is precisely why internal democracy in a revolutionary party is not a "luxury" or a simple gesture to traditional principles, but an indispensable tool for political effectiveness, a precondition for being able to more rapidly and smoothly correct inevitable political mistakes. Lenin put it this way: An important test of the political maturity of a party is its ability to correct its own mistakes.

Unfortunately, in the face of undeniable facts, Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack have decided not to recognize that their analysis of the meaning of the May-August political crisis in Portugal was dead wrong. Instead, they have covered their tracks with all kinds of spurious side issues. We are presented with a *potpourri* raising such vital issues for the world revolution as the origins and nature of the split between Healy and Lambert; the inner logic of the debate between our Swedish comrades and the Swedish centrists; the function of the left-reformist grouping around *Links* in Belgium; the past and present "guerrillaist" sins of the majority of the Fourth International; the differences among and respective merits of reporters of the London *Times* and the *Christian Science Monitor*; as well as a slew of other red herrings. And all this simply to avoid giving a clear answer to two straightforward questions: Was the main political struggle unfolding in Portugal between May and August a struggle between a workers party (albeit a reformist one) defending its democratic rights and a bourgeois military dictatorship attempting to suppress those rights? Or was it a struggle by all national and international bourgeois forces, spearheaded by the leadership of the Portuguese Socialist party, aimed at driving back the proletarian revolution, at wresting from the workers the important gains they had made in the factories and barracks, at destroying the embryos of dual power, and at disarming the workers, all under the cover of "defending democratic rights" and fighting against the threat of "communist dictatorship"?

In their attempts to cover up for the false political analysis that led them to a false prognosis and to the brink of lining up in the camp of the class enemy, Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack are caught in an implacable objective logic; they are forced to begin to revise some of the basic principles of Leninism and Trotskyism. This is what makes the present debate so crucial for the future of the Fourth International not only in Portugal, but

1. In September and October scarcely a day passed without the SP leadership calling for stepped-up repression of the radical workers and soldiers. When the SUV was created, the SP daily *A Luta* wrote: "It is strange that the army general staff has not taken any measures when they have the means to do so." (October 9.) During the SP-PPD demonstration in support of the Azevedo government, the crowd cheered General Charais because he had arrested two soldiers for the "crime" of distributing leaflets; Soares took up the cheer and repeated the slogan "Long live General Charais!" Similarly, the SP leaders organized a demonstration to support Jaime Neves, the reactionary, semifascist commander of the Amadora commandos, just at the time when this crack counterrevolutionary outfit had become utterly discredited in the eyes of the masses because of its physical attack on a demonstration of wounded and disabled war veterans demanding higher pensions.

also throughout the world, and for the future of the Socialist Workers party as well.

It is impossible to answer all the side issues and secondary points raised by Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack without writing a small book. We shall therefore avoid being sidetracked by dealing with a multitude of marginal questions that divert attention from the key issues involved in the debate.

Further, we are perfectly aware that even in concentrating the polemic on the major issues of the debate with Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack, we are dealing only partially with the important questions that must be discussed today: all the involved and complicated tactical problems raised by the actual process of revolution and counterrevolution in Portugal and the tasks they pose for revolutionary Marxists. For the Portuguese Trotskyists, the problems raised by Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack have already been solved by and large. They need a different discussion, around different issues. Nevertheless, the debate with Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack is useful for the vanguard both inside and outside Portugal, given the fundamental nature of the issues in dispute and their general implications for future revolutionary situations in other imperialist countries.

Class Nature of the Soares Offensive

One of the red herrings introduced by Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack to sidetrack the debate is the allegation that we "explain" their deviations from revolutionary Marxism by "psychological" factors. This is simply not true.

It is one thing to discuss "motivation," that is, the reasons for which a person or grouping thinks it is acting in a certain way. It is quite another to offer a scientific explanation, that is, to uncover the objective reasons for which it acts in this way, reasons that may well be leagues distant from their somewhat distorted reflections in the subject's own mind. Our allegation is that the mistakes of Comrades Foley and Hansen (and now Comrade Novack as well) in analyzing the Portuguese events during May-August were due to an abandonment of the *class criterion* in favor of formalistic and schematic dogmatism, namely, the concept of the central importance of "defending bourgeois democracy" up to the eve of the victorious proletarian insurrection. These mistakes are of a political and methodological character and are not at all "psychological."

In the more than 50,000 words they devote to the elucidation of the "correct political course in Portugal," nowhere do they even raise, let alone attempt to answer, this elementary question: How is it possible that the Portuguese and international capitalists rushed as one man to the defense of a reformist workers party supposedly under attack by a bourgeois military dictatorship? Is there any historical precedent for such bizarre behavior? Have all the Portuguese capitalists and all the capitalists throughout the world lost their elementary class consciousness? If what was involved was a conflict between Soares and a bourgeois military government, how could Spínola publicly support Soares?

The reference to the fact that the bourgeois character of the Gonçalves government makes a conflict between the government and a reformist workers party *possible* is no argument whatsoever. We were not speculating about possibilities; we were discussing realities. The bourgeoisie is no abstraction, not in Portugal and not internationally. To prove that there really was a conflict between the SP and the bourgeois government, one would have to prove that at least one significant sector of the national or international bourgeoisie was opposing the SP in June-August 1975. And that cannot be done. The hypothesis thus remains unproven—and not credible for Marxists.

In their efforts to avoid answering this basic question about the *class nature* of the political conflict in Portugal since May 1975, Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack offer us a long song and dance about Stalinism, a performance that is revealing in itself.

We are told that our demand that the class nature of the conflict be laid bare, that the question "cui prodest" be answered, is reminiscent of Stalinist polemics against Trotskyism:

"Isn't this reminiscent of the logic followed by the Stalinists in their polemics against the Trotskyists? Consider the following:

"1. Trotsky exposes the crimes of Stalin. The bourgeois press plays up the crimes of Stalin. Thus Trotsky and the bourgeois press are manifestly in a bloc.

"2. The Soviet Union is a workers state. Its greatest enemy is the United States, where bourgeois democratic rights still exist. Thus those who criticize the lack of freedom in the USSR are helping American imperialism.

"Shouldn't we guard against logic of this kind being used in the world Trotskyist movement?"

"'Cui prodest?' This is the argument every ossified bureaucrat in the labor movement considers to be unassailable. 'Anybody who criticizes me is helping the boss.'" (*IP*, October 13, 1975, p. 1373.)

Far from being the "argument every ossified bureaucrat in the labor movement considers to be unassailable," an argument that must therefore never creep into the Trotskyist movement, the criterion "cui prodest"—that is, the question of which social class's or layer's interests are served by this or that political move—*happens to be the major criterion used by Marxists in evaluating political events in class societies*. It has been used that way innumerable times in all the classics of Marxism, beginning with those authored by Marx himself, and including those written by Trotsky (one example: his treatment of the Kirov assassination). The fact that bureaucrats *abuse and misuse* this criterion to defend and justify their own privileges is no reason to abandon the criterion itself. We are not going to abandon Marxism, Leninism, or the theory of the class struggle just because Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, and Mao claim to be Marxists, Leninists, and advocates of the theory of the class struggle.

We ourselves drew the attention of the readers of our first article to the fact that if Portugal were a degenerate or bureaucratically deformed workers state under a Stalinist dictatorship, then the lineup of the Portuguese and international bourgeoisie behind Soares would have some semblance of logic in the light of the class struggle. But Portugal is not a workers state; it is a bourgeois state, albeit a very shaky one. This makes the unanimous support of world capital to Soares completely meaningless and incomprehensible in class terms if the basic conflict were really one between Soares and the "bourgeois military dictatorship," the bourgeois government.

But that is not all. It is quite easy for Trotskyists to answer the *fraudulent* use of the "cui prodest" criterion, the class criterion, by Stalinists and other bureaucrats when they are criticized by revolutionaries. Does it objectively strengthen world capitalism to denounce Stalin's concessions and capitulations to the bourgeoisie? Of course not. This denunciation strengthens the potential for anticapitalist struggle the world over. Does it objectively strengthen capitalism to criticize the sellouts of union bureaucrats to the bosses? Of course not. The bosses love the sellout and hate the alternative militant union leadership that this criticism helps to counterpose to the opportunists. Does it objectively strengthen world capitalism to struggle for soviet democracy in the Soviet Union? On the contrary; the success of this struggle would be a deadly blow to world capitalism. So in reality, in each of these instances, a correct application of the "cui prodest" criterion vindicates the class position of revolutionary Marxists as against its demagogical misuse by the bureaucratic fakers and misleaders of the working class.

It is true that the massive *verbal* support given by international capitalism to denunciations of the crimes of the Stalinist bureaucracy can create confusion among genuinely anticapitalist workers in the West. We patiently try to unravel this confusion by using, among other instruments, precisely the Marxist class

criterion. That is why we distinguish carefully between conflicts that oppose the toiling masses to the bureaucracy and conflicts that oppose international capitalism to that same bureaucracy. That is why the revolutionary Marxist position on Stalinism includes not only the strongest condemnation of the bureaucracy's crimes against the world revolution and the Soviet proletariat itself, but also the need to defend the Soviet Union against all attempts by the international bourgeoisie to reintroduce capitalism there. That is a concrete application of the "cui prodest" class criterion to the specific case of the Soviet Union. We do not fight against Stalin and Stalinism in any *bloc* with imperialism or the bourgeoisie. We attack the crimes and betrayals of Stalinism from a class position opposite to that of capital: Because these crimes and betrayals hinder, undermine, and thwart the struggle for world socialism. It is the bourgeoisie that "profits" from them.

Let us now consider the Portuguese political crisis in the light of the same criterion. Did Portuguese and international capital extend only verbal support to the Portuguese SP's fight for "democratic rights"? Absolutely not. There was a solid, material alignment of class forces, which was reflected, among other ways, by the withholding of hundreds of millions of dollars in economic aid until the SP demands would be met and by promising to grant that aid as soon as the demands were met, which is what actually transpired. (It remains an open question whether there were also direct CIA financial contributions to the SP.) There was a concerted drive by Portuguese and international capital to bring the SP back to power. There was a solid united front, extending from Spínola to the SP, for the "restoration of law and order," against "anarcho-populism," and against "armed civilians," that is, against the nuclei of workers power and the arming of the workers, which had developed spontaneously in Portugal. In this context, it is absolutely legitimate to raise the question "cui prodest?"

Today, after the first month of the "Soares government without Soares," there can be not the slightest doubt that the SP offensive *was the spearhead of a generalized counteroffensive of Portuguese and international capital aimed at halting and rolling back the socialist revolution* by trying to "discipline" (that is, repress) rebellious workers, soldiers, and poor peasants. The mistake made by Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack consisted in failing to understand the class nature of that offensive and its objective role in Portuguese society; today, in covering up for that failure, they still deny that this was and still is the key issue of Portuguese politics. The fact that the counterrevolution has had only limited success up to now does not change the fact that it has unfolded along the lines we predicted it would.

When the Soares offensive led to the downfall of the Gonçalves government, the Lambertist journal *Informations Ouvrières* saw this as a "triumph for the toiling masses." They were consistent at least. Since they believed that the major conflict in Portugal was the conflict between the "attempt to establish a bourgeois military dictatorship" (with the aid of the Stalinists) and the "resistance of the Socialist party to this attempt," they logically saw the downfall of Gonçalves as representing "the failure of the attempt to establish a bourgeois military dictatorship." How then to explain the small detail that the government that succeeds the Gonçalves government, with the full support of the SP and the majority of the military hierarchy, is *more repressive* (that is, more dictatorial) than the Gonçalves government? We are still awaiting some Lambertist "clarification" of this mystery.

While the Lambertists (and the Mao-Stalinists) at least have the merit of consistency, Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack lack even that. If the basic conflict was between the SP defending democratic rights and "attempts to install a full bourgeois military dictatorship," how do you explain the fact that this conflict resulted in a great majority of the "military dictators" gathering around the SP platform and stepping up their repressive, antidemocratic drive, with the enthusiastic support of

the SP? Why have Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack not hailed the downfall of the Gonçalves government as a great "triumph of the masses"? Why do they instead describe it, more correctly, as a shift to the right? How can a successful defense of "democratic rights" against a "military dictatorship" lead to a "shift to the right"? Perhaps the entire schema was wrong from the start? Perhaps "defense of democratic rights" was never the issue, after all?

On the 'Democratic Counterrevolution'

Since the rise of fascism, many Marxists have been inclined to identify counterrevolution with regimes that eliminate all forms of political democracy, with bloody military-Bonapartist or fascist dictatorships. The revolutionary Marxist view, however, is quite different. We recognize that many times in contemporary history the "democratic" counterrevolution has preceded the fascist or military-Bonapartist counterrevolution. The bourgeoisie is now trying to impose just such a "democratic" counterrevolution in Portugal.

Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack treat with heavy irony our "analogy" between the situation in Portugal today and the situations in Germany in 1918-19, Republican Spain after July 1936, and France and Italy at the end of the Second World War. For them this analogy may be summarized as follows: It "is not excluded" that the Portuguese bourgeoisie can use the Constituent Assembly to halt the proletarian revolution; "must it therefore be concluded that it is absolutely certain they will succeed in doing so?" (*IP*, October 13, p. 1363.) And they conclude that we dissolve the "peculiarities of the Portuguese revolution" into "the vague abstraction of 'all historical experience of the past fifty years in Europe.' What about the first premise of dialectical thought, that it deal with the concrete?"

Unfortunately, Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack miss the point, both the theoretical ("abstract") one and the concrete one.

First, it appears to us a bit strange that they regard the reference to the proletarian revolutions that have actually broken out in imperialist countries as "abstract" and "vague." Is it really useless to learn from historical experience, under the pretext that the truth is always "concrete," that every historical situation is "peculiar" and "unique"? Isn't that the old argument of all opportunists and all opponents of theory in general and Marxist theory in particular? Isn't the theory of the Leninist party based at least partially on the need for theoretical continuity, that is, a synthesis of historical experience?

Second, our "abstract" argument was especially relevant since Comrade Hansen had himself raised another "abstract" counter-argument: that revolutionary Marxists should defend bourgeois democracy right up to the moment of the preparation of the armed insurrection. We therefore politely remind him of an undeniable historical fact: that long before the conquest of power is on the agenda, long before a mass revolutionary party has won the allegiance of the majority of the working class, the "democratic counterrevolution," that is, the suppression of soviets and the disarming of the proletariat, is actively pursued and carried on under the cover of bourgeois democracy, that is, without the suppression of elected parliaments or the elimination of democratic rights for reformist parties. In fact, the bourgeoisie attempts to carry out this counterrevolution precisely by temporarily relying on the reformist parties and the parliamentary bodies. This fact alone—borne out, let us repeat, by fifty years of not at all abstract history—is sufficient to demonstrate how incomplete and thereby false is the formula: "fighting for bourgeois democracy in the period leading up to socialism."

Here is how Trotsky summarized the "democratic counterrevolution" that was successfully carried through in Germany between November 9, 1918, and January 1919:

"In Germany at the end of 1918 and at the beginning of 1919 the power was actually in the hands of the working class. The Social Democrats—the majority faction, the Independents, and the trade unions alike—used their whole apparatus and all their traditional influence for the purpose of returning this power into the hands of the bourgeoisie." (Theses of the Third World Congress of the Communist International on the International Situation and the Tasks of the Comintern, in *The First Five Years of the Communist International*, Pioneer Publishers, New York, 1945, p. 259.)

And on the relationship between this "democratic counterrevolution" and the military-fascist counterrevolution, Trotsky had this to say:

"By employing this Social-Democratic shield, the bourgeoisie was able to take the best possible advantage of the breathing spell. It recovered from its panic, stabilized its state organs, supplemented them with counterrevolutionary armed gangs and started handpicking politicians who are specialists in applying combined methods in the struggle against the open revolutionary movement [please note the expression "open revolutionary movement," not "ultralefts" or "putschist minority"] and who operate through intimidation, bribery, provocation, segregation, division, etc., etc. The basic task of these specialists is to engage isolated detachments of the proletarian vanguard in a series of battles, bleed them white and thus undermine the faith of the working class in the possibility of success." (L. Trotsky, "The Main Lesson of the Third Congress," *ibid.*, p. 294.)

Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack ask us the rhetorical question: "What have they actually said? That it is *not excluded* that the Portuguese capitalists can use the Constituent Assembly to halt the proletarian revolution. Must it therefore be concluded that it is absolutely certain they will succeed in doing so? In our opinion, this question will be determined by the course of the class struggle itself in which the Portuguese Trotskyists, too, can play a role." (*IP*, October 13, p. 1363.)

After having accused us of dissolving the concrete situation in Portugal into the "abstraction" of the democratic counterrevolution in general, Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack have very little to offer in the way of the concrete. "The course of the class struggle itself"—not a very "concrete" formula. Rather timidly, they then advance two additional "concrete" arguments: the MFA has been "muzzling" the Constituent Assembly so far; Portugal lacks a "centuries-old parliament." In our view, these two factors can in no way substitute for a concrete analysis of the real relationship between the Constituent Assembly in Portugal and Soares's fight for "popular sovereignty" on the one hand and the concrete class struggle between capital and labor now going on in Portugal on the other hand.

We *did* offer such a concrete analysis in our first article, an analysis to which Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack have counterposed only empty abstract formulas. We explained that in a situation in which the bourgeois repressive apparatus is close to paralyzed the bourgeoisie is unable to impose any sort of bloody military dictatorship in the immediate future. Thus, the bourgeoisie has no choice but to base itself mainly on the reformist misleaders of the working class in order to achieve the goals determined by its immediate class interest: suppression of the embryos of workers power; disarming of the working class and the rebellious soldiers; restoration of bourgeois "law and order" in the factories; restoration of a bourgeois state machine capable of a minimum of effective functioning, including an effective repressive apparatus. Further, the bourgeoisie cannot achieve this through an immediate open confrontation with the workers; it can be achieved only through guile, that is, through trying to isolate the "open revolutionary movement" in the name of "popular sovereignty," which means in the name of bourgeois democracy. This is a concrete analysis of the relationship of class forces, both social and political. On the basis of that analysis, we judged that

the "democratic counterrevolution" would be the most likely form of counterrevolution in Portugal after May 1975. Nothing that has happened since tends to invalidate that view, which is based not on "abstractions" but on a very specific analysis.

