

Intercontinental Press

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Strikes and Slowdowns on the Rise



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NEWS ANALYSIS

German SPD Torn by Dispute Over Nuclear Power

By Gerry Foley

In the lead article of its May 2 issue, the authoritative West German magazine *Der Spiegel* describes the buildup of an explosive crisis in the German Socialist party.

At all levels of the party, discontent with the right-wing leadership headed by Chancellor Helmut Schmidt has reached such a point that one Socialist party state leadership plotted an open revolt.

"In the northern part of the republic, veteran party leaders planned nothing more or less than a putsch against Bonn. To stop Bonn's program for building nuclear power plants, they are ready to bring down the chancellor and to accept the party being forced into opposition.

"Monday before last, the leadership of the SPD [Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands—Social Democratic party of Germany] organization in Schleswig-Holstein gathered in a conspiratorial meeting in the Hotel Conti-Hansa in Kiel to discuss the coup. Veteran SPD member Jochen Steffen, still an influential behind-the-scenes person in the northern SPD, raised the watchword: If the government of Helmut Schmidt does not change its energy policy 'then it has to go.' The fall of the chancellor would be for the good of the party."

The largest anti-nuclear-power demonstrations have been in Schleswig-Holstein, where a reactor is being built near the village of Brokdorf. On February 19, between 50,000 and 60,000 persons rallied near the building site to demand that work on the atomic power facility be halted.

The government's energy czars have planned a nuclear future for Schleswig-Holstein because it has salt deposits where radioactive waste can supposedly be safely buried. It is one of the few areas in West Germany that offers such a possible dumping ground. This state is also relatively underdeveloped and presided over by a right-wing Christian Democratic government that supports nuclear power.

There has, however, been no lack of signs that the local population is not enthusiastic about the project of turning their state into a nuclear center and dumping ground for atomic waste. Thus, the defense of Schmidt's nuclear policy has been largely left to the reactionary Christian Democrats, such as the state premier Gerhard Stoltenberg.

So, growing public opposition to nuclear power plants has probably brought the most pressure to bear on the Schleswig-Holsteiner Social Democrats.

Der Spiegel reports that the chairman of

the SPD organization in the state, Günther Jansen, supported the proposal made by Steffen in the "conspiratorial meeting" in the Hotel Conti-Hansa.

The strategy of the "conspirators" was allegedly to press SPD deputies to vote against the proposed appropriation for scientific development, which will include subsidies for building "fast-breeder" reactors.

If the government tried to include these subsidies in some other appropriation, the Schleswig-Holsteiner leaders were prepared to call for rejecting the federal budget as a whole, even though this would mean forcing the resignation of the chancellor.

The West German magazine notes that SPD Minister of Scientific Development Hans Matthöfer has expressed doubt that the rebels can get the six votes in parliament needed to put the government in a minority. It comments:

"This estimation may be correct. But the fact that, in official bodies of the SPD and with the approval and active participation of a state chairman, an attack has been prepared on an SPD chancellor shows the extent of the turmoil in the party, the spreading malaise, the longing to return to the opposition."

The revolt in Schleswig-Holstein clearly represents a new stage in the erosion of the SPD national leadership's credibility for the party membership and its electoral supporters. The vote for the SPD-liberal coalition has dropped in the last two elections. The SPD came within a hair of being forced out of government in the last parliamentary election.

Its losses were the result of running a no-issues campaign, in particular refusing to defend even democratic rights against a Christian Democrat red-baiting offensive against "all collectivists," including Social Democrats. After the election, the SPD leadership even tried to go back on one of its few election promises, its commitment to defend old-age pensions.

Recently the SPD has lost a number of municipal elections. These setbacks have been compounded by a series of scandals involving SPD municipal officials. This damaged one of the last attractions of the SPD for working-class voters, who believed that while the historic party of their class might no longer be revolutionary, or even very reform-minded, it was at least more honest than the bourgeois parties. The scandals showed that SPD politicians who had gotten used to feeding at the same

trough as their bourgeois colleagues had developed the same manners.

On top of all this, the SPD national leadership has just launched a purge against the recently elected leadership of their youth affiliate, the Young Socialists. This was directed first against Klaus-Uwe Benneter, the new chairman of the Young Socialists.

Benneter is identified with an ideological current that espouses a theory of the nature of German capitalism similar to that put forward by the Communist party, the concept of "state-monopoly capitalism." As such this theory is perfectly reformist, and the SPD leadership did not even give Benneter a chance to show what practical political conclusions, if any, he drew from it.

Thus, the purge launched against the Young Socialists suggests that the SPD leadership is terrified of seeing any critical or independent currents crystallize in its circles. Likewise, it shows that the SPD leadership is unable to deal with criticism or even unorthodox currents of thought in any way but by repressing them.

Der Spiegel takes note of the SPD leadership's lord-high-executioner approach:

"In one of his rare public interventions into the internal party situation, made in statements on TV April 30, Herbert Wehner [head of the SPD parliamentary fraction] spoke in favor of a radical break [with the Young Socialists]. 'No matter how many of them there are—if there's a lot, I'm sorry—but even if there are a lot of them, this step is unfortunately unavoidable.'"

In this context, *Der Spiegel* says, it was no wonder that Jochen Steffen voted against the decision of the SPD leadership to suspend Benneter and begin an investigation of him. Steffen described these measures as: "The dumbest thing these wisecracks in Bonn could do. Now even more people are going to be turned off to us."

But now, *Der Spiegel* points out, even a purge of the Young Socialists would not "restore order" in the Social Democracy.

"Driving out the left, no matter how much the top leaders may look forward to this, is not going to free the Social Democrats from the still more dangerous conflict arising from the interrelation of energy policy, nuclear technology, and economic growth."

SPD "theoretician" Erhard Eppler was quoted to the effect that he expects to win a majority against Schmidt's atomic energy policy in the party congress scheduled for next November: "They can't pass any resolution on energy policy to the right of me."

Eppler denies the validity of one of Schmidt's main defenses of his atomic energy policy—that restoration of "full employment" in Germany depends on the development of atomic power plants.

Der Spiegel quotes Eppler as saying: "If Schmidt goes on TV three more times to defend atomic energy, and then there is a party resolution to dump all this atomic shit, that's when the big explosion will come."

Obviously, the crisis in the SPD has not been created by the atomic power plant question alone, even though this does raise some key contradictions of modern capitalist development. This issue has become the focus of the malaise caused by the party's right-wing policies as a whole, its passivity in the face of the bourgeois offensive, its inability to take any effective action against unemployment, especially youth unemployment.

However, the movement against atomic power plants has touched off what seems to be the deepest crisis of the Social Democracy since World War II, one which is inevitably also a crisis of the political structures that have long kept the West German working people in a prison of conservatism and passivity.

In the first place, the outcry against the development of atomic power plants has discredited Schmidt's program of a "non-political" government of experts. The main decisions were made on the authority of experts and presented to the party as accomplished facts. *Der Spiegel* points out that at the last SPD congress, Eppler drew wide applause when he said: "I demand that politics be restored to its rights and duties."

The crisis in the SPD recalls the divisions in the main U.S. political institutions created by the pressure of the movement against the Vietnam war. Only in West Germany, such a split is much more explosive and deepgoing because it brings out the contradictions in a party based on the workers movement but which follows a bourgeois policy.

In the U.S. labor movement also, the appearance of a mass movement against the Vietnam war encouraged the first opposition in the union movement to an encrusted reactionary bureaucracy.

The pressure of the growing mass movement against atom plants in West Germany seems finally to be breaking the dead grip of ultraright-wing Social Democrats on the SPD and the unions. The country's most authoritative magazine obviously does not believe these leaders can restore the "order" that prevailed before, no matter how much they flail around trying to cut off the heads of all critical elements. □

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May Day Celebrated by Millions Around World

Violent repression was unleashed against demonstrators in many countries May 1 when they went out into the streets to voice their grievances and show solidarity with their brothers and sisters struggling throughout the world. Scores of persons were killed, wounded, or jailed in Turkey, Spain, El Salvador, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and Greece.

A frequent theme of the protests was the need to fight the austerity programs capitalist rulers around the world have imposed.

In **Istanbul**, a rally of more than 100,000 persons in Taksim Square was broken up by police with machine guns, tear gas, and armored cars. At least 34 persons were killed, with an additional 200 injured. Several hundred persons were arrested.

The rally was called by the 500,000-member Revolutionary Workers Trade-Union Confederation (DISK), which is heavily influenced by the Turkish Communist party.

Accounts of how the violence began are contradictory, but the extreme right-wing National Action party has taken the clash as a pretext to call for the banning of DISK.

Eight peasants were shot and killed at a May Day action in **San Salvador**. The demonstrators were responding to the call of the United Trade Union Federation to defy an official ban on demonstrations.

Police opened fire on demonstrators en route to May Day rallies in **Colombo**, Sri Lanka. The police said that they fired when some demonstrators began stoning government-owned buses carrying people to one of several rallies. At least thirty persons were shot in the incident.

In **Manila**, a march of about 1,000 persons protesting Marcos's curbs on civil liberties was attacked by police with high-powered water hoses. More than fifty persons were arrested. They were accused of possessing literature attacking the government and the activities of certain multinational firms.

Hundreds of thousands of persons marched to the headquarters of the General Federation of Greek Workers in **Athens**. The demonstrators chanted, "Don't shift the burden of the crisis onto the workers," "No more profits for the monopolies," "No banning of mass organizations," and "Better working conditions."

In a separate action called by the Maoists in Athens, twenty-one protesters were injured and fifteen arrested during a clash with police.

One hundred fifty thousand persons

1,000 Protest Arrest of Hong Kong Trotskyists

One thousand persons marched on the police station in Kowloon, Hong Kong, May 1 to demand the release of two imprisoned Trotskyists, members of the Revolutionary Marxist League (RML). The two had been arrested April 29 during a demonstration in the city's workers districts. The action was called to demand that May Day be declared a paid holiday. Following their arrest, the RML members were tortured and began a protest hunger strike.

At the close of the demonstration in front of the Kowloon jail, four more RML members were beaten and arrested by the police. All six were charged with participating in illegal May Day actions.

The May 3 issue of *Rouge*, reporting on these events, called for telegrams of protest to be sent to the Hong Kong authorities, with copies to the RML, 523 Shanghai Street I/F, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

attended a May Day rally in **Lisbon**, which *Le Monde* described as "the most impressive gathering since May 1, 1974."

The rally, called by the Portuguese Communist party and a number of the smaller groups of the left, was dedicated "to defending the gains of April 25 [1974]." Although the Socialist party leadership issued an appeal to its members on the eve of the rally urging them not to participate, prominent SP members ignored the directive. Among those present on the rally platform were Kalidas Barreto, a former SP senator and now deputy general secretary of Intersindical, and Lopes Cardoso, a former SP minister of agriculture who is identified with the SP's left wing.

March organizers estimated a turn-out of 100,000 persons in **Paris**, in an action called by the General Confederation of Labor and the French Democratic Confederation of Labor, with the support of virtually all the other left groups except the Maoists.

The banner setting the tone for the march read "Against the Barre [austerity] plan. We are fighting for purchasing power, jobs, social security, freedom, and rights for workers throughout Europe and the world."

There were also banners calling for "Freedom of organization for immigrants" and "French soldiers out of Zaïre."

Le Monde reported sizable contingents of Algerian and other foreign workers, supporters of the ecology movement, and members of the oppressed nationalities within the French state.

The French Trotskyist daily *Rouge* reported that 15,000 persons marched in the revolutionary contingent, a big increase over past years.

A women's liberation contingent of 6,000

protested the status of women as "Last hired, first fired, inadequately trained, cheap labor." Many of the chants focused on the fight for the right to abortion.

A contingent of gay activists numbered 1,000 persons.

In **Tiflis**, six members of the Soviet Helsinki monitoring groups observed a one-day fast to protest the April 7 arrest of Georgian writer Zviad Gamsakhurdia and musician Merab Kostava, both members of the monitoring groups.

More than ten million persons demonstrated throughout Japan. The **Tokyo** action drew 500,000 and there were rallies in more than 1,000 other cities.

Almost 100,000 Lebanese attended a rally in **Beirut**, where they heard Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat pay tribute to slain Lebanese leader Kamal Jumblatt and pledge that "the Palestinian revolution will continue, and the Lebanese nationalist movement will continue to be as giant as always."

In **Addis Ababa**, 300,000 persons heard junta leader Mengistu Haile Mariam say that the recent expulsion of five American agencies ended an era of "slavery" imposed by Washington. Mengistu also reported that heavy fighting is continuing in the northern territory of Eritrea and hinted that the government is arming tens of thousands of peasants for a "people's war" against Eritrean secessionists.

Several thousand persons demonstrated throughout Israel, with 3,000 attending the central rally in **Tel Aviv**. The main slogans of the rally were "The occupation is a disaster," "An end to the expropriation of Arab land," and "Free contraceptives for all." Most of the demonstrators were from the Israeli Black Panthers and the Rakah faction of the Israeli CP.

A statement by 126 trade-union leaders in Chile was published in the **Santiago**

daily papers May 1. The statement, directed at President Augusto Pinochet, protested the lack of democratic rights and trade-union freedoms in Chile.

Reuters reported that China's May Day celebrations were used to build up the personality cult around Hua Kuo-feng.

