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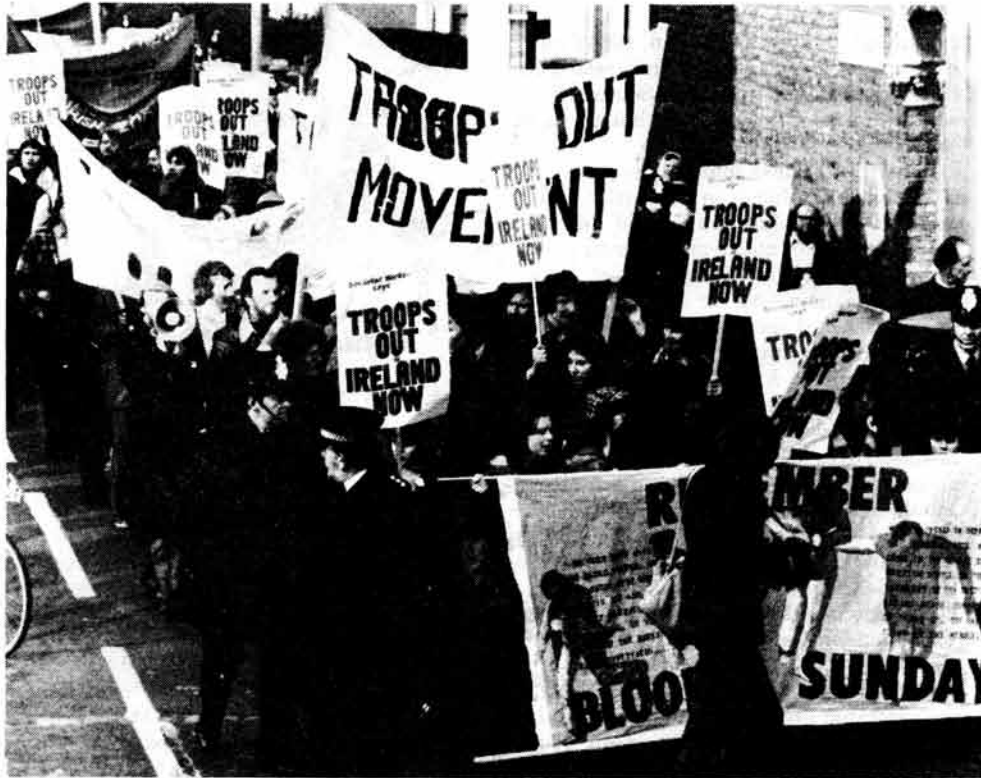
the Americas

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February 21, 1977

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LONDON, January 30: Part of march of 900.

G.M. Cookson

London March Commemorates Bloody Sunday

Carter for Rights Everywhere Except . . .

Sadat Pleased With 'Plebiscite' Results

Students, Unionists March in Mexico City

Elections To Be Opened to Spanish CP?

A Giant Dose of Oil for the Hudson

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Arab Prisoners on Hunger Strike in Israel

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Denmark—Wage Controls Key Issue

Lockheed Scandal and Japanese Election

Harry Wicks

Healy's Frame-up Campaign

'Whose Interests Are Served by Such Slander?'

Carter for Human Rights Everywhere Except . . .

By David Frankel

In keeping with his claim to be a deeply moral man, Jimmy Carter has been trying to show how concerned he is about human rights . . . in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, that is.

Carter promised on the day of his inauguration that he would work toward a world "more responsive to human aspirations." Six days later, on January 26, the State Department issued a statement deploring the violation of "such rights and freedoms" as were stipulated in the Helsinki declarations of 1975. This was in connection with the arrest in Prague of several signers of Charter 77, a declaration on human rights.

A day later another State Department statement warned the Soviet regime that any action against Andrei D. Sakharov, a leading Soviet dissident, would be in conflict with "accepted international standards of human rights."

When the Kremlin protested, Carter told reporters, "We're not going to back down" on the human rights issue. This was followed up February 7 by a State Department declaration—authorized by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance—expressing "profound concern" over the detention of Soviet human-rights activist Aleksandr Ginzburg.

What a cheap, cynical charade!

If Carter and his underlings really had an ounce of concern about human rights, it would be easy enough to demonstrate. Out of a decent respect for the opinion of the rest of the world, one would expect them to begin in those places where American intervention has been responsible for subverting human rights.

Or has Carter been so busy writing his sermons and teaching Sunday School in Plains, Georgia, that he is not aware of any American transgressions in the area of human rights?

The list of murderous dictatorial regimes that are warmly supported by Washington is a long one. In Latin America the governments in Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, and Uruguay come to mind immediately.

In Asia, the shah of Iran owes his throne to the CIA, while South Korean dictator Park Chung Hee is propped up by 40,000 American troops. The cordial relations between Washington and the authoritarian regimes in the Philippines, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Sri Lanka should also be noted.

Violations of human rights are being

continually reported in Spain, where large numbers of people have been arrested for their political views, and in South Africa, where hundreds have been shot down in cold blood.

But with all these countries to pick from, Carter chose to focus on the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. He figured he could make a couple of cheap propaganda points in behalf of the "civilizing role" of American imperialism and his own presidential image of moral rectitude.

Most commentators in the American capitalist media have ignored the obvious hypocrisy of Carter's policy. The editors of the *New York Times*, who have generally fawned over the new administration, declared February 1 that "Americans should applaud their Government's concern for the harassment of civil rights forces in Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union." They went so far as to call the U.S. statements "a summons . . . to 'socialism with a human face,' as Communists have called it."

In reality, despite the self-serving lies of the capitalist press, *Carter has stabbed the Soviet and Czechoslovak dissidents in the back.*

The spectacle of Carter preaching about human rights while selling arms—and no doubt torture equipment as well—to the shah of Iran and the Pinochet regime in Chile can only hurt the credibility of those dissidents he claims so piously to support. By trying to use the issue of repression in the Stalinist countries for his own narrow political advantage, Carter has given the Kremlin and its supporters new ammunition to use against the dissident movement.

"If the motive is to help the Russian



CARTER

people," *Christian Science Monitor* columnist Joseph C. Harsch commented February 3, "then the best course for the American government is to keep quiet. Washington does not come with clean hands to the pulpit of moral judgment."

According to Harsch, "A delegation of Italian Communists visited Moscow the other day and openly called upon Roy Medvedev, a distinguished and prominent Soviet dissenter. . . .

"The visit by the Italian Communists to Mr. Medvedev will give him more protection from the KGB [the Soviet secret police] than any public statement which anyone in Washington could issue on behalf of Mr. Sakharov, or of anyone else."

Harsch is clearly right. But if things were left at that, there would be no way for Carter to show how deeply concerned he is. Unfortunately, over the coming period we can expect to see further demonstrations of Carter's commitment to hypocrisy. □

Orlov and Rudenko—Victims of Carter's Ploy

By Marilyn Vogt

Two more dissidents have been arrested by the Soviet police.

Yuri Orlov, a fifty-two-year-old physicist who is chairman of the Moscow Committee to Supervise Compliance With the Helsinki Accords, was arrested February 10. Mikola Rudenko, a writer and war invalid who is chairman of the committee in Kiev, was arrested February 5.

The two imprisoned activists are among the initial victims of the Carter administration's hypocritical statements of concern over human rights in the Soviet Union.

This was made clear by the Kremlin rulers February 12, in an editorial in the Soviet CP daily *Pravda*. Taking the opportunity offered by Carter's meddling,

Pravda justified the crackdown by seeking to portray dissenters as a "heap of renegades" who "exist only because they are supported, paid and praised by the West."

In addition, the editors of *Pravda* seized the White House ploy as an opportunity to denounce all Western supporters of the dissidents as participants in a "carefully planned and coordinated act of sabotage" against the Soviet Union.

Orlov himself gave unwitting testimony of the damage Carter has done to the dissident movement. According to a report in the February 11 *New York Times*, he "was taken into custody a day after he had emerged from a week of hiding to tell Western reporters that the United States had made the situation safer by declaring its support of another dissident, Aleksandr I. Ginzburg, arrested last week."

"I think after the State Department statement on Ginzburg I will not be arrested now," Orlov told a reporter.

The Helsinki committees were started in Moscow in May 1976, with similar groups soon forming in the Lithuanian, Georgian, and Ukrainian republics.

The committees' aim is to "foster compliance with the humanitarian provisions" of the accords. Their main activity is to gather information from Soviet citizens about the Kremlin's violations of these provisions, in preparation for the second Helsinki-type conference scheduled to take place in Belgrade in June.

In the meantime, the information gathered is being forwarded to the heads of the thirty-four other governments that have signed the accords, and to the Soviet and world public.

Members of the committees are particular targets for harassment. Orlov had been called in for questioning in early January. Ginzburg, a founding member of the Moscow committee, was arrested February 3. □

Peking Warns Carter on 'Soviet Menace'

An article in Hsinhua, the official Chinese news agency, made clear February 10 that the Peking regime is worried over whether Jimmy Carter will be tough enough in negotiations with Moscow. Using a technique that it frequently resorts to, Hsinhua made its points by citing American newspaper articles.

"The Christian Science Monitor said in an article on Jan. 27 that Carter's statements have displeased a number of people in the defense and foreign-policy establishments who stand for keeping high vigilance against the Soviet Union," Hsinhua reported. It also took note of those who feel that Carter "appears excessively eager to reach a new arms-control agreement with the Russians."

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Electoral Arena To Be Opened to Spanish CP?

By Gerry Foley

A little more than a week after the "democratic opposition" helped hold back the mass strikes and protests touched off by the murder of leftist figures in Madrid, the government of Franco's heirs made some apparent concessions to the "moderate left" parties in general, and to the "moderate left" parties in general, and to the Communist party in particular.

On February 8, the government presided over by Adolfo Suárez announced a change in the law on "political associations." The cabinet has been stripped of its power to deny recognition to parties that meet the requirements laid down for registering. This seems to improve the Communist party's chances of being able to participate in the elections for the new "democratic" legislature, now reportedly scheduled for May 30.

However, legal recognition of the Communist party will probably be decided finally in the courts, since in the last days of the Arias Navarro government in June, a law was passed to justify continued exclusion of the CP. It specifically bans any party that "subject to an international discipline, seeks to establish a totalitarian system" in Spain.

In the February 9 issue of the *New York Times*, correspondent James M. Markham reported: "Some political analysts believe that the expected court case might drag on into the spring, when parliamentary elections are scheduled, keeping the Communists from running under their party's banner."

So, the Suárez government's concession to the Communist party is more like a carrot dangled before the CP's nose than a significant gain.

Nonetheless, according to the February 12 issue of the Barcelona weekly magazine *Mundo*, the CP is acting as if it is confident it will be able to take part in the elections, either in its own name or under an independent label:

The CP has an interminable list of deputies. They come from everywhere, towns and rural districts. Three persons whose forte in everyday life is not exactly politics have thrown their hats into the ring. Victor Manuel, the Asturian singer . . . will run. . . . Another candidate is the Valencian singer Ovidi Montllor, who is also an actor in the theater and in movies. . . . A third candidate is the dancer Antonio Gades. . . .

Besides having a law that can be used to bar CP participation, the government has demanded, and reportedly gotten, special guarantees. *Mundo* reported:

It has been pointed out that in the last conversation between Felipe González [of the SP] and Suárez, one of the conditions posed by the

premier for legalizing the PCE [Partido Comunista Español—Spanish Communist party] and for allowing *El Socialista* [the Social Democratic paper] to be published legally and be sold in the bookstores was the promise that under no circumstances would the SP and the CP run joint slates for the congress or for the Senate. "No popular fronts," Suárez reportedly told Felipe González.

If Suárez was ready to make some concessions, in return for strict guarantees, as *Mundo* reported, there were limits to his generosity:

Suárez is not willing to go along with the demand of the so-called opposition to form a "government of broad consensus" to preside over the elections. The military are the most opposed to this idea. The army is the absolute guarantee that the elections are going to be what the supporters of the Political Reform [i.e., the liberalization of the Francoist regime] say they are going to be and not a "break" from the previous regime.

A government in which the fate of the military would depend on discussions among a politically mixed assortment of ministers does not appeal to [Defense Minister and First Deputy Premier] Gutiérrez Mellado and the other brains of the army. So, the only thing left for the Opposition is to accept the Suárez government's formal promise to hold free elections, in which the most they can hope to do is go from being a liberal pressure group "Opposition" to being a parliamentary one, since they themselves do not think they can win.

Before the upsurge at the end of January, the mass workers parties threatened to boycott the legislative elections, as they did the December 12 referendum on the "Political Reform." The Executive Committee of the SP, for example, said in a December 16 statement:

The government conducted itself in a biased way during the [referendum] campaign—prohibiting demonstrations, detaining opponents, abusing the use of mass communication, et cetera. The promised elections must not develop under similar conditions, or they, too, will be a farce. (Quoted in the *Los Angeles Times*, December 17.)

However, after the Social Democrats and Stalinists backed Suárez's calls for maintaining "public order" in the aftermath of the Madrid murders, they appeared to drop their conditions for participating in the elections.

In its February 5 issue, *Mundo* commented:

The left opposition to the government is still unnerved by the outrage [of the murders]. . . . So much so that it has delivered itself over to the Suárez government bound hand and foot. The fear is so great that the Committee of the Nine [the opposition negotiating committee] is ready

to totally accept the elections on Suárez's conditions.

The last resistance . . . has been "overcome" by . . . a few professional assassins, sent by no one knows whom.

Suárez's apparent concessions to the Stalinists in Spain were paralleled by his opening up diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and other workers states. At the end of January, Madrid resumed relations with Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Poland.

The Spanish CP is particularly close to the Yugoslavs and Romanians, who act as the patrons and protectors of those Communist parties that take a more independent stance toward Moscow.

Madrid has reason to have a special warm spot in its heart for Poland. Polish coal shipments helped it in its efforts to break a strike of Asturian coal miners in late 1971. The shipments were especially helpful since unions in West Europe banned coal shipments to Spain in solidarity with the strikers.

On February 9, the Suárez government opened diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. The Spanish CP announced, according to Miguel Acoca of the *Washington Post*, that it had decided not to object to Moscow recognizing the Spanish government so as to clear the way for more trade to "aid the depressed Spanish economy."

On February 11, police rescued Lt. Gen. Emilio Villaescusa, retired former chief of staff of the army, and Antonio María de Oriol y Urquijo, president of the Council of State. They had been kidnapped and held by the Grupo de Resistencia Antifascista Primero de Octubre (GRAPO—October 1 Antifascist Resistance Group). No one was harmed during the operation. De Oriol said he had never felt like a prisoner but rather "like a guest in a rural home."

The GRAPO is portrayed by the Spanish authorities as an ultraleftist group. However, there is no hard evidence as to its politics.

The ban imposed by the government February 9 against publishing news about "terrorist" activities will make it still more difficult to determine what political forces are involved in violent acts. □

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For United, Mass Action in Reply to State of Emergency

[The following statement by the Political Bureau of the Spanish Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR—Revolutionary Communist League, sympathizing organization of the Fourth International) was issued January 31. It was published in the February 1-15 issue of their newspaper *Combate*. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

In view of the attack on members of the Guardia Civil and the Policía Armada [riot police forces] on January 28 and the response to these shootings—in particular the document signed by fifty-three political leaders,¹ the communiqué of the Coordinating Committee of Trade-Union Organizations,² the state of emergency decreed by the government, as well as [Premier Adolfo] Suárez's statements—the Political Bureau of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria has adopted the following statement:

1. As we said at the time, the attack January 28 can only be interpreted as either a fascist provocation or an ultraleft aberration. It must be said that every new action attributed to the GRAPO [Grupo de Resistencia Antifascista Primero de Octubre—October 1 Antifascist Resistance Group] points more to the probability that what is involved is a fascist provocation. It is practically unimaginable that any revolutionary group could fail to understand that the kidnapping of Oriol and Villaescusa would not help in any way to win amnesty, and that machine-gunning policemen is not the way to answer fascist barbarism.

2. Consequently, the LCR condemns this attack, which conflicts with the interests and the struggle of the workers. But this condemnation does not mean we are expressing the slightest solidarity with the repressive forces, whose job for forty years has been, and continues to be, oppressing, torturing, and murdering our people. We continue to fight as hard as ever for the dissolution of these bodies and continue to demand that they be made to account for their crimes, the most recent of which is the murder of Mari Luz Nájera. Likewise, this condemnation does not mean that we in any way go along with such hypocritical formulas as "denouncing violence regardless of its source." We know very well where the source of the "violence" in our country lies and who the perpetrator is—it is the fascist monarchy, its institu-

1. The statement by representatives of the major "democratic opposition" parties, including the CP and Social Democrats, which, among other things, called on the population not to participate in street demonstrations.

2. COS—Coordinadora de Organizaciones Sindicales.



KING JUAN CARLOS

tions, and its repressive forces. Faced with this institutionalized violence, the workers and the people are obliged and duty-bound to defend themselves, to organize self-defense. Nothing can justify their abandoning the right of self-defense.

3. We reaffirm what we said in the statement of January 26, 1977. The Suárez government is neither willing nor able to confront the escalation of fascist violence. Only a united and militant mobilization of the workers and the people can stop this.

The communiqué of the fifty-three politicians published January 29 represents another step down the blind alley of trying to fight the fascists by calling on the government "to assure public order," while calling on the population to "remain calm." The LCR considers that the gravest political event in these last days is that such a document was signed by the leaders of the country's major workers parties and unions. By signing such a statement, they are sowing suicidal illusions among tens of thousands of workers who trust them. They are politically disarming the masses when it is most necessary for the masses to mobilize and gain confidence in themselves. The same criticism can be made of the COS communiqué, which is completely devoid of any class position.

4. The Suárez government has taken advantage of the "confidence" placed in it to establish a state of emergency. This is supposed to be directed against "extremists whether of the left or right." But it is against the left that the state of emergency is being applied. Besides the arrests of members of trade-union organizations, as well as of the radical nationalist and

workers parties, the state of emergency hangs like the sword of Damocles over any revolutionary organization that refuses to accept the paralysis that has been imposed and continues to fight to mobilize the masses.

In his speech, Suárez exploited the atmosphere that has been created to justify the "political reform," the "forces of order," and the "state," that is, the Francoist monarchy.

Incredibly, this state of emergency and Suárez's speech have aroused hardly any opposition. For the first time in recent years, a state of emergency has not been universally condemned by the workers organizations.

Moreover, representatives of the PSOE³ and the Communist party stressed the "positive" aspects of the speech, while adding some minimal "criticisms." In the case of organizations such as the PTE, the MC, and the ORT,⁴ their representatives begged to be included among the signers of the "Document of the Fifty-Three" and limited themselves to expressing a desire for "greater clarity" on Suárez's part, to assessing "a certain contradiction" between his words and his deeds.

5. The LCR calls on all these workers parties and trade-union organizations to abandon this capitulationist attitude, which can only serve to foster the government's plans and to leave the mass movement without an alternative.

To bar the road to fascism today, the fundamental task is to win freedom, to do away with the Francoist monarchy, to complete the destruction of this dictatorship in whose entrails—its repressive forces and its institutions—the fascist activity gathers its strength.