Naturally, this analysis includes an assessment of the political role and function of the Social Democratic and Stalinist leaders, who are eager to play exactly the role the bourgeoisie has laid out for them. Whether or not this democratic counterrevolution will succeed is of course another question. But it is the elementary duty of revolutionary Marxists to warn the workers about this immediate danger. The way for a more radical counterrevolution of an openly dictatorial or outright fascist type will be opened only if the democratic counterrevolution successfully destroys the elements of workers power and workers and soldiers solidarity in the name of bourgeois democracy.

The time lag between these two "phases" of counterrevolution can be very short. In Germany not much more than a year elapsed between the January massacres, with the subsequent "sovereign constituent assembly" of 1919, and the Kapp putsch of 1920. In Russia only a few weeks elapsed between the July days of 1917 and the Kornilov putsch. But whatever the time lag, the two "phases" of counterrevolution must be distinguished; otherwise the working class and its vanguard, obsessed by the second phase, can lose sight of the danger of the first phase, which in most cases is an indispensable prelude to the second.

We would be interested to hear arguments against this analysis. For what peculiar reasons would the Portuguese bourgeoisie be incapable of initiating a "democratic counterrevolution" of the German pattern? Would Soares and Cunhal, "under the pressure of the masses," refuse to go along? Perhaps the masses have lost their parliamentary illusions? We see no "peculiarity" of Portuguese Social Democracy or Stalinism that would prevent the bourgeoisie from using bourgeois democracy as a shield behind which to reestablish the bourgeois state any more than the bourgeoisie was prevented from doing so in Germany in 1918-19, in Republican Spain in 1936-37, or in France and Italy in 1944-47. Just the opposite, in fact. In making this judgment we are basing ourselves on the generalized experiences of past revolutions in imperialist countries. It would be up to Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack to show us why Portuguese Social Democracy and Stalinism could not aid the bourgeoisie in repeating these experiences and why we should not warn the Portuguese workers and their vanguard that this is the most likely immediate counterrevolutionary threat to their revolution.

When we asked whether Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack would approve of the use of military force to throw the workers of *República* out of their printshop, we were answered with one word: "No." But how much our question was justified is confirmed by Comrade Gerry Foley's article "The MFA Tries to Stabilize Its Military Base" in the October 13 issue of *Intercontinental Press*. The article deals with the crackdown on radio and television stations by the Azevedo government. In this article Comrade Foley continues to maintain a shameful silence on the class nature of the repression. *He does not say one word in defense of the workers of the radio and television stations*; there is not one word of condemnation of the hypocritical SP leaders who, after initiating a fraudulent campaign in the name of "freedom of the press," enthusiastically applauded stringent censorship by the bourgeois state. All his criticism is centered on the CP. The workers get supercilious sneers for their foolish "ultraleftism." Such is the terrible logic of capitulation to democratic formalism and of abandonment of the class criterion: Our "consistent defender of democracy" is prepared to keep silent about violations of the elementary democratic rights of the masses in the name of defense of the "popular will," that is, in substance, the institutions of bourgeois democracy, bourgeois rule, and bourgeois exploitation, institutions that in revolutionary times repeatedly reveal

themselves as institutions of bourgeois dictatorship. That is the substance of the debate around "democratic" counterrevolution.

Formalism Adrift

Their formalistic approach to the problems of "democracy" and "dictatorship" has led Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack astray on what we always considered fundamental aspects of revolutionary experience and theory.

"What defines a military dictatorship is not the degree of its repressiveness at a given moment but rule by an unelected government openly based on the military," write Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack. (*IP*, October 13, p. 1377.) From such a standpoint, which reduces everything to elections, the Ebert-Scheidemann-Haase government in Germany after November 9, 1918, the Ebert-Noske government in January 1919, the Prince Lvov government in Russia after the February revolution of 1917, and the Kerensky government would all be military dictatorships, since none of these governments was placed in power by free elections and all were "based on the military." Trotsky had this to say about some of the forerunners of the method now being used by Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack:

"The fact of the matter is that the Stalinists compare the two regimes from the point of view of vulgar democracy. And indeed, were one to consider Bruening's regime from the criterion of 'formal' democracy, one would arrive at a conclusion which is beyond argument: nothing is left of the proud Weimar Constitution save the bones and the skin. But this does not settle the question so far as we are concerned. The question must be approached from the angle of *proletarian democracy*." (*What Next?*, in *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany*, Pathfinder Press, p. 160.)

What Trotsky tried to explain to the third-period Stalinists was that the key issue for the workers in approaching the problem of democracy and dictatorship was *not* the question of "elections," but rather the question of the *free existence and degree of freedom of action of the working-class organizations*, that is, *the nuclei of proletarian democracy within bourgeois democracy*. It is those nuclei to which we have to cling and which we have to defend tooth and nail. The question of elections is secondary. "Elected" governments that suppress working-class organizations are in no way "superior to" or "more democratic" than "unelected" ones that are compelled to tolerate those organizations. On the contrary, they are more reactionary. The Pilsudski regime in Poland and the Horthy regime in Hungary, not to mention the first "freely elected" Nazi cabinet in Germany, fall into this category. It was from this class point of view that Lenin remarked that after February 1917 Russia was "the freest country of all the countries involved in the war," regardless of its "unelected" government. (*The April Theses*.) It is precisely in that sense that we utilize a similar formula for Portugal today. The working-class organizations and the mass action of the working class have greater freedom of action in Portugal than anywhere else in the world. If this means that we "find such a government relatively tolerable" (as Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack insinuate), then it also means that Lenin found the governments of Prince Lvov and Kerensky "relatively tolerable" when he said that Russia after February was the "freest country" among the warring powers.

Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack try to escape the logic of their formalistic approach to the question of democracy and dictatorship by lamely noting: "It is true that there is less effective repression in Portugal than in other countries ruled by bourgeois governments. How could it be otherwise in a prerevolutionary situation? But does this mean that a military dictatorship does not hold power there?" (*IP*, October 13, p. 1377.)

The argument that there is less effective repression simply because a prerevolutionary situation exists does not stand up.

There was a prerevolutionary situation in Germany in 1919, 1920, and 1921. Nevertheless, some 25,000 communists and revolutionary workers were murdered during those years by the "freely elected government." In Spain, where there was a prerevolutionary situation in 1934, thousands of workers were killed by the "freely elected government." In Portugal, on the other hand, in spite of the fact that the government was not elected, not a single worker has been killed by repression, as was likewise the case during the first months after the February revolution in Russia. To explain this astonishing absence of repression it is not sufficient to point to the existence of a prerevolutionary situation. It is also necessary to stress the extreme weakness of the repressive apparatus, the divisions within the military hierarchy and the MFA, the refusal of soldiers to carry out repressive orders, the far-reaching collapse of the state machine, the extraordinary strength of the mobilizations and objectively anticapitalist actions of the working class, the extent of factory occupations, workers control, fraternization between workers and soldiers, and similar phenomena, all of which can be summed up as the beginning of the unfolding of a dual power situation in the country. If all these elements are taken into account, then the formula used by Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack assumes a bit of unintentional irony. In reality, the "military" holds infinitely less "power" in Portugal than it does under the "democratically elected" government in France, not to mention the democratically elected government of the United States.

For a formalist, the manner in which a government comes into being is decisive (was it "elected" or not?). For a revolutionary Marxist, what is much more important is the actual relationship of class forces, which determines the real degree of power exercised by the bourgeois class (and its government) on the one hand and the degree of working-class freedom of action on the other hand. From that standpoint, which is the class standpoint, to call the Portuguese government a bourgeois military dictatorship is to make a mockery of the term for the capitalists and to strip it of all meaning for the workers.

What is important for us under bourgeois democracy, what we defend in such a regime, was explained quite clearly by Trotsky:

"In the course of many decades, the workers have built up within bourgeois democracy, by utilizing it, by fighting against it, their own strongholds and bases of *proletarian democracy*: the trade unions, the political parties, the educational and sport clubs, the cooperatives, etc. The proletariat cannot attain power within the formal limits of bourgeois democracy, but can do so only by taking the road of revolution: this has been proved both by theory and experience. And these bulwarks of workers' democracy within the bourgeois state are absolutely essential for taking the revolutionary road." (Ibid., p. 158.)

In Portugal today, the committees, workers commissions, tenants commissions, soldiers committees, and peasant organizations must be added to the "strongholds of proletarian democracy" listed above. We defend all these bodies against anyone who wants to suppress them, whether there is an "elected" or "unelected" government. In that sense, that is, *from the standpoint of the proletarian class struggle*, the basic question that must be asked about the Constituent Assembly in Portugal today is not whether it, unlike the "military government," is a product of free elections, but what effect would the "sovereignty" of the assembly have on the fight to defend the gains of the working class and all the "strongholds of proletarian democracy" that now exist in the country, primarily the most advanced and radical of these centers, such as the factories under workers control, the soldiers commissions, and the instances of worker-soldier fraternization. If it is assumed that a "sovereign Constituent Assembly" would curtail these conquests of the working class, then such "sovereignty" should be opposed. If it is believed that this "sovereign Constituent Assembly" would not adversely affect the conquests of the workers (that there would be no "democratic

counterrevolution"), then convincing and massive evidence to support that belief had better be marshaled; otherwise, the adherents of such a belief could become, even if unintentionally, accomplices in the suppression or reduction of the power of the "strongholds of proletarian democracy" within the bourgeois state.

Is the Struggle for Creating and Coordinating Workers Councils a Concession to Bernsteinite Gradualism?

The most astonishing argument used by Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack is the one that tries to portray the attempt to set up soviets "gradually" as a variety of Bernsteinite reformist gradualism:

"In Portugal, the ultralefts direct their gradualist approach to chipping away at bourgeois democracy and replacing it bit by bit with soviets. Whereas Bernstein conceived of expanding bourgeois democracy until it gradually passed over into socialist democracy, the ultralefts conceive of achieving a comparable result by gradually narrowing bourgeois democracy. Through the withering away of bourgeois democracy, so to speak, the dictatorship of the proletariat will be assured.

"In their view, the erosion of bourgeois democracy and the concomitant burgeoning of proletarian democracy can be won under the bourgeois state (and with its aid), a theory that Bernstein might recognize as a lineal, if illegitimate, descendant of his own revisionist approach." (IP, October 13, 1975, pp. 1359-60.)

If what Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack have in mind is a Portuguese version of the old Kautsky-Hilferding theory that soviets can survive indefinitely without destroying the bourgeois state and without a decisive test of strength with that state machine, then the currents holding such a position are centrists, not ultraleftists. There might be traces of such a line among the comrades of the MES (Movimento de Esquerda Socialista—Left Socialist Movement); naturally, we oppose this line categorically.

There is a more serious, and genuinely ultraleftist, deviation among some Portuguese revolutionaries. That is the concept that the armed insurrection itself (carried out by an elite and expert minority) and the armed defense of the revolution as a whole ought to be *disconnected* from the generalization and centralization of soviets. Whatever its sins, this current certainly cannot be accused of wanting to establish workers power "with the aid of the bourgeois state." Their error is a *putschist* conception of how to destroy the bourgeois state.

In either case, the accusation of "gradualism" seems farfetched and artificial. But what appear to be gratuitous polemics against unnamed opponents become considerably more "operative" and relevant in the light of another of the key issues of revolutionary politics in Portugal today: the question of the necessity of "gradually" extending the embryos of proletarian democracy, "gradually" coordinating and centralizing them into a full-fledged situation of dual power in the country *before* the final overthrow of the bourgeois state through the victorious armed insurrection. Implementation of this strategy, far from being Bernsteinist, ultraleft, gradualist, or adventurist, is the only concrete way a dual power situation could come about and *is in fact coming about* in Portugal today under the specific existing conditions, given the treacherous policy of the Social Democratic and Stalinist misleaders of the proletariat and given the weakness of the revolutionary Marxist forces.

This is the heart of the entire debate, and Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack try to dodge it with their shadowboxing and their demolition of straw men they have erected themselves. What is under debate here is not whether the proletariat can take power within the framework of the bourgeois state and even with the aid of that state; only vulgar reformists believe that. What is under debate is whether soviets *can emerge, in fact have to emerge and*

have to be tested by the masses before they can take power, that is, whether a period of dual power is likely to occur between the initial appearance of workers councils and the final destruction of the bourgeois state. To obscure this question, a life-or-death one for all proletarian revolutions, through frivolous references to "Bernsteinite gradualism" is, once again, to evade one of the central issues of the Portuguese revolution in favor of waging pointless polemics instead.

The basis of Bernsteinite revisionism, reformism, and gradualism was the revision of the Marxist theory of the state. Instead of seeing bourgeois parliamentary democracy as only one specific (and temporary) form of *bourgeois class rule*, Bernstein believed that this sort of "democracy" had risen above antagonistic social classes and had become a neutral instrument to be used by whichever class "won the majority" in elections, the bourgeoisie or the working class. This revisionism, linked to the theory that the internal contradictions of the capitalist mode of production could be gradually reduced, logically led to class collaboration, betrayal of the fundamental class interests of the proletariat, and, ultimately, alignment with the bourgeois counterrevolution against the proletarian revolution.

The basis of the theory of dual power is precisely the opposite of the theory of Bernstein. It correctly sees the destruction of the bourgeois state machine as the central issue in the proletariat's conquest of state power. It understands that because of the specific features of the proletariat as a class, this destruction is possible only through a new form of class organization, which grows over into a new form of state power and a new and higher form of democracy: soviet organization, soviet power, soviet democracy. As Lenin put it:

"Under the circumstances, we see once again that the general course of the proletarian revolution is the same throughout the world. First the spontaneous formations of soviets, then their extension and development, after which the question is posed: the soviets or the National Assembly, or Constituent Assembly, or bourgeois parliamentarism; the most complete disarray among the parliamentary leaders, and finally, the proletarian revolution." (Lenin, Report to the First Congress of the Communist International on Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, in *Collected Works*, vol. 28, p. 495 of the French edition.)

In fact, to project any other development would be completely utopian. To believe that the working class, an oppressed and exploited class even under the most democratic bourgeois state, could take a single leap from "defending bourgeois democracy" to the victorious armed insurrection without passing through a previous experience of dual power would be to hold a completely unrealistic concept of the tremendous political and ideological obstacles to the breaking up of the bourgeois state machine, not the least of which are those obstacles created through experience with and illusions in bourgeois-democratic parliaments. Further, to believe that any revolutionary party, even one the size of the Bolsheviks in 1917, not to mention the strongest Trotskyist organizations today, could win the allegiance of the majority of the working class without the conflict between reformists and revolutionaries overstepping the bounds of parliamentary elections and directly involving millions of people through a period of dual power is to have a manipulative and bureaucratic conception of what the proletarian revolution is like. For a mass revolutionary party to win the majority of the toiling masses to the program of the immediate revolutionary conquest of power, a qualitative leap in the political class consciousness of the broad masses is indispensable. This leap can only result from a qualitatively higher level of political experience and practice. Once again, this presupposes a transitional stage of dual power during which the workers councils and the bourgeois state exist side by side, each trying to eliminate the other but neither able to accomplish the

task, the bourgeois state because of its lack of sufficient material strength, the workers councils because of the still insufficient level of mass consciousness and revolutionary leadership.

If adherence to this Leninist theory of dual power (first soviets arise spontaneously, then they spread and centralize, then the question of power is posed) amounts to adherence to gradualism, then we plead guilty. But we are in good company, for Lenin, Trotsky, and the entire Third International before its degeneration stand in the dock with us.

In reality, only a sophist could identify the attempt to destroy the bourgeois state through the creation of institutions of workers power with an attempt to conquer power through upholding and defending bourgeois state institutions.

Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack's inability to remember these elementary truths comes out clearly in the following confused formula: "In the period of preparing to take power, revolutionary Marxists defend bourgeois democracy in order to prepare and to train the masses to *supersede* it, that is, to establish proletarian democracy, which is infinitely superior." (*IP*, October 13, p. 1359.) The correct formula should be: "In the period preliminary to revolutionary upheavals, when bourgeois society is still relatively stable and the question of power is not yet posed for the proletariat as an immediate task, revolutionary Marxists utilize all the institutions of bourgeois democracy in order to prepare and to train the masses to supersede it, that is, to establish proletarian democracy, which is infinitely superior. They will defend all democratic rights of the masses, and in particular all 'strongholds of proletarian democracy' within bourgeois democracy, against any attempt by bourgeois reaction to weaken, limit, or destroy them by introducing forms of rule more backward than bourgeois democracy (more backward from the standpoint of advancing the proletarian class struggle, that is). At the same time, revolutionary Marxists will continue to educate the vanguard, as well as the members and sympathizers of their own organization, in the need to replace bourgeois state institutions with the institutions of workers councils, which extend the democratic rights and freedoms of the masses well beyond the limits that prevail in even the most democratic parliamentary bourgeois regimes. In a prerevolutionary and revolutionary period, when the question of the conquest of power by the proletariat is posed as a short-term possibility, revolutionary Marxists will carefully distinguish between restrictions on bourgeois democracy that result from attacks by capitalist reaction on the democratic rights and freedoms of the masses and reductions or the de facto suppression of the power of bourgeois-democratic state institutions that result from the emergence of organs of workers power. The first they will oppose; the second they will support, even if they 'limit' or 'undermine' bourgeois democracy, for they do this by extending and not restricting the democratic rights and freedoms of the toiling masses; for revolutionary Marxists, it is more vital to defend those rights than to defend 'bourgeois democracy,' which tends to be superseded by the rights of the toiling masses."

It is essential to understand this dialectical, contradictory, and not at all linear relationship between the democratic rights and freedoms of the masses and the institutions of bourgeois democracy, especially in prerevolutionary and revolutionary periods. That is the only way to avoid falling into the trap of using the pretext of "defending bourgeois democracy" to oppose mass mobilizations and actions that go beyond the limits of capitalist property relations and bourgeois state institutions (even the most "democratic" ones). That is a trap no Trotskyist should fall into.

Central Axis of the Revolutionary Marxist Intervention in Portugal Today

We do not differ with Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack on all points concerning the analysis of the revolutionary process in

Portugal and the tasks posed for revolutionary Marxists. We also have positions in common. Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack enumerate many of them, generally in a correct way. (*IP*, October 13, p. 1357.)