"The official newspaper, Jenmin Jih Pao, published an article by Mr. Hua

spread over three pages," the May 1 dispatch from Peking reported. "His picture hung above crowds thronging Peking parks, and television coverage concentrated on the 56-year-old successor of the late Mao Tse-tung."

Reuters also noted that "newspapers have carried numerous photographs of the Chairman in Mao-like poses. . . ." □

pañol (PSOE—Spanish Socialist Workers party).

The PSOE feared that Suárez was planning to maintain the gigantic, enormously wealthy government-controlled political apparatus in the guise of a "center-left coalition." Along with the weighting of parliamentary representation in favor of the conservative areas, the use of such machinery could enable the premier to avoid opening up much room in legal politics for the workers parties and still give the Francoist regime the necessary "democratic" veneer.

Since the Social Democrats' perspectives are mainly electoralist and parliamentary, such a scheme would pose a direct threat to their hopes. The CP, which is more tightly organized and has more activists, could hope to build its influence in the mass movements, even in the shadow of Suárez.

The PSOE was reassured, however, by Suárez's concessions at the end of March and in early April—he accepted in theory the workers' right to organize their own unions and he legalized the CP.

For example, in its April 16 issue, *Cuadernos para el Diálogo*, a Madrid weekly close to the PSOE, said:

It is not being said by semiofficial sources that Suárez has rejected the temptation to run in the elections as the head of an electoral coalition. . . . If he runs, it will be as an individual. . . . We won't know if he is going to run until the last minute. Is this important for the immediate future of the country? It doesn't seem so. What is important is the fact, once again according to presidential sources, that the premier is obsessed with the idea that the next parliament has to draw up a democratic constitution. . . . And the appearance in strength of the People's Alliance [the more openly rightist post-Francoist party led by Manuel Fraga Iribarne] in the two houses of parliament . . . would make this aim untenable.

It is now clear that Suárez is going to run and not as an individual. The repression of the May Day rallies made dramatically clear how limited and precarious all the government's concessions are in practice. Will the PSOE leaders now decide that their fears about a maneuver by Suárez to prejudice the elections were justified? Will they decide that they should throw all their strength into mobilizing the workers against the regime of Franco's heirs? On the basis of past performance they are more likely to decide that Suárez is motivated by a commendable "obsession" to block the right, and should be encouraged.

However, in Madrid 4,000 metalworkers have already gone on strike to press demands for the release of arrested demonstrators. The unions have been forced to threaten more strikes if the government prosecutes those arrested. And in the case of the mass upsurge touched off by the January murders, the CP and the SP could not prevent the workers from fighting back against the government's attacks. □

May Day Rallies Crushed

Spain—'Democracy' Under a Horsewhip

On April 29 in Washington, Spanish Premier Adolfo Suárez received Carter's accolade for achieving a "move toward freedom and democracy" in Spain that "has been brilliant and much better than we had hoped."

Two days after getting Carter's seal of approval, the Suárez government unleashed the Francoist police against rallies called by the workers unions to commemorate May Day.

According to legislation recently passed by the Spanish parliament, the independent unions have the right to legal activity. Nonetheless, the government banned the rallies these unions called to commemorate May Day. The pretext was that public demonstrations might lead to "violence," presumably by "provoking" the right.

In practice, the government's talk about the need for calm served as an excuse to give the Francoist police free rein. A May 1 Reuters dispatch described one incident in the Spanish capital:

On the outskirts of Madrid mounted riot policemen charged at full gallop to disperse several hundred leftists who had gathered in a wooded park for a 45-minute rally. The police lashed people with long leather whips as they fled.

The police moved on horseback through an outdoor cafe, forcing out clients and whipping those who moved too slowly. Three foreign correspondents were also whipped by the police after identifying themselves.

One of the policemen forced the customers to chant the traditional Francoist cry of "Arriba España" . . . and to give the Falangist salute.

A police officer, shouting "Franco is not dead," told the three correspondents . . . that they had two minutes to leave the cafe.

All three were lashed with a long horse whip when they asked which way the police wanted them to go.

According to a dispatch in the May 3 issue of *Le Monde*, about 15,000 persons had gathered in the Casa de Campo park in Madrid for a political picnic. Leaders of the Workers Commissions, the union in which the Communist party has the predominant influence, asked the police for

permission to address the crowd. They were told they could speak for fifteen minutes. The police claimed that they had found machine guns in a car and were afraid that "either the right or the left" might create an incident.

During the mass upsurge following the murder of four labor lawyers in Madrid at the end of January, the big reformist organizations accepted the government's argument that public protests would enable the right to stage provocations. In fact, the leaderships of the SP and CP unions were so impressed by this reasoning that they ceased most public activity. Obviously the government intends to go on using an argument that has proved so effective.

The government's argument is nothing if not flexible. It could be used to claim that demonstrations had to be banned in order to avoid "provoking the right," or according to other versions, to avoid "upsetting the army." Thus, the ban was not really aimed at the unions at all but at the right!

The unions announced May 2 that the rampaging cops had injured 200 persons in Madrid alone, where, they estimated, about 60,000 persons had tried to observe May Day.

Two days after the violent repression of the May Day rallies, Suárez announced that he will be a candidate in the June 15 elections in order to "avoid the division of Spaniards into two hostile camps."

The implication was that the premier had decided to step forward to strengthen the defense against the right. In an editorial in its April 28 issue, the *New York Times* helped convey this impression:

Mr. Suarez implies a willingness to run himself, to take the leadership of the weak and divided center parties . . . and to try to form a strong center bloc. But he has been under army pressure to remain neutral during the election, which would then most likely yield a plurality for the right.

Actually, the most vocal opposition to Suárez running has not come from the right but from the main Social Democratic party, the Partido Socialista Obrero Es-

For Immediate Withdrawal of French Troops From Zaïre!

[The following statement by the Political Bureau of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, French section of the Fourth International, was published in the April 28 issue of *Rouge*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

In telling the African presidents and premiers in Dakar on Wednesday [April 27] that they could "count on French support in all forms," [French President Valéry] Giscard d'Estaing revealed the full meaning of the French military intervention in Zaïre.

Its unconvincing arguments about a foreign invasion notwithstanding, the overriding factor in the French government's decision to intervene was its desire to bolster a reactionary regime on the brink of collapse.

The economic crisis plaguing Zaïre, the crumbling of the authority of the central government, and the regime's indebtedness have wrecked Mobutu's plans for establishing a strong, centralized state, which was the mission given him by imperialism in 1965. Regardless of the nature and goals of the Congolese National Liberation Front, the clashes in Shaba province are threatening to plunge the country into a prolonged civil war.

Such a situation would destabilize Black Africa from the cape to the western part of the continent. It would throw a monkey wrench into the negotiations around Zimbabwe, deepen South Africa's isolation, and spur radicalization of the mass movement throughout the continent. Mobutu has lost the confidence of the Western powers. But there is no replacement for him, and no imperialist sector has come up with a viable way to change the regime in Zaïre from within.

However, the aim of the French interventionists is not only to act as zealous bodyguards of Mobutu in the name of imperialist interests in general. Giscard is basing his policy on the perspective of a North-South dialogue and the partial industrialization of some African countries. At a time when the African bourgeoisies can afford to diversify their diplomatic and trade relations, he is out to advance the particular interests of the French bourgeoisie. This explains why the president's move has not met with unanimous approval from his Western allies. The American and European imperialists are questioning the wisdom of aggravating the Shaba conflict, at the risk of jeopardizing the prospect of future negotiations with such African states as Angola.

The French and Moroccan operation has apparently reestablished the military balance of forces, secured the Kolwezi mining center, and achieved a reorganization of the Zaïrian troops. This has pleased the bourgeois African leaderships, who are much more afraid of their own internal opponents than of any supposed danger of Soviet domination. The Franco-African summit meeting in Dakar fits neatly into this framework. The objective of this conference is to negotiate partial readjustments in the relations between the African bourgeoisies and their imperialist masters, as well as to work out a plan for long-term stabilization of the bourgeois African states.

So French intervention in Zaïre is by no means over and done with. A major military mission remains in the country; the flow of material aid continues.

In France, these events should have been met with immediate protests. The working-class organizations, particularly the CP and the SP, should have called for an immediate response. But the reformist leaderships are not about to undertake any real struggle against French imperialism and colonialism, any more than they are ready to struggle against the Barre government and the minority regime today. Didn't the authors of the Common Program consider it sufficient to put forward a perspective of "negotiating" with all the regimes in question? And aren't Rangoolam, president of the Organization of African Unity, and Senghor, president of

Senegal, who supported the French intervention, members in good standing of the Social Democratic international?

Clearly, France under the Common Program will still be an imperialist country. Even the far left, which has still not mobilized very much around the struggle against imperialism in Africa, was not able to organize an initial protest.

However, in the present context, there are other factors that make it still more important to respond to the French intervention in Zaïre—the banning of the Organization of African Communists and repression against immigrant workers and sections of the Federation of Black African Students in France. So, what is needed is a broad campaign against French imperialism and colonialism. And this campaign must be taken up by the entire labor movement.

The trade unions should organize a boycott of the Zaïrian regime without further delay. We must demand the immediate withdrawal of French troops, not only from Zaïre, but from all of Africa and the Indian Ocean. The soldiers' committees can carry this campaign into the antimilitarist movement, by condemning the French army's covert activities in support of the reactionary African regimes. We must demand the broadest democratic rights for immigrant workers, freedom of association, and the lifting of the ban on the OAC. The May 1 demonstration will provide an opportunity to make these slogans heard. □

Washington Expresses Approval

Sadat Sends Egyptian Pilots to Zaïre

In a further escalation of the international involvement in the Zaïre conflict, Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat announced May 1 that Egyptian pilots would be sent to "take over the operation of the entire Zaïrian Air Force" and to help Mobutu Sese Seko quell resistance by antigovernment Katangan forces in Shaba Province. "We are going to help Mobutu until he ends this matter," Sadat said.

In a new variation of the old "domino theory" advanced by Washington during the Vietnam War, Sadat claimed that the military action by the Katangans was a "direct measure against the Sudan and

against the sources of the Nile [River]. We are going to side with the Sudan no matter what the dimensions of the battle." Earlier he said, "I don't want to wake up in the morning and find happening in the Sudan what is happening in Zaïre."

Sadat also invoked the time-worn theme of a "Communist menace," charging that Moscow had a hand in the Katangan operation.

About fifty Egyptian pilots and mechanics, as well as an air force colonel, arrived in Zaïre within hours of Sadat's speech. According to an Egyptian representative, they would "handle the Mirages," the twelve French-built Mirage jets that are

part of Mobutu's air force. Only some of them are now operational.

Shortly after Sadat's announcement, the Carter administration declared its approval of the Egyptian intervention. A State Department representative tried to justify

Washington's stance by stating, "It is our position that such situations be solved by the African states themselves."

This pious claim has already been belied by Washington's provision of \$15 million worth of "nonlethal" military aid to help

Mobutu counter the Katangan forces. In addition, Washington has backed the French airlift of 1,500 Moroccan troops to Zaïre, as well as the provision of French and Belgian military supplies and "advisers." □

Bhutto's Army 'Showing Grave Signs of Strain'

Martyr's Day Demonstrators Gunned Down in Lahore

By Ernest Harsch

May 6 was "Martyr's Day" in Pakistan. In face of continued repression, demonstrations were held in various parts of the country to commemorate the estimated 300 persons who have been killed so far by police and troops during the massive antigovernment actions that have rocked Pakistan for two months.

Protests were held in the country's three largest cities—Lahore, Karachi, and Hyderabad—which have been placed under martial law by Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. In addition, peaceful marches were staged in Lyallpur, Multan, and Peshawar. Police fired over the heads of demonstrators in Sukkur.

The most serious clash that was reported took place during the demonstration in Lahore, the capital of Punjab Province. According to an eyewitness account by *Washington Post* correspondent Lewis M. Simons, about 2,000 persons marched through the streets, chanting "Bhutto is a dog" and "Down with Bhutto."

The marchers stopped when they saw a group of soldiers kneeling in a firing position. Several of the unarmed protesters approached the troops, and the leader of the demonstration, Aftab Allam, called out, "We are your brothers. Shoot us if you will." At a range of about ten feet, the troops fired, killing Allam and another demonstrator on the spot. A third later died in the hospital.

It was the second reported instance in which the army, composed predominantly of Punjabis, had fired on Punjabi civilians in Lahore. Simons noted the emergence among civilians of "a new bitterness that could explode into a rupture between the Punjabi population and the army, which is already showing grave signs of strain."

Although the top leadership of the military has publicly expressed its support for the Bhutto regime, a retired brigadier general told Simons that many junior officers were dissatisfied with Bhutto's promotion of some other officers, a dissatisfaction that could be heightened by the orders to shoot at demonstrators. "When they have to start killing unarmed civilians," the general said, "particularly their

own people here in Punjab, some will obey orders, of course. We are a disciplined army. But some will crack."

The demonstrations on May 6 were smaller than many of the earlier ones, some of which brought out hundreds of thousands of persons. One of the reasons for the lower turnout was the massive repression launched by the Bhutto regime.

Besides the widespread killing of protesters by police, troops, and paramilitary forces, an estimated 50,000 persons have been arrested since the mass upsurge began shortly after the March 7 elections.

The day before the Martyr's Day actions, about 250 persons were arrested in Lahore alone, including most of the twenty-seven members of the general council of the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA), which has called many of the protests. One of them was the council's general secretary, Mahmud Ali Kasuri, a former member of the Bertrand Russell War Crimes Tribunal, which investigated American atrocities in Vietnam.