To accomplish this task, what is needed, urgently needed, is a united front of all the workers parties and organizations. It is in this framework that a united response has to be given to the fascist violence and the government's repression, developing the potential of the masses and organizing the broadest possible mass action.

6. At this time, when dozens of activists are being hit with repressive measures, arrests, torture, and prison, the LCR calls for an immediate mass mobilization to win their release, total amnesty, and the lifting of the state of emergency. □

3. Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Socialist Workers party of Spain, the main Social Democratic party).

4. PTE—Partido de Trabajo de España (Labor party of Spain). MC—Movimiento Comunista (Communist Movement). ORT—Organización Revolucionaria de los Trabajadores (Revolutionary Workers Organization).

Empress Indira's Despotic Rule Under Fire

By Pankaj Roy

NEW DELHI—One of the motivating factors behind Indira Gandhi's January 18 decision to opt for general elections was undoubtedly her desire to refurbish her regime's "democratic" image. But it was not the most important, nor even one of the most important factors.

While the state of emergency was able to halt a further stagnation of the economy, it could not lead to a revival of economic growth. Rising prices had begun to impel the hardest-hit strata of the working class to launch strikes and other struggles. At the same time, the drop in demand due to the regime's deflationary measures caused stagnation in a number of industries, leading to more layoffs. Gandhi has sought to channel the growing restiveness of the masses by calling elections under the state of emergency.

In fact, liberal bourgeois figures like Rajni Kothari and Kuldip Nayar, as well as the group of newspapers around the *Indian Express*, had already begun urging Gandhi to adopt such a course in 1976. But she did not respond at the time because of several factors. First, the 42nd Constitutional Amendments Act, which permanently institutionalised many of the anti-democratic measures of the emergency, had not yet been adopted. The Pro-Moscow Communist party of India was still not subservient enough. No signs of accommodation had been received from the rightist bourgeois parties or leaders. Moreover, internal squabbles in Gandhi's own Congress party in several important states like Maharashtra, West Bengal, and Bihar were yet to be quelled.

By the end of 1976, however, it was becoming increasingly clear that the state of emergency was already politically counterproductive. After a year and a half of the state of emergency and after routing the so-called "fascist" and "right reactionary" parties, the regime no longer had anyone else to blame for rising prices, mounting unemployment, a drop in demand at a time of increasing production, the stagnation of the public distribution system in the midst of higher food-grain stocks, and other economic problems.

The pressure of the masses for an easing of the emergency, a relaxation in the implementation of forced sterilisation and the forced eviction of shantytown and pavement dwellers, and for an end to the monotonous praise of Congress leaders, especially of Gandhi's son, Sanjay, played a decisive role in compelling Gandhi to partially suspend the state of emergency.

No Cheers For Gandhi



Herblock/Washington Post

Indira Gandhi's first major election rally, held in New Delhi February 5, did not go as planned. In an effort to gather as large a crowd as possible, she provided free bus transportation for those attending, and government buses and trucks brought in government employees. According to official estimates, about 100,000 persons were present. But getting them there was only half the problem.

The crowd showed little enthusiasm

for the speeches by Congress party leaders. Even before Gandhi got up to speak thousands of persons began to walk out, only to be stopped by police swinging long wooden clubs. Others slept through the speeches.

When Gandhi spoke, she apologized for the "inconvenience and hardship" caused to some by the state of emergency and admitted that there had been some "excesses." A young man who tried to heckle her was hustled off by security police. As more of the crowd began to leave, the rally was abruptly adjourned, ending before Congress party President Dev Kant Borooah and other scheduled speakers could address the crowd. Gandhi's son Sanjay, who had been billed as a major speaker, did not show up.

The following day, about 200,000 persons packed the same area to hear speakers of the opposition Janata party denounce Gandhi's repressive rule. When the main speakers, Jaya Prakash Narayan and Jagjivan Ram were introduced to the rally, the crowd cheered wildly.

An earlier series of rallies organized by the Janata party January 30 had also attracted large crowds, with 100,000 or more attending each of the rallies in Delhi, Patna, and Kanpur, and 50,000 showing up in Jaipur.

This factor was singled out by V.K. Narasimhan in the February 2 *Indian Express*. Analysing the enthusiastic response given to Morarji Desai and other opposition figures in the mass rallies organised by the rightist Janata party in New Delhi, Ahmedabad, Patna, and other cities, Narasimhan implored the regime and the Congress party to "realise the implications of the relief and satisfaction with which even the partial relaxation of the emergency regulations and the temporary suspension of Press Censorship have been received throughout the country."

Sensing the mood of the masses on the question of the emergency, the Janata party has, for its own reasons, made the issue of democracy versus dictatorship a key one in the election campaign.

The partial relaxation of the emergency, however, has not left Gandhi's Congress party free from shocks. The suppressed grievances within the higher echelons of the Congress exploded with redoubled force with the sudden resignation on February 2 of Jagjivan Ram, the minister for food and agriculture, from the cabinet and party. Ram was one of the most senior leaders of the Congress party and held positions in the central cabinet longer than anyone else. Being a Harijan (untouchable), he wields considerable influence over the Harijan electorate, who constitute about 15 percent of all voters in India.

His resignation was accompanied by those of Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna, who has influence over the Muslim voters of

Uttar Pradesh, and Nandini Satpathy, a former chief minister of Bihar, who has a "leftist" image.

Commenting on this dramatic development, well-known commentator Kuldip Nayar pointed out in a dispatch in the February 2 *Indian Express* that a number of leaders of the Congress had for some time been unhappy with some of the policies carried out in the name of the emergency and with the overbearing posture of Sanjay Gandhi's Youth Congress. According to Nayar, they were apparently unwilling to quit the party earlier for two possible reasons: fear and the lack of an alternative.

This seems to have been borne out by a statement issued by Ram and the others, which appeared in the February 3 *Financial Express*. The statement graphically

described the strangulation of internal democracy in the Congress party and warned of the danger of despotic rule in the country. "A silent majority in the Congress," it said, "is restive and impatiently waiting for a lead to resurrect democracy in the organisation and in the country."

The elections are being held while the emergency is still in effect and in the context of antidemocratic curbs on political activities. These antidemocratic measures have been given permanence in the 42nd Constitutional Amendments Act.

The Janata party has not spelled out its position on these amendments. However, it demands the repeal of the emergency, the release of political prisoners, and the repeal of the Maintenance of Internal Security Act and the Defence of India

Rules. It pleads for freedom of the press and the judiciary. These are bourgeois-democratic demands. But it does not explain the objective reasons that led the regime to throttle democratic rights, nor does it explain how these rights are always the first target of the bourgeoisie when it is threatened by the exploited masses.

Overall, the approach of the Janata party leaders is to portray the whole issue of democracy in abstract, non-class terms and to equate the curbing of democracy with the personal dictatorial ambitions of Gandhi and her son. On the economic gains of the emergency, especially in stabilising the bourgeois economy, the Janata party has so far kept silent, since it cannot deny the services rendered by the emergency to the bourgeoisie as a whole. □

Demand British Troops Out of Ireland

900 in London Commemorate Bloody Sunday

By Stuart Paul

LONDON—Despite the continuing government ban on the use of central London for demonstrations against Britain's military occupation of Northern Ireland, and despite a virulent slander campaign against the Troops Out Movement (TOM), 900 persons marched through west London Sunday, January 30.

The action was held to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the massacre of fourteen civil-rights marchers in Derry on January 30, 1972.

A picket was held in Trafalgar Square earlier in the day to protest the ban on central London marches. The square had been made available for the progovernment Irish "peace rally" last November.

Two nights before the Bloody Sunday anniversary, twelve bombs wracked the main London shopping district of Oxford Street. No one was injured.

Airey Neave, the official Conservative party spokesman on Northern Ireland, and John Biggs-Davidson moved quickly to use the bombings to attack opponents of Britain's continued military occupation of part of Ireland.

In a clear attempt to smear the demonstration on the same day, most of London's Sunday newspapers carried the two MPs' statement. "The latest outrages," they said of the bombings, "justify the universal condemnation of the Troops Out Movement which has the support on the Left of [the] Labour Party and has done so much to encourage the bombing campaign of the Provisional IRA."

As the marchers assembled, Jack Claf-

ferty of the Troops Out Movement said the organisation "categorically denies any connection whatsoever with the bombs which went off in London."

He added that those who wished to see who was behind the bombs had only to look to Airey Neave and others responsible for the British presence in Ireland. Neave's party was in power when the order was given to gun down the Derry victims at a peaceful rally attended by more than 30,000 persons.

Paddy Prendiville, TOM student organiser, said at the rally after the London march that Neave's statement was further evidence of the fear in Tory circles that "a majority of the British population increasingly favour a British withdrawal from Ireland."

The Troops Out Movement released a statement to the press. The January 31 *Guardian* quoted it as saying: "Every act of violence, be it in Ireland or Britain, is the result of Britain's denial of the Irish people's right to self-determination. As long as British troops remain in Ireland, then so long will there be violence between our respective countries."

The march and the Trafalgar Square picket were organised by a wide assembly of organisations working together with the Troops Out Movement. However, because the TOM is consistently denied the use of London speaking halls, it had the Socialist Workers party (the new name adopted by the International Socialists) cosponsor the rally.

SWP leader Paul Foot drew objections

and boos from the audience when he asserted that most of those in attendance had marched behind his party's banners, and claimed that the SWP had organised the march and rally almost alone.

In the past the SWP have aroused the disfavour of those active on the Irish question by pandering to the anti-Irish hysteria of the bourgeois press with their demand, "Stop the bombings." On this occasion they made no mention of the recent explosions.

Although many groups helped build the march, the only other member of a left organisation permitted on the platform, Jimmy McCallum, was also from the SWP.

The Communist party and the Labour party continue to oppose immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, and the CP has refused for several years to join any commemoration for the victims of Bloody Sunday. □

Nursery School Subversives?

The Argentine military junta issued a decree February 4 banning sales of *Cinco Dedos* (Five Fingers), a book for pre-school children.

According to Decree 269, *Cinco Dedos* is "a story directed at the infant public, aiming at indoctrination preparatory to the task of ideological education for subversive activity."

Sadat Pleased With 'Plebiscite' Results

By David Frankel

Hailing the results of its February 10 plebiscite, the Egyptian government claimed the next day that 99.4 percent of those who voted had approved the new repressive measures proposed by President Anwar el-Sadat.

The results, of course, were never in doubt. The vote would be "tampered with, like previous ones," former Vice President Kamal Eddin Hussein—a man in a position to know—predicted before the referendum.

"The official figures on the referendum aroused some skepticism here, and many Egyptians spoke openly of their doubts about them," *New York Times* correspondent Henry Tanner reported in a February 11 dispatch from Cairo. "Especially striking, it appeared, was the government's announcement that 96.69 percent of the eligible voters had gone to the polls.

"Spot checks by diplomats and reporters yesterday indicated that the turnout was far below the official figure in Cairo, where about a third of the country's voters are estimated to live."

Only three weeks before the rigged plebiscite, Sadat's rule was jolted by massive protests against increases in the price of food and other basic commodities. The extent of the January 18 and 19 protests forced him to beat a rapid retreat, but his counterattack was not long in coming.

In a ceremony broadcast on radio and television February 3, Sadat signed a decree banning strikes, sit-ins that lead to disturbance of the peace, attempts to incite people to impede the administration of the government or the economy, and destruction of public or private property. Anybody found guilty of "inciting people to impede" Sadat's regime, or of any other offenses listed in the decree, is subject to life imprisonment at hard labor.

The same penalty was also set for membership in "organizations that are opposed to the regime." According to Sadat, those responsible for the protests against his government were "Communists" and "thieves and murderers."

Having set the desired atmosphere, he ordered a plebiscite to give the semblance of popular support to the new decree.

How Sadat intends to use the new repressive powers was indicated when he declared: "We cannot go on spending £170 for every 100 we are earning. Sooner or later the source that gives us this money will refuse to do so. It would be all right if we spend the extra £70 on building

factories. But we are spending them on food."

Thus, once again Sadat is proposing to balance the Egyptian budget at the expense of the masses, who will simply have to go hungry—or perhaps starve. Will the Egyptian workers, peasants, and students be any more amenable to this solution than they were when Sadat tried it in January?

Manchester Guardian correspondent David Hirst gave his opinion right after the mass explosion provoked by Sadat's austerity moves. "Either Sadat comes up with an entirely new and acceptable [economic] cure or he will face a rising tide of opposition that will eventually sweep him away altogether," Hirst said.

"For there is no doubt that a great political awakening is rapidly gaining momentum in Egypt, and that Sadat must either permit it to go forward, or revert to repression of a scale and severity that he cannot possibly sustain for long. Hand in hand with the demand for a better life—or rather for the basic necessities of existence—goes the demand for democracy and self-expression" (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, January 30).

The amount of pressure building up against Sadat was indicated just two days before the plebiscite when the Progressive Union party condemned Sadat's decree as "unconstitutional," and urged its rejection by the voters. The Progressive Union party, which was declared "independent" of the Arab Socialist Union (previously the sole legal party) only this November, was set up by Sadat as part of his scheme for a political facelift and economic liberalization. The party was intended to function as the regime's loyal opposition on the left.

Major newspapers, which are closely supervised by the government, refused to print party leader Khaled Mohieddin's statements. Members of Mohieddin's group were among those arrested following the price protests, and the party has been attacked by Sadat for its alleged role in the demonstrations.

The fact that Mohieddin has gone as far as he has is an indication that there was no alternative if the Progressive Union party was to maintain any credibility as a reform-minded alternative.

Sadat has not made any move to suppress the party as a whole. Such a step would deprive his regime of an important safety valve. Instead, selective repression has been used as a means of making clear how far opposition can be carried, and of

ensuring that the limits are not overstepped.

This policy holds a twofold danger for Sadat. On the one hand, it requires maintaining certain openings. This is dangerous, since under the right conditions the masses can pry them wider. On the other hand, if figures like Mohieddin are allowed to build a big enough base of their own, they can get ideas about replacing Sadat.

While Sadat has been wrestling with the problem of how to keep the masses under control, the imperialists are continuing to put pressure on his regime. The Carter administration has promised Sadat \$190 million in emergency aid, but this will come out of development funds already promised. It will do nothing to help solve Egypt's basic problems.

It may be that the economic pressure is intended to produce not only new austerity measures, but also political concessions in negotiations with Israel. The editors of the *Washington Post* suggested February 9, for example, that the Carter administration "can use Egypt's new exposure to its own priorities to press forward an American initiative for reopening negotiations between the Arabs and Israel. This means making it plain to Cairo just what Egyptian political compromises will make it possible for the United States to help secure the Israeli territorial compromises that Egypt desires."

Such compromises, the *Post* editors made clear, must come *before* any Israeli withdrawals. As they put it, there is a "need for Egypt to enter into the normal neighborly relations that demonstrate its political capacity to live with a comprehensive Mideast settlement."

But this is a dangerous game. Sadat's position is far from secure. As Hirst pointed out in the article cited above:

It is not only in Parliament that opposition to Sadat is making itself felt. All the representative segments of Egyptian society are stirring, demanding their own voice. The trade union movement, for example, is still officially under the control of leaders who depend more on their loyalty to the system than on the support of the workers.

But their position is being undermined by radicals from within. At a trade union conference early this month the radicals secured a condemnation of this "infatih* of exploiters and smugglers" and the endorsement of a demand to raise the minimum wage from twelve to twenty pounds a month. The army—sometimes called "Egypt's biggest party"—is showing signs of unrest too. "Are we at war or at peace?" asked an outspoken officer at a recent high-level gathering. "Where are the fruits of our victory?"

Sadat did not like Hirst's articles. He reacted by expelling the British reporter from Egypt. That solution, however, is not open to Sadat in relation to his real problem—the Egyptian people. □

**Infatih*—the Arabic word for "opening"—refers to Sadat's attempt to attract foreign investment into Egypt.

15,000 Students, Unionists March in Streets of Mexico City

By Jaime González

[The following article is taken from the February 21 issue of *Perspectiva Mundial*, a fortnightly newsmagazine published in New York. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

MEXICO CITY—Some 15,000 persons demonstrated in Mexico City February 1 in defense of democratic and trade-union rights in the universities, which have come under severe attack by the government of José López Portillo. The regime mobilized about 10,000 police and other repressive forces in an effort to discourage more people from attending the action.

The march was led by the Sindicato del Personal Académico de la Universidad Autónoma de México (SPAUNAM—Union of Academic Personnel of the Autonomous National University of Mexico), which had begun a struggle to demand that the UNAM administration sign a contract protecting university professors. SPAUNAM was the principal organizer of the demonstration, and it counted on the support of the Sindicato de Trabajadores y Empleados de la UNAM (STEUNAM—Union of Personnel of the UNAM).

Also participating in the action were the Sindicato Independiente de Trabajadores de la Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (Independent Union of Personnel of the Autonomous Metropolitan University), which is demanding a salary increase and has served notice of a strike; and the Sindicato Independiente Nacional de Trabajadores del Colegio de Bachilleres (National Independent Union of Personnel of the College of Bachilleres), which is seeking recognition as the majority union at that school.

As can be seen, the main organizations and sponsors of the demonstration were the university trade unions. Nevertheless, the largest part of the 15,000 who participated were students.

Besides supporting the demands of the various unions, the demonstration demanded freedom for the jailed students and professors from the Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero (Autonomous University of Guerrero) and an end to the repression at that school. The state of Guerrero has been the scene of some of the most convulsive struggles in the country.

The marchers also demanded respect for democracy at the Universidad Autónoma Benito Juárez de Oaxaca (UABJO—Benito Juárez Autonomous University of Oaxaca). The students and workers there have



LOPEZ PORTILLO

refused to accept an attempt by state Governor Manuel Zárate Aquino to impose a new rector.

The Zárate Aquino government is notorious for its constant attacks on the university and its campaigns of intimidation against the students. The most recent step in this campaign was the occupation of the university on January 8. Two hundred *porros*¹ took part in this occupation, backed up by the police.

Zárate Aquino was forced to resort to such violent methods because the rector he was imposing had to take office on that day.

The occupation of the UABJO was a clear violation of university autonomy, a right won by Mexican students decades ago. Autonomy includes, for example, academic freedom, and the prohibition of police or military intervention inside the university.

These rights have been violated with increasing frequency in the past several months. The attacks actually reached massive proportions when, also on Janu-

ary 8, government assault troops occupied the buildings of the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México (UAEM—Autonomous University of the State of Mexico).

Behind all these attacks is the question of government subsidies to the universities. This is what has caused such discontent among students, employees, and professors. López Portillo has proposed severe cuts in appropriations for higher education as part of the "austerity measures" he is trying to impose. To carry out this objective, the government must break the resistance of the students and of the trade unions and other organizations of campus employees and teachers.

One of the main targets has been the SPAUNAM, which has been under such severe fire that it was forced to give notice of a strike in order to obtain a contract. This strike notice was given under very difficult conditions, since SPAUNAM counts only about one-third of the university professors among its membership. The strike, expected to start February 7, did not take place.