But on one point on which these comrades think we are in agreement there seems actually to be an area of disagreement, or at least of lack of clear definition. It is the starting point for many differences in political analysis and proposals for intervention. That is the question of the definition of the objective situation in Portugal today. Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack write: "And both sides are in agreement as to how to characterize the stage that has been reached in the process—it is prerevolutionary." (*IP*, October 13, p. 1357.)

We consider this definition to be insufficient, to say the least, at present. The formula "prerevolutionary situation" covers a variety of situations ranging from those in which relatively stable reactionary governments with strong and stable armies exist (Spain in 1934) to situations in which the bourgeois government is temporarily paralyzed by huge working-class action but in which there can be a rapid return to "normality" as a result of the policies of the treacherous Stalinist and reformist misleaders of the working class and the weakness of the proletarian vanguard and revolutionary party, the bourgeoisie never having been really challenged at the level of the exercise of state power, the fundamental repressive organs never having been seriously weakened (May 1968 in France).

The situation in Portugal today differs radically from these classical prerevolutionary situations. Granted, there is not yet a generalized system of dual power. Thus, if the existence of such a system is regarded as the decisive element of a revolutionary situation, then it would be premature to speak of a revolutionary situation in Portugal. On the other hand, the weakness of the bourgeois state apparatus, the decline of its capacity to rule, and the disintegration of its repressive organs are qualitatively more advanced than was the case in Germany 1919-22, Spain 1931-35, or France 1936-37, not to mention France 1968. From that standpoint, the present situation in Portugal could be characterized as revolutionary.

The difficulty in coming to an exact definition is an objective one. The situation is in rapid flux. It is *moving* from one stage to another, which always makes precise definitions according to formal categories difficult. Let us thus attempt an approximation: The situation in Portugal, presently prerevolutionary, is growing over into a revolutionary situation, although the disintegration of the bourgeois state machine is proceeding in advance of the construction of a centralized system of organs of workers power.

This lack of synchronization between the two processes cannot last long. Either the capitalist class will restabilize some of the elements of the bourgeois state machine, above all recreating an effective instrument of repression (around, for example, the AMI—Military Intervention Group—the commandos, especially the Amadora regiment, the municipal police, the troops returning from Madeira and Angola, who are considered "immune" to the dissent in the armed forces, the Portuguese legion/Portuguese Liberation Army and its fascist hirelings in Spain and underground in Portugal), and will then attempt to destroy the elements of workers power and disarm the workers, first through a "democratic" counterrevolution and then through a bloody putsch. Or else, the workers, soldiers, and poor peasants will succeed in establishing a centralized system of dual power in which the councils will sooner or later strive to take full power if revolutionary Marxists succeed in convincing the majority of the working class of the burning need to do this.

We believe that one of the roots of the political differences that have arisen around the tasks confronting Portuguese revolutionary Marxists today lies in different appreciations of the real situation in Portugal. We believe that Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack underestimate the depth of the disintegration of the

bourgeois state machine and the depth and momentum of the revolutionary mass movement. We can offer two examples of this.

Regarding our explanation of why the Gonçalves government was incapable of implementing its decision to hand the *República* printshop back to its "rightful owners" by using military force to eject the workers from the premises, Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack write: "Do Comrades Frank, Maitan, and Mandel think that the MFA is so weak, the discipline in the Portuguese armed forces so decayed, that the regime could not even muster the force to oblige at most 150 workers to allow the *República* editorial staff to resume writing the paper? Then, the bourgeois government would really be so feeble as to be almost nonexistent. In fact, it would be nonexistent." (*IP*, October 13, p. 1379.)

Indeed, we "thought" that the discipline in the Portuguese armed forces was so decayed that the government couldn't muster the force to have the 150 workers expelled from the *República* printshop they had occupied. Subsequent events have confirmed the correctness of our assessment of the situation. When the Azevedo government attempted to have the premises of the Lisbon radio and television stations occupied by troops, the soldiers declared their solidarity with the workers in three out of the four cases involved and the military occupation was a dismal failure. (Some of these cases, by the way, involved even fewer than 150 workers.) In the fourth case, Rádio Renascença, the workers reoccupied the premises with the assistance of rebellious soldiers. In order to win this test of strength, the government had to order the broadcasting tower blown up surreptitiously by a handful of gangsters from the AMI, with some paratroopers standing by as guards, so incapable was the government of confronting the Renascença workers with soldiers for any length of time. Even these paratroopers, to the disgust of their officers, later stated publicly that they had been tricked into a counterrevolutionary action, regretted their initial lack of lucidity, and concluded that they would not be caught unaware again.

In an effort to poke fun at our insistence that real workers councils are now emerging in Portugal, that these bodies are genuine potential soviets and not fake corporatist organs dominated and manipulated by the "military dictatorship," a process we illustrated by the example of the first popular assembly gathered in the town of Pontinha, Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack write: "That happened in the 'first local popular assembly.' Wonderful! How many others are there like it? What have they done? What was happening in the rest of the country while a 'pure' people's assembly was being set up in Pontinha?" (p. 1387.)

Our answer is quite simple. The Pontinha example was by no means unique. At the end of September a "popular assembly" centralizing all the workers commissions, tenants commissions, and elected soldiers commissions (still nonexistent in the Pontinha case) met in Setúbal, the third-largest industrial town in Portugal. For some time previously, the forty workers commissions of the giant CUF financial group, which represents something like 15 percent of all industrial labor in Portugal, had been centralizing their efforts to reconvert these dozens of factories under centralized workers control guided by a common plan of what and how to produce. On October 3, ten workers commissions and six tenants commissions of the Olivais industrial zone of Lisbon assembled at the call of the workers commission of the Bruno Danz factory and decided to set up a provisional ongoing secretariat, with an observer from the RALIS (light artillery regiment of Lisbon). On October 20 thirty-four workers commissions of the industrial belt of Lisbon, the major industrial belt of the country, met in order to create a centralized body of workers power "opposed to any reconstruction of the MFA." This list could be lengthened by adding examples of actions in smaller sectors and towns.

In fact, because of the economic crisis in the country, especially the structural crisis of a number of entire branches of industry

and agriculture, the fight for transitional slogans of a *planned economy under workers control* has been placed on the agenda of concrete day-to-day workers agitation by the internal logic of the workers struggles themselves. This process, which began during the September-October period, created an initial objective thrust toward a coordination and centralization of at least the workers commissions (and in certain cases, beyond the limits of the workers commissions) among the textile workers, shoe workers, shipyard workers, and, especially, the CUF workers and the metalworkers.

Some 800 delegates of the metalworkers in southern Portugal met in Evora, along with representatives of the agricultural workers and the peasants cooperatives, and demanded a planned coordination of industrial and agricultural output. In the coordinating assembly of the CUF workers commissions a resolution was voted putting an ultimatum before the government: If within one week the agricultural workers cooperatives were not granted credit for buying fertilizer, the CUF workers commissions themselves would send fertilizer to the cooperatives; they would be given a 30 percent discount and the bills would be sent to the nationalized banks!

The revolutionary dynamic of this agitation is especially pronounced for two reasons: First, it grows out of the real workers and peasants struggles on a day-to-day basis; second, it leads the workers commissions to take on functions that are embryonically those of soviets and brings these commissions into direct conflict with the coalition government and the bourgeois state machine. In fact, because of their function in the actual workers struggles and their representativity, it is around the workers commissions that the process of centralization of potential workers power organs can be most efficiently achieved.

Of course, full exploitation of the tremendous potential of this process would require combining this struggle with a relentless fight for a workers and peasants government, along with adequate united-front agitation and the defense of a rounded revolutionary program. This would require revolutionary Marxist hegemony within the commissions, which is far from the actual situation. But the possibility of the eventual defeat of this magnificent dynamic as a result of the weakness of the revolutionary Marxists should never lead to ignoring these revolutionary potentials or to counterposing them to the stabilization of bourgeois-democratic state institutions. That sort of logic has been the argument of all Social Democrats and opportunists ever since 1917.

It is therefore absolutely wrong to say, as Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack do: "What then put dual power on the agenda? Wasn't it the fact that the 'progressive' wing of the MFA, Carvalho and Coutinho—in whom the ultralefts in Portugal placed such great hopes—pushed the scheme of 'direct democracy' codified in the Guide Document as a means of opposing the SP and opposing elections, and as a means of settling the 'national political questions'?" (p. 1386.)

No, this was not the "fact," unless figments of Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack's imagination and themes of bourgeois anticommunist and anti-"anarcho-populist" propaganda are to be confused with facts. The fact is that initiatives aimed at coordinating the workers commissions, tenants commissions, and soldiers assemblies emerged as the result of the efforts by the most radicalized sectors of the working class and the toiling masses (the "open revolutionary movement," to use Trotsky's phrase) to grapple with the immediate problems confronting them as a result of the decay of the capitalist economy and the disintegration of the bourgeois state in Portugal: unemployment; economic sabotage by the bourgeoisie (flight of capital, investment strike, hoarding, etc.); inflation; factory shutdowns; speculation; acute housing shortages; attempts to crush the independent mass mobilizations through repression; counterrevolutionary conspiracies; financial strangling of agricultural and industrial

enterprises taken over by the workers. The "fact" is that some officers tried to co-opt these spontaneous initiatives and integrate them into their own political project. But they turned out to be largely incapable of doing so, for they lacked the political or repressive instruments to control the mass movement.

Raising the question of whether there are two, three, or many Pontinhas in Portugal today is but one more attempt by Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack to divert attention from the main issue. The debate is not over whether there is *generalized* dual power in Portugal today. We never said there was. The question is whether organs of workers power are *beginning* to arise, and if they are, whether the central task of Trotskyists is to try to extend, coordinate, generalize, and centralize them. Comrades Foley and Hansen opposed this with the argument that the organs of "popular power" were actually tools of the military and the embryos of a corporatist state.² We challenged them to prove this in fact. And they have been unable to cite a *single example* of a popular assembly that was not a free expression of democratically constituted workers, tenants, and soldiers commissions. Instead, they now shift the argument from a dispute over the *content* of the councils to a dispute over how many of them exist. Not a very serious line of reasoning. And of no help at all in deciding on correct tactics in a revolutionary situation.

Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack argue that soviets *could* arise around a struggle for a sovereign Constituent Assembly. Yes, that *could* happen, under some specific circumstances, in some countries, maybe even in Portugal. But it does not appear to be happening right now. No soviet, pure or otherwise, has yet been created in Portugal around that issue. If Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack believe that a solid propaganda campaign by several hundred Trotskyists could manage to bring such a thing about, they are guilty of a serious misjudgment, to say the least. But again, this is actually a diversion. What it means is counterposing an abstract theme about how to create imaginary soviets to the real process of coordinating real organs of mass power, a process that is now going on before our eyes. Only hardened sectarians could be interested in such a sterile exercise. And hardened sectarians can be quite opportunistic politically; they can use sterile maneuvers to cover up for their actual counterposition of the bourgeois Constituent Assembly to the real organs of workers power now emerging from real mass struggles.

In our initial article, we wrote: "Comrade Foley's analysis shares an essential feature with the analysis of the centrist and opportunist tailenders of the MFA leadership: the assumption that everything that is happening in Portugal today depends essentially if not completely on the role, function, intentions, and actions of the MFA." (*IP*, September 8, p. 1179.) And also: "Comrade Foley's obsession with 'undermining any faith in the bourgeois MFA' (an obsession he shares with Healy, Lambert, and their ilk) is a typical sectarian reversal of an opportunist

2. Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack also cling to their wrong position on "corporatism," a position adopted directly from third-period Stalinism via the "theoreticians" of Healy and Lambert. Corporatism is not "some form" of integration of the trade-union bureaucracy into the bourgeois state or the loss of the proletariat's *complete* class autonomy. If that were the case, corporatism could be said to have been established in nearly all bourgeois-democratic countries throughout the world, for in most of these countries some "institutionalized" form of class collaboration among the trade-union bureaucracy, the employers, and the bourgeois state has existed for decades. Corporatism is a variety of semifascist or fascist dictatorship; it implies a far-reaching *destruction* of the free trade-union and organized labor movements, that is, the destruction of the "strongholds of proletarian democracy within bourgeois democracy." To see such a trend in Portugal today, to see such a trend in the commissions or councils of popular power because of the presence of some officers, is the sort of mistake committed by Stalin-Thaelmann when they thought the Brüning government was "fascist" because the Reichstag had been temporarily suspended.

mistake; it is based on fear that one might be on the point of succumbing to temptation."

This diagnosis has now been confirmed by a new and disquieting symptom. Even in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack stubbornly cling to their fantastic assumption that the question of soviets was placed on the agenda in Portugal not by the inner logic of exacerbated class struggle in a revolutionary situation (or near revolutionary situation), not by the dynamic of mass mobilization and mass activity, but instead by the maneuvers of the scheming, diabolical, and omniscient "progressive" wing of the MFA, which manipulates social classes and basic political issues as though they were puppets on a string.

This fantastic assumption, coupled with their serious underestimation of the maturity of the revolutionary crisis in the country, then leads Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack to the following conclusion: "The centrality of democratic rights in Portuguese politics since the April 25, 1974, coup stands out with unusual force and clarity. . . . For the Trotskyist movement in Portugal the central problem has been how to open a bridge from their revolutionary Marxist program to the consciousness of the masses on this central political issue." (p. 1362.)

We disagree with that conclusion. In a prerevolutionary situation rapidly growing over into a revolutionary situation the central task for revolutionary Marxists is not the struggle for democratic slogans, but the greatest possible efforts (propaganda, initiatives, exemplary actions, agitation) for extending, coordinating, generalizing, and centralizing organs of workers power, a situation of dual power. The only way to do this is to begin from all the manifold, real, day-to-day concerns of the masses (whether "political" or not) and to build organs of workers power around actions to meet these needs. This has already been shown to be quite "realistic" and practical in the case of workers control as practiced by the CUF workers and in the case of the Lisbon and Oporto soldiers opposing repression and suppression of their democratic rights.

Another presumably rhetorical question asked by Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack reveals how little they understand the implications of a revolutionary situation like the one that is rapidly unfolding in Portugal. They write: "But what about the democratic right of the majority of the workers and toilers to elect a government of their own choice? If a military dictatorship is less repressive than a parliamentary one, should we then oppose elections and reject the principle of majority rule?" (p. 1377.)

The implication of this schema is that the only choice facing the Portuguese masses today, in a rapidly maturing revolutionary situation, is a choice between two forms of bourgeois rule: a "military dictatorship" or an "elected government." But it is precisely this dilemma that we reject, and so do hundreds of thousands of Portuguese workers. In a revolutionary situation, revolutionary Marxists answer the reformists and centrists, who declare all forms of workers power to be "utopian," "unrealistic," or "putschist," by conducting systematic propaganda for workers councils, for soviets, especially when they are beginning to arise spontaneously. And they answer Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack's rhetorical question by simply stating that the right of the workers to take their fate into their own hands, to make their own decisions on all the key political, economic, social, and cultural questions that confront them in daily life, takes precedence over their "democratic right" to be fleeced by democratically elected representatives instead of being fleeced by self-appointed military saviors. After all, that is what the proletarian revolution is really all about.

An additional example of Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack's line leading comrades to become lost in the turmoil of revolutionary mass struggles is offered by Comrade Foley's article in the October 13 issue of *Intercontinental Press*, where a just struggle of agricultural workers to defend their livelihood against

the bourgeois state machine is characterized as a sectarian stance of the CP against the SP. Comrade Foley writes:

"At the same time, the CP continued to resort to unprincipled demagoguery to resist giving any ground to the SP in the areas where the two parties are in competition. It called strikes on September 16, 17, and 18 by the agricultural workers unions in Alentejo, which it totally controls, and turned these actions against the bank workers union, a former CP bastion in which the SP and its Maoist allies have just won a strong majority. Speakers in the strike rallies claimed the SP had taken over the union to stop credit to small farmers and agricultural collectives. Clashes occurred when the CP-led unions tried to intimidate the bank workers." (p. 1352.)

It is shameful to see such lines in a Trotskyist magazine. The class struggle, the fundamental contradictions between labor and capital, are completely forgotten. Everything is subordinated to (wrong) evaluations of sinister designs by politicians and officers at the government or party level, completely divorced from basic social forces. Supporting the resistance of the agricultural workers to the bourgeois state machine and its agents within the administration of the nationalized banks is now called "unprincipled demagoguery." No Social Democrat in Germany in 1918-19, no SP or CP leader in Republican Spain after July 1936, would have expressed himself any differently. Does Comrade Foley really deny that the bourgeois state machine and the administration of the nationalized banks are *starving out* the agricultural workers collectives, as well as all the enterprises taken over by the workers ("illegally" of course), denying them funds and credits? Should workers be denied the right to protest this strangling just because the culprits or their accomplices happen to be Social Democrats? Or should they limit their protests to polite newspaper articles and speeches in the Constituent Assembly?

In point of fact, the demonstrations in front of the banks have already had positive results. The bank employees of Espirito Santo, the major nationalized bank, modified their attitude. The debate triggered by the demonstration led to a change in the leadership of the bank workers in Oporto. Collaboration has now become possible between the lower-ranking personnel of the banks and the members of the agricultural workers cooperatives. Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack might protest: But that is anarchy! That is minority violence! That is ultraleft adventurism! We will answer: With all due respect to your learning, comrades, no, that is the advance of the proletarian revolution!

Counterposing the 'Method' of the Transitional Program to Its Actual Text

Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack refer again and again to the "method of the Transitional Program." Now this text contains at least two passages that are directly related to the disputed issues on the Portuguese revolution.

In the subsection on "soviets," after dealing with the rise of factory committees and all other "special mass groupings" (forms of self-organization of the masses around specific issues), the Transitional Program has this to say:

"These new organs and centers, however, will soon begin to feel their lack of cohesion and their insufficiency. Not one of the transitional demands can be fully met under the conditions of preserving the bourgeois regime. At the same time, the deepening of the social crisis will increase not only the sufferings of the masses but also their impatience, persistence and pressure. Ever new layers of the oppressed will raise their heads and come forward with their demands. Millions of toil-worn 'little men,' to whom the reformist leaders never gave a thought, will begin to pound insistently on the doors of workers' organizations. The unemployed will join the movement. The agricultural workers, the ruined and semiruined farmers, the oppressed of the cities, the women workers, housewives, proletarianized layers of the intelli-

gentsia—all of these will seek unity and leadership.