In addition to the imposition of martial law in Lahore, Karachi, and Hyderabad, curfews were also decreed in those cities the night before the scheduled protests. Special martial law courts have been set up to try persons accused of "obstructing" essential services. Radio Pakistan warned, "The maximum penalty for such offenses is death."

The actions of the top leadership of the PNA also appear to have helped dampen the most recent protests.

For instance, shortly before a scheduled march on the cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi April 30, the Pir of Pagaro, the acting president of the PNA, publicly declared that he would not attend.

Moreover, James M. Markham reported in the May 4 *New York Times*, "The impression that some kind of negotiations are under way between the Prime Minister and his opponents has clearly sapped the momentum of the opposition movement. . . ."

The PNA, whose leadership is dominated by rightist forces, including former military officers and Islamic religious

figures, originally called the protests after the March 7 elections, charging that Bhutto's Pakistan People's party had engaged in massive vote fraud. The PNA demanded new elections under military and judicial supervision and called for Bhutto's resignation.

However, after Bhutto indicated that he might be willing to call new elections, the Pir of Pagaro, speaking on behalf of the jailed leaders of the PNA, announced May 1 that the PNA was prepared to negotiate all of its demands, including the call for Bhutto's resignation.

The PNA leadership has tried to use the mass mobilizations as leverage in these negotiations. But at the same time, there are a growing number of signs that the protests are no longer under its full control.

Since the demonstrations first began, broad sectors of the Pakistani population have been drawn into them, reflecting mass dissatisfaction with the Bhutto regime, particularly with its repressive policies. Many of the largest labor unions have participated in the protests. The April 22 general strike, which was called by the Pakistan Labor Alliance, paralyzed business in much of the country.

The April 22 issue of the Lahore weekly *Viewpoint* reported that in Sahiwal the Punjab Ghee Workers Federation called a protest against management corruption. The unionists also demanded the release of all arrested workers and political leaders, as well as an end to the state of emergency and such repressive laws as the Defence of Pakistan Rules.

In Lahore, the Mutahidda Mazdoor Majlis-i-Amal, a union led by leftists, organized a protest march against Bhutto April 19.

The April 29 *Viewpoint* reported that a week earlier, "Left political and trade

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union leaders met in Lahore and demanded Mr. Bhutto's resignation. . . ."

The PNA leadership's efforts to keep the demonstrations under control has met with some resistance from within the

PNA's own ranks. Markham commented in a May 3 dispatch from Islamabad that the call for the Martyr's Day protests by the newly formed general council of the PNA "reflects rank-and-file impatience

with the alliance's so far inconclusive negotiations with the Prime Minister."

One member of the general council, Malik Hamid Sarfraz, remarked that his followers were getting "fidgety." □

Source of Israel's Atom Bombs?

The Mystery of the Missing Uranium

By Fred Murphy

In 1968 a West German cargo ship loaded with 400,000 pounds of natural uranium left Antwerp, Belgium. After a stop in Rotterdam, the ship headed for Genoa, Italy. Somewhere in the Mediterranean the ship disappeared. It turned up several weeks later—with an entirely new crew of a different nationality, with a new name and sailing under a different flag . . . but without the 200 tons of uranium, which never reached Genoa.

Two hundred tons is enough uranium to fuel a nuclear reactor for twenty years. During that time, enough plutonium could be produced to make thirty nuclear warheads.

In 1963 the Israeli government purchased a twenty-six megawatt heavy-water reactor from France and set it up at Dimona in the Negev Desert. This is one of only two reactors in the world not regularly inspected by the International Atomic Energy Agency, a United Nations body that seeks to monitor nuclear weapons proliferation. Since going into operation, the Dimona reactor has produced enough plutonium for fifteen 20-kiloton atomic bombs (equivalent to the weapon that destroyed Nagasaki). France has always denied supplying any uranium fuel for Israel's reactor, and the Zionist regime has always refused to disclose its source.

The mystery of the Genoa-bound uranium was revealed April 28 by Paul L. Leventhal, a former staff expert on nuclear proliferation for a U.S. Senate committee. The story was in the text of a speech Leventhal would give the next day at the Salzburg Conference for a Non-Nuclear Future (see page 559).

Immediately thereafter, reports in the American press linked the disappearance of the cargo to the Israeli nuclear program, citing "intelligence officials in Europe and the United States."

The reports also indicated that it was unlikely that the ship was hijacked. Rather the uranium was thought to have been diverted to Israel through what H.D.S. Greenway of the *Washington Post* called a "carefully prearranged deal." Greenway noted that "a similar arrangement was made when the Israelis sailed out of Cherbourg with a flotilla of patrol



Herblock/Washington Post

boats after France had declared an embargo on arms to Israel" in 1969.

Tel Aviv's response was limited to a terse denial by the Israeli Atomic Energy Commission: "The reaction of the commission is clear and unambiguous; we deny all aspects of the story which relate to Israel," a spokesman said.

That the information was leaked at this particular time was probably not fortuitous. The disclosures came one day after Jimmy Carter sent a fifty-five page bill to Congress outlining his program to hedge U.S. exports of enriched uranium with conditions making it more difficult for importing countries to develop nuclear weapons. Carter's administration is also reviewing a 1974 pledge by Richard Nixon to provide both Israel and Egypt with nuclear power reactors.

Carter's efforts to curtail the proliferation of plutonium and the breeder reactors which produce it have met with negative responses from the regimes in West Germany, Japan, France, Britain, which want to proceed with breeder technology and which depend heavily on uranium

supplied by U.S. producers. Representatives of these and other nations with nuclear technology convened in London to discuss curbs on the spread of atomic weapons the same day Leventhal released his speech to the press.

Carter, of course, is himself the commander-in-chief of the world's most awesome nuclear arsenal. If he were the least bit serious about limiting the threat of atomic war, he would begin to dismantle his own weapons, instead of making pious statements about those of other countries.

In reality Carter is seeking to maintain what is left of what was once a near-monopoly on enriched uranium held by the United States. He is also wary of the consequences that could ensue if more of Washington's client states—such as Israel—developed nuclear weapons and used them. This fear has disturbed the U.S. ruling class for quite some time. Carter's energy adviser, James R. Schlesinger, long a servant of the American capitalists, wrote on this topic in the autumn 1967 issue of the *Yale Review*:

From the American standpoint, nuclear spread could lead to the disruption of nuclear strategies, to the political unsettlement of Europe, to the diversion of resources with a corresponding decrease in military security in Europe and along the Chinese periphery, to instability in third areas of the world which we would prefer to be serene, and finally, to an added risk, however minimal, of a small-scale attack on the United States. . . . Our continuing efforts to impose stability on unsettled areas would entail additional risks if any of these countries acquired regional [nuclear] capabilities.*

Carter's immediate problem is convincing his fellow members of the "nuclear club" of the reality of this problem. The revelations concerning the Israeli uranium mystery will be useful in that effort. □

*For additional quotes from Schlesinger's article and a fuller discussion of Washington's difficulties in asserting control over nuclear weapons development, see "Anyone Can Join the 'Nuclear Club'" and "A New Leap in the Nuclear Armaments Race," both by Ernest Harsch, in the July 29 and August 5, 1974, issues of *Intercontinental Press* (pages 1035 and 1094).

Vietnamese Cite White House Pledge to Repair War Damage

By Steve Wattenmaker

The first round of talks between representatives of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the U.S. State Department concluded May 4 in Paris with both sides indicating that progress had been made toward normalizing diplomatic relations. A second round of negotiations has been scheduled for mid-May.

Deputy Foreign Minister Phan Hien, who headed the Vietnamese delegation, told a news conference that Assistant Secretary of State for Asian Affairs Richard Holbrooke had agreed that the Carter administration would no longer block Vietnam's admission to the United Nations.

Hien said that in return the Vietnamese government would intensify efforts to provide information about American servicemen listed as missing in action in the Vietnam War.

According to a report by correspondent Flora Lewis in the May 5 *New York Times*, Holbrooke also promised to lift the U.S. trade embargo as soon as formal diplomatic relations were established. The State Department had previously insisted that the administration would not remove the embargo until a comprehensive agreement was signed between the two countries.

The sticking point in the negotiations, however, remained Carter's refusal to acknowledge responsibility for providing postwar reconstruction aid to Vietnam. Hien maintained publicly that "a contribution to healing the wounds of war and reconstruct the country" was an American obligation "linked" to the establishment of normal relations.

He told the Paris news conference that Vietnam still claimed the \$3.25 billion in aid that former President Nixon secretly promised as part of the 1973 Paris peace accords.

When the Vietnamese made the aid pledge public in 1975, President Ford responded that the North Vietnamese "takeover" of the south had canceled the agreement. President Carter repeated the same cynical justification as late as March 24, 1977.

Within hours after the current round of talks recessed in Paris, Congress voted 266 to 131 to prohibit even the discussion of aid to Hanoi in future negotiations. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance responded to the vote by stating that "we made clear to the Vietnamese that we will not pay any reparations."

A new, behind-the-scenes account of how the Nixon administration reneged on the

\$3.25 billion aid pledge is featured in the April 30 issue of *The Nation* magazine. It conflicts sharply with Carter's current excuse for refusing to provide postwar assistance. The account was written by Gareth Porter, who served as a staff consultant to the congressional "Missing in Action committee" on its 1975 trips to Paris and Hanoi.

Porter reveals that the question of reconstruction aid came up in the final round of Paris peace negotiations in January 1973. The draft agreement had contained only a vague reference to postwar aid and Vietnam's Le Duc Tho asked Henry Kissinger for a letter from President Nixon spelling out the specifics of Washington's commitment.

Kissinger agreed, and the two negotiated the language of such a letter. While the full text has never been made public, Porter quotes the two key passages that appeared later in the Hanoi newspaper *Nhan Dan* and have been confirmed as accurate by officials who participated in the 1973 negotiations:

(1) The Government of the United States of America will contribute to postwar reconstruction in North Vietnam without any political conditions.

(2) Preliminary United States studies indicate that the programs appropriate for the U.S. contribution to the aforementioned postwar reconstruction will fall in the range of \$3.25 billion grant aid over five years. Other forms of aid will be agreed upon between the two parties.

After the letter was in final form, Kissinger tried pushing Hanoi to arrange a cease-fire in Cambodia as the price of obtaining congressional approval for the aid package. "We told them, if you are thinking of getting any aid from Congress, you will have to produce a cease-fire in Cambodia," a Kissinger aide recalled.

Hanoi reportedly ignored the implied threat and an exchange of letters between Nixon and North Vietnam's head of state Pham Van Dong sealed the aid agreement. The letters constituted a legal, if secret, part of the final Paris peace agreement.

According to Porter, Kissinger viewed Hanoi as held in check by both the threat of renewed U.S. bombing and the refusal of China or the Soviet Union to support any major offensive by Communist forces in South Vietnam. Consequently, Kissinger felt free to use the aid pact as a bargaining chip to extract further concessions from Hanoi when a new round of

negotiations on implementing the Paris accords began in April 1973.

Nixon and Kissinger were again particularly interested in forcing Hanoi to intervene in Cambodia to arrange a cease-fire before the Lon Nol dictatorship was swept away by the Khmer Rouge insurgents.

In these talks, Porter says, economic aid to North Vietnam was for the first time explicitly made conditional to a Cambodian cease-fire. One member of the U.S. negotiating team told Porter: "We demanded a cease-fire in Cambodia as the price of economic aid. We told them we wouldn't be prepared to go to Congress with an agreement unless they came through with it."

Since there was no provision in the Paris accords for Hanoi to arrange a Cambodian cease-fire, Washington was clearly ignoring the agreement to provide aid "without any political conditions."

Hanoi refused the demand, insisting they had no control over the Cambodian revolutionaries. "The Vietnamese told us they couldn't produce it," an aide recalled. "They would say quite earnestly that they would do everything possible. But they couldn't commit themselves to a settlement."

Finally, according to Porter, Le Duc Tho agreed to a private understanding with Kissinger in June 1973 that each side would do its best to promote a settlement in Cambodia, but without promising any concrete results.

By mid-July, however, the Lon Nol regime was on its last legs and hope of arranging a cease-fire evaporated. In Paris, American and Vietnamese negotiators were just putting the finishing touches on the aid package to be presented to Congress when Kissinger ordered the U.S. delegation home without completing the document. Washington no longer had any need to maintain the pretense of going through with the agreement.

Forced in 1975 to publicly justify the double-cross, President Ford concocted the argument that Hanoi's responsibility for the fall of the Saigon regime nullified the Paris accords and any U.S. promise of aid.

"But in fact the sequence of events was the opposite," Porter concludes. Faced with the Thieu regime's continuing military offensive, "Kissinger's refusal to keep his end of the bargain took away the last incentive which Hanoi had to maintain a defensive posture in the South, and led ultimately to the drive that brought Saigon's collapse." □

Behind the Kidnapping of the Three Argentine Journalists

By D. Marcelo

BUENOS AIRES—It was inevitable. A government that openly used paramilitary groups against revolutionary organizations and the workers movement would necessarily also use them to solve its own internal conflicts. And it has begun to do so. Most likely the kidnapping of three of the top staff members of the daily *La Opinión* is only the beginning.¹

The accommodating "opposition" is stupified. The shameless, toothless liberals within our bourgeoisie were not ready for this. They thought it was possible to let "the boys" do the dirty work, let them pile up the bodies of hundreds and thousands of workers and revolutionists, and then push them aside so that others could make speeches about human dignity, peace, rebuilding the nation, and elections.