On the other hand, SPAUNAM and STEUNAM announced recently that they have fused and are postponing the strike notice for the immediate future. In these conditions, a strike would involve not only the professors of SPAUNAM, but also the campus workers.

With this fusion, the new union—which is to be called Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Universidad Autónoma de México (Union of Workers of the UNAM)—already encompasses the overwhelming majority of the wage-earning personnel at the UNAM. As a result it is in a much better position to counter the attacks of the authorities.

The atmosphere the government is trying to create around the discontent in the universities is illustrated by the fact that various prominent figures have openly demanded that the government subsidies be withdrawn.

The chorus was opened by Senator Jorge Cruicshank, a former leader of the Partido Popular Socialista (PPS—People's Socialist party), who is now a senator from Oaxaca, thanks to the PRI.² His statement appeared in the February 3 *Excelsior* (the main Mexico City bourgeois daily) under a headline that ran the entire width of the

1. Gangsters armed and paid by the government to intimidate students.

2. Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary party), the main government party.

first page. It read: "The Universities of the Country Have Been Converted Into Battering Rams of Political Struggle." In the article he complained that the centers of study "are completely alien to education and the interests of the Fatherland."

Cruickshank proposed that instead of the government giving subsidies to the universities, it should give scholarships to students of humble origins. This is nothing more than a hypocritical way of covering up the attack against the universities.

Once Cruickshank launched his trial balloon, other functionaries chimed in, clearly revealing the origin of the vicious

campaign that had been taken up in the press against the universities. Fidel Velázquez, the main government officeholder inside the unions and General Secretary of the Confederación de Trabajadores de México (Mexican Workers Confederation), said that "a new 1968 was being prepared."³

But up to the present time the students,

3. In 1968 a series of massive student struggles led to the occupation of the UNAM by government troops. On October 2, the army opened fire on a demonstration in Tlatelolco Plaza, killing dozens of students.

workers, and university teachers have given every indication that they are ready to fight back against the government attacks in a united and decisive struggle. Demonstrations and meetings of thousands of persons have been held in various parts of the country, and the struggle has not been checked.

Fusion of the unions at the UNAM, which are the key forces in this struggle, gives new life to the resistance and points toward the growth of a national union of university employees. This advance will permit the students, professors, and campus workers to combat attacks against the universities more effectively. □

2,000 Attend London Meeting

Tribunal on Abortion Rights a Big Success

By Gwyn Davies

LONDON—Two thousand persons attended a "Day of Evidence" tribunal here January 29, in response to a mounting anti-abortion campaign and the refusal of a Parliamentary Select Committee on abortion to hold either a fair or public hearing.

The tribunal, which heard evidence on the restricted availability of abortion in Britain, as well as in other countries, was called by the National Abortion Campaign. It was sponsored by a wide range of individuals and organisations, including thirteen trades councils, twelve Constituency Labour parties, four national unions, fifteen trade-union branches, and fifteen members of Parliament.

A concerted campaign has grown up in the past two years to restrict the limited access to abortion granted by the 1967 Abortion Act. The James White Bill, various Select Committee proposals, and the forthcoming Benyon Bill, scheduled to receive its second reading in Parliament on February 25, represent the legal spearhead of the anti-abortion movement. Cutbacks in medical facilities providing abortion have greatly aided the anti-abortion drive.

Investigations carried out for the tribunal revealed that eleven cities in Britain had less than 30 percent of their abortions performed through the National Health Service. A London survey found that abortion facilities were cut back disproportionately, so that, for example, while hernia operations were still freely available, abortions were not.

On November 17, 1976, Pamela Slater of South London died from an illegal abortion after failing to get an abortion through the National Health Service. She was the first known fatal casualty of the

recent restrictions.

Another disturbing aspect of the evidence presented involved punitive attitudes amongst doctors, who under British law make the abortion decision. Some of the doctors interviewed prior to the tribunal showed extreme ignorance and bias. One doctor said he didn't know a law existed allowing abortion. Another claimed abortion was making girls promiscuous, which "ruined the moral fibre of the nation."

The Labour Abortion Rights Committee, made up of members of the Labour party, reported on their efforts to make the Labour government carry out its own party's decision. The 1975 Labour Conference took a stand in favour of abortion, yet the present government refuses to act.

Detailed reports were brought to the tribunal from countries across the world. It appeared that "right-to-life" organisations exist in nearly every country where abortion is provided or is being widely demanded.

Several speakers stressed the importance of making sure that abortion laws did not exclude women from other countries. A representative from the French Choisir (To Choose) group said that many women from her country still came to Britain despite the recent Veil law, which partially legalises abortion: "For us at the moment in France, the effect of restrictions in the English law would be to remove the only solution outside Holland for the numerous cases where the woman is over ten weeks pregnant."

Dr. Barbara Roberts, a founder of the American Women's National Abortion Action Coalition, participated in the international session. She described the abortion movement as a struggle against

reproductive slavery enforced within patriarchal society.

Two speakers from the north and south of Ireland described the problems facing Irish women. In the south, contraceptives are illegal and abortion counsellors may suffer prosecution if they advise women of the availability of legal abortion in England. It seemed that the greatest obstacle was the ideology of the Catholic Church: "We still need to deal with the belief of the majority of the Irish that abortion is murder," one participant said.

The reporter from the north of Ireland described how, in an area where British law applies in other fields, the 1967 Abortion Act is not law, and abortion is virtually unobtainable. Cases of women refused abortion in the north of Ireland included women who were raped, women as young as thirteen years of age, and women who had already had ten children.

An Irish woman spoke from the floor, explaining how she sought an abortion after years of child-bearing: "I've done nothing else in my life but look after children. When the youngest was four I had another. Then I had another pregnancy. All I could feel was just awful despair. In my heart I didn't really want to have another child." However, she was refused an abortion.

A Belgian speaker announced a demonstration planned for March 5 in Brussels opposing the arrests and harassment of doctors who perform abortions, and demanding the decriminalisation of abortion.

A representative from the Italian organisation CISA* reported on the recent

*CISA—Centro Informazioni Sterilizzazione e



G.M. Cookson

LONDON, January 29: Part of audience at abortion rights tribunal.

Italian law, passed by a majority of only six votes in the face of opposition from the Christian Democrats and the pope. It grants abortion up to ninety days when the mental or physical health of the woman is threatened. The law was passed partly in response to the Seveso chemical factory disaster last summer when 279 pregnant women were exposed to the powerful poison dioxin, and only 28 of them were able to obtain legal abortions. One serious defect of the Italian law, the speaker said, is a clause permitting medical personnel to refuse to provide abortion services on grounds of "conscience." She explained that about half the hospitals in Italy are run by Catholic religious organizations.

Susana Veraguas, a midwife from Chile, described how the suppression of democratic rights in her country has affected abortion. Abortion is illegal unless the woman has contracted German measles or her life is directly endangered. In practice, she claimed, medical abortion is unobtainable except at secret clinics catering to very rich patients. Prison sentences face both the woman trying to obtain abortion and anyone aiding her. Back-street abortions are common, and she reported that hospitals treat thousands of women each year suffering complications from botched abortions.

The convenor of the international session, Rose Knight, called for an international movement to coordinate the efforts of women who are fighting the same struggle all over the world: "We have a

Aborto (Center for Information on Sterilisation and Abortion).

common purpose—to defeat the political and religious institutions that oppose the right to choose."

Knight called on British women to show solidarity with women from other countries: "Don't accept the residency clause. Don't accept quotas on foreign women." She stressed that in face of growing anti-abortion campaigns in many countries, it was necessary to organize solidarity actions to express the international character of the abortion movement.

While Member of Parliament Renee Short called upon the tribunal participants to begin a letter-writing and lobbying effort, it was obvious from the testimony that a large public campaign independent of Parliament is necessary to win the right to abortion within the law and to make sure it is available to those who need it. The National Abortion Campaign announced plans for a march and meeting on February 24, prior to the scheduled second reading of the Benyon Bill. □

Light and Power Workers Go on Slowdown

Public Employees Confront Argentine Junta

The Argentine Labor Ministry threatened economic sanctions against light and power workers February 4. The action came after employees throughout the country in this state enterprise showed no signs of ending a slowdown and selective work stoppages that had been going on since mid-January.

The light and power workers are protesting the Videla regime's attempt to lengthen the workweek for civil servants to forty-two hours. The workers insist on abiding by the collective-bargaining agreement they signed at the beginning of the 1960s, which fixes their workweek at thirty-five hours.

In an attempt to halt the work action,

the junta said it will apply a provision of the Ley de Seguridad (Security Law) to make deductions from light and power workers' pay for time lost and reductions in productivity. Meanwhile, the administration of Servicios Eléctricos del Gran Buenos Aires (SEGBA—Electric Services of Greater Buenos Aires) has been trying to turn public opinion against the workers with threats that the slowdown will produce a diminishing in the efficiency of the service "in the near future."

For good measure, SEGBA administrators prepared the way for a witch-hunt adding, "It is difficult to determine if the conflict is being led from inside or outside the company." □

'Whose Interests Are Served by Such Slander?'

By Harry Wicks

The campaign of calumny against the leaders of the Socialist Workers Party, conducted by Healy, raises the question: Whose interests are served by such slander? To attack the integrity of Trotsky's intimate collaborators and co-thinkers can result, unless defeated, in the denigrating of Leon Trotsky. There can be no possible doubt that this last onslaught serves to confuse ever-growing numbers of workers who are turning to revolutionary Marxism.

It also serves to cover the politics of the traducers, who, faced with an unparalleled opportunity to grow in a condition of unfolding class struggle, find themselves hampered by their sectarian past.

Healy knows better than most that the power of the lie is limited; truth will eventually break through. But even so, by correct timing a lie can serve an immediate and pressing factional aim.

His campaign coincides with an intense interest in Trotskyism. At this moment the mass media, bourgeois press, labour leadership and government ministers are busy promoting a witch-hunt against the influence of Trotskyism. To most political observers on the left it is clear that this sustained barrage against Marxist influence in the labour movement is but the prelude to the next attack on the living standards of the working class. The aim of the government is to discredit the Marxists who alone are urging the workers to fight back against another round of wage restraint.

In Britain today the crisis is visible. It is biting deep into every worker's standard of living. The government's economy cuts have savaged the Health service, Education, and Transport. Unemployment is growing; layoffs increasingly become the talk on the factory floor. As the trade-union bureaucrats and labour government prepare their plans for the third year of wage restraint, there are signs, small, limited, fragmented, of the workers' resistance maturing. It is this real fear on the part of the establishment that a more dynamic leadership could merge with a rising movement against the social contract that helps to explain the frenzy of the present campaign in the media against Trotskyism.

It is against this political setting that any dirt against Trotskyism gets currency in the bourgeois press. Again let me ask, Whose interests are served by this factional attack on the Trotskyist leadership?

It is not new; for fifty years the leaders of the Trotskyist movement have been



News Line

HARRY WICKS: One of the founders of the British Trotskyist movement.

slandered. "Pensioners of Capitalism," "In the Service of Franco," "Agents of Hitler" and "Agents of Counterrevolution" were some of the lies orchestrated in the past by the Stalin machine.

Let us not forget the concrete situation and circumstance in which the most mendacious story of all was circulated: the "Wrangel officer."¹ The objective of that lie was to connect the Trotskyist opposition with a counterrevolutionary coup. Prompt, firm, and public exposure at the time compelled the GPU to admit that the alleged "Wrangel officer" was in fact a member of their own force.

What prompted the Stalin machine to circulate such a brutal lie? The year was 1927, the inner-party discussion was under way. The nearer the date of the fifteenth

1. A reference to the accusation by Stalin's secret police that an individual seeking contact with the Left Opposition in 1927 was an officer of Baron Peter Wrangel, a counterrevolutionary general who had fought against the Red Army in the civil war.—IP

party congress approached, so the balance sheet of Stalin's political line plunged deeper and deeper in the red. It was the year that the Anglo-Russian Trade Union agreement² ignominiously came to its end. In April, Chiang Kai-shek massacred his Communist allies in Shanghai; Stalin's Chinese policy had aborted a promising revolutionary situation. It also was the year of the visible growth of the Nepmen³ in the Soviet economy.

Faced with such defeats, the Stalin leadership were fearful that the Left Opposition program⁴ would find a road to the party masses. To avoid that, slander supplanted critical debate in the months preceding the party congress.

The writer of these lines remembers to this day the impact of that slander on party members in Moscow in 1927. It served an immediate purpose to confuse and disorientate those party workers who were awakening to the power of the Trotskyist program.

All this of course is ABC to Healy; he has spent a lifetime fighting the policies of Stalinism. But whether he has rejected the Stalinist method is open to question.

To attack George Novack for dereliction of duty in defending Trotsky is a complete travesty of the truth. At the time of the Moscow Trials, it was my privilege to be the first secretary of the Provisional Committee for the Defence of Leon Trotsky here in Britain. We knew of the magnifi-

2. Refers to the Anglo-Russian Trade-Union Unity Committee, established in May 1925 by the "left" bureaucrats of the British Trades Union Congress and the Stalinist leaders of the Soviet unions. Trotsky demanded its dissolution after its British members betrayed the general strike of 1926. The Stalinists refused and continued to cling to the committee until the British bureaucrats, finding they no longer needed it as a left cover, walked out in September 1927.—IP

3. Disparaging term for petty traders, merchants, and swindlers who took advantage of profit-making opportunities under relaxed restrictions on private business transactions under the New Economic Policy (NEP), proclaimed by the Soviet government in March 1921.—IP

4. The Trotskyist Left Opposition, founded in 1923 to fight the Stalinist degeneration of the Russian Communist party, had joined in a bloc with the Leningrad Opposition led by Kamenev and Zinoviev in 1926. The bloc summarized its views in its *Platform* presented to the Fifteenth Congress, and was outlawed by that congress.—IP

cent efforts being made in the States to get an enquiry into the Moscow accusations. Novack was most outspoken in letters and even cablegrams for us to work along similar lines and get a broad defence committee established.

Unfortunately, here the left intellectuals, the so-called liberal stream, were neck deep in the popular front. They preferred to remain silent, or, as many did, openly

support the Moscow accusations.

We did, however, make an effort to get signatories to a simple appeal for an enquiry. In spite of the fact that our appeal was published with a bare handful of signatories in the *Daily Herald* (Labour's daily paper) and the *Manchester Guardian*, the response was disgraceful. Defeated in the effort to get a broad committee established such as in France and the States, we had to counter the campaign of

the Communist Party by a series of meetings.

Throughout that period, bitter as it was, I have no memory of Healy either signing that appeal for the defence of Trotsky or participating in those meetings. Possibly that is unjust; he might not have been around when Trotsky's defence was a vital question, particularly to those he slanders.

February 2, 1977

Social Democrats Seek to Defuse Rising Discontent

Denmark—Wage Controls the Key Issue on Eve of Election

By Torben Hansen

COPENHAGEN—On January 21 a series of negotiations between the minority Social Democratic government and some of the bourgeois parties was suspended. The government declared that it had proved impossible to reach sufficient agreement about how to resolve the present economic and social crisis. The following day Premier Anker Jorgensen announced new elections for Folketinget (Parliament), to be held February 15.

In the last elections, held in January 1975, the Social Democrats won a slim victory over the government of Poul Hartling's Venstre party (a formation with traditional support in the petty bourgeoisie). In May and November 1974, Hartling's attempts to impose cutbacks in social services had touched off the biggest wave of demonstrations and strikes since the general strike of 1956, paving the way for the fall of his government.

Since coming to office, the Social Democratic government has taken up the tasks Hartling had to abandon. Its first job was to impose by law a single national contract between the employers federation and the unions, in open defiance of the demands the unions themselves had raised. There are strong indications that the Social Democrats will try to repeat this policy in March. (Landsorganisationen, the national union federation, negotiates a single contract with the bosses every other year.)

In the February 15 elections the country's 3.5 million voters will be asked to endorse Jorgensen's policy of "responsibility," the key slogan of the Social Democratic election campaign.

The government's decision to call the election is a challenge to its opponents—on both the left and the right—who have been unwilling to support its attempts to restore the stability of the economy.

The worldwide economic crisis that has shaken the Danish exporting companies and caused grave unemployment (officially listed as 150,000 at the end of 1976) is

also upsetting the Social Democratic policy of class collaboration. Now, with the demand of the capitalists that the workers accept a smaller slice of the pie, the Social Democrats are leading the way in attacking the unions' rights to keep scabs out of the plants, restricting the democratic rights of students and teachers in the university, and cutting education budgets.

Taking Aim at the 'Zero Front'

In addition, the government joined four bourgeois parties in passing a law that in essence takes away the unions' right to improve wages (see "The Battle Over Wage Controls in Denmark," *Intercontinental Press*, November 8, 1976, p. 1602).

The "August Agreement," as this attempt to introduce an incomes policy was called, was met by protests from the unions. A victory by the workers at the Royal Porcelain plant in Copenhagen was the first blow to the agreement. Other sectors of the working class thought that they too had a right to break through the "zero front" (i.e., "zero wage increases") of the employers and the government.

The result was a series of strikes, some spontaneous, others backed and organized by the elected union leadership. In mid-November the Falck firemen and salvage corps was hit by a "lightning action." The workers walked out without any warning, demanding a wage increase of 4.60 kroner an hour [1 krone=US\$0.17]. This was an open challenge to the August Agreement, which explicitly restricted wage increases to 2% in a single year. But the strike was a success, and the workers won what they demanded.

Dairy workers, a much bigger group than the Falck employees, also held strikes. Many dairies in Jutland were hit, and almost all milk production on the island of Zealand was halted, cutting off the supply to Copenhagen. The workers demanded a wage increase of six kroner an hour.

Other strikes followed, especially in the smaller industrial plants in the provinces. Officially, the employers federation rejected the demands. In many cases, however, the bosses were forced to grant wage increases, although publicly they did not admit it.

These actions appear to have triggered the most important action. On November 18, truck drivers for the oil and gas companies stopped work. The drivers, whose union traditionally has been weak, raised the quite modest demand for a wage increase that would guarantee them an average of thirty kroner an hour.

The bourgeois press mounted a hysterical campaign against the strike, while in Parliament both Social Democratic and bourgeois spokesmen called for outlawing all strikes and putting the strikers on trial. The fact that the strike had been initiated without a warning enabled the union leadership to condemn it. The result was that the drivers had to fight alone, calling off their strike at the end of November with no improvement in wages.

Shortly afterward Parliament struck a severe blow against the unions. On December 2, the government and the four smaller bourgeois parties that had signed the August Agreement passed a law empowering the government to intervene and settle any strike—even in the event that the bosses had already agreed to a wage increase.

To make the law look more "just," it was also decided that prices and rents should remain at their present level. In response to a question from a journalist, however, Jorgensen admitted that it could prove quite difficult to control prices and rents, which might rise no matter what the government tried to do. In any event, he stressed, wage increases had to be stopped.

Ferment in the Unions

In face of the government attacks, a broad discussion has opened in the unions

and the working-class parties. The most important issues are unemployment and the right of workers to defend their standard of living, especially in view of skyrocketing rents.