"How are the different demands and forms of struggle to be harmonized, *even if only within the limits of one city?* History has already answered this question: through soviets. These will unite the representatives of all the fighting groups. For this purpose, no one has yet proposed a different form of organization; indeed, it would hardly be possible to think up a better one. Soviets are not limited to an a priori party program. They throw open their doors to all the exploited. Through these doors pass representatives of all strata, drawn into the general current of the struggle. The organization, broadening out together with the movement, is renewed again and again in its womb. All political currents of the proletariat can struggle for leadership of the soviets on the basis of the widest democracy. *The slogan of soviets, therefore, crowns the program of transitional demands.*" (*The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, Pathfinder Press, p. 96, emphasis added.)

This passage strikingly reflects everything that has been happening in Portugal during the past nine months. Under these circumstances, one would have supposed that the slogan of soviets would have "crowned" the analysis of Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack. But it has not. Not "soviets" but "democratic demands" are supposed to be "central" in the present situation in Portugal, even though the "deepening of the social crisis" has brought hundreds of thousands to act in an "impatient" and "persistent" way, and even though the problem of "harmonizing" these various "demands and forms of struggle" has been posed urgently, not only on a municipal and regional scale, but nationally as well. Surely this was not Trotsky's view of what the key tasks are in a revolutionary situation!

But the Transitional Program has something more specific to say about cases like that of Portugal, that is, revolutions that arise from the overthrow of fascist regimes in imperialist countries:

"Of course, this does not mean that the Fourth International rejects democratic slogans as a means of mobilizing the masses against fascism. On the contrary, such slogans at certain moments can play a serious role. *But the formulas of democracy (freedom of press, the right to unionize, etc.) mean for us only incidental or episodic slogans in the independent movement of the proletariat and not a democratic noose fastened to the neck of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie's agents (Spain!).* As soon as the movement assumes something of a mass character, the democratic slogans will be intertwined with the transitional ones; factory committees, it may be supposed, will appear before the old routinists rush from their chancelleries to organize trade unions; soviets will cover Germany before a new Constituent Assembly will gather in Weimar." (*Ibid.*, p. 101, emphasis added.)

Germany was not covered with soviets before the downfall of fascism, because fascism was not overthrown by an indigenous mass movement. In Portugal the dictatorship was overthrown by a military junta. The mass movement developed impetuously after a several-months-long hesitant start. But when the mass movement developed, embryonic organs of workers power *did* appear, as Trotsky foresaw. Shouldn't the central task of Trotskyists then have been to make these soviets "cover the country"? In such a situation, should we give democratic slogans the "central place" in our agitation and initiatives instead of giving them the "incidental and episodic" character stressed by Trotsky?

Does not counterposing the defense of democratic rights to the actual development of soviets amount to contributing to fostering the movement of the "democratic counterrevolution," that is, to transforming these slogans into a "democratic noose fastened to the neck of the proletariat"? Isn't that what the Portuguese Social Democratic leaders have been doing since May 1975, and the Stalinist leaders too, although to a lesser extent? (In the future, the Stalinists could become even more guilty than the reformists on this question.) Shouldn't Trotskyists refuse to have anything to do with such maneuvers? Doesn't this imply categorically

rejecting the concept of the "centrality" of the call for a "popularly elected government," which, in the eyes of the masses, can only be identified with the call for a sovereign *bourgeois* constituent assembly?³ Isn't such a line in direct contradiction with the text of the Transitional Program? Wouldn't it be better to stick somewhat more closely to the text of the Transitional Program than to a somewhat mysterious "method," which then becomes objectively counterposed to the actual program itself?

At the very least, sticking to the text of the Transitional Program would have enabled Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack to avoid making unsubstantiated accusations like this one: "It is noteworthy for example that in their long article voicing their 'strong protest' against our coverage of the Portuguese revolution they do not once mention transitional demands, although they define the government as an extremely weak one. It is for just such cases that the Transitional Program has its greatest importance." (*IP*, October 13, p. 1392.)

It has indeed. But in our long article, didn't we mention such demands as workers control, nationalization under workers control, factory occupations, factory committees, workers councils (soviets), workers self-defense squads, workers united front, the elaboration of a workers economic plan for the entire Portuguese economy under workers control? Aren't these transitional demands, mentioned in the text of Trotsky's Transitional Program itself? How can this bizarre oversight by Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack be explained if not by the fact that the text of the Transitional Program is losing its meaning for them and is being replaced by incantations of a "method"?

What Lenin and Trotsky Have to Say on the Disputed Questions

The text of the Transitional Program is by no means the only source in Lenin's and Trotsky's writings that can help throw light on the disputed questions in Portugal. On the correlation between the exploitation of bourgeois democracy by Marxists and the struggle for workers councils, Lenin explains emphatically:

"The bourgeois parliament, be it the most democratic parliament in the most democratic country in which the property and power of the capitalists are maintained, is a machine aimed at the repression of millions of workers by a handful of exploiters. Socialists in struggle to deliver the workers from exploitation should utilize bourgeois parliaments as a tribune, as a base from which to carry on propaganda, agitation, and organization, *so long as our struggle remains within the framework of the bourgeois regime.* Now that the destruction of this entire system, the overthrow and crushing of the exploiters, the transition from capitalism to socialism, has been placed on the agenda by world

3. There can be no doubt that Trotsky considered the Constituent Assembly to be a *bourgeois state institution*. Here is what he wrote to his Italian cothinkers in May 1930:

"You remind me that I once criticized the slogan 'Republican Assembly on the Basis of Workers' and Peasants' Committees'. . . 'Republican Assembly' constitutes quite obviously an institution of the bourgeois state. What, however, are the 'Workers' and Peasants' Committees'? It is obvious that they are some sort of equivalent of the workers' and peasants' soviets. Then that's what should be said. For, class organs of the workers and poor peasants, whether you give them the name of soviets or committees, always constitute organizations of struggle against the bourgeois state. . . . How, under these conditions, can a Republican Assembly—supreme organ of the bourgeois state—have as its 'basis' organs of the proletarian state?"

"I should like to recall to you that in 1917, before October, Zinoviev and Kamenev, when they came out against an insurrection, advocated waiting for the Constituent Assembly to meet in order to create a 'combined state' by means of a fusion between the Constituent Assembly and the workers' and peasants' soviets. In 1919 we saw Hilferding propose to inscribe the soviets in the Weimar constitution. . . . As a new type of petty bourgeois, he wanted, at the very point of the most abrupt historical turn, to 'combine' a third type of state by wedding the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie to the proletarian dictatorship under the sign of the constitution." (*Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1930*, Pathfinder Press, p. 221.)

history, to content oneself with bourgeois parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy, to adorn it with the label of 'democracy' in general, to conceal its *bourgeois* character, to forget that as long as capitalist property is maintained universal suffrage is one of the instruments of the bourgeois state, is to shamefully betray the proletariat, to go over to the side of its class enemy, to the side of the bourgeoisie, is to be a criminal and a renegade." (Letter to the Workers of Europe and America, January 19, 1919, in *Collected Works* (French edition), vol. 28, p. 453, emphasis in the original.)

This fundamental difference between the attitude revolutionary Marxists adopt toward bourgeois democracy and bourgeois assemblies in revolutionary and nonrevolutionary situations, *independent* of whether the armed insurrection is immediately on the agenda or not, has not at all been integrated into the analysis of the tasks of Portuguese revolutionaries made by Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack. This represents a serious departure from the Leninist-Trotskyist tradition on this question, a tradition that cannot be reduced to the need to participate in parliamentary elections or to exploit the parliamentary tribune even during revolutionary times.

On the *subordinate* role the Constituent Assembly played in Bolshevik propaganda right from the beginning of the February 1917 revolution, Lenin explains:

"Like Kautsky, . . . the author repeats the bourgeois lie that nobody in Russia foresaw the role of the soviets, that the Bolsheviks and I myself supposedly took up the struggle against Kerensky solely in the name of the Constituent Assembly.

"This is a bourgeois lie. In reality, right from April 4, 1917, the very day of my arrival in Petrograd, I proposed 'theses' demanding the republic of *soviets* and not the *bourgeois parliamentary republic*. I repeated this on many occasions during the time of Kerensky, in the press and at meetings. The Bolshevik party declared it solemnly and officially in the decisions of its conference of April 29, 1917. Not to know this is not to want to know the truth about the socialist revolution in Russia. Not to want to understand that a bourgeois parliamentary republic with a Constituent Assembly is a step forward compared to the same republic *without* a Constituent Assembly, while a soviet republic is two steps forward, is to close one's eyes to the difference between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat." (Tasks of the Third International, in *Collected Works*, French edition, vol. 29, pp. 502-3.)

Again: When the actual political struggle is limited to various forms of bourgeois rule, when there is no other objective possibility as a short-term perspective, that is, during nonrevolutionary situations, revolutionary Marxists take an attitude toward bourgeois parliaments that is different from the one they adopt when they are confronted by revolutionary situations. And the change must be fundamental, not purely verbal and episodic; it must not consist merely of propagandistic reference to "soviet power" or the 'dictatorship of the proletariat':

"Kautsky now says that he is not against the dictatorship of the proletariat! The French social chauvinists and centrists sign a resolution in favor of the dictatorship of the proletariat!

"They do not deserve an ounce of confidence!

"What is needed is not verbal recognition, but a complete break *in real life* with reformist policies, with the prejudices of bourgeois liberty and bourgeois democracy, and the application in practice of a policy of revolutionary class struggle.

"They would like to admit the dictatorship of the proletariat verbally in order at the same time to pass over *en catimini* 'the will of the majority,' 'universal suffrage' (exactly as Kautsky does), bourgeois parliamentarism, the refusal to destroy, blow up, and completely and totally break the bourgeois state apparatus. These new subterfuges, these new tricks of reformism, must be feared above all.

"The dictatorship of the proletariat would be impossible if the majority of the population were not composed of proletarians and

semiproletarians. Kautsky and company use this truth in order to falsify it, under the pretext that a 'vote of the majority' would be required in order to recognize the dictatorship of the proletariat as 'just.'

"What comic pedants! They have not understood that in the framework of bourgeois parliamentarism, with its institutions and customs, the vote is *part* of the bourgeois state apparatus, which must be conquered and destroyed from top to bottom *in order* to realize the dictatorship of the proletariat, to move from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy." (Ibid., pp. 515-16.)

And lest anyone try to interpret these lines as applicable only to the situation prevailing on the eve of, during, or after the armed insurrection (or to a situation of already generalized dual power), Lenin explains, once again:

". . . the height of hypocrisy is this phenomenon typical of the parties of the Bern 'International': to recognize the revolution in words and to deceive the workers with pompous phrases claiming that they recognize the revolution, but in reality to consider from a purely reformist point of view *the germs, shoots, and signs of growth of the revolution represented by all the actions of the masses that violate bourgeois laws and break with all legality*; these are, for example, mass strikes, street demonstrations, soldiers' protests, meetings among troops, the distribution of leaflets in the barracks and military camps, etc." (Ibid., p. 511.)

In a prerevolutionary situation growing over into a revolutionary situation, to support all the "germs," "shoots," "embryos," and "nuclei" of the revolution and its future workers state *against* the institutions and legality of bourgeois democracy—that is the essence of Lenin's teachings on how revolutionary Marxists ought to conduct themselves in such situations. These teachings have guided the Fourth International in its basic line of intervention in Portugal. They have not guided the articles of Comrade Foley, nor the analysis presented by Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack.

When confronted with revolutionary situations or prerevolutionary situations growing over into revolutionary situations like the one that prevails in Portugal today, Trotsky's attitude was no different from Lenin's. In a letter to a Spanish friend dated April 12, 1936 (a letter that begins with the words, "The situation in Spain has again become revolutionary"), a nine-point "guide to action" is presented to the Spanish Trotskyists. After some points related to organizational tactics (break with and denounce the leaders of the POUM; apply entryism in the Socialist party and youth, etc.), the letter ends with the following key political points:

"6. To direct *their main attention to the spontaneous and semi-spontaneous mass movements*, to study their general traits, that is, to study the temperature of the masses and not the temperature of the parliamentary cliques.

"7. To be present in every struggle so as to give it clear expression.

"8. *To insist always on having the fighting masses form and constantly expand their committees of action (juntas, soviets), elected ad hoc.*

"9. To counterpose the program of the conquest of power, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the social revolution to all hybrid programs (à la Caballero, or à la Maurín).

"This is the real road of the proletarian revolution. There is no other." (Trotsky, *The Spanish Revolution (1931-39)*, Pathfinder Press, p. 214, emphasis added.)

Writing some weeks later, when the movement of mass strikes had broken out in France, Trotsky said:

"The revolutionary general staff cannot emerge from combinations at the top. The combat organization would not be identical with the party even if there were a mass revolutionary party in France, for the movement is incomparably broader than the party. The organization also cannot coincide with the trade unions for the unions embrace only an insignificant section of the class and are headed by an arch-reactionary bureaucracy. The new organization must correspond to the nature of the movement

itself. It must reflect the struggling masses. It must express their growing will. This is a question of the direct representation of the revolutionary class. Here it is not necessary to invent new forms. Historical precedents exist. The industries and factories will elect their deputies who will meet to elaborate jointly plans of struggle and to provide the leadership. Nor it is necessary to invent the name for such an organization; it is the *Soviets of Workers' Deputies*." ("The French Revolution Has Begun," in *Whither France?*, Pathfinder Press, pp. 154-55, emphasis in original.)

Lest anyone suggest that this "general line" was applicable only when the general strike situation was already apparent, in November 1935 Trotsky explained the central importance of fighting for soviets months in advance. And he insisted on the *gradual emergence of these soviets* even more strongly than we did in our analysis of the Portuguese revolution:

"However it would be a mistake to think that it is possible at a set day and hour to call the proletarian and petty bourgeois masses to elect Committees of Action on the basis of a given statute. Such an approach would be purely bureaucratic and consequently barren. The workers will be able to elect a Committee of Action only in those cases when they themselves participate in some sort of *action* and feel the need for revolutionary leadership. In question here is not the *formal democratic* representation of *all* and *any* masses but the revolutionary representation of the *struggling* masses. The Committee of Action is an apparatus of struggle. There is no sense in guessing beforehand precisely what strata of the toilers will be attracted to the creation of Committees of Action: the lines of demarcation in the struggling masses will be established during the struggle itself.

"The greatest danger in France lies in the fact that the revolutionary energy of the masses will be dissipated in spurts, in isolated explosions like Toulon, Brest and Limoges, and give way to apathy. Only conscious traitors or hopeless muddleheads are capable of thinking that in the present situation it is possible to hold the masses immobilized up to the moment when they will be blessed from above by the government of the People's Front. Strikes, protests, street clashes, direct uprisings are absolutely inevitable in the present situation. The task of the proletarian party consists not in checking and paralyzing these movements but in unifying them and investing them with the greatest possible force. . . .

"During the struggle in Toulon and Brest the workers would have created without any hesitation a local fighting organization had they been called upon to do so. On the very next day after the bloody assault in Limoges the workers and a considerable section of the petty bourgeoisie would have indubitably revealed their readiness to create an elected committee to investigate the bloody events and to prevent them in the future. During the movement in the barracks in the summer of this year against Rabiot (the extension of the term of military service) the soldiers without much ado would have elected battalion, regimental and garrison committees of action had such a road been suggested to them. Similar situations arise and will continue to arise at every step. In most cases on a local but often also on a national scale. The task is not to miss a single situation of this kind. The first condition for this is a clear understanding of the import of the Committee of Action as the *only means of breaking the anti-revolutionary opposition of party and trade union apparatus*.

"Does this mean to say that the Committees of Action are substitutes for party and trade union organizations? It would be stupid to pose the question in this manner. The masses enter into the struggle with all their ideas, traditions, groupings and organizations. The parties continue to exist and to struggle. During elections to the Committees of Action each party will naturally seek to elect its own adherents. The Committees of Action will arrive at decisions through a majority (given complete

freedom of party and factional groupings). In relation to parties the Committees of Action may be called the *revolutionary parliament*: the parties are not excluded but on the contrary they are necessarily presupposed; at the same time they are tested in action and the masses learn to free themselves from the influence of rotten parties." ("For Committees of Action, Not the People's Front," in *Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1935-36*, Pathfinder Press, pp. 57-58, emphasis in original.)

Golden words, which, like the above-quoted lines of Lenin, have guided our conduct and line in Portugal since the emergence of the prerevolutionary situation there.

The same cannot be said about the line of Comrades Foley, Hansen, and Novack or the line of Comrade Foley's previous articles. Their line shows no sensitivity whatever for the "centrality" of the self-organization of the masses (for that is what "action committees" are all about). They do not express the understanding that *only through such committees*—and not, for example, through propaganda campaigns for democratic slogans or for an SP-CP government—can the actual grip of the conservative bureaucratic apparatus on the masses be broken. They are full of distrust for and underestimation of the *real* committees springing up in Portugal, allegedly because these committees are still "fragmented," because they are developing "gradually," because their emergence "coincides" with the "maneuvers" of some officers. They even reproach us for "concentrating so much on self-organization of the masses that we become 'open to the charge of leaving 'national political questions' to the MFA.'" But isn't the key "national political question" in Portugal today precisely the question of generalizing the nascent dual power situation? The similarity between our line in Portugal today and the line proposed by Trotsky for Spain in April 1936 and France in November 1935-June 1936 is all the more striking in that the degree of decomposition of the bourgeois regime in both those situations was much less advanced than it is in Portugal today.

[Continued next week]

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150,000 Personas en las Calles de la Ciudad de México

Por Cristina Rivas

MEXICO, D.F.—El 15 de noviembre se celebró en la ciudad de México una manifestación de más de 150,000 personas en apoyo a la lucha de la Tendencia Democrática del Sindicato Unico de Trabajadores Electricistas de la República Mexicana (SUTERM).

El combate de los electricistas democráticos no es nuevo; se remonta hasta el momento de la nacionalización de la industria eléctrica, en 1960. En ese entonces el gobierno creó un organismo descentralizado—la Comisión Federal de Electricidad (CFE)—y nacionalizó la Compañía de Luz y Fuerza del Centro (LyF). Estos dos organismos quedaron a cargo de administrar la industria eléctrica.