Convinced of this and convinced that "the subversives have been defeated," the liberals recently launched a political offensive. The response was immediate and forcible. And it has created severe tension within the military dictatorship.

Timerman, Jara, and Sajón Kidnapped

Twenty days after his disappearance, nothing is known about Edgardo Sajón. The government has publicly stated that it knows nothing of his whereabouts. Planning Minister Ramón Díaz Bessone told the press in New York that Sajón is "not being held by the armed forces or the police. We do not know what happened to him." However, such denials have scant credibility.

In fact, the dictatorship has presented sufficient examples of its method of operation. On April 16 at 8:30 p.m. the Information Office of the president of the nation issued a statement saying, "As soon as we learned of the disappearance of Mr. Jara, security bodies began to investigate, but they are not yet in a position to provide information on the matter."

Enrique Jara is assistant director of *La Opinión*. He was detained by a gang of twenty armed civilians at dawn on Friday, April 15. While three men remained in his home holding the members of his family, Jara was taken to the house of Jacobo Timerman, director of the same newspaper. Jara was apparently used to gain access since they made him go up to Timerman's apartment along with the

men—identified as members of the military—who were heading the operation. Both the doorman of the building and Timerman's wife saw Jara. Despite that, the government insisted it knew nothing about him until mounting national and international pressure produced results.

Even then, it was the army, not the government, that issued a statement April 18: "The Command of Zone I informs the population that since April 15, 1977, the assistant director of *La Opinión*, Mr. Enrique Jara, a Uruguayan citizen, has been under the jurisdiction of military authorities."²

It should be kept in mind that the president of the nation, who stated via his press secretary that "he knew nothing" about the disappearance of Jara, is also commander in chief of the army.

In the case of Timerman, things were no better. It was only after news of his kidnapping had spread around the world, resulting in condemnations from several international groupings, that the army admitted he was being held—twenty hours after the operation.

The fact that both operations were carried out in the middle of the night by men in civilian dress, that guards remained in both houses for three hours, and that the telephones were ripped out of the wall so that the families could not report the actions does not contradict our assertion that they were kidnappings that, unlike the kidnapping of Sajón, were frustrated by the pressure created by an immediate international outcry.

Why Were They Kidnapped?

The government is trying to explain the blow against the *La Opinión* officials by saying that Timerman is being held "in conjunction with the investigation of the Graiver case" and under the National Security Law. They are holding Jara without specifying any reason, and they deny all responsibility for Sajón. Various official and semiofficial statements and commentaries nonetheless try to present the three cases as a logical outcome of "the fight against subversion," linking the three journalists to the "Graiver affair."

The repression against [the Peronist guerrilla group] the Montoneros led to the discovery of a financial group headed by David Graiver. Graiver is said to have

close contacts with former Economics Minister José Ber Gelbard. The financial group acted to channel funds to that guerrilla organization, which in 1975 had obtained \$60 million through the kidnapping of two members of the Bemberg group.³ This "affair," in which many notable members of the Argentine bourgeoisie along with representatives of some imperialist firms apparently would be implicated, is being used at one and the same time as a battering ram and a screen for the struggle unleashed among different sectors of the bourgeoisie who are now accusing each other of being "subversives."

Leaving aside the imprecise meaning the word "subversion" has acquired in this country and the tremendous fraud concerning the dictatorship's own "legality," let us look at how the three kidnap victims relate to the dictates of "national security."

Jara has a long history as a journalist in Argentina and Uruguay. According to a Reuters dispatch, he is "a strong candidate for the post of executive secretary of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights." This fact makes him suspect as a threat to the national security. However, Jara's ideological and political convictions are clearly defined in the same cable, which adds that the prisoner "placed as a condition for accepting the post support from the government of Uruguay—his native land—and Argentina—where he has resided since 1971."

Placing as a condition for deciding to defend human rights the support of the current governments of Uruguay and Argentina is something to think about when it comes time to judge what class of "subversive" Jara is.

In the case of Timerman, there is no need for much explanation. As director of *La Opinión*, he was a firm supporter of the military dictatorship's policy of starvation and repression.

When a delegation from Amnesty International came to the country, Timerman boasted in a note on the front page of his daily: "Last night the director of *La Opinión* refused a request for a meeting made by Amnesty International's special envoy from London, who is visiting Argentina. . . . There is another interview that could be fruitful for Amnesty Interna-

3. Juan and Jorge Born, top executives of the Bunge and Born conglomerate, were released in mid-1975 after a \$60 million ransom was paid to the Montoneros.

1. Edgardo Sajón disappeared April 1; Enrique Jara and Jacobo Timerman, April 15.

2. Jara was released on April 23, but Timerman is still being held "for economic crimes."

tional's envoy—with the wife and orphaned children of Mr. Carlos Alberto Souto, killed by guerrillas yesterday. Perhaps Mr. Souto also deserves to have some human rights recognized" (*La Opinión*, November 4, 1976).

Previously Timerman had labeled as "an accomplice of leftist extremists" the U.S. congressional committee headed by Donald Fraser and sent to investigate human rights in Argentina. He proposed that he testify before the committee in open defense of the daily crimes of the military junta.

Fraser accepted the proposition, and Timerman was to have appeared in mid-May in New York to testify.

Sajón, who at the time of his kidnapping belonged to the *La Opinión* board of directors, has a trustworthy journalistic record as a leading reporter for newspapers that unequivocally defend capital, such as *Clarín* in Buenos Aires and *Acción* in Montevideo. But the position he held that is most relevant here was the post of presidential secretary of press and publicity, under Gen. Alejandro Lanusse in the final phase of the military dictatorship installed in 1966.

General Lanusse himself came out publicly in Sajón's defense and to this end met with President Jorge Videla April 3. The following day Lanusse said, "I believe the president is honest and sincere when he gives me the information he has, which is given to him by his subordinates . . . but to get back to the welter of different versions, in them there is conjecture that Mr. Sajón must be in La Plata with others detained in the Graiver case."

He added, "I am afraid—I hope I am mistaken but—I can only fear that what is involved is an event that can result in very serious consequences for the country and I want to avoid that" (*La Opinión*, April 5, 1977).

Such solidarity is explained if it is kept in mind that Sajón is the editor of Lanusse's memoirs, which are scheduled to go on sale soon. Their publication is the first step in a strategy developed with the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR—Radical Civic Union), one in which Sajón plays a central role, to present Lanusse as a candidate for the presidency of Argentina.

These facts clearly show two things:

1. The kidnappings of Sajón, Jara, and Timerman—the last two later transformed into "detentions"—have nothing to do with the "fight against subversion." On the contrary, they reflect the direction disputes within the bourgeoisie have taken.

2. The government and the armed forces, through the procedures used and the proven falsity of their statements, show themselves publicly to be those *directly responsible* for the thousands of kidnappings and assassinations that began occurring long before the military junta took power.

Lanusse Arrested



Alejandro Lanusse, the general who presided over the Argentine dictatorship from 1971 to 1973, was arrested in Buenos Aires May 4, allegedly in connection with an investigation of government corruption. Jailed along with him were Brig. Carlos Rey, Adm. Pedro Gnavi, and Rafael Cáceres Monté—all top functionaries in the former Lanusse government.

In fact, these three kidnappings deserve to be analyzed closely precisely because the details surfaced, the victims being three known representatives of the bourgeoisie. The kidnappings became a perfect, irrefutable demonstration that the military government is directly responsible for the thousands of killings carried out by what it has tried to present to world public opinion as anonymous gangs. These "gangs" have now been revealed to be nothing but groups of officials and military underlings carrying out orders from higher up.

The Argentine press has never given details of the daily kidnappings when the victims were workers, students, or revolutionary activists. In the best of cases, the press has merely mentioned some of these cases without giving them any importance.

Journalists themselves have been hit hard, without the facts reaching the public and without any sector of the bourgeois "opposition" coming to their defense. In the last twelve months twelve journalists were kidnapped, five of whom ended up dead. Twenty-three journalists are currently in jail, and more than 660 in exile, according to figures compiled by the Federación de Periodistas Latinoamericanos [Federation of Latin American Journalists], located in Caracas.

As part of the same political offensive

the dictatorship has reacted to, a group of attorneys, outstanding among whom is R. Alfonsín of the UCR, presented a suit in the Supreme Court April 11. The suit demanded that the court expedite 425 habeas corpus petitions presented on behalf of persons who had disappeared in the course of the last year and whose petitions had not been replied to. The court declared the matter outside its jurisdiction, placing the responsibility with the executive power.

These 425 persons are only a minute fraction of the thousands who have disappeared in the last twenty months. Many of them have been killed, their bodies buried by the army in secret graves. The main cemetery in Córdoba contains a section closed to the public, where army trucks periodically enter. Others remain in concentration camps the armed forces have established in Córdoba and in "Campo de Mayo"—the Greater Buenos Aires headquarters of the First Army Corps, the most powerful bastion of the armed forces.

In addition, there are thousands of political prisoners throughout the country who have not been charged or received legal aid. They suffer systematic torture and inhuman conditions of confinement.

Finally, the press records a daily average of five murder victims, apparent casualties of "confrontations." These are none other than prisoners killed in cold blood or victims of the indiscriminate raids the armed forces conduct systematically throughout the country.

There are thousands of anonymous, defenseless victims here who need help. The case of the three prominent kidnapped journalists, which has been publicized, must not be allowed to obscure the tragedy of the real situation. It should instead serve as one more proof, an irrefutable confirmation, of the dictatorship's blood-stained hands.

This is all the more essential since those thousands of prisoners in jails and concentration camps are currently hostages of the military junta, and the junta will not waver in massacring them as a savage response to the crisis that has already begun to corrode it.

April 21, 1977

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India—Rapid Increase in Strikes and Slowdowns

By Sharad Jhaveri

JAMNAGAR, India—The Indian working class was hard hit by the emergency imposed by former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Workers were the prime targets of various measures undertaken by her regime, including the freezing of their wages while prices were allowed to soar.

Now that the emergency has been withdrawn and the Janata party government of Morarji Desai has repealed the Prevention of Publication of Objectionable Matter Ordinance and restored many democratic rights, Indian workers have begun to pay more attention to their economic and trade-union problems.

According to an April 6 dispatch in the *Economic Times*, worker unrest is threatening production in Maharashtra, one of the most industrialized states. More than fifty large, medium, and small factories have been affected by strikes, lockouts, slowdowns, morchas (processions), and demonstrations, involving about 75,000 workers. The number of factories affected by such disturbances is rapidly increasing.

In Greater Bombay alone, there have been more than fifty strikes during February and March, according to the Labor and Police departments. Twenty-five to thirty factories have been hit in the Thana Belapur industrial complex near Bombay. Ten cases of "closure or lockout" were also reported.

Trade unions have begun to flood the government with memoranda listing their demands:

Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, a trade-union affiliate of Jan Sangh, one of the most influential components of the Janata party government, has passed a resolution demanding:

Restoration of the pre-emergency bonus policy and its extension to all workers.

Immediate scrapping of the compulsory deposit scheme.

Restoration of wage agreements in the Life Insurance Corporation and other industries where those had been annulled during the emergency.

An end to all types of victimisation inflicted on workers during the period of the emergency and making good the loss suffered by them on that account.

The initiation of inquiries about police excesses against workers and their organizations during the emergency.

The Scindia Steam Navigation Company employees union demanded "the restoration of privileges and rights of employees which were taken away by the

actions of the management during the emergency."

Even the Indian National Trade Union Congress [the trade-union federation dominated by Gandhi's Congress party—IP] has urged the government to accord legislative sanction to the announcement that the traditional bonus is a deferred wage.

The National Federation of Petroleum Workers and the Indian National Chemical Workers Federation have submitted a memorandum listing their demands relating to pay revisions, dearness allowances, bonus, etc.

Janata party Labor Minister Ravindra Varma has initiated a series of exploratory talks with capitalists and central trade-union leaders. Meanwhile, employers have demanded an industrial truce.

The question yet to be decided is: How far will the Janata party government allow the rise of workers' struggles to

develop and grow unhindered?

In view of the difficult economic situation, the options before the new government are limited. "Far from healthy," is how the new finance minister, H.M. Patel, characterized the economy March 30 in the Lok Sabha [the lower house of Parliament—IP.] There are problems of inadequate growth both in agriculture and industry, rising unemployment, and increasing numbers of factory closures.

Countering the claims of C. Subramaniam, finance minister in the Gandhi regime, regarding the economic achievements of the emergency, Patel said that the 8.5 percent growth in national income in 1975-76 compared to 0.2 percent in 1974-75 was largely due to "favorable weather conditions." He warned that agricultural production was expected to decline substantially during the current year, noting that production trends for coarse grains, pulses, and oil seeds were particularly discouraging.

Wholesale prices have been rising relentlessly since March of last year; by March 1977 they had risen 12 percent.

The major tenets of the new government's economic policy will become clearer in May, when it will announce its budgetary proposals.

April 22, 1977

For the Release of All Indian Political Prisoners!

[The following declaration by the Committee for the Protection of Democratic Rights, Bombay, was sent to Indian Prime Minister Morarji Desai April 15. It was published as a letter to the editor in the April 16 issue of the *Bombay Economic and Political Weekly*.]