An initial focus of the debate was the national conference of the Formandsinitiativ, held November 27-28. The Formandsinitiativ (Shop Stewards' Initiative Group) is a body of Copenhagen union leaders, most of them members of the Communist party or the SF (Socialistisk Folkeparti—People's Socialist party).

For this conference every union leader and every shop steward was invited to discuss how to fight the incomes policy and defend the rights of the labor movement. About 1,000 union activists took part in the gathering, with the result that it reached decisions going far beyond the ideas of the CP.

As in the past, the CP was very reluctant to take up the concrete tasks of preparing and launching strikes challenging the government. They sought mainly to use the Formandsinitiativ to put verbal pressure on the Social Democrats and win more votes in the next elections.

Stalinists Say 'No'

At the conference a battle was fought over two issues: First, the question of whether the Formandsinitiativ should elect a permanent leadership body, in view of the inactivity of the top bureaucrats in the Landsorganisationen; second, the question of whether the Formandsinitiativ should take responsibility for calling an action to protest the incomes policy.

The representatives of the CP wanted both questions answered with a "no." But a small majority supported a different point of view, put forward by other political currents present at the conference. Members and sympathizers of the SF, VS, KF, RSF,¹ and other groups won a vote in favor of calling a new conference in early 1977 and a national day of action for January 7.

As a compromise—to avoid a split between the CP and the other currents—the decision to elect a leadership commission was postponed to the next conference. This in itself was a serious setback for the day of action.

The Formandsinitiativ and its sympathizers undoubtedly represent a part of the working-class vanguard. But it is tiny in relation to the huge Social Democratic bureaucracy in the Landsorganisationen, which includes the unions of one million wage earners.

1. VS—Venstresocialisterne (Left Socialist party). KF—Kommunistisk Forbund (Communist League, a split from the VS). RSF—Revolutionære Socialister Forbund (Revolutionary Socialist League, Danish section of the Fourth International).

How could the Formandsinitiativ prepare broad sectors of the working class for the contract with the employers federation in early 1977? How could it help give a focus to and lead the scattered strikes, when the Landsorganisationen opposed any real resistance to the incomes policy?

The first condition for answering these



DANISH PREMIER ANKER JORGENSEN

questions was obviously agreement in the ranks of the Formandsinitiativ itself to put forward a line of action that could unite the workers. This would confront other leaders and shop stewards—especially those who are influenced by or are members of the Social Democratic party—with concrete proposals for action concerning the immediate needs of the masses. But as the Formandsinitiativ conference revealed, such agreement did not exist. The CP went so far as to actively sabotage the January 7 day of action.

In Aarhus, the country's second largest city, for example, the CP refused to use its influence in the local unions. It also refused to consult with union activists from other political parties who had expressed support for the Formandsinitiativ's proposal. The CP leadership also carried this line through on the national level, and there is no doubt that this contributed heavily to the failure of the day of action.

Shipyard Workers Set Example

The working class encountered other setbacks as well. In November the workers at the Burmeister & Wain shipyard in Copenhagen decided by a vote of 1,128 to 395 to reduce their workweek to thirty-five hours, leaving the job every Friday at noon. This action had to stop in early January because no national force inside

the union movement had organized to spread it.

Although leaders of both the CP and Social Democracy have been complaining about unemployment, their parties did nothing to support an action to cut work time without cutting wages. The shipyard workers were left alone in their fight against unemployment, and an obvious opportunity for the entire union movement was lost.

The lack of an alternative to the leadership of the unions and the lack of experience of broad layers of workers who wanted to take action against the incomes policy enabled the Social Democratic bureaucrats to avoid a serious challenge. However, the events did provoke a certain crisis inside the Social Democratic party, as well as in the Landsorganisationen and other organizations associated with the party. To a certain extent, this reflected the anger of the working class and other layers of the population who felt that the "zero front" was unjust when rents and prices continued to rise.

An important problem the government had to face was the public protest of Thomas Nielsen, chairman of the Landsorganisationen, against the August Agreement. Nielsen and other Social Democratic leaders pointed to the housing rents. At the end of 1976, the Boligselskabernes Landsforening² and the Landsorganisationen published a "white paper" documenting the deterioration of housing and in particular the increase in rents. This kind of indirect pressure has never before been felt by a Social Democratic government.

In the past, such protests and discontent in the Social Democratic party never went beyond the narrow perspective of parliamentary decisions. Social Democratic union leaders simply refused to support strikes, and the Social Democratic chairmen of housing associations always opposed the actions of angry tenants who collectively boycotted payment of rent increases. But the government's loss of prestige and its need to consolidate Social Democratic control over the mass organizations has resulted in a tactical change in its line.

Since it is a minority, the government has to constantly negotiate and maneuver with other parties represented in Parliament. At the end of 1976 it was clear that Jorgensen and the Social Democratic leadership had decided to increase pressure on their government's smaller bourgeois allies—the CD, Det Radikale Venstre, Konservativt, and Kristeligt Folkeparti.³

2. National Federation of Housing Associations, a semipublic Social Democratic institution responsible for the construction of a considerable part of housing.

3. CD—Centrum Demokraterne (Center Democrats). Det Radikale Venstre—Radical Left, which despite its name is the most outspoken

Jorgensen has tried to persuade them that to secure the success of the incomes policy and to avoid future strikes like those that had been organized following the August Agreement, the majority in parliament had to gain some credibility in the eyes of the masses. It was necessary to promise some reforms and improvements.

On December 16 the government published a plan to fight unemployment. The state was to invest 708 million kroner for construction and the improvement of public and private buildings with modern insulating materials (thus cutting expenses for fuel).

Other proposals followed. The government asked members of Parliament to support a law providing a subsidy to housing tenants, thus compensating for the rise in rents. Support for this and other bills was sought not only from the Social Democrats' four smaller allies, but also from Hartling's Venstre party.

But this attempt to establish a broader parliamentary majority was apparently too difficult. The Venstre and the other parties opposed increasing the budget—with the exception of military expenditures. And when Jorgensen declared that the annual wage increase might possibly be allowed to rise a little over 2%, the Venstre party protested, accusing the government of ignoring the August Agreement.

The quarrels in the corridors of Christiansborg (the parliament building) were finally interrupted when Jorgensen called the new elections. The troubles the government had in maneuvering to obtain an agreement with the bourgeois parties are now being cited by the Social Democrats in their election campaign.

Other parties, such as the CD and Det Radikale Venstre have joined this propaganda effort. The aim is to convince the masses that the government and its supporters are "responsible," that they are worthy of trust. Their claim is that they want to do something about unemployment, and that they want to defend the interests of "all of society"—not only narrow party interests (which the Venstre party in particular is being accused of).

In their campaign, Jorgensen and the other Social Democratic leaders like to stress their image as "strong men"—rocks in a time of storm. The Social Democratic party declares that it intends to be the center of stability in a time of confusion and disturbances. Its leaders and its press are more cautious about strikes and the rights of the union movement.

The 'Berlingske Tidende' Lockout

One important issue has been the strike at the *Berlingske Tidende*, one of the biggest daily newspapers (associated with

representative of bourgeois liberalism. Konservativ—Conservative party. Kristeligt Folkeparti—Christian People's party.

Nationalists Field Slate in Greenland

The February 7 issue of *Klassekampen*, the Danish Trotskyist fortnightly, reports: "Elections are being held in Greenland at the same time as in Denmark [February 15]. Two representatives to the Danish parliament are to be elected. Two groups are running candidates. The Sujumut [Greenlander nationalist] movement is running Lars Emil Johansen, an incumbent deputy. In the last election in 1975, he got the largest individual vote of any of the candidates." Johansen has become known as a defender of Greenlander control over use of the island's natural resources.

The paper continues: 'Sujumut's other

candidate is former deputy Moses Olsen. There are reports that Thue Christiansen, as well as Odaq Olsen, the leader of the Greenlander Workers Association, will also run on the Sujumut slate.

"The other slate includes Ole Berglund, Otto Steenholdt, and Arqaluk Abelsen. These candidates stand politically to the right of Sujumut. They come out of the newly founded 'Movement for Maintaining the Connection Between Denmark and Greenland.' This movement, grouped around the conservative local government head Lars Chemnitz, has just published its political program."

the Conservative party). On January 30, 1,000 workers were locked out of the newspaper's print shop because they had refused to accept new production methods that involved firing 200 persons and worsening working conditions.

The company has claimed that the economic situation dictates this measure. However, in 1976 *Berlingske Tidende's* declared profit was 22 million kroner, out of a total budget of 600 million kroner. This fact, and the arbitrary decision to dismiss a substantial part of its work force, has made the lockout a public scandal and an issue in the political battle leading up to the elections.

Poul Harling, for example, accused the print shop workers of "destroying democracy," pointing to the importance of a "free press." Jorgensen, on the other hand, said that he hoped the struggle would be resolved.

It is much more probable, however, that his hope is that the latest polls (February 4) are indicative of the election results. According to these polls, the Social Democratic party will receive 31.3% of the vote February 15, as compared with 29.9% in 1975. Other parties, such as the Venstre, are expected to lose a considerable percentage of votes.

But even if the Social Democrats and their allies (such as Det Radikale Venstre, which says that it intends to enter a government with Jorgensen at its head) increase their vote, other political parties will be represented. Twelve parties—including a pensioners' party—are running candidates. The Communist party, the SF, and the VS will still be represented in the Folketing, and the Fremskridtspartiet (the Progressive party—a "taxpayers-say-no" party) is expected to gain more votes. □

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How the Political Police Grilled Jürgen Fuchs

[The following firsthand account of an interrogation carried out by the East German political police in early 1975 is reprinted from the November-December issue of *Est-Informations*, an information bulletin on Eastern Europe published in Paris. The introduction and notes are also taken from *Est-Informations*.

[The translation from the French is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Jürgen Fuchs was born in 1950 in Reichenbach, GDR; his father was an electrician, his mother a white-collar worker. He took his baccalaureate examination in 1969, and then worked as a railroad worker; after that, he was drafted into the "National People's Army" and served until 1971. He studied psychology at Jena, and, beginning in 1973, published some writings in the literary magazine *Sinn und Form*. In April 1975, having been expelled from the SED [Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands—Socialist Unity party of Germany, the Communist party] for doing a public reading of his most recent work, he was kicked out of the university a few days before completing his studies. A total ban was imposed on the publication or reading of his work. The press denounced him as a "counterrevolutionary," claiming that he "slandered the state" in his unpublished writings. In an attempt to shield Fuchs, Robert Havemann took the writer, along with his mother and his young wife, into his home in Grünheide. Fuchs was arrested on Friday, November 19, while in Havemann's car. Many writers, both in the East and in the West, have protested this arrest. The Association of German Writers, which is part of the publishing workers union in West Germany, has also protested.

The following account was written by Fuchs immediately after he was interrogated by two officials of the "Stasi," Honecker's political police. It was circulated in typewritten form in East Germany before its recent publication in Hamburg, in a volume dedicated to Wolf Biermann, as well as in various West German newspapers.

* * *

A. Greetings. We're from the Department of State Security. (He holds up a piece of paper.) We'd like to have a word with you. Let's go in the back room . . . Sit down. Like a cigarette? Cup of coffee?

Fuchs. I have an appointment at the

union headquarters to talk about some cultural questions . . . What do you want with me?

A. I see you're surprised. Don't be afraid. We only want to have a nice chat with you. I'm sure you know that the Department of State Security doesn't get involved unless it's important. We don't make any slip-ups; that's all over and done with. We're concerned with complex matters, with the class enemy's activities in our society.

Fuchs. What do you want?

A. Would you like to smoke?

Fuchs. I'd like you to answer me. What do you want with me?

A. We know you're a young, active comrade, a comrade who doesn't stand on the sidelines, who gets involved. We expect a cooperative, constructive attitude from you.

Fuchs. What kind of cooperation?

A. People often get the wrong ideas about our activities. It has nothing to do with informing. We just want to talk to you, that's all.

B. The class enemy is trying to infiltrate our ranks through the people you closely associate with.

Fuchs. What is the meaning of this? I don't understand any of this.

B. Come on, think. You have friends, acquaintances, you know a lot of people, you give lectures, you've also published some things, so you must talk with a lot of people . . .

A. We know everything.

Fuchs. What does this mean? You're making vague references, you're obviously trying to intimidate me, to make me feel guilty . . .

A. How could you think such a thing? You totally misunderstand our intentions. We know you're a good, sincere comrade, who always says what he thinks . . .

Fuchs. Then get to the point. What is this all about? Who do you have in mind?

B. Do you know Biermann?

Fuchs. Aha! So that's it!

B. Do you know him well?

Fuchs. Yes, pretty well.

B. What do you think of his stuff?

Fuchs. What stuff?

B. Well, you know, the stuff he writes, his songs.

Fuchs. Why do you want to know? Are you interested in Wolf Biermann's songs, or in my opinion of them? Wouldn't it be better if you listened to them yourself?

B. We're familiar with Biermann's output. What we're interested in is your opinion.

Fuchs. All right. I like a lot of his songs and poems very much, and I think it's terrible that he can't sing them or publish them in the GDR.

A. Do you know him well?

Fuchs. We're friends.

A. Has this gone on a long time?

Fuchs. I met him in Berlin in 1973, at the World Youth Festival, in August.

B. Where, on the street?

Fuchs. We were talking about his case, particularly in relation to socialist democracy and the question of blacklisting. There were small groups everywhere, discussing a wide variety of problems. Standing down there on the Alexanderplatz¹ was the first time in my life that I participated in those types of discussions. A West German asked how the citizens of the GDR could explain the fact that there were so many divorces in our country. It didn't seem to fit in with the declarations about harmony and bliss. Biermann answered that the number of divorces spoke in favor of the GDR—that many people no longer wanted to bind themselves for life. And if there were a lot of women seeking divorces, that proved that, under socialism, women had already become independent, that they were able to make their own decisions about what concerned them. This conversation didn't last very long. Some

1. The main square in East Berlin.

people recognized him; people wanted to know how he was living, what he thought of this and that, what he thought of the current situation in the GDR, and so on. I realized that he was quite well known, and what struck me particularly was the way he stood up for the GDR.

B. You're familiar, however, with this "Ballad of Sindermann,"² where Comrade Sindermann is portrayed as a petty imbecile . . . "Sindermann the blind man." What do you have to say about that?

Fuchs. Well, if you want to talk about songs and poems, you have to have them in front of you, and listen to them, to find out exactly what's in them. All I can say is that I disapprove of anything that slanders and insults the workers of the GDR.

B. O.K., but . . .

Fuchs. And as long as we're talking about Biermann, I'm sure you're aware that an anthology of his work, entitled *Chile—Songs and Narratives*, will soon be published. His "Ballad of the Cameraman" is included in it. Erik Neutsch talked about it at the Leipzig book fair.

A. You talked about this "Cameraman" at the last Chile solidarity meeting, in the university tower; is our information correct?

Fuchs. Yes, that's right. There were quite a few people there, and they obviously understood very well what it was about. At least, the attention and the applause I was given on that occasion led me to believe so.

A. But you didn't say that that poem was by Biermann . . .

Fuchs. No.

B. Why?

Fuchs. I don't know. Perhaps I should have said so.

A. Your friend Pannach³ from Leipzig includes Biermann's songs in his repertoire also, is that correct?

Fuchs. Why are you asking me that? You must have been informed about it.

A. We know that Pannach has been consistently singing an ever-growing

2. Sindermann is one of the main figures in the East German oligarchy. He was head of government until last month, and is now chairman of parliament. The ballad in question is actually "That's What Makes Me Popular."

3. The popular songwriter Gerulf Pannach was arrested soon after Fuchs.

number of Biermann's songs for a huge audience. For example, his songs "Che Guevara," the "Cameraman," "It Has to Be This Way," and others. We've even heard that he sang "Soldier, Soldier" in a student club in Weimar. You were at that meeting, weren't you?

Fuchs. Yes, I read some prose texts there.

A. Do you agree with Biermann's pacifist attitude? He says in that song that all soldiers are the same—the fascist troops and the liberation movement in Vietnam—they all wear uniforms . . .

Fuchs. I've already told you: if we're going to talk about art, we have to be concrete. I don't know what you're going to do with all this, but, as you pointed out, I don't see any reason to mince words. You misquoted the "Soldier, Soldier" song. It doesn't say, "All soldiers are alike," but rather "All soldiers resemble each other, living or dead." There is a difference.

B. Does Biermann's nerve impress you?

Fuchs. It doesn't impress me to realize that confronting problems directly and openly is still considered something very unusual, something that is of interest to State Security and the sensationalist press in the West. I think that Wolf Biermann should be able to perform in public. Only a democratic public opinion can decide what is good or bad. Any other method amounts to hitting below the belt. It is impossible, in this day and age, to completely gag a man who writes songs. You know as well as I do how many copies and recordings of his songs are in circulation. If, in fact, "the Biermann problem no longer exists for us," as they say now and then, then all of this is—to put it politely—nonsense.

B. And do you distribute them too?

Fuchs. I find it horrifying that young people get arrested for distributing artistic creations.

B. You haven't answered my question.

Fuchs. Yes, I have.

B. Do you, Pannach, and others perhaps model yourselves on people like Biermann, Kunze,⁴ Braun, or Heym?

Fuchs. We don't model ourselves on anyone. But, of course, you have to adopt a certain orientation if you want to become good at something. You mentioned a number of people who are perhaps "untrustworthy" in your eyes, who ought to be

4. Kunze has just been expelled from the Writers Union for having his "The Unforgettable Years" published by a West German publisher.

under surveillance . . . I certainly wouldn't want to slavishly imitate anyone or plagiarize anyone's writing—that's quite stupid. But there are some attitudes, some human and political decisions, which can't help but make an impression on me. And in this respect, Biermann is certainly someone who helps you find your direction. For example, the way, both as an artist and as a Communist, he fought certain Stalinist tendencies. The way after 1965, in the late lamented Ulbricht's⁵ human community, he emphasized the contradictions and the gaps which existed, and still exist, between the state and society—I think that's what we need. Now that the Eighth Congress of the SED has thrown a little terminology overboard, shouldn't we begin to rectify the consequences of the Stalinist period and the Eleventh Plenum?⁶ That is, insofar as it can still be rectified.

A. The party firmly upholds its decision to allow all artists to take part in cultural life if they wish. And we know that Biermann was offered a chance many times to discuss it. But he has a theory in the back of his head that what's involved is more than passing errors . . .

B. There's a limit to everything, and it's been reached. Biermann is an enemy of the

5. Ulbricht had proclaimed the GDR's transition from socialism to communism.

6. The Eleventh Plenum adopted an orientation of strict subordination of writers and artists to the party.

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state. And we treat him like one.

Fuchs. Who told you he was an enemy of the state?

B. His songs clearly demonstrate this. Furthermore, Comrade Hager⁷ said recently that Biermann is a confirmed enemy of the GDR.

A. And you are his friend. . .

B. I have another question to ask you: do you have any ties with the apprentices at Jena-Lobeda?

Fuchs. No. I know nothing at all about this.