La LyF seguía encubriendo la penetración directa del imperialismo, ya que en ella participaba la Light and Power Company, de la que tomó el nombre. Los trabajadores de esta empresa se agrupan en el Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas (SME).

Los trabajadores de la CFE estaban divididos en dos sindicatos, el Sindicato Nacional de Electricistas, Similares y Conexos de la República Mexicana (SNESCRM) y el Sindicato de Trabajadores Electricistas de la República Mexicana (STERM).

El SNESCRM era un típico sindicato "charro," integrado total y directamente al gobierno y al Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). Desde luego, era un sindicato antidemocrático, en el que no se permitía ningún tipo de participación de los trabajadores.

El STERM era un sindicato bastante democrático, aunque su dirección no era políticamente independiente del gobierno.

Los problemas empezaron a fines de 1971, cuando la burocracia "charra" del SNESCRM trató de despojar de la titularidad de su contrato colectivo al STERM. Los "charros" se habían planteado la necesidad de acabar con un peligroso foco de infección democrática que podía extenderse a otros electricistas y a otros sectores del proletariado.

El STERM agrupaba a la minoría de los trabajadores de la CFE, por lo que la lucha estrictamente legal no le deparaba resultados halagadores. Así, la dirección del STERM se vio en la necesidad de recurrir a la movilización de su base para salvar la vida del sindicato.

Durante 1972 el STERM organizó manifestaciones en todas las ciudades importantes del país, con excepción de la ciudad de México. A estos actos no iban sólo los

electricistas del STERM, empezaron a unirse a la lucha obreros de fábricas pequeñas, estudiantes, colonos y, en algunos lugares, campesinos.

En noviembre de 1972 las movilizaciones continuas rinden sus frutos, y "charros" y gobierno abandonan transitoriamente su objetivo de acabar con los electricistas democráticos, cambiándolo por un compromiso: la unificación de los dos sindicatos y la formación del Sindicato Unico de Trabajadores Electricistas de la República Mexicana (SUTERM).

El STERM, desde luego, aceptó el compromiso, siendo abucheado por toda la ultrazquierda mexicana que acusaba a la dirección de traidora, mostrando una vez más su incapacidad para comprender los problemas más elementales de la lucha de clases.

En ese momento, los revolucionarios estuvimos de acuerdo con la unificación de los sindicatos, pero señalamos que los métodos que se utilizaron para llevarla a cabo no fueron democráticos.

Se unificaron, entonces, la dirección nacional y todas las secciones locales y sus direcciones. A partir de ese momento, los compañeros del ex-STERM empezaron a difundir sus ideas democráticas y su experiencia de movilización dentro de un sector más amplio del gremio electricista.

Así fue como se ganó para la lucha democrática a la mayoría de los trabajadores del SUTERM.

Ya desde la unificación de 1972, el gobierno había planteado la necesidad de que el SUTERM se unificara con el SME, para que hubiera un solo sindicato electricista. Quizás ahora algunos de los gobernantes de este país se den cuenta de que ésta no fue una idea tan afortunada como parecía al principio.

El SME tiene fuertes tradiciones democráticas y de lucha, pero se ha convertido en el sindicato más gremialista de México, lo que hizo que su base fuera reticente a la unificación. Además, actualmente está controlado por un burócrata muy parecido a los "charros," aunque no tan descarado.

Sin embargo, el avance de la tendencia democrática en el SUTERM y el rancio odio de los miembros del SME contra los "charros," hicieron que los dirigentes "charros" del SUTERM se volvieran a plantear aniquilar a los elementos democráticos.

Para esto utilizaron provocaciones, terror y, finalmente, un "Congreso" en el que decretaron la expulsión de los dirigentes de la tendencia democrática que eran miem-

bros del Comité Ejecutivo Nacional del SUTERM.

Fue entonces cuando la tendencia democrática se convirtió en la Tendencia Democrática del SUTERM.

Comenzaron de nuevo las movilizaciones en toda la República. Pero esta vez la lucha tendría que ser más dura y decidida, pues el gobierno había reconocido el "Congreso" espurio y aceptado "legalmente" la expulsión de los compañeros.

Los charros recurrieron a despedir a trabajadores de la Tendencia Democrática y a atacarlos a balazos y con gángsteres.

Ya se habían realizado manifestaciones de 10, 20 o 30,000 personas en muchas ciudades, y a los dirigentes de la Tendencia Democrática les quedaban sólo dos medidas para lograr la reinstalación de los compañeros despedidos y el reconocimiento de sus dirigentes: una movilización de masas en la ciudad de México y luego la huelga nacional.

Pero para que la manifestación fuera un acto de fuerza y no de debilidad, debía pasar de las 60,000 personas. De no ser así, se podía propiciar una represión más dura contra la Tendencia.

Los electricistas democráticos comenzaron a propagandizar su lucha y a buscar solidaridad en todas partes y entre todos los sectores. En la ciudad de México destacó la actividad que en este sentido desarrollaron las Secciones Nucleares del SUTERM (las secciones del sindicato que agrupan a los trabajadores de la industria nuclear, las cuales se han distinguido por su alta combatividad y nivel político) y la Liga Socialista.

El ascenso de la lucha de clases que empezamos a ver en México hizo posible la tarea de los electricistas. Muchos sindicatos dieron su apoyo, lo mismo sucedió con casi todas las organizaciones políticas de izquierda, los estudiantes y algunos sectores de colonos y de campesinos.

Todos estos sectores colaboraron para lograr la manifestación más grande y más amplia que se ha visto en este país desde 1968. El 15 de noviembre hubo 150,000 personas en la calle, la mayoría de las cuales eran trabajadores de los sindicatos que han emprendido la lucha por recuperar sus sindicatos, expulsando de ellos a los corruptos "charros."

La importancia política de esta manifestación radica en que ahora uno de los sectores fundamentales del proletariado

mexicano, de quien depende uno de los puntos clave del funcionamiento del país, ha tomado el paso que nadie con menor fuerza podía dar: lanzar a decenas de miles de personas a la calle y ofrecer un polo de atracción en torno al cual se puede organizar la lucha de los diversos sectores.

La clase obrera y sus aliados han comenzado a recuperar la confianza en su propia fuerza, que habían perdido con las derrotas del movimiento ferrocarrilero de 1958-59 y el estudiantil de 1968.

El siguiente paso en la lucha de la

Tendencia Democrática—si el gobierno y los “charros” no reinstalan a los despedidos y reconocen a los dirigentes democráticos—es la huelga nacional electricista.

Desde luego, varios sindicatos importantes podrían irse a la huelga de solidaridad. Este podría ser el caso, por ejemplo, del Sindicato de Trabajadores y Empleados de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (STEUNAM).

Los dirigentes del SUTERM han propuesto, además, la creación del Movimiento Sindical Revolucionario (MSR), que agrupa-

ría a todas las corrientes democráticas y grupos de oposición sindical. Sin embargo, hasta ahora no han hecho mucho por poner en práctica su proposición.

La dirección de la Tendencia Democrática impulsa la confianza de los trabajadores en que el gobierno va a resolverles sus problemas, y no es políticamente independiente del PRI. Pero la lucha que se ha visto en la necesidad de encabezar es una muestra contundente de la dinámica de la lucha por la democracia sindical en México. □

Forman una Tendencia Sindical de Izquierda

Los Electricistas Mexicanos a la Vanguardia

[La siguiente es una entrevista con dos miembros del Comité Político de la Liga Socialista, organización simpatizante de la Cuarta Internacional en México.

[La entrevista fue llevada a cabo unos días antes de la manifestación del 15 de noviembre. En la manifestación del día 15 participaron, además de miembros del SUTERM y del SME—los dos sindicatos electricistas—importantes contingentes del Sindicato del Personal Académico de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (SPAUNAM) y del Sindicato de Trabajadores y Empleados de la UNAM (STEUNAM), así como una gran cantidad de sindicatos, grupos de izquierda y organizaciones estudiantiles, sumando un total de aproximadamente 150,000 personas.

[Durante la manifestación—la más grande demostración de fuerza de la clase obrera mexicana en más de una década—los participantes coreaban consignas de “Líderes Vendidos a la Cárcel” y “Muera Fidel,” esta última refiriéndose a Fidel Velázquez, máximo líder de la CTM y figura principal del “charrismo” que es el nombre que recibe la burocracia sindical en México.

[La Liga Socialista participó activamente en la preparación de la manifestación a través de la Coordinadora que se formó para ello. Durante la marcha, la participación de la Liga Socialista se centró alrededor de las demandas de la Independencia y Democracia Sindical y el Control Obrero de la Industria Nacionalizada.

[Para mayor información ver el artículo de Cristina Rivas “150,000 Personas en las Calles de la Ciudad de México” que aparece en este mismo número de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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Pregunta: Se va a realizar una gran manifestación el 15 de noviembre. ¿Podrían

explicar cuál es su objetivo y quién la ha convocado?

Respuesta: La marcha del día 15 la llama la Tendencia Democrática del SUTERM (Sindicato Único de Trabajadores Electricistas de la República Mexicana). Los objetivos de esta marcha son varios: El primero es una demostración de fuerza para mostrar cómo es la Tendencia Democrática el sector de este gremio que representa a la mayoría de los trabajadores. Igualmente es una demostración en contra de la empresa, la Comisión Federal de Electricidad (CFE) que en repetidas ocasiones ha mostrado que apoya y defiende a los charros o sea a la burocracia de este sindicato. Ellos acusan a la CFE de violaciones de contrato.

Otro de los objetivos es el de impulsar la unificación de los sindicatos electricistas. Existe otro sindicato de electricistas aparte del SUTERM, que es el SME (Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas). Dado que se está llevando a cabo un proceso de integración de la industria eléctrica, se ha planteado también como una necesidad que se integren los sindicatos. Ya se está desembocando de hecho ese proceso de unificación.

En esta marcha, la Tendencia Democrática del SUTERM quiere presionar al SME para que la unificación se lleve a cabo democráticamente y con los verdaderos representantes del SUTERM, que sería la propia Tendencia Democrática.

Un tercer objetivo, como lo ha manifestado en sus volantes y propaganda la T.D., es el de una manifestación de fuerza para apoyar toda aquella política que tienda a reestructurar la industria nacionalizada. Ellos apoyan todas las iniciativas de los sectores oficiales para que se reestructure el funcionamiento de la industria nacionalizada. Esto es, que se termine la corrupción, que las empresas nacionalizadas realmente funcionen en interés del pueblo y que los

trabajadores tengan realmente una participación en esas empresas. Esa es la política que esa tendencia apoya. Y apoya al sector del gobierno que supuestamente impulsa esta política. Estos son los tres objetivos centrales.

P: ¿Quién va a participar en esta manifestación del día 15 y cuál es su importancia?

R: Varios sectores. La importancia de la manifestación es extraordinariamente grande. Desde 1958, cuando se llevaron a cabo las huelgas de los ferrocarrileros, que fueron las huelgas más grandes que hubo después de la etapa cardenista¹ en la que fueron aplastados los trabajadores en muchos sentidos, no había vuelto a suceder ninguna manifestación de esta naturaleza en la clase obrera.

Todo el mundo ha entendido la importancia de la movilización. Por otro lado, es la primera movilización de obreros que va contra el santuario de la burguesía que es el Zócalo.² Se va a concentrar en esa parte, y

1. Se refiere al período comprendido entre 1934-1940 durante el cual el entonces Presidente de México Gen. Lázaro Cárdenas llevó a cabo una serie de nacionalizaciones e inició una tibia reforma agraria. Para esto buscó el apoyo de las masas obreras y campesinas, el cual obtuvo a través de una serie de concesiones y propiciando su movilización y organización. Sus objetivos eran el aprovechar una coyuntura internacional favorable en beneficio de la débil burguesía mexicana y, sobre todo, la consolidación del Estado surgido de la Revolución Mexicana de 1910-1921 y del partido oficial (el actual PRI), fundado en 1929 como Partido Nacional de la Revolución (PNR).—IP

2. El Zócalo es la plaza en el centro de la ciudad de México alrededor de la cual están ubicados el Palacio Nacional y varios otros edificios que albergan a las diversas oficinas gubernamentales.

todo el mundo ha entendido que ésta es una demostración de fuerza muy importante, lo cual lo demuestra la formación de una coordinadora para apoyar la manifestación. Esa coordinadora tiene un carácter nuevo, a diferencia de todas las anteriores que se habían formado para apoyar otras movilizaciones. Lo nuevo es que no son sólo membretes o nombres de sindicatos o de organizaciones, sino que son realmente organizaciones o sindicatos los que la apoyan. Son aproximadamente 45 o 47 sindicatos distintos, 10 o 12 organizaciones y otras siete u ocho organizaciones estudiantiles, las que están llamando a y apoyando la movilización.

Se ha hecho una campaña propagandística muy grande por todos estos sectores a través de todo el país, apoyando por medio de manifestaciones y otros mítines, a la manifestación del día 15. Todo parece indicar que va a ser un éxito.

Nosotros creemos que si se realiza la marcha del 15 y después se lleva a cabo la huelga que han anunciado los electricistas, puede haber un cambio, una nueva etapa en el tipo de movilizaciones que han venido realizando los trabajadores desde que se iniciaron los años setenta prácticamente. ¿Por qué es un cambio? De hecho, en ningún movimiento anterior de los trabajadores se había manifestado este nivel. El tipo de movilizaciones que se habían dado se habían manifestado de dos formas: una eran los conflictos en sí—las huelgas que se habían dado en diferentes sectores, sobre todo en pequeñas fábricas de los nuevos sectores industriales, y otra eran las movilizaciones que estaban realizando algunos sindicatos nacionales. Los primeros que las impulsaron fueron los ferrocarrileros y paralelamente los electricistas en 1971-72. Sin embargo, esas movilizaciones tenían un carácter regional y sectorial, que únicamente incluían a dichos gremios, y generalmente eran demostraciones de fuerza muy pequeñas. El sindicato de ferrocarrileros que fue el primero en impulsar estas movilizaciones, de hecho no rebasó esos marcos porque fue derrotado por una línea ultraizquierdista por parte de sus dirigentes. Fueron los electricistas los que han ido evolucionando de ese nivel de movilización a uno superior.

Ellos en 1971-72 llamaron a unas jornadas nacionales para defender la integridad del antiguo STERM (Sindicato de Trabajadores Electricistas de la República Mexicana). Si bien no mantuvieron la independencia del sindicato, sí sobrevivió esta corriente de los electricistas.

El Zócalo representa el símbolo del poder político en México.

Después de la derrota del movimiento estudiantil de 1968 ningún movimiento se había atrevido a convocar una manifestación en el Zócalo.—IP

P: ¿Cuál es el origen de esta Tendencia Democrática en el sindicato de electricistas? ¿De dónde proviene?

R: El origen es el siguiente: Es necesario explicar primero los antecedentes de los sindicatos electricistas.

Originalmente existían tres sindicatos de la industria eléctrica que eran: el STERM que era dirigido por Rafael Galván; el Sindicato Nacional de Electricistas, Similares y Conexos de la República Mexicana (SNESCRM) que era dirigido por Pérez Ríos, un charro directamente del equipo del dirigente de la Confederación de Trabajadores Mexicanos (CTM), Fidel Velázquez (era el segundo después de Velázquez dentro de la CTM); y el SME, que es el que agrupa a los trabajadores de la Compañía de Luz y Fuerza (LyF). Los otros dos sindicatos agrupan a los trabajadores de la CFE.

Galván es el que de hecho empezó a impulsar la Tendencia Democrática. Galván era de un sector izquierdista del Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). El, aunque tiene cantidad de años como dirigente obrero, nunca había impulsado una tendencia con esas características.

Comenzó en 1971-72 cuando la Secretaría del Trabajo determinó que la titularidad del contrato de la CFE la tenía el sindicato nacional, el sindicato de Pérez Ríos controlado por la CTM. De hecho, esto era una maniobra por parte de la CTM para pasar a tomar el control del sindicato de Galván. Galván respondió con lo único que le quedaba que era movilizar a los trabajadores. Desde aquel entonces, al STERM se le empezó a considerar como una corriente democrática dentro del gremio electricista.

Posteriormente, se unificaron los dos sindicatos, el de Pérez Ríos y el de Galván sin que los charros lograran absorber totalmente al STERM. La corriente de Galván logró sobrevivir y quedó con una parte de la dirección del nuevo sindicato, que es lo que actualmente se conoce como el SUTERM.

Sin embargo, ya unificado el nuevo sindicato, se inició una nueva lucha por controlarlo, que se agudizó previamente a que se planteara la unificación con el tercer sindicato, el SME. Se inició una lucha por las secciones del SUTERM, que ya era el mayoritario. Pero, esta disputa coincidió con que ciertos sectores aparte del STERM ingresaron al nuevo sindicato. Estos eran sindicatos combativos que se habían movilizado, como era el caso de las secciones nucleares—un sindicato que ingresó al SUTERM apoyando al sector de Galván. Este era un sector muy combativo—podemos decir que es el sector de vanguardia—y fue el que le dio mucho auge a esta tendencia dentro del SUTERM. También ingresó la sección de Puebla. Podemos decir que estas dos eran las secciones más combativas.

Hubo momentos en que estos sectores se movilizaron y presionaron a los charros, aún en contra del propio Galván que estaba a favor de la negociación con los partidarios de Pérez Ríos. Sin embargo, cuando se vio que las intenciones de la CTM de Fidel Velázquez no eran negociar con Galván, sino expulsarlo, el propio Galván tuvo que impulsar nuevamente la movilización de las secciones que él dominaba en contra de los charros dentro del SUTERM. Entonces es cuando se empezó a dar esta lucha ya abiertamente entre Galván y los dirigentes del SUTERM dándole el nombre de Tendencia Democrática a su corriente dentro del nuevo sindicato. Es así como, estando en minoría, y estando muy dividido el sindicato, a través de toda una serie de jornadas de movilización que impulsó a través del país, y el apoyo a algunos conflictos que se dieron en algunas secciones del sindicato, la Tendencia Democrática logró agrupar a la mayoría de las secciones del nuevo sindicato.

Los charros empezaron a debilitarse y empezaron a ser minoría. El intervenir en conflictos claves como Kelvinator, General Electric, etc., en los cuales la tendencia de Galván se movilizó y los apoyó, le valieron que se fortaleciera mucho más dentro de ese sindicato.