* * *

We the undersigned strongly urge the government to redeem its pre-election pledge of releasing all political prisoners, irrespective of their political beliefs. It is our understanding from figures stated by cabinet ministers in Parliament, as well as estimates from independent sources, that there are about 35,000 political prisoners including undertrials yet to be released.

A large number of these detenus [detainees] have been implicated in criminal cases to deny them the status of political prisoners. We request the government to nullify this anti-democratic practice of the previous dictatorial government, and affirm its faith in democratic rights by dropping cases against these detenus, and releasing them unconditionally. The fact that a large number of these detenus have languished in jail for anything from three to eight years, in the most inhuman

conditions, and the fact that a negligible number have been produced for trial in the past decade demonstrates the fabricated nature of the cases against them.

From the experience of the anti-democratic nature of the last regime we are keenly aware that the extra-legal political detention of any section of society opens the doors to the future use of such detention against other sections of society and violates the basis of a free and democratic society.

We therefore urge the government to unconditionally release all political prisoners immediately, or establish the veracity of the nature of the charges against them through open inquiry committees.

We demand judicial inquiries in the cases of the hundreds of detenus and undertrials who have been killed in jails or in encounters during the past decade.

We hope that the detention of these political prisoners which has earned worldwide opprobrium for its violation of human and political rights will receive your most urgent attention, and be remedied immediately.

Navroz Modi

Committee for the Protection of Democratic Rights, Bombay.

Indian Stalinists Assess Election Debacle



GANDHI: CPI now says it "overestimated" her "progressive potentiality."

JAMNAGAR, India—The pro-Moscow Communist party of India (CPI) suffered a crushing defeat in the March general elections because of its support for former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's repressive policies.

The CPI's all-India vote fell from 69.36 lakhs* (4.73%) in 1971 to 53.10 lakhs (2.82%) in 1977. The number of seats held by the CPI plummeted from twenty-three to seven.

The left CP, the Communist party of India (Marxist), CPI(M), formed an electoral alliance with the Janata party. It polled 81.03 lakh votes (4.30%) against 75.11 lakh votes (5.12%) in 1971. However, it won twenty-two seats as against twenty-five in 1971.

Thus, overall, Stalinist representation in the sixth Lok Sabha (lower house of Parliament) has been considerably reduced.

The CPI published a sterile, half-hearted self-criticism of its policy in the April 10 issue of the party's central organ, *New Age*. The National Council resolution admits that the main reason for the CPI's rout at the hustings was its total support for Gandhi's emergency measures. However, the CPI still retains the untenable position that the emergency was initially a boon. Only later, with the rise of Indira Gandhi's son Sanjay and an "extra-

constitutional centre of power," did the emergency begin to exhibit what it calls "negative" features.

In the CPI's opinion, "it was a serious mistake for our party not to have called for the lifting of the emergency once its negative features had begun to come to the fore. A proper understanding was lacking that vast emergency powers could not be allowed to remain in the hands of the bourgeois state and its bureaucracy for a long time." In other words, there would be no harm if such powers are allowed for a short time, though the CPI fails to spell out the length of time that would be acceptable.

The CPI resolution continues in a cynical vein: "There was the mistaken understanding that the emergency could be used to bring about progressive shifts in the state power in a national democratic direction. The progressive potentiality of the national bourgeoisie and of its representatives in the Congress headed by Indira Gandhi was overestimated. . . ."

This betrays the extent of revisionist thinking of the Stalinists in India. The emergency provisions in Articles 356 to 360 of the Indian constitution are unique. Such provisions in peacetime are not to be found in any of the bourgeois-democratic federal constitutions in the world. They are a built-in mechanism to install a constitutional dictatorship of the bourgeoisie without recourse to naked military rule.

Instead of demanding that these articles be scrapped, the CPI engages in wishful thinking—after nineteen months of nightmarish experience with the emergency—that the repressive fist of the bourgeois state in the form of emergency powers can be used for desired changes without any fundamental change in the state power.

The CPI now acknowledges that on the question of the emergency there was nothing to distinguish it from the ruling Congress party. "In the mind of large sections of the masses our demarcation from the Congress became blurred. The independent image of our party was eroded," the resolution admits.

Completely lacking, however, is any admission that this erosion occurred because of the CPI's class-collaborationist policy and its total failure to pursue independent working-class politics. It is therefore unable to explain the paradox of a four-party rightist combine—the Janata party—restoring bourgeois-democratic freedoms throttled by the "progressive" Gandhi.

As against this evaluation, Harkishen Singh Surjeet of the CPI(M) criticizes the CPI resolution—from a class-

collaborationist perspective, of course—in the April 17 issue of *People's Democracy*. He castigates the CPI for failing to respond to the call for left and democratic unity.

Along with the All-India Forward Bloc and the Revolutionary Socialist party, the CPI(M) has extended its support to the Janata party government. In a March 29 joint statement these parties expressed the view that the consolidation and strengthening of the left and democratic forces was the urgent need of the hour. But nowhere does this statement stress the need for independent proletarian politics.

A CPI(M) Central Committee statement issued March 26-27 congratulates the Janata party and the Congress for Democracy on their victory and presents a list of immediate tasks for the new regime. The entire thrust of the statement is to place political confidence in the new government for the solution of basic tasks.

Thus, both the two major Stalinist tendencies fail to come to grips with the complex social reality of India. Both fail to perceive that the Janata party victory was due to the failure of the CPI and CPI(M) to provide a clear revolutionary perspective on the central question of these elections—that is, the nature and limitations of bourgeois democracy in India. Neither party held up the revolutionary ideal of socialist democracy, even if only for propagandistic purposes.

Consequently, the electoral politics of both parties had to be subordinated to one or the other bourgeois formation in India. Now both are paying the price for their class-collaborationist politics.

April 24, 1977



Herblock/Washington Post

*One lakh equals 100,000 units.—IP

Zambia—Students Say 'No' to Cut in Government Aid

By Jim Atkinson

LUSAKA—The Zambian government of President Kenneth Kaunda has been challenged by the most widespread student demonstrations and strikes since the country gained formal political independence from Britain in 1964.

Students in technical colleges in both the capital, Lusaka, and several cities in the copper-mining region boycotted classes and took to the streets following a January 28 announcement that the government would cut student allowances from K10* per month to only K5. Several campuses were occupied in the ensuing protests.

The Kaunda regime, however, refused to back down. On March 8, heavily armed riot police were sent into the occupied colleges. At Evelyn Hone College in Lusaka and the Zambia Institute of Technology (ZIT) in Kitwe, police threw tear gas cannisters into student bedrooms, directed water cannon into dormitories, smashed windows and doors with axes, and viciously beat cornered students. The police rampage left the two campuses looking like battlefields. According to a hospital worker in Kitwe, some of the students who were admitted to the city hospital for treatment on March 8 had bullet wounds.

Students here say that as many as five of their comrades were killed during the police riots.

Despite Kaunda's denial, the rumours persist. And, according to an official of the Zambia Congress of Trades Unions (ZCTU), the trade-union federation has received a confidential document from the government confirming that five students were indeed killed by the police on March 8. The ZCTU is affiliated with the ruling United National Independence party (UNIP).

This is not the first time that Zambian students have clashed with the Kaunda government. Student protests have prompted the regime to close down the University of Zambia (UNZA) twice since its founding in 1966.

The second of these crises was sparked just over a year ago, when students demonstrated against Kaunda's collusion with the imperialist intervention in Angola. The regime responded by declaring a state of emergency on January 28, 1976, closing down the university and arresting seventeen students, four staff members, and a journalist. The students were released several months later and, in a

*One Zambian kwacha is equivalent to US\$1.25.

rebuff for the UNIP Youth League, several of them were elected to the executive of the National Union of Zambian Students last August. Several former detainees were expelled from UNZA in November for not having "reformed."

The regime's decision to halve student allowances was a reflection of the acute economic crisis wracking this neocolony as a result of the worldwide capitalist slump. In particular, the government has imposed tough austerity measures following two years of greatly depressed prices in the world market for copper, on which the Kaunda regime depends for more than 90 percent of its export earnings.

The students, however, insisted that they were not to blame for the crisis of the Zambian economy. "The chaotic economic situation this country is facing has not been brought about by student allowances," a statement issued by a mass meeting of students at Evelyn Hone College pointed out January 28.

Fuelling the students' ire, moreover, was a government decision just six weeks earlier to raise the salaries of members of parliament and increase housing allowances for the general secretary of the UNIP, the prime minister, the speaker of the National Assembly, the deputy speaker, government ministers and ministers of state, and the attorney general.

"If they can increase their salaries, why should they cut our meagre allowances?" students at the Zambia Air Services Training Institute in Lusaka asked in a statement released February 1. The students, who demanded that their allowances be raised to K20 a month, asked: "How are we going to live with this K5 allowance when the prices of commodities have gone up?"

The January 28 budget announcement sparked class boycotts and demonstrations throughout Zambia. "In Kitwe," the Zambia Daily Mail reported February 1, "large detachments of armed police yesterday [January 31] rushed to the Boma [government office], where nearly 2,000 ZIT students marched in protest against the Government's decision to reduce their allowances. . . . All roads leading to the Boma were sealed off by armed police and big traffic jams formed on Obote and President Avenues as students chanted anti-hunger slogans."

On the same day, students from the Northern Technical College (Nortech) in Ndola marched to the office of Fines Bulawayo, the member of the UNIP

Central Committee for the copper-mining region, to present a petition. In Lusaka, students from Evelyn Hone College and the National Resources Development College marched to the National Assembly.

But the government refused to rescind its decision. On February 1, Education Minister Lameck Goma said that the government's decision was final. On the same day, the inspector general of police, Fabiano Chela, warned the students that their demonstrations were illegal under the state of emergency.

A month later, at a special nationwide strategy-planning meeting in Lusaka, student representatives decided to step up their protests in view of the government's intransigence. On March 2, students at Luanshya's Technical and Vocational Teachers College and Trades Training Institute barricaded the college entrances. Barricades were also thrown up at ZIT in Kitwe and Evelyn Hone in Lusaka. Later, at ZIT, students commandeered college vehicles to assist the struggle.

It was in response to this mounting militancy on the part of the students that the government sent squads of riot police to smash their way into the occupied colleges on March 8 and assault scores of students—presumably to emphasise that the regime was not going to concede under any circumstances.

The police brutality, however, succeeded only in widening the gulf between the students and the regime.

The seriousness of the confrontation prompted some UNIP MPs in the National Assembly to dissociate themselves from the government's actions and plead with ministers for a change in policy on the allowance issue.

Daniel Munkombwe, MP for Choma, warned the government March 17 that its repressive actions could be used by Zambia's "enemies" to make embarrassing comparisons with the massacres in Soweto, South Africa. He urged the government to take note that relations between students and the government were "at their lowest ebb."

Several top trade-union bureaucrats also spoke out against the cuts in allowances and against the police repression—despite the ZCTU's links to UNIP. ZCTU Chairman Frederick Chiluba demanded that the students' allowances be raised from K10 to K20, pointing out that the economic difficulties faced by students are similar to those pressing in on workers.

Inflation is hitting workers hard. Be-



LUSAKA, February 1: Students march to parliament protesting cut in government aid.

tween January-September 1975 and the equivalent period in 1976, the official food price index for low-income Zambians rose by 20.6 percent. (The index is known to underestimate inflation because it is based on widely ignored government-set prices.) According to a study recently completed by the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka, 52 percent of Zambians live below the breadline. Employment has fallen by 17,000 in the past two years, according to the March 6 *Sunday Times of Zambia*, and there are about a quarter-million persons who are destitute.

In addition, the government's shortage of foreign exchange has led to a strict import quota system, causing production bottlenecks and serious shortages of food in the shops. "Almost everything" has been absent from the food-shelves in city stores at some point, a student told me. "Today it might be bread. Tomorrow it might be sugar, cooking oil. Next time, it could be salt. It's almost everything."

There is no doubt that the mass of Zambians, especially those in the cities, are worse off today than at any point since independence. And, it seems, popular support for the regime and UNIP, the only legal political party, has tumbled to its lowest level so far.

Two recent industrial disputes also illustrate the trend—and point to the powerful pressures now bearing down on the UNIP politicians at the head of the ZCTU. On March 22, Goodson Titima,

general secretary of the National Union of Posts and Telecommunications Workers, warned the government that his union would launch a strike if the Ministry of Labour did not ratify a stalled wage agreement negotiated last November with the Posts and Telecommunications Corporation.

"The fact that workers have not gone on strike yet is because the union leadership has the confidence of workers," Titima said. "It is timely, however, to warn that this situation could turn for the worse in the near future."

Titima was trying to head off a strike, but the Lusaka branch of his union vowed three days later to go out on April 1 if the new wage structure was not ratified. Titima condemned the Lusaka branch, noting that a strike would be illegal under the state of emergency. "If it materialised," he warned the workers, "it would render those responsible to self-destruction, as police have the power to pick up anybody who breaks the law."

Titima, however, was out of tune with the mood of his own members. The Ndola branch came out in strong support of the stand taken by the Lusaka postal workers, issuing a statement saying that "we want our Lusaka counterparts to know that Ndola supports whatever action they will take morally and physically."

The union's telecommunications branch denounced Titima as a "sell-out and liability" to the union, in a letter published in

the March 30 issue of the *Zambia Daily Mail*. Accusing Titima of threatening to call in police to break the strike, the letter asked: "Is it in the best interests of the labour movement for a general secretary to invite the police to arrest members he represents?"