B. Mr. Fuchs, we have to warn you. The activities of our enemies are intensifying. And we do not share your opinions about certain cultural questions. We can only feel astonished . . .

A. But perhaps we can still find room for agreement. We could meet from time to time to talk, without any commitments. Of course, it would have to be kept just between us. You could bring us your latest work . . . perhaps we won't understand much about the arts, but it might be interesting to talk about it.

Fuchs. I don't really know. Perhaps you could attend the public meetings where I read my works? You could give your opinion and take part in the discussion. . .

A. Are you willing to talk with us again?

Fuchs. But what is it you still want from me?

B. Then you don't trust us?

A. So you're turning us down. Is that it?

Fuchs. I don't see why I should have ongoing discussions with State Security. And secretly, to boot. I am trying to create literary works, and I'm also a man who is completely unable to keep quiet about such a conversation; it's bound to prey on my mind for quite awhile.

B. We work in a conspiratorial manner. You have to go along with the rules of the game.

Fuchs. As far as I'm concerned, you can work in a conspiratorial manner if you like. That's your business. At any rate, I won't do it. For me it's just the opposite—I'm interested in having as many people as possible know what I think.

7. An old Stalinist who is something of a German version of [Kremlin hardliner Mikhail] Suslov.

A. Well then, you can't work in the field of psychology, either. There's a need for secrecy there, too.

Fuchs. As a professional psychologist, where the rules have been set down in writing, I couldn't say during a consultation that I am required to have conversations with State Security about my literary works and my political views, and to keep them secret, on top of it. Look here, you have two choices. Either you institute legal

proceedings against me—in which case you will certainly find a way of bringing me to you—or you call me as a witness, with a subpoena in the proper form. I will not agree to any other kind of meetings or discussions.

A. Very well, Mr. Fuchs, I see this is pointless. We thank you, however, for this very informative discussion. If you should encounter any problems after this, please do not think that it's because of us. Goodbye. □

'We Are For the American Bases'

Spanish CP Chief Outlines Program



SANTIAGO CARRILLO

Excerpts from a revealing interview with Spanish Communist party leader Santiago Carrillo were featured in the January 16 *New York Times*.

Carrillo, now living in Madrid after years of exile, complained that "in practice, NATO and the United States apply all possible pressures to insure that Eurocommunists in certain cases are separated from power and in other cases from legality. And one can imagine that if the Soviet Union replaced the United States in these parts of Europe, we would be in exactly the same position."

His interview was apparently an attempt to convince the American State Department of how misplaced its hostility

is. For instance, Carrillo declared, "We are for the American bases in Spain as long as an accord is not reached that dismantles the military bases—American and Soviet—in the whole of Europe."

As for NATO, Carrillo claimed to draw the line there, but he insisted that "if the Spanish Parliament votes entry into NATO, we obviously will accept it."

In making such promises, Carrillo was not only casting himself in the role of a loyal opposition within the capitalist framework. He was also articulating the type of deal, built around agreed-upon spheres of influence, that is at the heart of Moscow's détente policy.

But Carrillo also had promises for the Spanish capitalist class. To begin with, he made clear that he would support any moves to improve the competitive standing of Spanish imperialism on the world market. "We are in favor of the entry of Spain into the European Economic Community, and we are in favor of the building of a European economic and political union."

On the home front, Carrillo expressed understanding for the problems of small capitalists. "We think that we have to have a tax system that favors not only the workers but small enterprises, which are passing through a deep crisis in Spain."

This, however, did not mean that Carrillo and the Spanish CP would be hostile to the interests of big capital. "There already exists the National Institute of Industry, which controls a great part of the national industry. So, we think if this institute is democratized—if one truly put it at the service of the nation—I think it would not be necessary in Spain to have more nationalizations in a precipitate fashion."

What about socialism? That was not mentioned. Carrillo explained that "in the short term, we want a fully democratic regime. . . . After, in the long term, we want to start the process of structural, economic change." □

Arab Prisoners on Hunger Strike in Israel

By Michel Warshawsky

[The following article appeared in the January 29-30 issue of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

On December 11, 1976, all the Arabs jailed in the Ashkelon prison because of their activities in the Palestinian resistance movement went on a hunger strike. They are still on it. They are not even demanding to be treated as political prisoners, or prisoners of war. In protest against their inhuman conditions of detention, they are demanding the same treatment as the common-law prisoners. While living conditions of common-law prisoners are absolutely deplorable, they are still much better than those of the political prisoners.

Kept in dark, damp, overcrowded cells (twenty to thirty in a cell), the Palestinians have even been denied a separate room to eat in. Since the diet they get is very scanty and poorly balanced, lacking in fresh fruits or vegetables, most of the prisoners are continually undernourished and suffer from ulcers. Their families have been prohibited from bringing them fresh fruits and vegetables. Along with this, the amount they are permitted to spend each month in the prison store to buy dried fruit has been reduced from thirty to twenty Israeli pounds [about US\$2.30].

On their arrival, the prisoners get two sets of used clothing which are neither changed nor replaced throughout their imprisonment. Their one change of underwear per year is provided by their families.

There is no work they can do. The only job they are offered is repairing the camouflage nets used by the Israeli army—a humiliating task which of course they refuse to perform. The prisoners spend twenty-three hours a day locked up in their cells; they only get a chance to “go for a walk” for one hour in a dark hallway.

In violation of the law, the prisoners are forbidden to study or enroll in correspondence courses. Likewise, they can receive only a limited number of books. Anything on political, economic, or social subjects is, of course, banned. They are allowed to read only the press of the [Zionist] Labor party and the Israeli right wing.

Medical care is virtually nonexistent. The prison doctor sees up to fifty prisoners in a quarter of an hour, although the great majority are suffering from ulcers and rheumatism caused by the conditions of their imprisonment. Some have been left handicapped by “rigorous questioning.” The prison administration has opposed

letting the prisoners get decent medical care even by paying for it out of their own pockets. Omar Shalabi, a twenty-four-year-old Syrian suffering an attack of nerves, was reportedly beaten to death by the head guard.

After the eighth day of the hunger strike, 59 prisoners—the leaders—were transferred to the Kfar Yona prison, where 55 of them are continuing their action. On January 19, after another 150 prisoners had been transferred, the prison administration was able to announce that the thirty-five-day-old strike was over—once there were hardly any prisoners left in Ashkelon! This, however, has not stopped the prisoners’ struggle from being carried on in their “diaspora.”

The prison administration has begun to force-feed the prisoners, but they are being given only forty grams of milk a day instead of half a liter, which is usual in such cases. As a result, some of the prisoners have lost up to thirty kilograms since the beginning of the month.

The Palestinians are enduring even worse conditions in the prisons where they are now being held. Some have been placed in a special wing, one that a report published a few years ago declared to be unfit for human beings. They are crammed into three cells, with no heat or ventilation; their only bed consists of a few blankets. Walks are prohibited.

Just Another Slip of the Tongue

No doubt Federal Trade Commissioner Paul Rand Dixon expected the businessmen in his audience January 17 to be sympathetic when he called consumer advocate Ralph Nader a “son-of-a-bitch and a dirty Arab.” However, one of the businessmen listening to Dixon happened to be—like Nader—of Arab descent, and word of Dixon’s remark leaked out.

When his slur was pointed out publicly, Dixon expressed “deep regret” for a remark “which could be interpreted as a derogatory reference to Mr. Nader’s ethnic background or to others of Arab descent.” While he was not quite sure, Dixon expressed the opinion that “there may be a hell of a lot of good Arabs” who might have taken offense.

Nader, however, was different. “I don’t intend to apologize to Ralph Nader,” Dixon asserted. The consumer advocate had characterized Dixon as notoriously

Increasing pressure is being applied by the prison administration to force the prisoners to call off their hunger strike. They are not even allowed to receive visits from their lawyers. “I was informed of this situation by two of my clients, Nadim Hamed Darwish and Abdul Aziz Ali Shahim,” Leah Tzemel, one of the political prisoners’ lawyers, told us.

“I had to file a complaint in the High Court of Justice against the warden of the Ashkelon prison, who refused to allow me to meet with my clients. The judge issued an injunction ordering the two directors of the penitentiary commission to let me visit my two clients. When I arrived in Ashkelon, the warden prevented me from seeing them. I was left with no alternative but to go back to the High Court and demand another injunction against the warden, who was refusing to comply with the court’s decision. It was only at the end of this long, drawn-out process that I was able to meet with my clients.

“At the Ramleh prison, several of them informed me of the recent death of one of their comrades owing to the lack of medical care, as well as the death of Hassan Sawart from El Harish, who died from the effects of a prolonged kidney disease. Several prisoners had offered to donate a kidney, but the prison administration opposed this.

“The Ramleh prisoners have complained about being hit with penalties after going on a hunger strike in solidarity with the other prisoners. One prisoner from East Jerusalem, sentenced to life imprisonment, has been suffering such severe headaches in the aftermath of an ‘intensive interrogation’ that he is unable to speak, read or write. These headaches have not received any proper medical attention.”

Tomorrow [January 31], the hunger strike will go into its fiftieth day. □

probusiness in a 1969 report on the Federal Trade Commission.

Dixon’s friends defended him, noting that “he probably has a thousand prejudices,” and that “the Arabs would be at the bottom of his list of prejudices.”

But, as an editorial in the February 2 *Christian Science Monitor* said, Dixon’s slur was “only the latest in a string of dismaying incidents.” It was only last year, after all, that Agriculture Secretary Earl Butz was forced out of office by the outcry over one of his racist jokes about Blacks.

Dixon eventually reversed himself and apologized to Nader, but in the meantime sixteen members of Congress had called for his resignation or impeachment. As for Carter, he ducked the issue by saying there was nothing he could do about it. White House officials declined to condemn Dixon or call for his resignation. After all, it was just one of those slips of the tongue.

The Lockheed Scandal and the Japanese Election

[The following is the first part of an interview with Jiro Kurosawa, obtained in Tokyo on December 29, 1976. It focuses on results of the December 5 elections in Japan. The concluding part, which provides background on trends in Japanese politics, will appear in a subsequent issue.]

[Kurosawa is a member of the Political Bureau of the Japan Revolutionary Communist League, the Japanese section of the Fourth International. The interview and translation were done by Hideo Yamamoto.]

* * *

Question. The Liberal Democratic party suffered a setback in the December 5 elections to the lower house of the Diet [Parliament]. This has been referred to as a catastrophic defeat even though the number of seats lost was rather small and the LDP still controls the government. How serious was this setback, and how did it come about?

Answer. At the start of the election campaign, the LDP said that it would be considered a victory if they could hold on to 271 seats, the number they had held prior to dissolution of the Diet. But considering that the total number of seats in the Diet was increased by about 20 in this election, the LDP was actually forecasting a loss of 10 seats or so in real terms. But it turned out that they lost 20 seats more than that. The LDP now holds a bare numerical majority in the lower house, but not a large enough majority to control all the Diet committees, as they have in the past.

These results reflect the direct effect of the Lockheed bribery scandal, especially the fact that from about February through April the masses were able to go onto the offensive around the Lockheed case. Since April, the effects of the Lockheed scandal have been expressed as an internal crisis within the ruling party, focusing on a dispute over how to deal with the demands of the masses. The various factions of the LDP continued to be divided under this pressure, and the party went into the elections suffering a de facto split between the "bourgeois mainstream" factions headed by Takeo Fukuda, and the minority grouping led by then-Prime Minister Miki. These two groups essentially ran separate election campaigns, and under these conditions the LDP as a whole suffered a big defeat.

Miki hoped to limit the masses' alienation from the LDP by means of policies

that in a sense prefigure the line of a possible coalition government in the future. That is, he compromised with the Socialist party and at the same time tried to restrain the bourgeois mainstream. But Miki was unable to win mass support in the context of the Lockheed scandal and a split LDP campaign.

Miki's policy had been successful in the 1975 Spring Labor Offensive (*shunto*).¹ Up until 1974, the *shunto* had always been marked by numerous strikes over a ten-day period, but in 1975 Miki succeeded in preventing widespread industrial actions. In that sense, Miki's policy succeeded in restraining mass struggles—or at least in restraining political polarization—in 1975. Nevertheless, it turned out that this line of Miki's failed completely when faced with the outbreak of the Lockheed scandal.

Q. The Socialist party remains the largest opposition party in the Diet, but its electoral gains were relatively modest. Why was this?

A. In terms of Diet seats, the SP came out stronger than in previous lower house elections in 1972, but this reflects the way election districts were redrawn when the twenty new Diet seats were created. One of the deals between the Miki government and the SP was that in return for the SP's cooperation since the 1975 *shunto*, Miki made the big compromise of allowing some election districts to be redrawn more favorably for the SP. The SP didn't win many new seats outside of those redrawn districts.

The geographical distribution of the SP's support also shifted significantly. Compared with the previous election, the strength of the SP declined in urban areas, both in terms of Diet seats and in the percentage of the vote they got. At the same time there was a slight increase in the SP vote in rural areas. So we can say that what the SP lost in the cities was compensated for in the countryside, and most of the SP's new Diet seats were gifts from Miki. The total percentage of the vote that went to the SP was less this time than four years ago.

The increase in the SP's rural vote reflects something we began to see in the previous election, namely that the votes of

people who are becoming alienated from the LDP are tending to go to the SP. In a sense, this is the initial political expression of alienation from the LDP in the countryside. In Tokyo and the other urban centers, we've already passed through that phase, and the process of political differentiation is proceeding, with the SP picking up votes that went to the Communist party in the previous elections, and losing votes to other parties. The net result is that the SP's strength in urban centers has declined significantly from its level in the previous elections.

I should mention a couple of other things about the SP's results. One is that nearly all of the most prominent leaders of the SP except for the party chairman and vice-chairman were defeated in this election. Among the losers, for example, were the two ranking members of the Party Policy Council, and leaders of major intraparty factions, such as Saburo Eda.

The second thing is related to this. These defeated Social Democratic big shots were the ones who traditionally had depended most heavily on the major labor unions to gather votes for them. One of the striking features of the SP's campaign this time was that the unions under Social Democratic leadership didn't budge on behalf of SP candidates. The big shots had always figured up to now that they could rely on the stable vote-gathering capabilities of the big unions, and just call on them in order to get elected. This is how it had been for a long time in traditional SP strongholds such as the city of Sendai. But that strategy completely collapsed this time.

In a sense, this is a result of the defeats of the *shunto* in 1975 and 1976. It shows very clearly what has been happening to the relationship between the SP and the working class, especially the workers in Sohyo-affiliated unions.²

Q. Why did the Communist party suffer such a major defeat?

A. The percentage of the total vote that went to the Communist party this time was only 0.1% lower than in the previous elections, but in terms of Diet representation the CP suffered a historic setback, losing twenty-one seats. This reflects the geographical shifting of the CP's vote, which was more dispersed this time, rather

1. It has become traditional each spring for major unions to stage mass rallies, strikes, and other actions to press their demands. The wage settlements won then generally set the pattern for the rest of industry.—IP

2. Sohyo is short for Nihon Rodo Kumiai Sohyogikai (General Council of Trade Unions of Japan), the largest union federation in Japan, led by the Socialist party.—IP

than concentrated in a few urban strongholds. We can say that in those strongholds the CP lost from both the right and the left of its traditional base of support.

In the past, the CP's support came largely from city dwellers, especially local government employees and workers in education. The CP attracted these layers, responding to their economic demands, organizing them on the neighborhood level, and on this basis establishing "renovationist" municipal governments in various cities. This has been more or less the structure of the movement on which the CP's growing strength was based.

But in the last couple of years the Stalinists' support among teachers and local government employees has been declining as a result of the party's new theories that "the teaching profession is a sacred one," and that "local government employees are not workers, but public servants." These "theoretical" innovations were intended to rationalize the CP's abandonment of the struggles of those workers for the right to strike. This has resulted in a loss of CP influence—and membership—among these layers, which have been the CP's only major base within the union movement.

In the recent election campaign, the CP of course carried out leafleting and other activities, but it was unable to turn out the usual large numbers of its union supporters for this sort of activity. The Stalinists were unable to organize street demonstrations as big as in the past. The only layers of the CP's base among whom the party didn't lose support seemed to be the elderly. It also lost its ability to mobilize students. Support for the CP within the student movement had been a big factor in previous election campaigns. But this year, for example, the Stalinist youth group organized campus demonstrations around the Lockheed scandal that in some cases involved only a couple of hundred students—no larger than the ones we organized.

So we can say that the CP ran in this election campaign without the support of the activist layers of labor unionists and students who had been crucially important to its earlier campaigns. Trying to run an election campaign without those activists was like trying to run a car without the engine.

At the same time that it was losing the support of these layers at the "left" of its electoral base, the CP also ran up against the contradictions of the reformist municipal governments in which it participates. There are many people who have supported CP candidates in local elections not because they are attracted to the Communist party ideologically, but simply because they see it as a symbol of "clean politics." Some of these supporters have become alienated from the CP because they now stand politically to the left of it, or at least because the CP is offering no

positive alternative to people who are beginning to think seriously about the question of political power. The central theme of the CP's propaganda in this election wound up being opposition to



S. Yamafuji/Asahi Evening News

JAPANESE PREMIER FUKUDA

anticommunist attacks, rather than any concrete perspective of governmental power.

We began to see these trends when Minobe, the reformist governor of Tokyo, ran for reelection in 1975. There has been a continuing rightward evolution of the CP's line, which was symbolized in 1976 by the decision to delete the term "proletarian dictatorship" from the party program. But more than just the renunciation of one well-known slogan, it is this whole evolution that has acted to demoralize many party members and alienate CP supporters. To the average activist, the most blatant betrayal has to be the new "theory" that workers in education and in municipal government services are not really workers, and therefore should not have the right to strike.

Q. After splitting from the LDP last summer, the New Liberal Club (NLC) made big gains in the elections. The Democratic Socialist party (DSP) and the Komeito³ also won many more seats than in the past. The bourgeois press has pointed to these victories as evidence that "the people rejected both the right and the left, and instead showed their preference for the moderates, for a middle-of-the-road

political line." Is this assessment accurate?

A. The Komeito, the DSP, and the NLC all appealed to the masses—including layers of the working class—on the theme of "we have to get rid of the LDP, restore clean politics . . ." In a way, their election strategies were the ones most closely in tune with the prevailing mood. What characterized the campaigns of these parties was that they completely avoided any propaganda along the lines of what kind of government they wanted to form. Rather than elaborate policies, they merely stressed over and over again that "we have to get rid of the LDP." This was true of all three parties, above all the New Liberal Club.

In a situation where the SP and CP also refused to speak clearly about their policies, about what kind of government they were out to form, the masses voted for the Komeito, the DSP, or NLC simply as an expression of anti-LDP sentiment. It's true that the SP and CP also got these kinds of votes, but the "floating votes" were really the key to the Komeito, DSP, and NLC's success. Support for these parties increased most conspicuously in the major cities.