Esto es lo que actualmente es la Tendencia Democrática: las secciones que apoyan a Rafael Galván en contra de los charros de la CTM dentro del gremio electricista, que posiblemente sean un 80% de ese gremio.

Cuando Galván organizó la T.D., planteó que la lucha que estaba desarrollando esta tendencia no debería de limitarse al gremio electricista, sino que la planteaba para el conjunto del movimiento obrero. O sea, se planteaba como una alternativa contra el charrismo en todo el país. Para eso llamaba a que se constituyera una Tendencia Democrática en todos los gremios, en todo el movimiento obrero.

Ellos escribieron un programa que se llama la "Declaración de Guadalajara," el cual se dio a conocer en un mitin que se llevó a cabo en la ciudad de Guadalajara al cual asistieron veinticinco mil electricistas. Este programa es el programa que le dotan a este movimiento que están tratando de formar y al que le han dado el nombre de Movimiento Sindical Revolucionario [MSR].

Si bien no ha pasado de haber hecho la declaración, haber propuesto un programa para el MSR, y haber empezado a invitar a otros sectores a empezar a formar esa tendencia, nosotros consideramos que es muy importante porque Galván nunca antes había planteado un programa, el cual nosotros, si bien le tenemos algunas críticas, creemos que es el más avanzado que se ha presentado dentro del movimiento obrero.

Nosotros creemos que ese es un hecho muy importante y que es muy probable que

Galván, de acuerdo a cómo se desarrolle el movimiento de los electricistas, se plantee consecuentemente construir esa corriente. Ellos, concretamente, ya están impulsando a la T.D. en otros gremios, aunque a un nivel todavía muy inferior al que existe dentro del gremio electricista, como es el caso del sindicato minero, de los ferrocarrileros—tienen una tendencia de ferrocarrileros—y en el gremio automotriz.

Tienen pequeños grupos que ya responden a la T.D.

P: ¿Pueden explicar brevemente cuál es la estructura del movimiento sindical en México y qué es el charrismo?

R: En general, nosotros definimos como charrismo a todo lo que constituye la burocracia sindical, a todo ese sector que dirige al movimiento obrero que de una u otra forma está ligado al aparato de Estado, y que de una u otra forma ha logrado establecer ciertos intereses dentro del aparato de los distintos gobiernos que se han dado.

Esta vinculación se ha establecido a diferentes niveles: En primer lugar, existe la vinculación a nivel económico. Desde un principio, el gobierno ha vinculado estos sectores a los negocios que el propio gobierno impulsa. O sea, la corrupción de este sector del movimiento obrero no es en cuanto a que le den únicamente dinero, sino que es en cuanto a que muchos de estos se han convertido en socios de burócratas dentro del gobierno con respecto a los negocios que hacen utilizando los fondos del gobierno.

Tal es el caso, por ejemplo, de las burocracias más poderosas, como la burocracia minera, petrolera y electricista.

Pérez Ríos, que era el dirigente del SUTERM [murió a principios de 1975—IP], estaba totalmente vinculado a los dirigentes de la empresa en negocios como los de la construcción. Todo el contratismo de la empresa era controlado por la burocracia.

En segundo lugar, existe también la vinculación a nivel político. Debido a que son miembros de un sector importante del partido oficial, posiblemente la base del partido oficial, ellos también están integrados a los diferentes puestos de control político, que van desde puestos en las cámaras de diputados y senadores, hasta puestos a nivel de dirección de empresas.

Existe toda una vinculación de esta capa del movimiento obrero con el gobierno. De hecho, han servido como uno de los mejores instrumentos del Estado para controlar a las masas. Nosotros pensamos que esta vinculación que tienen los charros con el gobierno mexicano—debido a las características especiales de que durante 30 años no haya habido golpe de Estado, etc.—es una cosa un poco diferente al resto de América Latina que conduce a un control mucho

muy acervado y terrible dentro de la clase trabajadora. Es un estrechamiento increíble de relaciones entre el gobierno y la burocracia que le sirven y le han servido como uno de los pilares fundamentales de la estabilidad a este gobierno. Sin ese pilar de la estabilidad es muy difícil que el gobierno se pueda mantener. No soporta corrientes independientes. No las puede aguantar.

Es una burocracia muy conservadora porque en 30 años de hecho no ha tenido que enfrentar presiones importantes del movimiento obrero, y a la vez que no ha tenido que soportar presiones, su integración con los elementos del gobierno ha sido mayor, o sea, las dádivas económicas que le da el gobierno son cada vez mayores. Eso ha hecho muy conservador a este sector de la burocracia.

P: ¿Cuál es el programa de la Liga Socialista para el movimiento sindical?

R: Nosotros pensamos que el eje de todo nuestro programa para el movimiento obrero mexicano es la consigna de la *democracia y la independencia sindical*. Es un hecho importante que los trabajadores en México, desde que han empezado a salir a la lucha en 1971, levanten esta consigna como la suya. Y con todas las palabras: *la independencia y la democracia sindical*.

Por supuesto, diferentes sectores dentro del proletariado la entienden de diferente forma. Esto se debe a que no hay una homogeneidad dentro del proletariado: Existen capas que se han formado muy recientemente, y otras que ya tienen mucha experiencia, pero todas entienden la democracia y la independencia como la independencia política y organizativa del gobierno.

De 1971 a 1973, las luchas fueron económicas en muchos sentidos, pero empezaron a oponerse a la burocracia sindical y empezó a ascender muy rápidamente su nivel de conciencia. Todas ellas llegaron a un nivel más o menos estable que fue el de la lucha por la independencia y la democracia sindical. Todas han empezado a agruparse alrededor de estas consignas, y precisamente de ahí viene la importancia de la movilización de electricistas, que homogeniza la conciencia de los trabajadores por sus objetivos de la independencia y democracia sindical.

El problema principal de los trabajadores en México es que al emprender cualquier lucha por resolver algún problema, ya sea de tipo económico o con respecto al tipo de organización sindical, el principal enemigo o el primer enemigo que encuentran son los charros. De ahí que el problema que está siempre tendiente en cualquier tipo de lucha que emprenden es rebasar o derrotar a los charros.

Nosotros hemos dicho constantemente que la independencia y la democracia sindical, explicadas en el sentido revolucio-

nario de la palabra y tratando de ser lo más consecuente con ellas, están directamente ligadas a la lucha por el poder en México. Y creemos no exagerar, precisamente porque este problema es una de las bases más importantes de la estabilidad del gobierno mexicano. Cuando los trabajadores luchan por estas demandas que el mismo gobierno no puede permitir por su propia existencia, esto genera movilizaciones masivas. De hecho, las luchas más masivas que han estallado en México han sido luchas por estas demandas.

Por supuesto, dentro de nuestro programa tenemos muchas otras demandas. Esta es simplemente el eje, la más importante, la que encabeza el programa para movilizar a los trabajadores en forma masiva.

Pero hay otra serie de consignas programáticas muy importantes.

Para los trotskistas actualmente, es mucho más fácil hacer llegar el programa revolucionario a los trabajadores que para los trotskistas en la época cardenista. Por ejemplo, en aquel entonces, las masas confiaban en el gobierno cardenista y no habían hecho ninguna experiencia con este tipo de gobierno. Sin embargo, treinta años de experiencia de los trabajadores con gobiernos que de una u otra forma han mantenido sus rasgos más esenciales, les ha causado una profunda desconfianza en el gobierno en muchos aspectos.

Por ejemplo, el gobierno no ha podido resolver el problema de la *desocupación*. Al contrario, este problema se ha agudizado terriblemente. Actualmente existen, según cifras oficiales, seis millones y medio de desocupados, aproximadamente el 15% de la población en general. Las luchas se han visto amortiguadas debido a este problema y por toda otra serie de factores sociales, que van a ser sumamente explosivos. El gobierno no lo ha podido solucionar. Este problema va en contra de los salarios, va en contra de la fortaleza de los sindicatos, va en contra del nivel de vida de los trabajadores, directa o indirectamente. Indirectamente porque no hay trabajador en México que no tenga viviendo en su casa a su hermano que viene del campo, que no tiene trabajo, etc., y eso hace que baje su nivel de vida mucho más todavía. Directamente porque hay un gran ejército de reserva que le permite a la burguesía maniobrar muy fácilmente con los trabajadores. Hay muchos problemas precisamente por los desocupados.

Nuestro programa incluye la consigna de *la semana de cuarenta horas* como una medida contra la desocupación. Debido a que el gobierno no ha podido resolver este problema, los trabajadores mexicanos han empezado a adoptar esta consigna. Los charros, incluso, la han empezado a tomar como suya.

Para nosotros ha sido relativamente fácil explicar a muchos trabajadores que la

demanda de la semana de cuarenta horas puede ser un paso importante para luchar por una *escala móvil de horas de trabajo*.

Por otro lado, el gobierno no ha podido solucionar el problema del nivel de vida de los trabajadores. Hubo todo un período en el que por lo menos se mantuvo estable el nivel de vida de los trabajadores, o bajó muy poco. Pero actualmente, sobre todo desde 1971, cuando tuvimos en México una pequeña recesión—que el gobierno llamó “atonía”—hasta 1975, hemos visto que el nivel de vida disminuye en una forma impresionante. En estos cinco años ha subido aproximadamente en un 300% la inflación de los productos básicos de primera necesidad, y los aumentos salariales no han alcanzado ni siquiera el 150%. Por lo tanto se ha reducido en casi la mitad el poder adquisitivo de la población.

Los charros se han visto obligados a impulsar luchas importantes por aumentos de salarios e incluso han amenazado con la huelga general.

En este terreno los trabajadores ya han logrado triunfos en conflictos importantes. El más importante es que la contratación donde se revisan los salarios ya no se hace cada dos años como se hacía antes, sino cada año. Debido a la frecuencia y la fuerza de las huelgas por aumentos salariales, el período entre las revisiones de salarios se hace cada vez más corto.

Esto también ha tenido como efecto que cada vez sea más fácil plantear a los trabajadores mexicanos la *escala móvil de salarios*.

Por otro lado está un problema muy importante que contesta nuestro programa, que es el problema de la *industria nacionalizada*. Una de las principales fuerzas del gobierno mexicano es la industria nacionalizada. Este controla en sus manos los sectores básicos de la industria como son petróleo, ferrocarriles y electricidad, adquiriendo así un poderío económico terrible. Y esto le da posibilidades de maniobra y de control enormes.

Los trabajadores de estas industrias tienen la ventaja de ser el sector más avanzado del proletariado mexicano. En la etapa cardenista lucharon contra el imperialismo pero detrás del nacionalismo burgués. Además, no conocían el problema de la independencia y la democracia sindical, debido a que apenas empezaba a nacer la burocracia. Sin embargo, treinta años después se ha visto que las empresas nacionalizadas son un verdadero desastre, por la conducción que tienen y la orientación económica que les da el gobierno. Están dirigidas a servir los intereses de la burguesía no solamente nacional, sino también extranjera. Se han descubierto muchos escándalos que han sido difundidos amplia y frecuentemente en la prensa nacional.

Para los trabajadores que han visto, a

través de 30 años de experiencia, lo que ha sido la industria nacionalizada, no es muy difícil entender que si no es controlada por ellos mismos, esta industria nunca servirá sus intereses.

Nosotros hemos planteado en algunos lugares en forma propagandística la consigna del *control obrero de la industria nacionalizada* y muchos trabajadores la adoptan como su consigna.

En ese sentido y en muchos otros aspectos también, nosotros tenemos muchas ventajas. El Programa de Transición es una realidad viviente en México y eso es una gran ventaja para el movimiento revolucionario.

Otra de nuestras consignas más importantes para el movimiento obrero es el problema de la organización, para el cual planteamos la consigna de *una central única, democrática e independiente*.

Esta consigna es de suma importancia, ya que para desarrollar sus luchas, el movimiento obrero tiene que desarrollar su nivel de organización como la única forma de poder enfrentar al Estado, al capitalismo. De hecho, ninguna corriente política dentro de la izquierda mexicana plantea la necesidad de esta central única. La línea que ellos han seguido a este respecto es la de impulsar los sindicatos independientes: Todos aquéllos sectores del movimiento obrero que empiezan a luchar contra los charros y logran independizarse, no deben impulsar sus luchas para seguir recuperando las centrales oficiales, sino que deben romper con ellas y mantenerse aislados.

Esto obedece generalmente a que todas las corrientes de izquierda al lograr tener contacto o control sobre una fábrica o sobre un pequeño sector, inmediatamente quieren convertirlo en feudo de esa corriente. Esto sucede, por ejemplo, con el Partido Comunista que controla la Federación Sindical Independiente, que de hecho es un simple membrete.

Precisamente ahora el programa de la Tendencia Democrática, el programa del MSR, incluye como uno de sus puntos importantes este problema. Nosotros creemos que es un gran avance el que la corriente de Galván impulse este punto, porque si antes éramos los únicos que lo sosteníamos, el hecho de que se incluya en este programa va a ayudar a que sea más difundido dentro del movimiento obrero.

Ninguna otra corriente impulsaba la necesidad de luchar por una central única basada en sindicatos por rama industrial y la necesidad de la lucha por recuperar la CTM y otros organismos. La falta de esta consigna era una de las mayores deficiencias que existían en el movimiento obrero.

Aparentemente, en la lucha concreta que está llevando la Tendencia Democrática, su línea era esa, o sea, recuperar el SUTERM y mantenerlo dentro de la CTM como un sindicato democrático que diera la lucha

dentro de esta central. Sin embargo, Galván no ha sido consecuente y yo creo que no va a ser consecuente con estos planteamientos, ya que precisamente el otro sindicato electricista, el SME, plantea como uno de los requisitos para poder unificarse con la Tendencia Democrática, el no entrar a la CTM.

El SME no está dentro de la CTM y se ha caracterizado por ser enemigo de ese sector de la burocracia. Por lo tanto le pide a Galván que no entre a la CTM como un requisito para la unificación con él.

Nosotros creemos que es muy posible que Galván ceda, lo cual sería el retroceso en uno de los aspectos más positivos de este movimiento: el de conservar un sindicato electricista, uno de los más poderosos, democrático, dentro de la CTM. Sería un golpe fuertísimo contra Fidel Velázquez.

P: ¿Cuál es la importancia de la lucha de la Tendencia Democrática dentro de la situación política actual de México?

R: El problema electricista actualmente es muy importante no sólo desde el punto de vista de que puede haber una etapa de movilizaciones nuevas, sino también porque puede incrementar la crisis política que empieza a manifestarse dentro del propio gobierno.

A partir de la elección del pre-candidato oficial, empezó a haber una serie de reacomodos dentro del aparato oficial que, agudizados por la crisis económica, provocaron importantes roces dentro del PRI. Muchos gobernadores durante todo este período fueron destituidos, les dieron su golpe de estado pequeño y los hicieron a un lado para poner a gente que responde directamente a la línea oficial. Han sido retirados 6 gobernadores, como manifestación de las pugnas internas del gobierno.

Una de las más importantes pugnas que se han manifestado últimamente, es la que existe entre el sector obrero del PRI, la burocracia sindical, y los demás sectores del gobierno.

Actualmente Fidel Velázquez está protestando porque no le dan la suficiente importancia al sector obrero en la campaña de López Portillo.

Cuando estalló el conflicto electricista fue obvio que hubo una división muy grande dentro del propio gobierno y los charros, debido a este problema. Por un lado, a Echeverría y al gobierno no le convenía que la movilización electricista continuara, por dos razones: la primera, porque puede aglutinar a toda una serie de movilizaciones que se están dando, las puede agrupar tras de sí y darle una fuerza muy grande al movimiento. Esto le puede causar problemas muy grandes. La otra es que este problema puede echar a perder la campaña del candidato López Portillo. Porque si llega a un lugar donde hay una movilización electricista, simple y sencillamente no le va

a salir bien la campaña.

Al gobierno le interesaba resolver este problema favorablemente. Se hizo un pacto, un tratado entre el Secretario del Patrimonio Nacional Francisco Javier Alejo, el Presidente Echeverría y la Tendencia Democrática del SUTERM para reinstalar a todos los que habían sido despedidos como producto de la expulsión que llevaron a cabo los charros de Saltillo. Mediante un convenio fueron reinstalados. Pero al ser reinstalados, dos días después la burocracia de Fidel Velázquez respondió emplazando a huelga y además formando grupos de asesinos, yendo a sacar a la gente de sus centros de trabajo. De hecho, Fidel Velázquez estaba pasando por encima de la autoridad del Presidente de México, lo cual es una cosa muy grave. No cualquiera lo hace. Evidenciaba roces muy, muy fuertes.

Como producto de esto se agudizaron más las luchas electricistas y llega un momento en que la Tendencia Democrática se tiene que definir, tiene que echar toda la carne al asado, no le queda más que irse hacia adelante y por eso viene en estos momentos un problema definitivo. El gobierno no tiene mucho margen de maniobra en este problema. Tiene que solucionarlo favorablemente a los trabajadores de la Tendencia Democrática, pero si lo hace va a tener problemas con Fidel Velázquez.

Si la movilización es suficientemente fuerte, no sabemos que pueda pasar. Puede haber cambios en la burocracia sindical—después de muchos años Fidel Velázquez puede ser hecho a un lado—o bien el gobierno se puede ver obligado a intervenir con el ejército como lo ha hecho en algunas otras huelgas de la industria nacionalizada.

No sabemos que pueda pasar, aunque es poco probable que utilice al ejército en esta ocasión, a menos que se vuelva muy peligroso para el gobierno el problema, debido a la campaña que ha venido haciendo Echeverría. Sería un descrédito rapidísimo a toda su política. Sería muy peligroso para el propio gobierno que ha venido alentando incluso algunas movilizaciones controladas en contra del imperialismo. Se le podrían escapar muy rápidamente de las manos todos los movimientos que se han dado y que han sido apoyados por el propio gobierno. No sabemos que pueda pasar, pero es obvio que el gobierno va a sufrir una crisis política terrible, sobre todo una disociación con la burocracia sindical.