The uncompromising stand taken by the postal and telecommunications workers, who occupy a strategic position in the economy, prompted the government to settle the issue quietly by ratifying the filibustered wage agreement.

Workers at a Dunlop tyre factory in Ndola, however, were less fortunate. All work ground to a standstill when they walked off the job March 31. The strike was broken when ten strike leaders were fired by the Dunlop management April 5 in collusion with the UNIP and the government. "These measures were taken," said Cosmas Chibanda, MP for Masala, "to avoid illegal strikes which have become common in Ndola and maintain industrial peace at the factory."

As these battles intensify, the workers' struggle will doubtless focus not only on economic demands but also on democratic issues, above all the right to free collective bargaining and the right to strike. Revolutionary socialists here stress also the importance of ending the ZCTU's links with the UNIP, the party of the Zambian *apamwamba* (bourgeoisie), and converting the unions into real fighting instruments of the workers. □

Northern Ireland—'Loyalist' Strike Fizzles

By Gerry Foley

After four days, the general strike launched May 3 by the ultraright proimperialist organizations in Northern Ireland had failed to paralyze the economic life of the British enclave.

The results achieved fell far short of those of the "loyalist" strike in 1974, which did effectively shut down the six Irish counties ruled directly by London.

The reason for the failure of the latest strike seemed clear. This time, unlike 1974, the British authorities were united in their opposition to it. In the April 28 *Irish Times*, Claud Cockburn reviewed the attitude of British officials during the 1974 strike:

The Army High Command in the North was divided in its reasons for not taking action at the beginning of the strike, when military action against the intimidators and bully-boys could probably have been successful.

One faction in the High Command was, silently but implacably, opposed to the Catholics whom it identified with the Provisionals. In the view of that faction, a very powerful one in the British Army, the militant Protestant leadership might be a bit of a pain in the neck but was basically on the right side. Our sort.

The other bit of the High Command simply based its reasons for inaction at the critical moment upon alleged technical considerations. Their spokesman said—and they told Harold Wilson [then prime minister] so—that the Army in the North just did not have the technically qualified manpower to run power stations and thus keep the North going despite the strike.

There was, you will recall, that mysterious weekend during which Harold Wilson first seemed to be announcing that he was going to use all available forces to keep the power-sharing Government [including Catholics] from being toppled by a *coup d'état*, and then, after consultations at Chequers with the military, remained passionately passive.

The power plants were decisive in the last loyalist strike. Their shutting down meant that the rest of the economy had to stop functioning. At the same time, it showed unmistakably that the strike organizers were in control, and guaranteed that political and physical intimidation by the ultraright loyalists would be effective.

This time, not only did the British authorities and the army make clear in advance that they were united in opposing the strike, but powerful economic pressures were brought to bear on the Protestant workers.

A few days before the strike, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Roy Mason announced that Harland and Wolff shipyards had just received a £60 million



IAN PAISLEY: Leader of right-wing strike.

contract that would assure 2,000 jobs for the next two years. The workers in this declining enterprise, now dependent on government support, are a key section of the Protestant labor aristocracy.

After announcing the new contract, Mason warned:

If there is any disruption, if there is any illegal act which could scar the image of Northern Ireland once again, then you all must face up to the fact that it will cause economic decline. It will be difficult to hold the orders we've got and to attract more to Northern Ireland.

Fionnuala O Connor's report in the April 30 *Irish Times* on her interviews with Harland and Wolff workers indicated that Mason's carrot-and-stick approach had been successful. One worker was quoted as saying: "If we lose the order we'll lose the yard, that's the effect it [Mason's announcement] had. God knows we've waited long enough for it [the contract]."

"The shipyard workers voted overwhelmingly against the strike, and the other key sections of the Protestant working class followed their lead.

The most well-known Loyalist politician backing the strike was the preacher Ian Paisley. The organization that called it was the United Unionist Action Council (UUAC), which includes the far-right

loyalist groups. It does not include the Official Unionist party or the Orange Order, neither of which supported the strike. But in 1974 also the more direct representatives of the Protestant bourgeoisie hung back.

Until now, whenever there has been a confrontation between a more moderate and more rightist alternative in Protestant politics, the rightist one has always won out. There has been a steady march to the right.

Now, for the first time, the loyalist forces pushing to the right have apparently been blocked. Analysts in the big British and Irish papers wrote that the UUAC had bitten off too much to chew, since its action this time was directed against the authority of the British state itself. It was demanding not the withdrawal of a concession to the local Catholic middle class as in 1974, but the restoration of the Belfast Protestant parliament and a war of extermination on the militant Irish organizations.

It is hard to believe that the UUAC leaders themselves believed such goals were attainable. Moreover, in the past Paisley was not a strong supporter of restoring the local parliament but favored total integration of Northern Ireland into the United Kingdom.

Nonetheless, Paisley committed himself this time to a position from which he could not retreat without big losses. In the April 30 *Irish Times*, David McKittrick wrote:

He has always left himself an escape clause and that is why his current position is an unfamiliar one for him. For the first time, he bet everything. It is now all or nothing.

There was a note of desperation in the strike leaders' appeals that became stronger as the action faltered. A May 6 AP dispatch quoted Paisley as saying: "The strike will go on. It must. This is a life-or-death struggle."

The failure of the strike shows clearly that while the Loyalist organizations have a certain autonomy vis-à-vis the British capitalist class and its government, in the last analysis they can play no independent role.

The question is why the Loyalists decided to press ahead with this strike when the chances for success were so dim.

Part of the answer at least seems to be that the deepening economic crisis and the continuing conflict are beginning to wear down the illusions and proimperialist belligerency of the poor Protestants, on which the loyalist demagogues directly depend.

For example, in the April 30 *Irish Times*, Fionnuala O Connor quoted a Protestant shipyard worker as saying:

"I don't know who gives them the jurisdiction to call a thing like this—now if they could give you a guarantee it'd end the trouble, that'd be different." □

Ireland—Anti-Imperialist Forces Discuss Joint Activity

By Ruairí O Connaire

[The following article was published in the April 22 issue of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

The women's peace movement was a flash in the pan. Created with the aid of the British to drive support away from the Irish resistance, it faded out during the winter. The imperialist offensive in the North, reinforced by the state of emergency in the South, had one positive aspect. It forced the Irish resistance movement to rethink its strategy.

The attempt to treat the fighters in the North as criminals and the repression in the South, whose character is shown by the recent revelations of torture and by the complaints of the Portlaoise prisoners on hunger strike, posed a challenge. Facing this situation, the republican organizations (Sinn Féin and the Provisional IRA, and the Irish Republican Socialist party [IRSP]), the reformist organizations (the Irish Communist party and Official Sinn Féin), and the small far-left groups (People's Democracy and the Movement for a Socialist Republic, Irish section of the Fourth International) have raised the question of a regroupment of anti-imperialist forces in Ireland.

While 1976 was a year of splits in virtually all the left organizations, 1977 has been marked by a desire for unity. This aspiration has had a two-sided result. On the one hand, it has brought together socialist and republican activists, primarily at the rank-and-file level. But it also produced lines of cleavage running through some organizations.

Inspired by the Relatives Action Committee (RAC) in Belfast, which at the end of 1976 included People's Democracy, the IRSP, and the Provisionals, broad-based committees spread throughout Northern Ireland. They grew up primarily around the issue of supporting the prisoners' struggle to maintain their political status. In Newry and Armagh, broad committees were formed. However, the richest experience developed in Derry.

In Northern Ireland's second largest city, the Irish Front was formed. It included Provisional Sinn Féin, the IRSP, the Nationalist party, and former members of "Official" Sinn Féin, such as Michey Montgomery, who had been a top leader in the "Officials." It has been able to mobilize the population of Derry on an ongoing basis around anti-imperialist demands.

Organized as a federation of neighborhood committees, the Irish Front was formed on the basis of the following demands:

1. End torture and repression.
2. Full support for the campaign to maintain political status and for a general and unconditional amnesty for Irish political prisoners in Ireland and abroad (Great Britain and the U.S.).
3. Repatriation of all Irish political prisoners in British jails.
4. Withdrawal of British occupation troops and an end to British interference in the political and cultural life of the Irish nation.

The two main components of this united-front group are the Provisionals and the IRSP. However, they have different conceptions of what the united front means. For the Provisionals, what is involved is primarily a tactical question, an alliance with anti-imperialist forces where the IRA is not dominant. For the IRSP, which since 1974 has concentrated on advancing a broad-front strategy, forming a national liberation front is the decisive question.

Recently, however, these two different political conceptions of unity have become part of the political debate inside the Provisionals. A debate has developed in *Republican News*, the organ of the Provisional IRA in the North, between left activists in Derry and in Belfast. The Derry activists call for the formation of a national united front based on the experience of the Irish Front in their city. The Belfast activists, represented by Peter Dowling, tend to want to preserve the Provisional dominance in the ghettos:

"The situation is different not only in the areas outside Belfast and Derry but also in certain neighborhoods in these cities. In these places, there are no other anti-imperialist groups besides the Provisionals. So, proposing unity with such groups would be meaningless. It is, on the other hand, possible to form local committees under [Provisional] republican leadership" (*Republican News*, April 2, 1977).

Although this debate has not yet led to any conclusion, it has the merit of being the first debate on a major political question in the Provisionals and the first one conducted on a socialist basis.

The far-left groups—People's Democracy, the Movement for a Socialist Republic, the Socialist Workers Movement (close to *Lutte Ouvrière*), etc., on the other hand,

look to the formation of a united front of the far-left forces, which could then, in practice, take part in the debate with the IRSP and the Provisionals. So, on February 21, they came together to form a Socialist Committee for Unity Against Imperialism, based on the following demands: withdrawal of the troops, defense of political status, and an end to repression.

Although this group is numerically weak and based essentially in the South, except for People's Democracy, its formation is an important symptom of the general trend toward unity. And this step should enable the groups involved to bring some weight to bear in the debate among the larger republican organizations.

In the South, the Committee to Defend Noel and Marie Murray showed that, united, the republicans could halt the repression. This is why about twenty liberal intellectuals close to the Provisionals and the IRSP decided to call on the anti-imperialist organizations to discuss the possibilities for setting up an anti-imperialist united front.

The Provos, the ISRP, and the Communist party seem interested by the proposal of these intellectuals. Concretely, the formation of a committee to commemorate the 1916 insurrection and a series of rallies this week should facilitate discussions. The only organization that rejected this proposal was "Official" Sinn Féin, which, faced with the need to respond to the repression in the South, has split into several factions.

Ironically, the "Officials'" main ally, the Communist party, seems more willing to mobilize against the quisling government in Dublin, and it has just recruited another group of "Official" Sinn Féin members in the South. Moreover, the physical confrontations between Provisionals and "Officials" in Belfast a couple of weeks ago have only reinforced the most right-wing Stalinist tendency in the organization, led by Dessie O'Hagan, who is fiercely opposed to any alliance "with the Provisional fascists and the Trotskyists of the IRSP."

In any case, this is the first time in eight years of struggle in Ireland that the perspective of a united front of the people's forces North and South has been taken up in a political way and apparently drawn together the vital forces of the Irish resistance. □

1,400 Attend Iran Protest Meetings



Wayne Glover/Militant

Speakers platform at Seattle meeting, April 14. From left: Ali Shokri, former member of Iranian Air Force; Babak Zahraie, CAIFI; Iranian scholar Ahmad Karimi; and Angela Davis.

More than 1,400 persons attended meetings in Seattle and Washington, D.C., April 12, called to protest the shah's repression in Iran. Both meetings were sponsored by the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran (CAIFI), and featured a wide range of speakers.

Twelve hundred persons assembled at the University of Washington in Seattle to hear Babak Zahraie, a national field secretary of CAIFI; Ahmad Karimi, an Iranian scholar and professor at Columbia University in New York; Ali Shokri, a former member of the Iranian Air Force; and Angela Davis of the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression.

The meeting was endorsed by the Iranian Students Association, Organization of Arab Students, Black Student Union, and Young Socialist Alliance.

In his speech Zahraie said that the shah now holds more than 100,000 political prisoners, has tortured more than 250,000, and has executed more than 1,000 Iranians without a trial.

"And who could have provided the shah with such a gigantic killing industry?" he asked. After the 1953 coup, "the government of the United States gained supremacy over the Iranian people and they lost their democracy," he said. "The American companies got the oil and we got the misery—heat for the United States and repression for the Iranians."

Ali Shokri described the circumstances that led him to defect from the Iranian Air Force. He was brought up in a poor family and joining the air force seemed to be the best alternative, he said. At an Iranian base, Shokri observed and witnessed brutalities:

"Soldiers were ordered to walk barefoot in the snow and kept awake for nights on end as a punishment. Two soldiers during training were arrested for reading banned books and were never heard from again," he said.

Shokri was then transferred to a base in Texas for further training. While there, he continued, "For the first time in my life, I got the chance to freely read and talk about the shah's military regime. I realized I was part of that repression."

Shokri has now applied to the Immigration office for permanent residency in the United States. Even though he is married to an American citizen and entitled to such a status, the Immigration office has refused to grant him a visa and has sent his case to the State Department. He appealed to everyone to support his right to stay in this country. If deported to Iran, he could face execution.