These gains of the Komeito, the DSP, and the NLC—particularly in urban areas—reflect not so much support for the political programs of these parties, but rather the combined processes of alienation from the LDP and disillusionment with the Social Democrats and Stalinists. Many people who in the past had voted for the SP or CP turned to the "moderate" parties for lack of an alternative. For this reason it is incorrect to speak of the election results as "the people's choice of a moderate line." It was on the contrary an expression of the disappointment of voters who weren't presented with a clear choice of political line, and in many cases wound up casting votes for candidates of the "middle-of-the-road" parties, whose lines haven't yet been tested in practice.

The NLC in particular was appealing precisely because it was new. But its political character will be put to the test in the very near future, even sooner than the line of the SP and CP will be.

The success of the Komeito also reflected its organizational growth. It has been expanding its influence among the lower layers of the petty bourgeoisie, and among unorganized workers, and building a neighborhood-level organization linked to the Soka Gakkai Buddhist sect. Many of the people being attracted to the Komeito were CP supporters in the past.

During the economic boom of the late sixties and early seventies, the CP drew around it those urban layers who were "left out" of the economic prosperity. The CP promised increased social-welfare spending under "renovationist" municipal governments. But with the end of the

3. Komeito (Clean Government party), the political arm of the Soka Gakkai Buddhist sect.—IP

economic boom and cutbacks by local governments, these layers have become disillusioned with the CP. The somewhat increased social-welfare spending by reformist local governments always depended on funds from the national government controlled by the LDP. Now the LDP is demanding cuts in such spending, and the CP has refused to lead a mass struggle against the cutbacks. As a result, those unorganized workers and layers of the urban petty bourgeoisie who used to support the CP are now being attracted to the Komeito and its local organizations, which promise better funding for municipal services.

Q. So how would you sum up the significance of the election results overall?

A. This election marked the first time since the early 1950's that the radicalization of the masses has begun to pose the possibility of an alternative to the LDP government. At this point the working masses are not at all clearly conscious of what kind of government they want, but they know they've had enough of the LDP. In that sense, this election marks a turning point in Japanese history.

The LDP lost its numerical majority in the lower house in this election. The LDP now has a bare majority only because a few Diet members who were elected as independents have joined the LDP since the elections. The class polarization reflected in the election results is still at an early stage of development, and was expressed in a very confused and incomplete way. That is, it hasn't come to the point of a clear polarization over what kind of government should be formed. Nevertheless, it objectively is an important political trend.

The role of the SP and CP further exacerbated this confusion. They represent the only currents that could have offered a realistic alternative to the LDP, but they refused to do so. Instead, they also tried to water down their programs, formulate their slogans more vaguely, and present themselves as "moderates." This was especially so in the final weeks of the election campaign, as SP Chairman Narita publicly announced that the SP would be willing to join in a coalition government with elements of the LDP, even if it meant dropping the SP's long-standing demand for abrogating the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. Chairman Miyamoto of the CP hesitated barely twenty-four hours before announcing that the CP was willing to do the same.

In this context, with all parties but the LDP refusing to speak about what policies they propose to carry out, the process of political differentiation among the masses was suspended at a very early stage. And as a result, the masses' alienation from the LDP often ended up being expressed as votes for "moderate" parties. This was the basic character of the election results. □

420 Delegates in Attendance

French LCR Holds Second Congress

By Jean-Yves Touvais

[The Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR—Revolutionary Communist League, French section of the Fourth International) held its Second Congress January 27-30, attended by 420 delegates. The following report on this meeting was published in the January 31 issue of *Rouge*, the French Trotskyist daily. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

The Second Congress of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire was concluded yesterday evening [January 30] with the singing of the "Internationale." Before breaking up, the delegates heard greetings from Lutte Ouvrière [LO—Workers Struggle] and the Organisation Communiste des Travailleurs [OCT—Communist Workers Organization]. A lengthy discussion has been settled by a vote. According to our democratic-centralist principles, the entire organization will now carry out the line of the majority.

This does not mean that discussion has ended here, even though the pace of political life is demanding. There are urgent tasks before us, such as the unity agreement on the municipal elections, trade-union work, the fight against women's oppression, and the struggles of students in vocational schools, universities, and high schools.

Revolutionists discuss and debate among themselves, but they never lose sight of their goal, which is to build a combat organization. This point is often forgotten by those commentators who like to talk about the internal differences and crisis in the LCR.

The last two days were marked by several events that were sufficient in themselves to show that the discussions are not frozen. The women delegates brought up the role of women in the organization in a forceful way. The congress made some preliminary decisions so as to establish the best possible framework for discussing these questions. There will be a national conference so that they can be discussed in greater depth.

The vote on the political resolutions also indicated the emergence of a new majority. Tendency E dissolved, and adopted the amended resolutions put forward by Tendency D. The latter received 54.7% of the votes, as compared to 27% for Tendency A, 4.7% for Tendency B, 3% for the Brest Working Group, and 4.45% for the other working groups.

The vote on the organizational resolutions, where Tendency D obtained its narrowest margin, showed that not all problems have been settled by the discussion. The resolutions adopted represent the basis for a deepgoing change in the LCR. We hope that this will be achieved over the coming months.

* * *

All of Saturday [January 29] and part of yesterday morning were devoted to organizational questions. The reporters for the various tendencies and working groups, and then the delegates, addressed themselves to the problems that had arisen in the Ligue's functioning, offering explanations and solutions. We had to evaluate the causes of this crisis, as well as our conception of Leninist principles.

The contributions dealt mainly with democracy in the organization, getting jobs and becoming rooted in different milieus, educating the membership, as well as the role of *Rouge* and its relationship to the organization. The problems connected with maintaining a full-time staff, on the paper as well as in the day-to-day leadership, were also taken up in several contributions. Questions such as the structure of the local and national leadership bodies, and the need for proletarianizing and feminizing these teams also prompted various tendencies to present conflicting positions.

But the issue that clearly dominated the discussion was the role of women in the organization. Special time was set aside for discussing this question. Women comrades from every tendency participated, including women delegates favoring the formal constitution of a separate working group for women only (see accompanying article).

While one woman comrade from Tendency A said she thought that the role of women in the organization "is closely linked to our orientation in the women's movement," another woman delegate, from the separate working group, expressed the opinion that specific forms of women's oppression were reflected in the Ligue. "Although we know that the Ligue cannot be a little island of socialism, we are struggling to build a party which can provide us with weapons for our fight." She said she felt it was necessary to "establish a certain relationship of forces," and that this was the purpose of the "internal women's groups." Tendency B considered that "women putting pressure

on the organization is a very ominous sign; it is unacceptable."

Tendency E, for its part, focused on explaining that this situation was the price being paid "for the leadership's failure to think through our intervention in the women's movement."

Lastly, Tendency D stressed that "We cannot fight our oppression in the Ligue with the same methods we use to fight our oppression in society. . . . Both sexes must confront these problems in order to work out and direct our mass work among women." This, however, need not prevent women militants being given special rights within the organization to discuss among themselves.

Tendency D declared its support for reaffirming the vote at the last congress that authorized "internal women's meetings" at every level, with the understanding that these meetings could not be nationally coordinated or replace the regular procedures for discussing, planning out, and directing our work.

On Sunday morning, before the vote on the political resolutions, the comrades in Tendency E announced the dissolution of their tendency. They said that "the resolution supported by Tendency D suffered from a lack of precision as to the nature of the Union of the Left, the forms of the working-class radicalization, and our 'workers-united-front' tactic. On organizational questions, they said, its proposals were limited to "technical solutions, which, while positive, cannot enable us to work effectively so long as the entire organization is not mobilized to deal with these problems."

After discussing among themselves, the supporters of Tendency D incorporated a series of amendments on these points. Following this, Tendency E announced: "Noting that the essential points of our amendments have been incorporated, we are dissolving and calling for a vote for Tendency D's resolution as amended."

On the other hand, after Tendency A had presented its resolution for a vote, twenty-three of the delegates elected on the basis of supporting its positions felt it was important to stress that, while they "agreed in principle" with this resolution, "this general agreement should not cover over the fact that this resolution is subject to several interpretations, a fact that is an indication of its overly schematic character."

Nevertheless, the twenty-three delegates called for a vote for Tendency A's resolution. They explained: "The discussion that has opened concerns the organization as a whole. Because of the importance of this debate, because of the need for the entire organization to undertake the necessary clarifications, we propose to carry on this discussion before the entire membership."

After the working groups presented their document, the political vote was taken. Tendency D obtained an absolute majority (54%).

On Sunday afternoon, the different tendencies met to complete work on the final amendments to the organizational resolutions.

The vote on these resolutions also revealed the great importance of Saturday's discussions. Tendency D's resolution was adopted, but only with a plurality of 50%. Tendency A obtained 23.4%; Tendency B, 4.8%. The comrades of the Brest Working Group received 14.7%. A document presented by comrades from a separate working group for women was

rejected, by a vote of 150 to 105, with 88 abstentions.

After voting on new statutes for the organization, the congress took nominations from each tendency for the central committee. The congress voted on the representation to be given to the different tendencies and working groups in accordance with their relative strength in the Ligue. The incoming national leadership of the LCR includes a total of sixty-one comrades. Among them are more women but also many new comrades. □

Debate Over Separate Work Groups for Women

[The following article appeared in the January 29 issue of *Rouge*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Before the congress could begin discussion on the political resolutions, it had to first make a decision on the demand for recognition put forward by a working group composed solely of women comrades.

This working group, which was not part of any tendency, was formed on December 8, on the basis of a statement signed by fifteen comrades. It had previously asked the Central Committee to authorize it to take part as a recognized group in discussion in the *Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire*, since it is up to the organization's national leadership to set the rules for discussion between congresses. The recognition of a tendency or a grouping formed around a document means that it can receive funds from the Central Committee for traveling and explaining its positions.

The Central Committee had twice decided against recognizing this group, not because of its political positions, but because it was formed on the basis of excluding from the start part of the organization—men.

It was therefore up to the congress to make a decision. In the first place, it was pointed out that the comrades making the request for recognition, as signers of documents submitted for a vote, had the same rights as other comrades in the discussion. The question of whether the separate working group for women only would have recognized status in the future would be settled on Sunday morning [January 30], when the statutes were voted on. These comrades also agreed to deciding the question then.

Thus, the motion voted on yesterday morning [January 28] had to do with "according full recognition to the separate working group and condemning the Central Committee resolution." The comrades supporting this motion made a long statement explaining their position. In particular, they noted "the failure by the

groups and tendencies to work out a political line and a theoretical position concerning women and feminism," as well as the fact that women "were outsiders" in the discussion at the congress. They felt that the outgoing Central Committee had acted irresponsibly "in relegating a current as large as ours to an underground role for over a month and a half. . . . We point out the absurdity of the situation in which we have been placed and the hypocrisy and inconsistency of our leadership. We have a clearly defined political position: We want to push forward the discussion in the organization on feminist questions."

These comrades said that they were fighting to maintain "internal women's groups" and to keep them from "being relegated to the role of safety valves for the crisis in the organization."

Other comrades presented their points of view to the congress. One woman delegate in particular said that the comrades were confusing two different questions. In raising the question of the role of women, they had exposed a major weakness in the party, which would be dealt with in the discussion on the organizational resolutions. But while they had correctly pointed out the Ligue's delay in planning, and taking responsibility for, the women's liberation work, in setting up a separate working group for women only they were maintaining a certain existing situation. Rather than solving the problem, setting up a formally constituted separate group at the national level was simply aggravating it.

The congress finally rejected the motion put forward by the comrades from the separate working group for women only by a vote of 223 to 116. 32 delegates abstained. □

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Northern Ireland 'Peace Movement' Loses Momentum

By Stuart Paul

LONDON—In her traditional Christmas Day message, Queen Elizabeth II gave a special note of recognition to the "peace women" of Northern Ireland, thus adding her name to a long and varied list of their declared fans in Britain.

No doubt the queen would like to see the peace women regain the momentum they had in British politics before their march and rally in London last November. For while support for the Peace People (as they call themselves) still ranges from the entire bourgeois media and both Tories and Social Democrats in Parliament to the Communist party of Great Britain, the enthusiasm is waning.

The march, held in London November 27, failed to match the predictions of its backers. Projected to draw more than 100,000 persons, it actually mustered only 10,000 to 12,000 (on the police count) despite massive publicity and government support for the event. Only ten days before, the public-service trade unions mobilized the biggest-ever midweek demonstration (80,000) to protest the Labour government's austerity policy. The November 29 *Guardian* described the Peace People's action as "a most orderly well-dressed and predominantly middle-aged affair reminiscent—for comparative demographers—of the big anti-abortion rallies."

The march and rally were marked by a notably unspirited crowd. The organisers' strict ban on expression of political ideas was broken only by counterdemonstrators chanting "Troops out now!" The police moved in on the dissenters—organised by the Peace Through Freedom Committee—as soon as they expressed their view that peace could only come by withdrawing British troops from Ireland. Their banners were seized and several of their number arrested for chanting or leafleting.

Though the rally failed to mobilise enthusiastic participation, this alone cannot be taken as a sign of failure for the movement's backers in the British media and government. The impact which the press campaign and widespread backing of the peace movement has had on British politics is far-reaching. Support for the peace women was counterposed to calling for withdrawal of British troops at the annual Labour party conference in Blackpool on October 1, leading to a massive rejection of a motion raising the demand of "troops out." While the Communist party has given total backing to the Peace People, the issue of support has divided pacifists, students, and feminists. The

response in Britain's Irish community has ranged from suspicion to hostility.

For British TV audiences, violence in Northern Ireland is as common as "Match of the Day" soccer highlights and news of the sinking pound. While continuing to present this one-sided image of a situation without solution, the TV news and press cultivated an image of the peace women as a voice of reason arising from "the ordinary folk" fed up with violence in Ulster.

If there was any doubt about whether the prominent coverage of the peace movement in the capitalist press marked a shift from its virulent terrorist-baiting of Republicanism or uncritical praise for the British army, the answer was made clear in the media response to two statements made last October by peace leaders Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan.

Following the murder of thirteen-year-old Brian Stewart by a plastic bullet, fired by the army, and another plastic bullet incident in which troops had wounded a pregnant woman in her home, neighborhood women chased the two peace leaders from a meeting at Turf Lodge on October 10. The next night Williams and Corrigan told a British TV reporter that they were grateful to the Provisional IRA for safely conducting them from the meeting and that they would add the British army to the list of violent organisations they were campaigning to isolate. The stunned reporter concluded that as a result of thanking the IRA and criticising the army, "the honeymoon is over for the peace women."

Williams and Corrigan retracted their comment in a few days, however. The October 14 edition of the *Daily Mirror* expressed its joy with the headline "We Back the Army Say Peace Women." This statement, clearly designed to reassure their prominent British backers, said, "We fully support the rule of law and order in Northern Ireland . . . the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC)¹ and the other security forces are the only legitimate upholders of law and order."

The day before this item appeared in the *Mirror*, the *Financial Times* reported a press conference of Mrs. Jane Ewart-Biggs, wife of the British ambassador to

Ireland assassinated in Dublin last August, to launch a special fund in her husband's memory. She was flanked by the author of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA)² Roy Jenkins. When the Peace People announced plans for their London rally she was named official organiser of the event along with prominent anti-abortion campaigner Lord Longford.

The government also has made clear that its support for the peace women is simply an extension of its hard line against any opposition in Britain to its repressive presence in Northern Ireland. The Labour government indicated its disapproval of the Labour party conference even discussing the issue. An editorial in the *Irish Times*, reprinted in the October 10 *International Herald Tribune*, said, "There was an almost insulting downgrading of the debate by its position at the end of the conference, and by the absence of any Government speaker." The editorial, however, did not miss the fact that "of course it would be naive to equate the general level of understanding of the issues at Blackpool with the degree of concern of Mr. Callaghan's Government."

The Labour government also showed its position in decisions surrounding the London peace rally. For more than four years, the use of London's traditional political rally site—Trafalgar Square—has been banned for any rally on the issue of Northern Ireland. The ban was lifted for the peace women. However, when the Peace Through Freedom Committee, a coalition of groups committed to withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, applied to hold a rally miles away in Hyde Park, the government banned their rally. Police monitoring the peace march told me they had been given instructions to bend their usual rules for the Peace People. While Peace Through Freedom leafleters were arrested for breaking park rules at the march assembly point, Peace People leafleters were in abundance throughout the area.

The government has also continued using the PTA to harass the Irish community. The night Provisional Sinn Fein

1. It was the RUC attacks on peaceful civil rights marches in 1968 and 1969 which started the current wave of violence in Northern Ireland. The RUC is the Protestant police force.

2. Under the PTA, police may detain persons for up to seven days without charge. Natives of Northern Ireland who have not been resident in Great Britain for twenty years can be deported to Ireland by order of the home secretary without trial. (See *Intercontinental Press*, December 1, 1975, p. 1680.)

leader Maire Drumm was killed (October 8, 1976) the TV news showed a major police raid on the Irish community in Reading, during which several Irish people were picked up under the act.

But while it is clear that the government has had no change of heart in arriving at its support for the Peace People, many forces in Britain with a record of opposition to British rule in Ireland have come out in support of their movement.

The Communist party was quick to announce support for the peace movement, claiming it would isolate the paramilitarists in Ulster and combat sectarianism. The party's student members, who hold the leadership of the National Union of Students (NUS), moved away from their two-year inaction on Ireland and began campaigning for NUS members to support the peace movement. This was despite the fact that an NUS fact-finding delegation to Ireland in September had been told by Loyalist paramilitary leaders themselves that they welcomed the peace movement because they thought it would reduce support for Republican groups.

In fact, the Stalinists have practically ceased to mention the army at all, dropping their call for a campaign to withdraw British troops to their Ulster barracks. Instead they advocate mobilising to back the Peace People and the "Better Life for All Campaign" of the Irish trade unions. This campaign advocates British aid to the Ulster economy and also avoids any mention of British troops.

If the Communist party has lined up with the government, they have not done so without opposition. In the student movement, an open conference, called to "build a massive campaign of peaceful, legal but direct action by the student movement against British repression in the North of Ireland," decided after two days' debate that the only way to do so was on the political demand of "Troops out now!" The November 13-14, 1976 conference, which was the first national assembly of students on Ireland since the army went onto the streets of Belfast and Derry in 1969, voted to support the Peace Through Freedom counterrally against the Peace People and to work to win NUS to taking action to "Get Britain out of Ireland."

Even the Communist party has had to temper its support for the Peace People in Britain's Irish community. Its organisation for Irish residents of Britain, the Connolly Association, admitted in the December issue of its paper, the *Irish Democrat*: "There have been complaints by some of our English friends that the Irish community in Britain have shown themselves lukewarm towards the women's peace movement. This is quite true. . . . The enthusiasm of the British Government also made them suspicious. The ban on talking about Ireland in Trafalgar square was hastily lifted. The

BBC couldn't find epithets complimentary enough for the 'courageous women'. . . . Again all the emphasis is on nationalist violence; there is little said about Unionist extremist violence. . . ."

Some feminists were originally taken in by the "women's" image cultivated by the



QUEEN ELIZABETH: An ardent fan of the Northern Ireland "Peace People."

movement. But the presence of figures like Lord Longford and Mairead Corrigan, both longstanding campaigners against abortion rights, is likely to help dampen feminist support for the Peace People. The leading British feminist magazine *Spare Rib* printed a letter from the Belfast Socialist Women's group criticising the movement in no uncertain terms. Irish militant Bernadette Devlin McAliskey has also taken up this point on numerous occasions. Both stress the failure of the peace women to take up the role of the British army.