El problema es que esta movilización es un golpe en contra del sector de la burocracia sindical más poderoso en México, o sea en contra de la burocracia de la CTM. La Tendencia Democrática dentro del gremio electricista ha derrotado ya casi totalmente a los charros, dejándoles en minoría. El único problema para que los charros sean definitivamente derrotados, al menos dentro del gremio electricista, es que el gobierno les quite su apoyo. Actualmente el problema

de los trabajadores electricistas es imponer al gobierno con esta movilización el triunfo que ya de hecho han logrado dentro del gremio electricista, esto es, obligarlo a que deje de apoyar a los charros. Por eso, esta movilización es distinta de todas las anteriores, porque todas las anteriores fueron para golpear, para ir acorralando a los charros. En esta movilización el problema no son los charros sino el gobierno. Es ahora el gobierno quien va a tener que decidir.

Como ya dijimos, el gobierno retrocedió en cuanto al convenio que habían ya firmado anteriormente, y prefirió mantener a Velázquez y Pérez Ríos. Desde el punto de vista legal, desde el punto de vista de las negociaciones y todo, el gobierno sigue reconociendo a los charros, a la CTM, como quienes dirigen al gremio electricista. De ahí la importancia de esta manifestación. Es la primera manifestación que va a obligar al gobierno a definirse.

Nosotros creemos que es muy importante porque la dirección de la T.D. ha hecho todas sus movilizaciones alentando la confianza en un sector del gobierno, en el sector que ellos consideran está por dar concesiones, por acabar con la burocracia.

Para Galván hay un sector del gobierno que está por terminar con la burocracia; el gobierno ya no necesita a la burocracia, dicen ellos, ahora ya hay un sector que está por echar a la burocracia. Todas las movilizaciones que han hecho, han sido diciéndole a los trabajadores que hay un sector oficial que está de nuestro lado, un sector del gobierno. Y ahora dicen que López Portillo representa a ese sector.

Para nosotros el hecho de que Galván movilizó de esta manera a los trabajadores va a ser una experiencia muy importante para los trabajadores en cuanto a que ellos mismos van a constatar si existe algún sector oficial que los apoya o no los apoya. O sea, es una movilización que va a definir

al gobierno en relación al problema del gremio.

P: ¿Qué proporción del movimiento sindical apoya a este movimiento?

R: El 1 de mayo siempre se hace una manifestación oficial de la CTM en apoyo al gobierno. Es una marcha impresionante, muy grande de los trabajadores. Este 1 de mayo, los trabajadores electricistas se unieron—la T.D. se unió con el SME—y controlaron aproximadamente la cuarta parte de la manifestación, que eran unos treinta o cuarenta mil trabajadores. Eran un sector muy importante dentro de la manifestación oficial, y fue muy comentado porque todos marchaban con el puño en alto.

Parece que hay 69 secciones y la T.D. controla a cerca de 60 de ellas.

La importancia numérica de la T.D. o del MSR dentro de la CTM, no es en realidad muy grande. La CTM agrupa a 3 millones de trabajadores. La importancia está en cuanto a que es la vanguardia de las movilizaciones y dentro de la propia CTM.

Juan Francisco Vargas Liberado Bajo Fianza en República Dominicana

Después de una campaña internacional a su favor, Juan Francisco Vargas, Secretario General del Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores Telefónicos (SNTT), fue liberado bajo una fianza de \$50,000 el 27 de noviembre en la República Dominicana. Siguen pendientes las acusaciones fabricadas de "amenazar la seguridad del Estado."

Otros dos oficiales laborales permanecen en prisión bajo el mismo cargo—Francisco Antonio Santos, Secretario General de la Central General de Trabajadores (CGT), y Eugenio Pérez Cepeda, Secretario de Conflictos. Un tercer dirigente de la CGT, Julio de Peña Valdez, fue liberado el 16 de octubre.

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La Falsa Acusación de Healy Contra Joseph Hansen

Por George Novack

[La siguiente es una traducción del artículo "Healy's Frame-up Against Joseph Hansen" que apareció en el número del 8 de diciembre de *Intercontinental Press*. La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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A Gerry Healy, Secretario General del Workers Revolutionary Party [WRP—Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores], le ha entrado el súbito deseo de emprender una investigación histórica. La prensa de su movimiento entero desde Londres a Sydney se ha dedicado semana por semana a examinar las circunstancias del asesinato de Trotsky en agosto de 1940 y sus consecuencias. ¿Por qué este evento que ocurrió hace treinta y cinco años ha poseído tan de repente y totalmente al dirigente del sectorio International Committee [Comité Internacional]?

De seguro no se debe a un deseo de establecer o amplificar los datos acerca de ese asunto, lo que pudiera hacer un erudito escrupuloso como Isaac Deutscher. La campaña de Healy tiene motivos más vergonzosos y siniestros y sus investigaciones persiguen otros objetivos. Se siente obligado a calumniar y desacreditar a sus oponentes políticos del Socialist Workers Party [SWP—Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores] y la Cuarta Internacional, aún si eso significa deshonorar al mismo Trotsky y su hijo Sedov. Busca también advertir a los actuales o posibles miembros críticos de sus propias filas de que si expresan opiniones disidentes, se abren al mismo tipo de abuso como el que se les ha inflingido a Tim Wohlforth, Nancy Fields, Alan Thornett, y otros que han contrariado al gurú indeseable.

Le tercera razón es la más odiosa, mesquina y vindicativa. Esa es su venganza personal contra Joseph Hansen, editor de *Intercontinental Press*. Healy está determinado a destrozarse de la forma más vil la reputación de este revolucionario veterano quien ha expuesto persistente y eficazmente su incapacidad teórica [de Healy], sus errores políticos y sus métodos organizativos. En realidad, sus esfuerzos sólo proveen evidencia del diagnóstico de Hansen de que Healy tiene un rasgo de paranoia en su forma de ser. Este factor psicológico explica la motivación frenética y la virulencia desenfundada de las falsas acusaciones e insinuaciones que Healy y sus acólitos han lanzado contra Hansen en el folleto titulado

Security and the Fourth International: An Inquiry into the Assassination of Leon Trotsky [La Seguridad y la Cuarta Internacional: Una Investigación del Asesinato de Leon Trotsky].

En este folleto Healy acusa a la dirección del SWP de aquel entonces de ser "criminalmente negligente" al no lograr prevenir el asesinato de Trotsky (esto lo descubrió únicamente después de poner fin a años de colaboración con ellos); que Joseph Hansen, como uno de los secretarios de Trotsky, era el culpable principal; e insinúa que Hansen podría ser agente del FBI, de la GPU, o de ambos. Semejantes mentiras y calumnias son los argumentos con los que las fuerzas reaccionarias han a menudo bombardeado a revolucionarios honestos. Healy ha recurrido a estos métodos porque se siente más cómodo a este nivel que en el estira y afloja del debate político. Eso requiere talentos más allá de sus capacidades.

Escribo esta respuesta a sus ataques venenosos, no sólo como viejo dirigente del SWP y colaborador íntimo de Hansen por más de un tercio de siglo, sino como uno de los testigos vivos con más autoridad con respecto a los acontecimientos sobre los cuales Healy basa su falsa acusación. Permítaseme mencionar brevemente, para aquellos que desconocen mi carrera de años atrás, cuáles son mis credenciales en relación a los eventos que precedieron y siguieron al asesinato por parte de Stalin de su archiantagonista.

Durante seis años, de 1934, un poco después de que ingresé a la Communist League of America [Liga Comunista de América], hasta el día de la muerte de Trotsky en agosto de 1940, yo estaba más o menos ocupado con una misión en relación con asuntos relevantes a la seguridad de Trotsky.

En 1934, cuando el exilado ruso se encontraba en Francia, perseguido por fascistas y stalinistas—como respuesta a una desesperada petición de ayuda, inicié un comité de intelectuales norteamericanos que buscaba lograr la entrada de Trotsky a los Estados Unidos. Conseguimos a Morris Ernst, entonces Cónsul General del American Civil Liberties Union [Unión Norteamericana de Libertades Civiles], para que se reuniera con Roosevelt en la Casa Blanca para presentarle nuestro caso. El esfuerzo fracasó y Trotsky permaneció "el hombre en el planeta sin visa" hasta que el gobierno laborista noruego recién electo le concedió asilo en 1935.

Cuando se realizó el primer Proceso de Moscú en 1936 y el gabinete noruego, bajo la presión del Kremlin, internó a Natalia y Trotsky y les impidió hablar de tal forma que no pudieron defenderse contra las acusaciones infames del acusador Vyshinsky, ese primer comité fue revivido bajo el nombre del American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky [Comité Norteamericano para la Defensa de Leon Trotsky]. Yo era su Secretario Nacional. Este comité tuvo los objetivos de obtener el asilo para Trotsky y promover la formación de una Comisión Internacional de Investigación de las falsas acusaciones de Moscú.

Pudimos lograr los dos objetivos. En diciembre, por medio de la escritora Anita Brenner y el artista Diego Rivera, el Presidente Cárdenas acordó permitir que los Trotsky entraran como huéspedes de su gobierno. Recuerdo muy bien cómo Max Shachtman y yo transmitimos las buenas noticias a Oslo por medio de Walter Held. En enero conocimos a Trotsky y Natalia al llegar ellos a Tampico y los acompañamos en el tren presidencial a la casa de Frida Kahlo en Coyoacán.

Después de ayudar en su formación, acompañé a la Dewey Commission of Inquiry [Comisión Dewey de Investigación] a México en abril de 1937 donde ésta llevó a cabo las audiencias memorables, publicadas en *The Case of Leon Trotsky* [El Caso de Leon Trotsky], que atrajo la atención mundial y golpeó de la forma más contundente la credibilidad de los Procesos de Moscú.

Después de eso, junto con los camaradas del SWP y otros asignados a esa tarea, trabajé para salvaguardar a Trotsky de todas las maneras posibles contra el decreto de muerte lanzado contra él por los matones de Stalin. A mí se me encargó especialmente conseguir los fondos que se necesitaban para las amplias medidas de defensa que fueron instituidas antes y después del asalto a la casa por parte de Siquieros el 24 de mayo de 1940. En efecto, una de las últimas cartas que escribió Trotsky, un poco antes de ser arrebatado, era dirigida a un amigo simpatizante que había contribuido generosamente a ese fin.¹

También se me informó de las indagacio-

1. Ver *Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1939-40* [Escritos de Leon Trotsky 1939-40], segunda edición (Nueva York: Pathfinder Press, 1973), p. 329.

nes que se llevaron a cabo para investigar a personas conectadas con la casa después del asalto de mayo y las medidas adicionales emprendidas para fortalecer las defensas.

Durante ese mismo tiempo, debido a mis contactos en diferentes círculos, fui puesto a cargo de asegurar documentos y visas para trotskistas en Europa Occidental cuyas vidas y libertades fueron amenazadas por los nazis y sus agentes. Colaboré con varias agencias voluntarias y negocié con funcionarios del gobierno en esta causa y logré poner fuera de peligro a varios camaradas judíos y no judíos amenazados. Por ejemplo, hice todos los trámites para que Walter Held (Heinz Epe) y su familia pudieran venir a los Estados Unidos, apelando a funcionarios en altas posiciones en el gobierno, pero fue detenido por la policía secreta soviética cuando pasaba por la URSS, y ejecutado. No era de nuestro conocimiento en aquel entonces que entre aquéllos que trajimos al país se encontraba un agente de la GPU. Ese era Mark Zborowski (Etienne) alrededor de quien Healy ha levantado un clamor décadas después.

Era mejor salvar a diez buenos camaradas aún si se incluía entre ellos un peligroso agente cuya identidad era en todo caso desconocida y no comprobada en aquel entonces. Si una situación parecida volviera a darse en Europa Occidental o en otro lugar, nosotros del SWP seguiríamos la misma conducta. No nos detendríamos a investigar más de lo razonable a cada individuo en nuestro movimiento antes de rescatarlo.

Durante todo este período trabajé en asociación fraternal con Trotsky y gozaba de su confianza, al igual que Hansen y Cannon. Esto es más de lo que puede decir Healy.

Lo que sí dice Healy es que nosotros abusamos de esa confianza y éramos culpables de no haber tomado mejores precauciones y por lo tanto prevenir el asesinato de Trotsky. Esto voltea de cabeza la situación. Es cierto que no prevenimos la muerte de Trotsky. A pesar de la defensa más rigurosa y de la vigilancia constante, no es fácil, y en realidad es muy poco posible, impedir indeterminadamente que una banda decidida de asesinos armados con recursos sin límites, lleve a cabo su objetivo fatal. Pueden ser mantenidos a distancia por un tiempo, como ocurrió por accidente en mayo. Pero a largo plazo sus posibilidades de triunfar son óptimas, como el mismo Trotsky sabía muy bien.

Con todas las fuerzas disponibles, los zares rusos y los dos Kennedy fueron víctimas de asesinos. ¿Cómo se podría esperar que un exilado, aislado con pocos recursos y unos cuantos amigos en un país extranjero, tuviera éxito en lo que el séquito

de estos poderosos jefes de estado fracasaron?

Ese es un lado del asunto. De gran importancia fue el hecho positivo de que gracias a nuestros esfuerzos e intervención, Trotsky pudo gozar de una moratoria de tres años y medio, de enero de 1937 a agosto de 1940. La ejecución de la sentencia de muerte fue aplazada durante estos años finales en que siguió dirigiendo la Cuarta Internacional y escribió algunas de sus contribuciones más valiosas. En 1935 Trotsky declaró en su *Diario en el Exilio* que necesitaba cinco años más de trabajo ininterrumpido para transmitir a la nueva generación sus conocimientos del método revolucionario. Pudo tener estos cinco años, aunque no fueron años ininterrumpidos.

Ya para agosto de 1940 virtualmente todos los otros acusados en los Procesos de Moscú excepto el Viejo habían sido ejecutados por Stalin. El vengador Healy no está dispuesto a darles a Cannon, Hansen y sus colegas ningún crédito por ese logro. Fue un logro mucho más trascendente que la incapacidad de Trotsky o sus guardias de ver de dónde y a través de qué canales el siguiente y final golpe de muerte, anticipado durante mucho tiempo, provendría.

De la misma manera, Healy no puede ver que Hansen y los demás son sólo figuras secundarias en el drama. Los actores principales fueron Trotsky y Sedov, quienes confiaron en Etienne y le permitieron a Jacson entrar a la casa. Al apuntar hacia los trotskistas norteamericanos, Healy golpea a las víctimas mismas.

No sólo eso. Sus imprudentes e indiscriminadas alegaciones insinúan que el guardia de Trotsky de diecinueve años, Sheldon Harte; Sylvia Caldwell, la secretaria de Cannon; y Lola Dallin, quien ayudó a salvar a tantos refugiados antifascistas, eran todos agentes de la GPU, aunque no provee ninguna nueva evidencia probativa con respecto a esto. Cualquier cosa sirve en sus esfuerzos frenéticos para poner en tela de duda a Joseph Hansen y sus colegas.

* * *

Durante mi carrera política colaboré no tan sólo con Trotsky sino con Joseph Hansen y con Gerry Healy. He sido un asociado íntimo y colaborador literario de Hansen desde que escribimos conjuntamente la introducción a la última obra de Trotsky, *En Defensa del Marxismo*, en 1942. De 1951 hasta principios de 1953 trabajé todos los días con Gerry Healy en Inglaterra. Conocí muy bien a ambos.

De esta experiencia personal y del conocimiento directo, pienso que estoy tan capacitado como cualquier persona de ambos lados del Atlántico para juzgar la probidad de ambos hombres y probar las acusaciones que Healy ha lanzado contra su anterior asociado. Puedo mencionar otra razón que

me otorga algo de autoridad para emitir un juicio. Desde el caso de Scottsboro en 1931 he estado involucrado en la defensa de las libertades civiles y derechos laborales en una serie tan larga de casos aquí y en el extranjero, que no podría enumerarlos. Los más conocidos son el caso de Tom Mooney, el caso de Kutcher y la demanda actual del SWP contra el FBI, la CIA, etc. Como resultado he aprendido a detectar una falsa acusación contra un militante a millas de distancia y he organizado repetidas veces movimientos para defender a víctimas a escala nacional e internacional. Como experto sobre acusaciones fabricadas de todo tipo, me considero bien equipado para dar un veredicto en este caso: Apesta a los mil demonios.

Aparte de la ausencia total del más mínimo rasgo de evidencia por parte de Healy, para cualquiera que ha conocido a Hansen desde cerca por décadas, es psicológicamente imposible que sea un agente de la policía secreta soviética o del FBI. Por el otro lado, yo sé que Healy es muy capaz de diseminar informes falsos acerca de sus oponentes por una ventaja fraccional, especialmente contra aquéllos que pisotean su ego.

A mi juicio Healy es en este caso un mentiroso sin vergüenza, un redomado pillo y un delincuente político. Declaro esto, no tanto para exculpar a Hansen y Cannon, quienes no necesitan mi defensa, sino para caracterizar a Healy como lo que él mismo ha demostrado ser. En toda mi experiencia muy raramente he visto una acusación tan odiosa y tan débil como este platillo picante que Healy ha confeccionado.

Sus calumnias estúpidas contra Hansen y Cannon son igual de detestables e infundamentadas que las acusaciones de Stalin contra Trotsky y Sedov en los Procesos de Moscú. ¿Por qué no incluye a Dobbs y Novack, quienes estaban igualmente involucrados en y eran responsables de la planificación de la seguridad de Trotsky—o se nos está reservando para una segunda vuelta?

O, para acercarnos más a Londres, son igualmente injustificadas que las acusaciones del gobierno británico cuando internó a Trotsky en un campo de presos de guerra alemanes en Nueva Escocia cuando iba camino a Petrogrado en abril de 1917. Dijeron que era un agente alemán. Cuando las noticias llegaron al Soviet de Petrogrado, la *Pravda* bajo la dirección de Lenin contestó: "¿Es posible creer por un solo instante en la veracidad de una declaración de que Trotsky, el Presidente del Soviet de Delegados Obreros en San Petersburgo en 1905—un revolucionario que ha sacrificado años al servicio desinteresado de la revolución—que este hombre haya tenido algo que ver con un plan subsidiado por el gobierno alemán? Esta es una patente,

inaudita y maliciosa calumnia contra un revolucionario.”²

En aquel entonces Trotsky había prestado menos de la mitad de los años al servicio

2. Leon Trotsky, *My Life* [Mi Vida] (Pathfinder Press, 1970), pp. 283-84.

de la revolución que Hansen ha prestado. Las acusaciones de Healy contra Hansen y cia. son igual de infundadas e igual de infames que las del gobierno británico contra Trotsky. Nosotros en 1975 las refutamos tan vigorosa e inequívocamente como Lenin en 1917: “¿Es posible creer por

un solo instante en las atroces calumnias de Healy contra el irreprochable Hansen?”