Ahmad Karimi protested the presence of U.S. military forces in Iran and detailed the methods of interrogation and torture under the shah.

Angela Davis affirmed her support for the campaign for human rights in Iran and drew a parallel between the oppression of the national minorities there and racism in the United States.

Some 250 persons attended the meeting in Washington, D.C., filling up George Washington University's Marvin Center Ballroom. Speakers included Bahram Atai, a national field secretary of CAIFI; Lizette Echols of the International League for Human Rights; Morton Halperin, director of the Project on National Security and Civil Liberties; Reza Baraheni, an Iranian poet, writer, and former political prisoner; and Washington journalist I.F. Stone. □

Threats Postpone Texas Meeting

A panel discussion on repression in Iran, scheduled to take place March 23 at the University of Houston, was called off because of threats of physical disruption.

The panel, sponsored by the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran (CAIFI), was to have included Daniel Ellsberg; humorist John Henry Faulk; Reza Baraheni; Gertrude Barnstone, president of the Texas Equality Action League; Babak Zahraie, CAIFI national field secretary; and James Calaway, president of the Texas American Civil Liberties Union.

The meeting was canceled after the Iranian Students Association (Confederation) and the Iranian Students Association (Houston) publicly threatened to physically prevent it from taking place. The two groups have a long history of physical attacks against opponents of the shah with whom they disagree.

CAIFI has rescheduled the Houston meeting for later in the year.

Jobless Workers Return to Italy

For the first time in recent years the exodus of Italians emigrating in search of jobs has come to a halt. Statistics just released for 1975 show the number of Italians returning from abroad reached 120,000—the vast majority of them from Europe. Meanwhile, the number leaving Italy dropped below 100,000.

The trend began as a trickle in 1972 but became a torrent as thousands of Italian workers were fired in West Germany, Switzerland, and other countries affected by the world economic slump.

"Germany alone laid off 77,000 Italians from 1974 to 1975," said Dino Pelliccia, an official in the emigration office of the Italian Communist party. "Most of those men headed home."

The returning tide is evidently further aggravating Italy's already bleak economic picture. In the past, Italians employed in other parts of Europe sent home part of their pay to families. Now, returning migrants receive six months of low unemployment benefits and then are forced to compete with one million unemployed for nonexistent jobs.

Documents discussed at 1974 Tenth World Congress of Fourth International. 128 pages. 8½ x 11, \$2.50

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East European Dissidents Face Mounting Persecution

By Susan Wald

Numerous victimizations and arrests of human-rights activists have occurred in Eastern Europe in recent weeks as the Stalinist regimes seek to stifle rising protest against bureaucratic rule.

In Czechoslovakia, a Prague labor court ruled April 25 against an appeal by Zdenek Mlynar, a signer of Charter 77. The former secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist party was summarily dismissed in mid-January from his job at the National Museum in Prague.

In confirming the dismissal, the court held that by signing the human-rights document Mlynar had "endangered the security of the state and of society." Mlynar was not allowed to call any witnesses in his defense, or to obtain a transcript of the judges' decision.

Since January, scores of signers have lost their jobs and are unable to find work, even as laborers, according to a report in the April 27 *Le Monde*.

Another prominent signer of Charter 77 has suffered reprisals of a different type. Vilem Sachr, a seventy-year-old lieutenant general and World War II veteran, was demoted to the rank of private and ordered not to wear his Czechoslovak, Soviet, and Western military decorations.

Chagrined by the amount of publicity that Charter 77 and its authors have received in the international press, the Czech authorities have also moved to clamp down on the activities of Western correspondents visiting Prague.

Eric Bourne, the *Christian Science Monitor's* Vienna correspondent, reported in the April 15 issue that he was told by a Czechoslovak embassy official that he would be granted a visa only on condition that he pledge not to meet with any dissidents during his stay. The official warned Bourne that if he did so, he would be immediately expelled. This policy will apparently be applied to other Western journalists who have visited Czechoslovakia in the past.

Seven Polish intellectuals were detained April 15 for questioning by Warsaw police. Among the seven were three members of the Committee for the Defense of Polish Workers—Miroslav Chojecki, Antoni Macierewicz, and Jacek Kuron. All seven were released forty-eight hours later.

According to the April 19 *Le Monde*, Kuron said after his release that the police had tried to enlist their aid as "witnesses" in an investigation into the "relaying of false reports abroad." Kuron explained

that he and his associates had refused to cooperate.

These arrests may indicate a new crackdown on Polish dissidents. This was outlined in an April 14 speech to the CP Central Committee by Edward Gierak, the party's first secretary. Gierak called on the press to step up its propaganda campaign against the dissidents, who he termed "a tiny group that provides ammunition for foreign centers of diversion," and said that they should be fought "by every means at our disposal."

According to a report in the April 19 *Le Monde*, Gierak has recently come under criticism from some on the Central Committee who feel that the regime's stance has been too lenient. On April 21, the Committee for the Defense of Polish Workers announced the release of four workers who had been held since June 1976 and sentenced to six years in prison for taking part in the workers' demonstrations in Radom last June.

However, seventeen persons are still being held in prison. One of them, a worker named Chomicki, is on a hunger strike, and his weight is said to be down to around forty-eight kilograms (about 106 pounds).

In addition, the committee reports that a new series of arrests and house searches by police have occurred in Radom. The families of the imprisoned workers, who have filed a suit charging the police with brutality in the wake of the June demonstrations, have been particularly harassed in an attempt to force them to drop their suit.

The Romanian government is continuing the crackdown against critics that began with the arrest of dissident novelist Paul Goma on April 4. According to a report in the May 1 *New York Daily News*, Vlad Georgescu, a prominent historian, has been taken into custody. In addition, six Baptist and Calvinist ministers have been arrested and interrogated. The April 22 *Le Monde* reported that they had been arrested on April 3 for broadcasting a statement on religious freedom over Radio Free Europe.

A letter written by Goma before his arrest was recently made public in Paris. Dated March 21, 1976, it foresees the possibility of his death in detention, and says that if any announcement is made by the authorities to the effect that he has "confessed or recognized my errors, it should be known that those 'confessions'

will be fabrications which I declare null and void beforehand."

Goma also wrote that he had "never participated in any conspiracy having as its aim the overthrow of the present Romania political regime." He said that he considered his possible arrest and trial illegal, and would therefore refuse to answer any questions during interrogation.

Le Monde reported April 27 that Mari-slav Marinovich and Mikola Matosevich, two members of a Ukrainian group set up to monitor compliance with the Helsinki accords, were arrested in Kiev April 23. They were arrested following a search by police of the homes of nine activists, and their families were informed that they might be prosecuted for "anti-Soviet activities." Two other members of the group were arrested in early February. □

U.S. Trade Unions Losing Ground

Twenty years ago, 33 percent of American workers in nonfarm jobs belonged to trade unions. Now fewer than 26 percent do, according to a report in the April 24 *Washington Post*.

In 1957 workers also voted to have unions represent them about twice as often as they voted to keep unions out. Today unions are losing slightly more elections than they win.

Between 1968 and 1974, union workers in manufacturing declined from 9.2 million to 9.1 million. Labor's losses would have been even more dramatic without the recent rise in the number of public employees under union contract.

"I see the polls and I'm appalled that we come in somewhere between Richard Nixon and used car salesmen," said William Winpisinger, incoming president of the International Association of Machinists. "The principal problem of organizing is the image of the labor movement, and the image comes from the top."

Child Stabbed for Singing in Basque

A six-year-old boy was stabbed in the Basque city of Bilbao for singing a song in his native Basque tongue, according to a report in the April 27 issue of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*. José Luis Camarón was admitted to the hospital in critical condition after he was attacked by members of the extreme right-wing group New Force.

Kremlin Tries to Tighten Reins on 'Euro-Communist' Parties

By Gerry Foley

A seminar held in Prague at the end of April marked a milestone in the growth of tensions between the Kremlin and the so-called Euro-Communist parties.

The seminar, ostensibly called to discuss the work of the Stalinists' international magazine *Problems of Peace and Socialism*, had the dimensions of an unofficial world conference of CPs. Seventy-five parties were represented. The subject lent itself to discussing the general political problems affecting the pro-Moscow Stalinist parties.

Problems of Peace and Socialism is virtually the only international institution still recognized by all the pro-Moscow parties, at least to some extent, as representing them. In recent months, a veiled debate between the Soviet bureaucracy and the Euro-Communist parties has taken place in its pages.

The main speeches published in *Pravda* all focus on countering the criticisms voiced by the big Western CPs over the denial of human rights in Eastern Europe. Of course, this is not done directly. It is done in the guise of responding to "imperialist anti-Communist and anti-Soviet campaigns." But the moral is clearly drawn for the West European CPs.

The two speeches quoted most extensively were by B. N. Ponomarev, Soviet CP Central Committee expert on West Europe; and Gustav Husák, general secretary of the Czechoslovak CP. The Czechoslovak regime has been the one most criticized by the West European CPs.

Pravda also played up remarks by Vasil Bilak, one of the Czechoslovak CP officials who signed the appeal for the Soviet invasion.

Another speaker singled out for special attention was C. Florakis, first secretary of the unconditionally pro-Soviet "exterior" faction of the Greek CP. The Euro-Communist "interior" CP was not listed among the parties represented.

The American and Canadian CPs, the most notorious toadies of the Soviet bureaucracy, made statements that in the context of the tension between the Kremlin and the Euro-Communist CPs were clearly threatening. The April 30 *Pravda* reported:

Stressing certain examples from the experience of his party, the representative of the Communist party of the USA, Comrade G. West, expressed the opinion that the struggle against opportunism and liquidationism is becoming a more and not less timely problem as imperialism nears its end.

Pravda continued:

Dealing with the tactics of the struggle for the purity of Marxist-Leninist theory, the general secretary of the Communist party of Canada, Comrade W. Kashtan, raised the question of right and "left" opportunism.

Kashtan said:

It [opportunism] can be expressed in exaggerating national peculiarities and traditions and deliberately underestimating or ignoring the general laws of social revolution. Opportunism cannot be ignored. In the fight against it, we need a joint effort, while of course continuing to respect the independence of parties and the principle of noninterference in the affairs of other parties.

This seminar was preceded by a series of pressure plays by the Kremlin against the Western CPs that have tried to dissociate themselves from Stalinist dictatorship by criticizing some aspects and incidents of bureaucratic repression in the USSR and East Europe.

The most dramatic of these incidents was the split of the old-line Stalinist faction from the Swedish CP at the end of February. Although this break could hardly have taken place without prior Kremlin approval, it was not clear how far the Soviet bureaucracy would go in backing such a weak formation. This still is not clear. But in its April 21 issue, *Le Monde* reported that the official Polish press agency carried a sympathetic report of the founding of the new "Communist Workers party" in Sweden:

The agency noted with satisfaction that the ideological basis of the new CP is "Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism." It added that "this party wants to maintain close links with its sister Communist parties throughout the world on the basis of the Berlin Conference documents."

In previous veiled polemics with the Euro-Communist parties, the Kremlin has maintained that the resolution of the June 1976 conference of European CPs in East Berlin should prohibit the Western CPs from criticizing the actions of the East European CPs in their own countries. Representatives of the Soviet bureaucracy have indicated that this resolution recognized the need of the West European CPs to adjust their line in their own countries in order to take advantage of new electoral opportunities. But this could not be at the expense of the political needs of the bureaucracies in their own countries.

In its April 9 issue, *Le Monde* published a guest article by Jeannette Vermeersch, widow of former French CP General

Secretary Maurice Thorez. It was an attack on an article by leading CP historian Jean Elleinstein, which was published in *Repères*, the magazine of the Socialist party left wing, and quoted in the March 9 *Le Monde*.

Vermeersch is one of the most prominent old-line Stalinists in the French CP. She resigned from the Central Committee in 1968 to protest that body's disapproval of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Since Elleinstein has had to present a justification for the French CP's new Euro-Communist line and try to establish some democratic credentials in debates with non-Stalinist intellectuals, he has been the one in the party leadership to carry the criticisms of the bureaucratic regimes the furthest. He has also drawn the most fire from the Kremlin.

In its January 28 issue, the Soviet magazine *Novoe Vremya* devoted an article of almost four pages to attacking Elleinstein's recent books. Among other things, it said: "Chapters of his *History of the USSR* are hardly distinguished from the writings of reactionary journalists."

Vermeersch attacked Elleinstein primarily for saying that the Soviet leadership had two main concerns in pursuing its policy of détente. The first was to keep détente from leading to "internal difficulties and substantial changes in the political system" in the USSR and East Europe. The second was "to reinforce its positions in a number of countries that are not part of the socialist world but whose links with it are more or less close." She commented:

By slandering the Soviet Union's policy of détente, Elleinstein is carrying grist to the mill of the fomenters of international tension, of cold war.

Vermeersch's article prompted a reply in the May 3 *Le Monde* from the leaders of three CP cells in Paris—Alain Bladier, François Bramoullé, and Claude Outzekhovsky. They wrote that her article showed "how much the differences have deepened between certain currents in the Communist party in recent months."

Noting that her arguments were the same as those put forward by the Soviet press, they said:

What is new is that for the first time a prominent member of the French Communist party has publicly espoused these arguments. That cannot help but be disturbing when you know that in the recent past, such situations have been used to foment splits in a number of parties. After Finland [where public factions

arose], the Lister affair in Spain,* and Greece, we now have the recent example of Sweden.