An article on Irish women in the November 25 British Trotskyist newspaper *Red Weekly* pointed to the role Britain plays in oppressing Irish women and concludes "while women in this country can assist the development of a women's movement in Ireland, we have a greater contribution to make. That contribution consists of throwing our weight behind immediate British withdrawal from Ireland and building solidarity actions demanding the release of all women political prisoners in the North and South."

British pacifists continue to be deeply divided on the issue of support. The December 3 issue of *Peace News*, a magazine committed to "non-violent revolution," lamented, "there seemed no choice but to support the Peace People and their rally last Sunday. The whole movement felt to have so much in common with the origins of the anti-bomb years—much of the 'for life' rhetoric is very similar—and springing from torn and warring communities the movement is in many ways a pacifist's dream." The British section of the internationally known Fellowship of

Reconciliation supported the march for much the same reasons.

However, many pacifists could not turn a blind eye to the Peace People's support for the British army. Pat Arrowsmith, probably Britain's most well-known pacifist, commented that "if the word 'peace' has any meaning, and for me, a pacifist, it certainly has, then surely those who call themselves Peace People shouldn't approve of armies of occupation." Both Arrowsmith and McAliskey tried to dissuade Joan Baez from joining the march. McAliskey pointed to the contradiction of opposing Washington in Vietnam and yet supporting the British army in Ireland. Baez joined the rally anyway, singing "We Shall Overcome" while police dragged away people chanting "Ireland is Britain's Vietnam."

Groups to the left of the Communist party have generally been opposed to supporting the Peace People. The International Marxist Group and students from the Troops Out Movement jointly presented the resolution which carried at the November Student Movement Conference on Ireland.

The International Socialists have been affected by the terrorist-baiting of the bourgeois media aimed at whipping up an anti-Irish hysteria. They urged their student members to boycott the student conference and appeared at the first British peace rally with a leaflet which added the slogan "Stop the Bombings" to a "troops out" position. "Bombings" refers to Irish, not British, violence. By the time of the London rally, the IS opposed the Peace People, although they did not have a strong presence at the counterdemonstration.

After picking up more than £500,000 (US\$850,000) in international donations off the crest of publicity they rode at the end of last year, the Peace People have announced they will hold no more rallies. Their press coverage is thus likely to decline. But the British imperialists will no doubt try to keep alive the memory of a movement which allowed them to tell the British people: you can support peace in Northern Ireland and the British army too.

Argentine Inflation Rate 347.5%

Inflation in Argentina was held to a rate of 347.5% in 1976—slightly higher than 1975's 335%, but "a magnificent achievement just the same," according to the *Buenos Aires Herald*.

Economy Minister José Alfredo Martínez de Hoz hopes to cut the 1977 rate to 150%, and perhaps even get below 100% in 1978.

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Check rates inside cover.

Capitalism Fouls Things Up



A Giant Dose of Oil for the Hudson

The 305-foot-long barge *Ethel M*, carrying 2,678,000 gallons of No. 6 fuel oil, struck the Con Hook Rock near Bear Mountain Bridge February 4. The barge immediately began leaking oil and sinking slowly.

A floating derrick and tugs managed to keep the vessel from going down while part of the cargo was pumped to other barges. Nonetheless, the Coast Guard estimated four days later that 420,000 gallons had leaked into the river.

A ten-man team of Coast Guard experts was assigned to try to limit the damage during the four weeks it is estimated the spill will take to ooze down past Manhattan, into New York Harbor, and, it is hoped, out to sea.

Coast Guard Chief Warrant Officer Peter Brunk, who is supervising the cleanup, expressed concern about the effects on wildlife. He was quoted by the February 9 *New York Post* as saying: "The fish are deep under water and the oil is on the top so the swimming and diving birds will be the only victims."

He explained further: "The first thing a bird does if he gets contaminated is clean his feathers. He'll eat that oil and it will kill him."

Brunk has ordered standby supplies of bird laxatives, tranquilizers, vitamins, and detergents for washing the feathers of any birds that might become mired by the oil.

An "Arctic skimmer" was flown in from Los Angeles. Mounted on a steel catamaran hull, the skimmer has a seven-foot-long, four-foot-diameter drum that turns in the water. The oil clings to the drum, which is rotated up into the vessel. There the oil is scraped off by a plastic wiper and channeled into a holding tank.

Although it is designed to recover 300 gallons of oil a minute, the Arctic skimmer in its first six hours of use retrieved less than ten gallons. Despite this, Coast Guard engineer Larry Espenshader said, "I'm still happy with it."

In assessing the "psychological impact" of the spill, Espenshader said that conditions look worse than they are. "It's like blood. You spill half a pint and it looks like a massacre."

If the oil spill drifts out into the Atlantic, that will be the end—so far as the authorities are concerned—of what is perhaps the Hudson's biggest ecological disaster up to now. Out of sight, out of mind.

Display of 'Corporate Contrition' Wins \$4 Million for Allied Chemical

Last October 5, the Allied Chemical Corporation pleaded "no contest" on 940 counts of violating antipollution laws by discharging the highly poisonous pesticide ingredient Kepone and other toxic chemicals into Virginia waters.

Health officials had determined in late 1975 that the James River was contaminated with Kepone and that fish in it contained levels dangerous to humans. The river has been closed to commercial fishing since December 1975.

Federal District Judge Robert R. Merhige Jr. imposed a fine of \$13.24 million, the highest ever levied for violation of antipollution laws.

However, the judge generously postponed payment, saying he might reduce the fine if Allied Chemical showed a willingness to help clean up the James River.



Stevenson/Los Angeles Times

On January 28, legal representatives retained by the corporation announced in court that Allied Chemical was establishing an \$8 million nonprofit "Virginia Environmental Endowment" to alleviate Virginia's greatest environmental disaster and to conduct general environmental improvement projects in the state.

The January 30 *New York Times* reported that the "bid to impress the judge with a display of corporate contrition succeeded, at least in part. "Judge Merhige hailed Allied's 'very generous offer' and said, 'You're going to get a reduction.'"

An Allied attorney, Murray J. Janus, suggested that the judge reduce the fine to the minimum of \$1.44 million.

However, Judge Merhige was not prepared to go that far. On February 1 he declared that the Allied Chemical Corporation was contrite and sincere. Consequently he subtracted the \$8 million donated by the company to the public good, thus reducing the fine to \$5 million.

The Associated Press reported that the corporation gained a tax advantage by giving \$8 million to the endowment rather than paying it as a fine.

The tax saving would be about \$4 million.

Do-Yourself-In Manual

Plans to publish a popular American do-it-yourself book in Britain were postponed indefinitely after the London *Sunday Times*, which was considering serializing it, found that it carried risks of death or injury to anyone using it.

"The book's recipe for a home-made mouthwash, for instance, contains a cumulative poison, the mascara can damage your eyes and the toothpaste, used regularly, will strip enamel off your teeth and cause gum decay," Alex Finer reported in the January 23 issue of the *Sunday Times*.

"Other recipes," continued Finer, "contain powdered asbestos (a cancer-causing agent), cresylic acid (a corrosive chemical which can be absorbed through the skin) and sodium pentachlorophenate (a toxic chemical which should be handled only when wearing a mask and full protective clothing)."

Sodium pentachlorophenate, which the

book recommends in making an algae spray for ponds, "can be absorbed through the skin to produce fever, convulsions and liver and kidney damage."

The book was written by Norman Stark and has already sold 100,000 copies in the United States.

Coffee Substitutes? Sorry About That

An article in the February 5 *New York Post* recommended mistletoe and wolfbane as coffee substitutes.

The February 9 issue stated that the information was "inaccurate."

The newspaper had been informed by Frank Anderson, an herb specialist at the New York Botanical Garden, that one cup of tea made from mistletoe berries can prove fatal within ten hours.

As for wolfbane, Anderson said: "All parts are poisonous. It will numb the mouth, cause nausea, irregular pulse and labored breath. Death can come within the space of two to three hours. There are any number of cases on record where wolfbane was grown around culinary herbs and mistakenly shredded like parsley. It killed the diners."

Bug Proof Shelf Paper

Inspectors of the Minnesota Agriculture Department found household shelf paper coated with Chlordane, a possible cancer-causing pesticide, in two west-central Minnesota grocery stores.

The Chlordane was probably intended to rid cupboards of cockroaches, friendly but unpopular insects.*

The owners of both stores voluntarily removed the Pretty Please brand "bug proof shelf paper" when they were informed that the paper was coated with Chlordane, a compound banned by the Federal Environmental Protection Agency since 1975.

'Crackdown' on Toxins in Sewage?

In the United States, industries have long used municipal sewer systems to dispose of dangerous wastes. Public concern over this practice has mounted in recent years. As a result the government has finally decided to put on a show of doing something about it.

On February 7, John Quarles, acting administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, announced plans for a "national strategy" for cracking down on this use of municipal sewer systems.

"We regard the pretreatment of industrial wastes as one of the most serious unaddressed problems in our entire national effort against water pollution," he said.

Without pretreatment of industrial wastes, toxic materials can escape into

public water supplies. Quarles added that the program of reversing the pollution of water supplies could cost "high in the billions of dollars."

The press did not report any details on how the agency expects to crack down on enterprises that fail to pretreat their industrial wastes.

Alternative Found for Red Dyes

No one knows how many cancers have been induced by Red Dyes No. 2 and No. 4, which until 1976 were commonly used in many food products and cosmetics. Last year, in grudging response to persistent pressure from consumer groups, the Food and Drug Administration banned use of both dyes in many items.

To avoid the growing unfavorable publicity associated with these two colorants, manufacturers had already turned to another concoction, Red Dye No. 40. More than one million pounds of the stuff are used annually in the United States.

But Red Dye No. 40 is also suspected of causing cancer. For instance, Dr. M. Adrian Gross, an FDA pathologist, said December 6 that the number of tumors found in test animals is statistically significant.

Two tests by scientists, he said, showed that the dye, when fed to mice, can induce malignant lymphoma.

Dr. Gross criticized his superiors in the FDA for failing to ban Red Dye No. 40 up to now.

Researchers are now predicting that use of an organic colorant extracted from common red table beets may replace the suspect dye.

As an indication of the trend in this direction, AP reported that Beatrice Foods, one of the country's largest food product firms, announced in Chicago January 31 that it will produce beet coloring extract at its plant in Clyman, Wisconsin.

"A spokesman said the company will sell the natural vegetable color for use in all types of foods, beverages and other products, including cosmetics."

Ducks Misread Friendly Warning

Washington is taking action, with some success, to save birds from oil spills. Lynn A. Greenwalt, director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, told a subcommittee of the House of Representatives February 3 that the idea is to frighten birds that are endangered.

Thousands of birds have been saved through firing cannon and setting off other alarm devices.

In the case of ducks, however, the system does not always work. "These birds," he said, "tend to dive rather than fly away in response to harassment, thus increasing the probability of their becoming oiled."

Research is needed, he said, to get across to the ducks the correct message: "Fly, don't dive."



Dunagin/New York Daily News

"Oh yes, we have some food items that are naturally red . . . but most of them have been dyed green."

Our suggestion: Check the cannon. The ducks may be responding the way they have learned to respond to shotguns: "Dive, don't fly."

Claim Plutonium Sniffers Unharmed

The Paris daily *Le Monde* reported that it had learned from a "good source" that eight persons were contaminated by vapor from plutonium oxide on Friday, February 4, at the Hague (in the province of Manche) plant where nuclear fuel is reconstituted.

In processing an undisclosed amount of plutonium oxide, one of the deadliest poisons known, eight workers in a sector of the plant accidentally inhaled the vapor.

They were immediately placed under medical observation, according to *Le Monde*.

However, management reported that only a minor accident was involved and that the victims would be able to resume their duties on Monday morning as usual.

Flaming Naphtha Spill Near Mobile

A barge loaded with 960,000 to 1,440,000 gallons of highly inflammable naphtha hit the Cochrane Bridge near Mobile, Alabama, February 5.

The cargo exploded, sending a flaming spill into the Mobile River.

The explosion shook the city but no casualties were reported.

An oil company guard, Charles Greenwood, was standing on a pier beside the bridge when flames suddenly rocketed 100 feet into the predawn air. "I was knocked to my knees," he said.

The barge was one of four linked together. A tugboat pushing the barges cast off its lines after the explosion and moved away to a safe position.

Firemen played streams of water at the burning spill to prevent it from spreading.

*See, for instance, *Nobody Loves a Cockroach*, by Bill Ballantine (Boston, Toronto: Little Brown and Company, 1967).

Selections From the Left

revolución socialista

"*Socialist Revolution*," organ of the Socialist Bloc. Published weekly in Bogotá, Colombia.

The January 20 issue announces a congress of Blacks to be held next July and launches a column that is to deal with the problems of Blacks in Colombia.

"We are witnessing a historic moment," the first column states, "one that is unprecedented in Colombia and Latin America. That immense mass of workers, violently uprooted from African soil to profit the European traders and colonists, is now rising to protest the discrimination that makes them an oppressed and viciously exploited national minority."

Blacks in Colombia, in large measure, "live ignored in inhospitable zones along the Pacific and Atlantic coasts. They lack basic services and are victims of the greed of the timber, fishing, and mining companies owned by foreign and native capitalists. Black children do not have teachers, doctors, or an adequate diet. The songs about children who have died, heard every day on the Pacific coast, are eloquent and heartbreaking testimony to the discriminatory treatment, double exploitation, and oppression that Black workers face."

la gauche

"*The Left*," French weekly paper of the Revolutionary Workers League, Belgian section of the Fourth International

A National Day of Action to combat the abuses of the Belgian pharmaceutical industry was planned for January 29, as the culmination of a campaign launched by the Feminist Cooperative Movement and supported by a number of trade-union and feminist organizations, as well as the Revolutionary Workers League.

The January 26 issue, scheduled to be sold at the action, features an article by Mark Van Rijssen expressing the Belgian Trotskyists' support for the campaign's main demand—nationalization of the pharmaceutical industry. The article, entitled "Toward a Free, Publicly Financed National Health Care Service: A Rough Sketch," points to the need for a comprehensive program, providing readily accessible health care in each community.

At present, Van Rijssen writes, despite the enormous tax revenues swallowed up by the social security system, the delivery of health care has not improved because of "systematic plundering . . . by all kinds of parasitic groups, such as doctors, the

pharmaceutical industry, and so on."

The fact is, he says, that no national health program will "be able to escape this as long as these sectors remain in the hands of avowed capitalists, whose only motive is profit, and who are even ready, when profits are at stake, to jeopardize the health of the population by lying about their products.

"The only way to protect a national health service from these swindlers is to nationalize the pharmaceutical industry and all the health industries, without compensation and under workers control. . . ."

HAYTH

"*Auge*" (*Dawn*), the morning paper of the left. Published daily in Athens. Reflects the views of the Greek Communist party ("*interior*").

Auge is running the text of a discussion on Stalinism between Gilles Martinet, a Communist in his youth and now general secretary of the French Socialist party; and Giuseppe Boffa, an Italian CP historian. The installment published in the January 29 issue takes up the period of the Moscow Trials:

Boffa said: "I think that the interpretation that Stalin acted this way because he feared the approach of war is doubtful. The result of the massive waves of repression was a dramatic weakening of the Soviet Union. This was true above all in the military field, because the thinning out of the officer corps put a brake on the development of the armed forces. They lost at least three valuable years for military preparation, and many of the most capable officers were liquidated, creating a situation that had a very negative effect in 1941. Secondly, the economy was weakened. The years 1937-40 were a period when growth stopped completely in the basic sectors of the economy, including war industry.

"Instead of strengthening the Soviet Union, the massive repression weakened it on the eve of the conflict. Stalin's attitude and his diplomacy between 1939 and 1941 would be hard to understand, I think, if he had not been conscious of the severe losses he inflicted on the country. In short, I would say that Stalin preferred to pay the price of having to face a terrible international threat rather than face defeat within the country."

Martinet said: "At that time, I was still a young man, but I held a very responsible position in the Communist student organization. I, along with my comrades, read the transcripts of the trials. I confess that it was like being struck by a bolt of lightning. I discovered a reality so mon-

strous and so starkly clear that I was thunderstruck. I was forced to make a choice that at the time was a dramatic one for me. I had to decide to leave the party.

"There was no other solution. The positions of the Left Opposition seemed utopian to me. I admired Trotsky but never tried to join the Opposition. So, I had no other answer, no other possible solution.

"Reading those documents, I could not believe that what they said was true. The accusations were so astonishing and the contradictions so obvious that it seemed to me no thinking person could believe them. And many Communist students had the same reaction. It must be said, though, that the overwhelming majority of the party, which was not made up of naïve or unprincipled persons, accepted everything. It was a very strange phenomenon; particularly demoralizing.

"For many people of my generation, the revelation of Stalin's crimes meant personal collapse. The overwhelming majority of Communists, however, refused to open their eyes. . . . How was this possible? I confess that after almost forty years, I cannot understand how such shameful lies could be so easily accepted."

libération

A socialist monthly published in Montréal. Presents the views of the Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière/League for Socialist Action.

Writing in the January-February issue, Sylvie Charron reports on the recent victory of the six-year fight by unions and women's groups to free Dr. Henry Morgentaler.

Morgentaler was arrested in 1973 for operating an abortion clinic in Montréal. On December 10, 1976, Marc-André Bédard, minister of justice in the newly elected Parti Québécois (PQ) government, announced he was dropping all charges against Morgentaler.

This victory has given a boost to the struggle to repeal Canada's abortion law. "As a result of this legal precedent," Charron writes, "it will be much harder to haul doctors into court for performing abortions—not just in Québec, but in English Canada too."

Charron points out that the Parti Québécois does not defend women's right to abortion. In a letter to the federal minister of justice explaining his decision, Bédard said that the ban on abortions "cannot be enforced as it now stands."

"Thus," Charron explains, "instead of challenging the very existence of a law that denies a basic right to women, and demanding its repeal, the PQ is willing to

settle for amending the section of the Criminal Code that deals with abortion." Bédard's decision was partly motivated by the desire to restore confidence in the courts, which had been shaken by the fact that Morgentaler had spent ten months in jail, despite his acquittal in three separate jury trials.

At a press conference held a few days after his release, Morgentaler announced his intention to reopen his clinic and resume performing abortions. He also said that the government should pay for abortions, and offered to put his clinic at the disposal of the Ministry of Social Welfare, so that other doctors could learn the medical techniques he has perfected.

Charron adds, "Like Morgentaler, we must not be content with this partial victory. We must demand that the PQ government put pressure on the federal government to repeal the abortion law, and refuse to enforce it in Québec. . . ."

"But it would be a mistake to depend on the PQ to take the initiative in this fight. A public campaign of rallies and demonstrations, launched by feminist organizations, unions, and student groups, is needed to demand that the abortion law be completely withdrawn from the Criminal Code. Abortions should be safe, legal, available on request, and covered by health insurance like any other medical service."

revolution socialiste antilles

Weekly publication of the "Socialist Revolution" Group, Antilles section of the Fourth International.