Hasta que Healy retire sus acusaciones e insinuaciones, permanecerá en su frente para que todo el mundo la vea, la deshonrosa etiqueta de un desmedido calumniador.

20 de noviembre de 1975

El Relato de un Testigo Presencial

La Intervención de Sudáfrica en Angola

Por Tony Hodges

[La siguiente es una traducción del artículo “South Africa’s Intervention in Angola” que apareció en el número del 8 de diciembre de *Intercontinental Press*. La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

LUSAKA, Zambia, 23 de noviembre—Tropas sudafricanas han avanzado más de 600 millas dentro del territorio de Angola. Yo y otros cuatro periodistas británicos y norteamericanos que viajamos por avión a la ciudad costera de Benguela, a cuatrocientas millas al norte del territorio ocupado por Sudáfrica de Namibia, vimos a soldados sudafricanos operando autos blindados en la ciudad.

Las fuerzas sudafricanas están luchando de lado de las unidades del Frente Nacional para la Liberación de Angola (FNLA) y la Unión Nacional para la Independencia Total de Angola (UNITA) contra el tercer partido nacionalista angolés, el Movimiento Popular para la Liberación de Angola (MPLA).

Una columna conjunta de tropas sudafricanas, del FNLA y de UNITA se apoderó el 5 de noviembre de Benguela y Lobito, el puerto más grande de Angola, a 20 millas al norte de Benguela. Los soldados del MPLA que habían mantenido control de las ciudades desde mediados de agosto huyeron al norte hacia el puerto de Novo Redondo, a 300 millas al sur de Luanda. La columna sudafricana-UNITA-FNLA, bien equipada, según los informes, con autos blindados, se ha apoderado ahora también de Novo Redondo. El MPLA afirma, sin embargo, mantener el control de la siguiente ciudad costera, Porto Amboim, a 55 millas más al norte.

Las tropas sudafricanas entraron al territorio de Angola por primera vez a principios de agosto. Pieter Botha, el Ministro de Defensa sudafricano, admitió el 9 de septiembre que el ejército sudafricano había cruzado la frontera de Namibia y avanzado cerca de 10 millas al interior de

Angola para tomar el control de las instalaciones hidroeléctricas de las cascadas de Ruacana, en el río Cunene. Se espera que la electricidad generada en las cascadas de Ruacana satisfaga las necesidades de energía de Namibia casi por completo, poco después de que las primeras tres turbinas de 80 MW empiecen a funcionar en 1977.

El gobierno sudafricano ha también admitido que sus tropas han llevado a cabo incursiones relámpago a Angola para atacar a los luchadores de la South West African People’s Organisation [SWAPO—Organización Popular de Africa Sudoccidental]. A mediados de octubre, Sudáfrica anunció que sus tropas habían cruzado la frontera y liquidado a 13 militantes de la SWAPO. De nuevo, el 16 de noviembre, el Ministerio de Defensa de Sudáfrica dijo que sus fuerzas habían matado a 10 militantes de la SWAPO en el “área operativa de la frontera” en la frontera de Namibia y Angola.

El gobierno sudafricano ha negado repetidamente, sin embargo, que sus fuerzas estén interviniendo en la guerra civil angolés. El 24 de octubre, por ejemplo, el Ministerio de Defensa sudafricano negó las acusaciones lanzadas por el MPLA de que tropas sudafricanas habían avanzado 150 millas dentro del territorio de Angola hacia la ciudad de Sá da Bandeira. En respuesta a los recientes informes de testigos presenciales acerca de la actividad de tropas sudafricanas dentro del territorio de Angola, el Ministro del Exterior sudafricano Hilgard Muller declaró categóricamente el 23 de noviembre en una entrevista con la South African Broadcasting Corporation [Compañía Emisora Sudafricana] que “Sudáfrica no tiene intenciones de verse involucrada en la guerra civil de Angola.”

UNITA ha tratado también de negar las acusaciones de que ha recibido ayuda de Sudáfrica. El representante de UNITA en los Estados Unidos Jeremiah Chitunda dijo en Nueva York el 11 de noviembre, el Día de la Independencia formal de Angola, que “la

intervención sudafricana a favor de uno de los movimientos de liberación angolés no existe.” El Departamento de Información de UNITA en Lusaka, Zambia, dijo el 16 de noviembre que “ambos la radio y la prensa han estado presentando falsos informes sobre soldados sudafricanos que luchan al lado de las fuerzas de UNITA en Lobito y el sur de Angola.” UNITA afirmó que “sin confirmar su nacionalidad” los periodistas habían confundido a angolés blancos en el ejército de UNITA con soldados sudafricanos.

Pero un corresponsal de Reuters, un periodista japonés y yo pudimos verificar que estos soldados no eran angolés blancos cuando se nos permitió—debido a un relajamiento temporal en la seguridad de UNITA—entrevistar a tres soldados blancos en el aeropuerto controlado por UNITA de Silva Porto, a 442 millas al sureste de Luanda. Manejaban dos autos blindados Panhard pintados con consignas de “Viva UNITA.” No entendían portugués y hablaban inglés con fuerte e inconfundible acento sudafricano.

Yo, junto con un equipo de televisión británico y representantes de Reuters y el *New York Times*, vi más de 50 soldados sudafricanos almacenando cajas de armamentos en el aeropuerto de Benguela el 10 de noviembre. Dos autos blindados Panhard más, conducidos por jóvenes soldados rubios, vigilaban el camino de acceso al aeropuerto. Estos soldados, entre los 18 y los 20 años de edad, eran demasiado jóvenes para ser mercenarios y parecían ser soldados conscriptos regulares.

La intervención sudafricana prueba que la política de distensión seguida por los regímenes neocoloniales de Africa “independiente” hacia el sur del continente, dominado por blancos, ha envalentonado a los racistas sudafricanos para actuar con aún más desdén caballeroso por los derechos de las masas africanas. La invasión no es, como puede aparecer en la superficie, inconsistente con la ofensiva sudafricana

por la distensión, sino que está orientada a promoverla.

El Primer Ministro sudafricano Vorster ha estimado que la intervención de su ejército en este momento, puede volcar la relación de fuerzas a favor de las fuerzas políticas comprometidas firmemente a la colaboración con Sudáfrica. La fuerte línea pro-distensión de UNITA ha sido expuesta en numerosas ocasiones en entrevistas otorgadas a periodistas extranjeros. En una entrevista con la publicación de Luanda *Portuguese Africa*, el dirigente de UNITA Jonas Savimbi declaró el 28 de abril que "la cooperación económica con Sudáfrica es tan sólo realismo, por mucho que nos opongamos a lo inhumano e injusto del apartheid." El número del 2 de mayo del boletín continuó con un informe de que "el Dr. Savimbi dijo que él estaba a favor de la distensión y del diálogo como un medio de resolver los problemas, y que él no creía, en el contexto sudafricano actual, que la solución para los problemas de Namibia y Zimbabwe fueran necesariamente guerras armadas de liberación.

"El Dr. Savimbi dijo que él creía que el Primer Ministro de Sudáfrica, John Vorster, es un 'dirigente responsable,' y que la presión que Sudáfrica había puesto sobre el régimen de Smith era la principal razón por la cual el Dr. Sithole había sido liberado."

El imperialismo sudafricano debe también recibir con beneplácito la adhesión de Savimbi a las virtudes de una economía de libre empresa. En la misma entrevista, Savimbi se declaró a favor de un estado que "dejaría tanto como fuera posible de la economía a las empresas privadas." Declaró que "recibimos con agrado inversión extranjera de cualquier fuente, y daremos al inversionista toda clase de facilidades y garantías."

El MPLA no ha emitido ninguna declaración pública que indique su actitud hacia la distensión en el sur de África. Como los dirigentes del FRELIMO* en Mozambique (con el cual el MPLA mantiene lazos estrechos), la dirección del MPLA puede muy bien haber estado a favor de la colaboración con Sudáfrica—como lo estuvo en el caso del gobierno portugués y sus fuerzas armadas por los primeros siete meses después de la firma de los Acuerdos de Alvor el 15 de enero. El gobierno sudafricano puede haber estimado, sin embargo, que el régimen del MPLA en Luanda se vería constreñido por las aspiraciones radicales de sus propios seguidores de base en los *muçeques* (barriadas) de Luanda.

Sudáfrica seguramente sabía que el envío de tropas a Angola encontraría muy poca respuesta por parte de los estados africanos neocoloniales y la Organización Africana de Unidad (OAU). El Presidente del MPLA



La Opinión

Agostinho Neto ha declarado, durante una entrevista con la agencia de prensa argelina APS el 22 de noviembre, que "la mayoría de los países africanos nos están traicionando al guardar silencio en semejante situación y al evitar condenar a Sudáfrica." Los países como Zambia, que han jugado un papel clave en promover la distensión con Sudáfrica, no han emitido ninguna protesta contra la invasión—aunque, de acuerdo con el corresponsal del *Observer* de Londres David Martin, a quien le fue concedida una entrevista con el Presidente de Zambia Kenneth Kaunda el 22 de noviembre, Zambia fue informada por primera vez de la intervención sudafricana desde principios de diciembre.

Kaunda, quien ha descrito la propaganda a favor de la distensión de Vorster como la "voz de la razón," ha dado también un fuerte apoyo a Savimbi. UNITA ha recibido propaganda favorable en la prensa controlada estrictamente por el gobierno de Zambia, y se ha canalizado ayuda material a UNITA a través del partido dominante (y único partido legal) de Zambia, el United National Independence Party [UNIP—Partido Unido de la Independencia Nacional]. Algunos periodistas británicos han visto cajas grandes con equipo de radio hecho en Gran Bretaña transportadas por avión del Aeropuerto Internacional de Lusaka a territorio de UNITA. Las cajas han sido enviadas por Racal Communications Ltd, una importante compañía británica de telecomunicaciones, al UNIP para ser enviadas a su vez a UNITA.

Otro factor tras el apoyo de Kaunda a UNITA es el deseo de su gobierno de reabrir el estratégico Ferrocarril de Benguela (controlado ahora en su totalidad por UNITA excepto en el extremo noreste) el cual ha sido usado en el pasado para exportar más del 45% de la producción anual de cobre de Zambia de cerca de 700,000 toneladas. Zambia obtiene más del 90% de sus divisas extranjeras de la exportación de cobre y ha sido golpeada duramente por el cierre del

ferrocarril desde mediados de agosto. Más de 140,000 toneladas de productos importados por Zambia se encuentran también detenidas en el puerto de Lobito al cierre del ferrocarril.

Mercenarios norteamericanos están ayudando también a UNITA en la guerra. Un traductor que trabaja en el campo de entrenamiento Capola de UNITA cerca de Silva Porto, me dijo que 15 norteamericanos trabajaban en el campamento como instructores. Un ex Boina Verde, llamado "Skip," me dijo que había ofrecido sus servicios como piloto experto a UNITA.

Se cree ampliamente que la mayoría del material bélico que llega a manos de UNITA y el FNLA se canaliza a través de Zaire, uno de los países que recibe más ayuda militar de los Estados Unidos. La administración de Ford reveló el 26 de octubre que estaba a punto de proponer al Congreso de los Estados Unidos un programa de ayuda militar de 19 millones de dólares para Zaire además de 60 millones de dólares de ayuda financiera de emergencia que están ya siendo considerados. Esto equivaldría a un aumento de más de cinco veces la actual cantidad de ayuda militar a Zaire por parte de los Estados Unidos. De acuerdo con unos pilotos en el aeropuerto de Silva Porto, un Pearl Air Viscount vuela diariamente con armas para UNITA desde Kinshasa, la capital de Zaire. Aviones de transporte sin identificación en su fuselaje están también descargando toneladas de armas pesadas en el aeropuerto de Benguela, aparentemente el principal centro de abastecimientos de las fuerzas de Sudáfrica-FNLA-UNITA que avanzan por la costa. Vimos un gigantesco Hercules camuflado aterrizar aquí tan sólo unos minutos después de nuestra llegada al aeropuerto. □

'Como Zambullirse en un Pozo Negro'

El Departamento de Contralor de Sanidad Ambiental y Humana de Buenos Aires realizó una conferencia de prensa el 26 de noviembre para advertir a los habitantes del área sobre el peligro de bañarse en el Río de la Plata. Los funcionarios del Departamento explicaron que esto "crea el riesgo de contagio de enfermedades que van desde las respiratorias a las intestinales, pasando por afecciones musculares, ópticas, sinusitis y laringitis entre otras."

El diario de Buenos Aires *La Opinión* informó el 27 de noviembre que las aguas del río han estado contaminadas con desechos industriales por más de diez años. Estos incluyen "fenoles, que dan gusto acre, e hidrocarburos, que aportan el olor desagradable y nauseabundo."

El artículo señalaba además que el "zambullirse en aguas del Río de la Plata equivale a hacerlo en un pozo negro."

*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique.—IP

FROM OUR READERS

The article by Joseph Hansen "On Healy's 'Investigation'—What the Facts Show," which appeared in the November 14 issue of *Intercontinental Press*, met with an unusually favorable response. However, several readers called attention to what they consider to be an error in the article. The following letter from Peter Buch of New York is representative:

"Your answer to the Healyite slander campaign . . . is immensely enjoyable. . . .

"However, there is a small error which, in my opinion, crept into a paragraph that starts on the bottom of column 2, p. 1640, in the section titled, 'More Dishes From the Healyite Kitchen.' The second-to-last sentence says:

"As for myself, I was never attracted to any religion, whether Mormonism, Catholicism, Buddhism, *Zionism*, or Healyism." (Emphasis added.)

"The sentence lists a number of religions. However, Zionism is a nationalist and political doctrine, not a religion, even though religious arguments are often cited in its defense. The proper word to use in this context should have been 'Judaism.' Healyism, of course, is entered here for satiric effect in classifying it as a religion. All the more, the other doctrines referred to in the sentence should have been clearly religions.

"If we are careless about the use of the word 'Zionism' or 'Zionist' when we mean 'Judaism' or 'Jewish,' or vice versa, that gives unmerited weight to the Zionists' argument that those words are only new code words for 'Jew' in the derogatory sense. They are primarily responsible, of course, for the common tendency these days to identify Jew with Zionist, to make a heritage one is born into or a religion one may adopt coextensive with a specific political doctrine of Hebrew nationalism based on the program of an exclusively Jewish state in Palestine. There are religious, orthodox Jews comprising whole communities in the United States as well as Israel who reject this identification.

"And, of course, we reject it as Marxists and opponents of racial, religious, or national exclusionism."

Joseph Hansen's reply:

Peter Buch's letter shows that the inclusion of "Zionism" in the sentence he quotes is open to misinterpretation because of current sensitivities and that it would therefore have been better to avoid it.

Nonetheless, the matter is not as simple as might appear at first glance. First of all, Judaism is not the only faith involved. The Mormons, for instance, won many converts,

particularly in the early days of the church, by playing up the desirability of "God's chosen people" gathering in Zion.

They located Zion, naturally, not in the Arab East but in the Rocky Mountains, specifically Utah.

More important than such ramifications is the possible error of looking at religion and politics as fixed categories having nothing in common. It can be inferred from Peter Buch's letter that he recognizes a certain connection does exist. Nonetheless, the relationship between the two deserves deeper exploration.

Almost a century and a half ago, Ludwig Feuerbach held (in *The Necessity of a Reform of Philosophy*) that "religion and the Church have been replaced by politics, the heaven by the earth, prayer by work, hell by material need, and the Christian by man."

If politics has superseded religion, as Feuerbach claimed, then examples of the transition from one to the other must abound, particularly if the process has not been completed even in our times. Does this hold for Zionism or comparable politico-religious currents?

Research might provide a positive answer to the question. If this guess were to be confirmed, how would it affect our estimate of Healyism? Obviously we would have to categorize Healyism as a politico-religious current of opposite type—as a *retrogression* from politics to religion and a church.

And we would have to conclude that even a promising Trotskyist group is not immune to the general decay of capitalism. Under adverse circumstances it can fall prey to a

Professor Solves Britain's Food Shortage

Are Britons squandering most of their food budgets on unnecessary frills? Professor Kenneth Mellanby, a British agricultural expert, thinks so.

In the professor's opinion, it would be quite possible for the British to feed themselves for 5 pence (about US\$0.10) per person a day, instead of the 50 pence they now spend.

The diet would be "horrid" and "intolerably dull," he warned at a Reading University conference November 22.

It would be limited to a porridge made of concentrated poultry food and oatmeal. Such a diet would contain everything necessary to sustain life, he claimed.

local god who changes it into a sect, then into a cult, and finally into a religion with its divinity or international committee of divinities.

It is true that the Healyites do not yet have their own Zion or Mecca; however, a beginning in this direction can be seen in the development of their holy center in London to which pilgrims may come or be summoned for the rituals pertaining to security clearances.

Thus we return to the subject of the article, which was an exposé of the lies and frame-ups of a religion still in the process of birth.

The article "Slightly Atomic Rabbits" in the November 10 issue of *Intercontinental Press* was commended by Mary Jo Hendrickson of New York.

"You know, I really like that Capitalism Fouls Things Up section," she said. "The Hanford atomic power plant is in my home state.

"What happened to those rabbits makes you realize that no matter how hard you try to stay healthy by eating natural food and so forth, it doesn't make a bit of difference.

"The cow that my yogurt came from could have been exposed to the same things those rabbits were."

It should be added that avoiding salads and other rabbit food will not help any. Besides the rabbits near Hanford, badgers and coyotes were thought to have been poisoned.

The source was a salt cake that became an animal salt lick. The salt contained 900,000 curies of radiation from strontium-90, cesium-137, tritium, cobalt-58, and plutonium.

The cake formed from liquid radioactive wastes dumped by the Atomic Energy Commission in unlined trenches in the 1950s.

Capitalism really does foul things up. □

Switching to his diet would make Britain nearly self-sufficient in food production, Mellanby said. And none too soon either.

According to a report in the November 23 *Observer*, "Professor Mellanby said there was probably a 50 per cent chance of such economic chaos in the next year that Britain would face a siege economy and be forced to become more self-sufficient."

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