The January 29 issue contains an interview with Bryon Alleyne, an attorney for Desmond Trotter.

Trotter, a political activist on the Caribbean island of Dominica, was arrested in May 1974 on the frame-up charge of murdering a white tourist. He was convicted and sentenced to be hanged. International protests forced Patrick John, the premier of Dominica, to commute Trotter's death sentence on April 5, 1976. However, the twenty-two-year-old Black leader still faces a life prison term.

"Throughout the Caribbean, as well as in Martinique and Guadeloupe, actions are under way to pressure the Dominican government to act on the case of Desmond Trotter," Alleyne reports.

Both the Dominican Lawyers' Association and the Caribbean Conference of Churches have appealed for clemency. In addition, international solidarity actions are planned, according to Alleyne.

"A group of Antilleans living in Toronto who are concerned with the lack of respect for civil liberties in the Caribbean countries have invited a representative of the Desmond Trotter Defence Committee to visit Canada in February 1977. They have also invited others from the Caribbean

area, with the aim of bringing information to the Canadian public through a series of public meetings around Trotter's case.

"We hope that a series of meetings can take place in other countries besides Canada, perhaps in the United States and London. At this time we are in the process of organizing the London meeting."

klasse- kampen

"Class Struggle," published fortnightly in Copenhagen by the Revolutionary Socialist League, Danish section of the Fourth International.

The February 7 issue takes up the attitude of the Danish Communist party toward Stalinist repression in Eastern Europe:

"The Danish CP has long clearly taken its distance from the persecution of political 'dissidents' in East Europe. In an editorial in the party paper *Land og Folk* January 22, it said: 'Even though we do not share the "dissidents"' opinions, they should be able to express them and should be countered politically.' The same day, the party's Central Committee adopted a resolution that this editorial 'was the basis of the party's policy in this field.'

"So far, so good. But it would be a natural conclusion to draw from such an attitude that the party should work actively for the release of political prisoners in the workers states, as for example, the Italian, French, and Spanish Communist parties have done at certain times.

"At the same time, it is to be hoped that *Land og Folk* will stop slandering and whipping up hatred against the oppositionists in East Europe. . . ."

"An example of a type of journalism that does not fit in very well with the Danish CP's new line is an article in the January 19 issue of *Land og Folk* by its Prague correspondent Erik Nielson. . . ."

"Nielsen describes [dissident] Jiri Pelikan's role on Czechoslovak TV [under the Dubcek government] in the following way: 'Every day he exercised the only form of freedom of the press that is officially recognized by capitalist ideologists, namely anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism. Pelikan today holds a high position in the CIA-financed Radio Free Europe, where along with many of his friends from 1968, he continues . . . to spread anti-Soviet and anti-Czechoslovak views. . . .'

"This is all garbage. Pelikan doesn't have a high position in the pay of the CIA. He puts out a small socialist magazine, *Listy*. . . . There is not a trace of anti-Communism or anti-Sovietism in his views. He is against the bureaucratic governments in East Europe, but works for socialism. . . ."

"If he is to be criticized for anything, it is that he expresses too much confidence in the 'Euro-Communist' CPs, whose ranks

the Danish CP seems to be joining with its new line toward the 'dissidents.'"



"Radical," for socialism and peace, published biweekly in Amsterdam by the Dutch Pacifist Socialist party.

The December 6 issue features a series of articles on the political situation in Greece, including one on the Greek women's movement. The author, Titia Bos, writes:

"During the rule of the colonels (1967-1974) women's organizations were out of the question. After 1974, a great variety of women's organizations were established in Athens. Most of them are sort of front groups for left parties. Besides these formations tied indirectly to party politics, there is a Social Democratic-oriented association of academic women led by Lady Amalia Fleming, and a left-oriented women's liberation movement.

"The women's liberation movement began by publishing leaflets and articles about abortion, not just theories, but primarily information about where abortions could be obtained and for how much money. When I visited one of the women's organizations connected to a party, I was first put through an inquisition to determine if I was 'of sound doctrine.' Their 'sound doctrine' consisted of the principle that men and women have to fight together in the class struggle, of which women's fight is a subordinate part. This organization has published data about women being paid less than men for doing the same job.

"This year, two women have set up a publishing business putting out a lot of books about women. These include primarily works by Marx, Engels, and Lenin, and Greek translations of Rosa Luxemburg, Juliet Mitchell, Sheila Rowbotham, and Simone de Beauvoir. A number of books have also been written by Greek women about the torture they underwent in the junta's jails. And there is another book published in 1959, which was almost forgotten and certainly never attracted much notice. It was written by a Greek woman to denounce the oppression of Greek women.

"The left women's organizations have recently begun to coordinate their work. The need for this is strongly felt because of the legislation the Caramanlis government appears to want to introduce. . . ."

"The conflict with Turkey has led to a proposal that . . . women be allowed (or obliged) to serve in the military during wartime. According to this proposal, women between the ages of twenty and thirty-five who serve in the military (as nurses or typists) are to get preference in civil service promotions.

"The left women's organizations actively oppose this idea of women serving in the military in return for privileges."

AROUND THE WORLD



Syrian Forces in Beirut Shell Palestinian Camps

For the second day in a row Syrian "peacekeeping" forces in Lebanon shelled Palestinian refugee camps February 11. "Witnesses said today's exchanges were far heavier than yesterday's. They said about 20 mortar shells a minute fell on the Palestinian Sabra camp, the adjoining Shatila camp and the nearby Burj al-Barajnea camp on the southern outskirts of Beirut," the *New York Times* reported February 12.

The unsigned article said that "the fighting has led to speculation that the Syrians are now ready to deal firmly with Palestinian radicals of the Rejection Front."

This is the first time since the Syrian forces completed their occupation of Lebanon that they have openly attacked major Palestinian refugee camps. Until now, the Syrians have operated under the cover of pro-Syrian groups within the Palestinian movement.

Twelve casualties were reported in the February 10 clashes, but fierce fighting on the following day prevented the collection of accurate casualty reports.

Cardoso Forms Group in Portuguese SP

A dispatch by the official Hungarian press agency in the February 6 issue of *Magyar Nemzet*, the daily paper of the Hungarian Patriotic People's Front, reports: "Former Minister of Agriculture Lopes Cardoso has formed a left faction in the Portuguese Socialist party called the 'Socialist Cultural Society.' According to Cardoso, the society will discuss the problems connected with building socialism in Portugal, *without posing a threat to the organizational unity of the Portuguese SP.* [Emphasis in original.]

"In a statement published in the latest issue of the magazine *Opção*, this political figure said that members of the society wanted to fight as SP militants to get their views adopted, in accordance with the party's statutes."

'Why Me?'

Sri Lanka Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike has come in for criticism over her charges that "foreign powers" were



SIRIMAVO BANDARANAIKE

behind the wave of strikes that occurred in December and January. Speaking in her own defense, Bandaranaike declared in Parliament February 1, "Mrs. Gandhi said it, President Sadat said it, what's wrong in my saying it? Why are you blaming me?"

British Government Admits Use of Torture in Ireland

British Attorney General Sam Silkin admitted in a hearing before the European Court of Human Rights February 8 that his government had used five torture techniques in Northern Ireland. Silkin conceded that British troops had hooded prisoners, harassed them with noise, deprived them of sleep, put them on bread and water diets, and made them lean against a wall, off balance with arms outstretched, for long periods.

These forms of torture—and worse—were used by the British against Catholic prisoners in Northern Ireland after the introduction of internment without trial

there in August 1971. Popular outrage in the Republic of Ireland forced the Dublin government to take action. A dossier detailing the British crimes was submitted to the European Human Rights Commission, which upheld some of the allegations after a four-year investigation.

Silkin, who claimed that the torture of prisoners had been ended in 1972, promised that his government would not do it again, and urged that the embarrassing court proceedings be dropped. Referring to the Dublin regime's collaboration with British efforts to suppress the Irish national liberation movement, Silkin said that with his admission and promise, "there is no longer any adequate reason for them [the Dublin regime] to pursue a course which can only divide us in a situation which cries out for the fullest cooperation between us."

New Student Protests in Soweto

Demanding the release of all arrested Black students and the abolition of the government's discriminatory education system, thousands of Black high-school students staged demonstrations in Soweto February 9. It was the first major Black protest in South Africa this year.

Rallies were reportedly staged at five of Soweto's high schools, involving an estimated 6,000 protesters. In response to a student call for a boycott of final examinations, which had been postponed from last year, about 4,000 gathered at Meadowlands High School. They built a bonfire of examination papers and textbooks in the Afrikaans language, which is one of the two languages spoken by the dominant white population. They sang freedom songs and gave clenched fist salutes.

Police swinging clubs and firing tear gas rushed in to disperse the demonstrations. All of Soweto's schools were closed and an 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. curfew was imposed on students. Brig. Jan Visser, the Soweto police chief, warned, "Students who roam the streets will feel the full might of the law. Police have been instructed to be tough on such people." He also warned that police might shoot into further demonstrations.

Although there were no reported student protests in Soweto the following day, students did shut down Hofmeyr High School in the Black township of Atteridgeville, near Pretoria.

DOCUMENTS

RMG and LSA/LSO Agree to Seek Unity

[The following statement by the Canadian Revolutionary Marxist Group records the progress made toward unity with the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière, the Canadian section of the Fourth International.

[It appeared in the January 31 issue of *Labor Challenge*, a socialist fortnightly published in Toronto.]

* * *

In 1972-73 the Trotskyist movement in Canada and Québec, until then unified in one pan-Canadian organization, went into a deep political and organizational crisis. This led to the formation of three groups affiliated to the Fourth International—the Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG) in Canada; its sister organization in Québec, the Groupe Marxiste Révolutionnaire (GMR); and the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière (LSA/LSO). In addition, several small groups appeared which claim to be Trotskyist while remaining outside the Fourth International.

Over the last several months, all three groups of Fourth Internationalists have been discussing the possibility of reunifying revolutionary Marxist forces in both Canada and Québec. These discussions have involved both the general political positions of the two main currents of Canadian/Québécois Trotskyism and the possibility of practical collaboration on specific tasks in the class struggle.

On the basis of these discussions, the Central Committee of the RMG, which met from December 29 to January 2, unanimously agreed that a principled basis existed for reunifying Trotskyist forces. In particular, the Central Committee noted the convergence of positions on such central issues as the imperialist character of Canadian capitalism, Canadian nationalism, the national liberation struggle in Québec, and the programmatic characterization of the New Democratic Party.

Another important factor is the common analysis of all three groups of the turn in the political situation signified by the October 14 national political strike and the election of the Parti Québécois in November. In addition to a shared evaluation of these events, everyone acknowledges their impact in heightening a common understanding of the need for unity of Fourth Internationalists. Of course, the common adherence of all three groups to the Fourth International and its basic program is a factor of fundamental importance.

The Central Committee also produced a

self-criticism on the RMG's previous sectarianism towards the LSA/LSO.

Thus, the Central Committee declared itself unequivocally in favor of a fusion. What does this mean in practice?

First, the position of the Central Committee is not yet a position of the RMG as a whole. Such a position can only be adopted by the membership as a whole through a delegated convention of the organization. The Central Committee vote is the beginning of a discussion on this issue throughout the ranks of the organization. This discussion will be concluded by a convention of the RMG, to take place later this year. A parallel process is occurring in the GMR.

In addition, there is no guarantee that a fusion will actually occur. A multitude of problems remain. There are still important differences between the LSA/LSO and the RMG, especially in relation to slogans, orientation, and tactics vis-a-vis the NDP and the trade union bureaucracy. And everyone is agreed that a fusion must involve at least a partial consensus on practical tasks of party-building and intervention in the class struggle. This is especially important given the relatively equal size of both currents at the level of the Canadian state as a whole. Hence, the importance of practical collaboration between the LSA/LSO and the RMG and the GMR to test in practice the feasibility of fusion.

The outcome of the process also depends

on the solution to a problem which the RMG and GMR are currently discussing: the organizational relations between Canadian and Québécois revolutionary Marxists. This issue is also being debated in the pre-convention discussions of both organizations.

Nevertheless, a real possibility exists for a principled solution to the division of the Fourth International in Canada and Québec. The LSA/LSO leadership (which attended the CC meeting as observers) welcomed the RMG Central Committee decision as a fundamental and positive breakthrough.

The LSA/LSO Political Committee agreed with the RMG Central Committee's position on the need for fusion. It set the strengthening of common work and discussion with the RMG as a top priority for all LSA/LSO branches.

This new situation is leading at present to an intensification of discussion on various political problems. At the practical level, we are jointly organizing a speaking tour throughout English Canada of one Québécois comrade from the LSA/LSO and one from the GMR, in order to build support for Québec's right to self-determination. In addition, the Prairie branches of the LSA/LSO and the RMG are organizing a joint regional conference on political questions facing the revolutionary left and workers movement. It is to be hoped that such collaboration will also extend to other areas of work.

For the Construction of the Revolutionary Workers Party!

For the Unity of the Fourth International!

*Political Committee of the
Revolutionary Marxist Group
(Sympathizing Organization
of the Fourth International)*

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FROM OUR READERS

A reader of *Intercontinental Press* in Jordan tells us about the reaction in that area to the November presidential election:

"I enjoyed your coverage of the American elections. It's funny, but the intensive world-wide coverage of the U.S. playoffs between the Democrats and Republicans which ends up in the 'election' of yet another liar and reactionary lover of Israel is not seen here as an example of American 'democracy' in action, but rather it is discussed as if it were some sort of coup d'etat. People are racking their minds trying to figure out what the differences between Ford and Carter were, and why Carter was pushed into power. The general explanation seems to be that Ford was going to actually make Israel withdraw from the 1967 borders in exchange for all that Assad did for him, but that the pro-Israel powers couldn't take that so they pushed Carter into the presidency.

"You can see the kind of coup d'etat mythology in this thinking, but in some ways it shows a much clearer estimation of the real Carter than most liberals have . . . the real Carter who can't even wait for the inaugural before declaring his unqualified support for NATO's iron fist. 'Yukhrub Beito' may his house fall down.

"Even before his inaugural, Carter has accumulated a large amount of vulgar and colorful epithets here, taken from various functions of his anatomy. I'm sure the same has already started in the U.S., too."

This note came from a new subscriber in France:

"You surely got (or you'll get in the immediately following days) a postal order ('mandat carte international') of 32 US Dollars. . . . As it is impossible to mention anything on the order, I am obliged to send the present letter separately, just to tell you the aim of that money.

"I sent it to subscribe to INTERCONTI-

NENTAL PRESS for one year, airmail posted from the United States.

"I hope my letter is clear enough; and I am already waiting for what I consider as the best Trotskyist weekly throughout the world."

This explanation accompanies the following request:

"Because of the disruption of mail services in Lebanon, for the last two years, our collection of *Intercontinental Press* is incomplete. As we are anxious to maintain a complete run of it, you are kindly requested to send us the issues which are still missing. . . ."

To complete the Lebanese file of *Intercontinental Press*, we have already sent the missing issues.

G.K. of Toronto, Canada, adds this "by the way" note to his purchase of a 'gift subscription' for a friend:

"I have been a regular reader of *IP* for six years now—since I was fifteen. It is undoubtedly the best publication of its type in the world!"

We can't think of a better gift in the world than a subscription to *Intercontinental Press*.

Here's another good idea. D.H. of Glebe, Australia, explains:

"We would like to order the following back issues of *IP*. We are going to make up a few complete sets for 1976 and 1975 and sell them at our conference, etc."

Pathfinder Press, distributor of *Intercontinental Press* in London, forwards this letter from a subscriber:

"I had no hesitation in paying up despite the increased cost. *Intercontinental Press* is doing a great job. I especially appreciate the documents you print from the left wing throughout the world and welcomed the 'Selections from the Left' feature.

"I hope those friends I've shown *Intercontinental Press* to take out a subscription."

"This is shocking, absolutely shocking," says C.K.S. of Athens, Georgia. "I couldn't figure out why you kept sending me those nasty form letters, threatening to cut me off if I didn't renew. After all, I told myself, I renewed a month ago. I tried to convince myself that you were just kidding, but I decided to check my records, just to make sure. Not really necessary, you understand, as I remember sending in a check, definitely. I remember doing that. And what did my records show? By God, that wasn't *ICP*, it was the *Black Scholar!* A close call."

It always pays to check—even when you are sure!

C.B. of Louisville, Kentucky, sends this "compliment on quality" with a change of address:

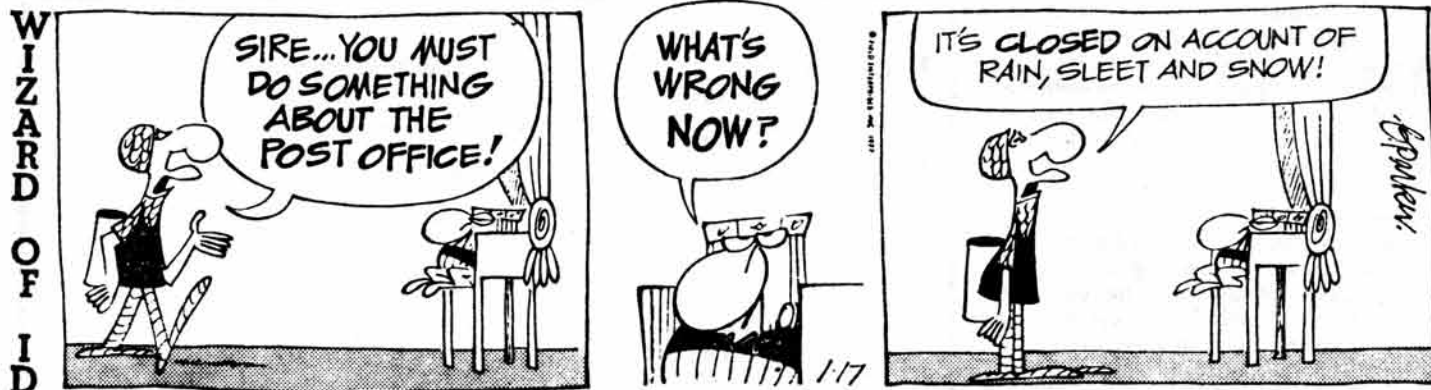
"I keep waiting for the high standard of *IP* to level off, but there seems to be no such thing as an 'average' issue as with other magazines; with each month *IP* hits a new peak from which to look down on the rest of the journalistic world. My only answer to questions like 'Which do you like better: *Time* or *Newsweek*?' is to produce my most recent copy of *IP*."

M.J. of Detroit, Michigan, wants to know the cost of back copies of *Intercontinental Press* "from October and November of 1970." He adds:

"I am particularly interested in the issue that carries a report on the 'Red Europe' rally held in Brussels in late October or November of that year."

For those outside the United States who may not know, the wisecrack in Parker's *Wizard of Id* refers to the passage from Herodotus inscribed on the General Post Office in New York City:

"Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."



Parker/New York Post