No doubt the Soviet pressure plays are disturbing to the Euro-Communist leaders. But they have a powerful self-interest in maintaining the image of a certain independence of the Kremlin. And they would have a lot to lose if they retreated too far now. This conflict has opened up a process that neither the Western CP leaders nor the Kremlin seem entirely able to control.

The result of the Vermeersch article, for example, seems to have been to give a strong impetus to public debate in the French CP.

In the British CP, public debate is already rather advanced. An example of this is the letters column in the February 21 issue of *Morning Star*, the party daily. One letter openly defended Stalinist dictatorship:

It is rather impertinent of the armchair Communist parties in Western Europe to criticize the treatment of the "dissidents" in Eastern Europe.

Every successful Socialist revolution hitherto has found it necessary to employ coercion and suppression of propaganda against the government; it is scarcely surprising since every Communist government has come to power by force of arms without enjoying the support of a majority of the population.

But the author defended the current Euro-Communist program of the British CP:

It was absolutely correct for our party to replace "For Soviet Britain" by the "British Road to Socialism." We should do the East European Communists (and those in other countries) the courtesy of accepting that they are proceeding along a different road to Socialism—one which is dictated by very different circumstances from those envisaged for Britain.

One writer put the question in a broader perspective:

I hope that it will become plain to the unreconstructed Stalinists who still write letters to you that Marxists outside—and I hope inside—the Communist Party will never again be taken in by the propaganda of the governing elites in those countries.

The memory of our deception by this propaganda, in the years before N. Khrushchov's famous speech, will always put us on our guard, however cynical we may be about the exploitation by the capitalist press of these deformations of Socialism.

The April 13 London *Daily Telegraph* quoted Paul Fauvet as follows, writing in *Marxism Today*, the British CP theoretical magazine:

At the moment it is obvious that the British working class does *not* trust the Communist party, and this is due not simply to some sort of conspiracy in the mass media, but also to the

* Lister led an old-line Stalinist faction encouraged by the Kremlin to counter the line of the majority of the Spanish CP leadership opposing the invasion of Czechoslovakia. This group left the Spanish party in the early 1970s.



Herblock/Washington Post

fact that for many years—whether consciously or not—our party lied to the workers.

It lied about the Soviet Union: it swallowed the fabrications of the show trials of the 30s, reproduced the absurd allegations about Tito, and regurgitated all the nonsense that Stalin and his dreary acolytes proclaimed as absolute truth in every field.

Solemnly our party retailed this trash to the people of Britain, and should not have been surprised when most of them had the good sense to reject it.

The British CP was one of those parties where the Kremlin encouraged open factional activity by old-line Stalinists to force the leadership to retreat from its condemnation of the invasion of Czechoslovakia. This memory may have helped motivate the British leaders to come to the defense of the semi-excommunicated "interior" faction of the Greek CP.

In its April 28 issue, the "interior" paper, *Auge*, reported a meeting between Babis Dhrakopoulos, general secretary of the Greek party, and Mac Lennon, general secretary of the British party. The importance of this step is indicated by the fact that even after its turn to Euro-Communism, the French CP continues to refuse to have anything to do with the "interior." Even the Italian CP, with which the "interior" publicly identifies, gives it little open support.

Apparently, the British CP leaders thought it was necessary to do something concrete to discourage excommunications.

The response of the three French CP cell leaders, previously cited, to the implicit threat of a Kremlin-sponsored split was to call for "democratic debate that would enable all the real social and ideological currents to express themselves freely in the party."

In an interview with French Trotskyist leader Alain Krivine published in the May 2 issue of *Rouge*, Alfredo Reichlin, a member of the Italian CP Executive and editor of its political-cultural weekly *Rinascita*, carried opposition to excommunications quite far for a Communist party leader.

Krivine asked:

Some Communist parties have begun a critique of Stalinism but outside of a few individual contributions, none of these parties has rehabilitated the communists who opposed Stalin. What is the position of the Italian CP on this question?

Reichlin replied:

I don't like this term rehabilitation. You are referring to a certain period in the history of Russia when there were political debates linked to this period. For example, we can discuss the validity of Bukharin's politics. But I don't think the term rehabilitation is appropriate.

Krivine continued:

I am not talking about the validity of their line. But Trotsky and the other oppositionists were slandered by the Stalinists, characterized as agents of the bourgeoisie.

Reichlin answered:

On that point, there is no problem. For us, they are part of the workers movement. Some of them were even leaders.

Vermeersch, as well as Ponomarev, speaking at the Prague seminar, was able to take advantage of weaknesses in the Euro-Communist arguments. Ironically, the most serious of these results from the attempt to limit the criticism of Stalinism by ascribing it to the backwardness of Russia and the East European countries. This argument is not only demeaning to the workers movement in underdeveloped countries, it blurs over the distinction between the policy of Lenin and Stalin. Thus, the Euro-Communists' deference to the bureaucrats enables the latter to quote Lenin against them.

The "Leninist" arguments of the Kremlin representatives, however, are not intended for the Euro-Communist leaders. They simply offer an excuse for fomenting factional activity and thus serve as a means of pressure. The real argument raised by Ponomarev was as follows:

Anti-Sovietism is aimed . . . at undermining the prestige of Communists and their parties in the capitalist countries.

That is, the West European CPs live from the reflected glory of Soviet power, and so their criticisms of the bureaucratic regime rebound against them. The Euro-Communists certainly do not want to cut themselves off from this aura of power. But they know that it is not sufficient to gain them the confidence of a majority of workers in their own countries. And the biggest obstacle to that is precisely their identification with bureaucratic dictatorship. □

Italy—Crisis of System and Workers Strategy to Meet It

An Interview With Livio Maitan

[Third of four parts]

Q. What is your opinion of Gramsci's contribution?

A. I cannot answer such a broad question in just a few words. I would only point out that in the past Gramsci's works have been misused to create many kinds of mystification, and that this is still being done. Before de-Stalinization, it was in the PCI's interests not just to present the repellent face of Stalinist dogmatism and Zhdanovism: Gramsci was used to provide the PCI with a different image. Secondly, several of Gramsci's formulations were extrapolated and torn out of context in order to use them as a basis for the Italian road to socialism. I would like to point out here that Gramsci was not only the lucid theoretician of the *Quaderni*, but also the editor of *Ordine Nuovo*, where he defended the idea of workers councils and the theses adopted by the Congress of Lyons, which reaffirmed in no uncertain terms the socialist goals of the coming Italian revolution and the validity of the Leninist method (what is more, the Lyons Theses date, of course, from 1926, that is, several years after the Communist International adopted its theses on the united front, and at a time when a revolution in the West did not appear imminent).

If we come to the famous passage that talks about the different nature of Western society, we have to say first of all that its criticism of Trotsky for supposedly failing to understand the united-front turn advocated by Lenin, is not only unfounded—inasmuch as Trotsky, as is well known, was on Lenin's side in the fight for the united front—but puzzling as well, since Gramsci wrote this following Trotsky's great campaign for the united front, on the eve of Hitler's rise to power. Furthermore, in another passage dealing with the same subject, Gramsci recognizes Trotsky's "attempt to begin a shift in tactics" and his understanding of the fact that, in the West, making the revolution would be more difficult, but that constructing socialism after the conquest of power would be easier. At any rate, nowhere in Gramsci's writings is there a hint that he intended to revise the conception of the need for a revolutionary break with the system, the need to smash the bourgeois state apparatus.

Gramsci understood very well why this revolutionary break with the system could take place more rapidly in countries that were more backward as regards the structures of "civil society," and he wrote some excellent passages on the problem of bourgeois ideological hegemony. But there is more to the problem than just understanding how strong the bourgeoisie's defensive positions are in the Western countries and how manifold are its safety devices. What is most important is to realize that certain institutions, despite their inherently conservative function, can in certain circumstances make it possible for the working class to achieve or consolidate partial gains, and thus it becomes harder to expose these institutions for what they are. In other words, the oppressed classes will seek to utilize these institutions until they see a concrete alternative to them.

Q. Do you think that today the Italian working class still has parliamentary illusions?

A. The advanced political consciousness of the Italian working class is the result, among other things, of a special combination of twenty years' experience with a fascist dictatorship followed by thirty years of bourgeois democracy. I do not think that the

majority of the workers are convinced that the transition to socialism can be achieved by parliamentary and constitutional means. They hold the established institutions in very low esteem. But they think that as long as there are going to be elections, it is necessary to take part in them and vote the right way, and that their parties should make the fullest possible use of the parliamentary arena. They would not hesitate to throw all the "constitutional" trappings overboard the instant they felt there was a concrete perspective for proletarian democracy.

But let's return to the problem I dealt with earlier. There are those who hold that advanced capitalist society is polarized between a small group of monopolists, who are the only ones who have an interest in maintaining the status quo, and everyone else, who should be for socialism. Contrary to this theory, however, there are quite extensive and substantial noncapitalist social layers, intermediate strata, who do have privileges to defend, even if these privileges may be very relative and insecure. Of course, many of those who make up these layers could be "recycled" in a transitional society, which would improve the quality of their lives, to use the phrase that is in vogue. But social layers as such will not give up the privileges they now have for the sake of some hypothetical future. In this sense as well, the notion of a gradual transition is quite utopian. The only viable perspective, as has been confirmed by many historical examples, both positive and negative, is one of a revolutionary break with the system, of a qualitative leap, of taking power by smashing the bourgeois state apparatus.

Q. You don't think that Gramsci's strategy for the struggle for power is similar to that of the PCI leadership . . .

A. Far from taking Gramscism to its logical conclusion, Togliattism and Berlinguerism represent its negation. There is a rather curious document that I would like to mention in passing, namely, Berlinguer's conclusions at the last congress of the PCI. To justify the notion of the "historic compromise" within a broader context, Berlinguer recalled that, for over a century, the nation's history had been characterized by compromises between heterogeneous social forces. This is an indisputable fact. But while Gramsci had pointed out the harmful consequences of this even for the bourgeois democratic revolution, Berlinguer drew positive practical conclusions from it. What for Gramsci was a historical judgment of the events, became for Berlinguer a political strategy and, so to speak, a world view.

Fundamentally, the PCI's whole political line is based on two assumptions. The first is that, in this period, the strategic goal should not be the working class coming to power; the perspective should be that of a new stage of the "democratic and antifascist" revolution, involving collaboration with bourgeois forces, particularly the DC. In the most desirable variant, this would be a prelude to the transition to socialism. The second assumption is that major confrontations between the two fundamental classes must be avoided at all costs, because, in all probability, this would mean the end of democratic institutions (let us not forget that Berlinguer put forward the formula of the historic compromise soon after the defeat in Chile).

The implications of such ideas go much further than the PCI's public statements admit. The basic conclusion is that even such a deepgoing, widespread crisis of the system, combining with a powerful working-class upsurge and the radicalization of other social layers on a very broad basis, and coming against the

background of the crisis of world imperialism, cannot create conditions for a struggle for power by the workers. The question of power is therefore put off indefinitely, for all practical purposes eliminated. This assessment is being projected further and further backward. The question arises, if what the PCI is saying nowadays is true, how could the conditions for taking power have existed in 1919-20? And yet the PCI was built at the time on the idea that the crisis of the system made it imperative to wage a revolutionary struggle for power and that the old SP was incapable of leading such a fight. Some PCI members, Amendola, for example, have not shrunk from the logical conclusions of this. They say that it was an error to think that a revolutionary situation existed in Italy in 1919-20. Others have revealed this opinion by their responses to problems of revolutionary strategy. Bruno Trentin, for example, whom some people mistakenly continue to think of as part of the left wing, was not only one of these who fought hardest to incorporate the delegate councils into the union structures; he also denied the validity of the experience of councils as an embryonic form of dual power in 1919-20. Once again, this represents the negation of Gramsci—even if, for the sake of the cause, they sometimes choose to hide behind vulgar distortions of his writings.

Q. A discussion is going on nowadays about the nature of the Communist parties. Have they turned into Social Democratic parties? The PCI, which began some turns before other CPs and carried them further, deserves special attention in this regard. It would be tempting to conclude that its "social-democratization" is already a fact.

A. I have already pointed to the striking similarity between the PCI's present positions and those of traditional Social Democracy. In the recent period this has become more pronounced. The PCI leadership not only defends bourgeois democracy, but accepts more and more ruling-class ideology, for example, in economic questions. The austerity plan was recently supported in terms that were nearly identical to those used by the government and the bosses, and some statements by PCI economists lead you to wonder if they are belated Keynesians or proponents of liberalism. The PCI, while not in the government, places itself on the same footing as regards these questions as the British Labour party. Of course, the PCI sometimes went even a bit further between 1944 and 1947. But even leaving aside the fact that the "theory" at that time still retained some more orthodox aspects, we must not forget that a deepgoing change occurred in the composition of the party's leadership and ranks. Between 1944 and 1947, most of its key cadres came out of the struggle against fascism, out of the partisan struggle, and were of proletarian or plebeian origin. Nowadays, cadres who have known nothing but bourgeois democracy, and who come from petty-bourgeois origins, play by far the predominate role. Last but not least, at the end of the war, international factors—the interests of the Soviet guide state and of the Communist movement—played by far the biggest role. No one could say the same thing nowadays. In the final analysis, the main point is this: The PCI's political line is determined by the needs of its own reformist "national" strategy, by the party's integration into bourgeois-democratic institutions (parliament, regional and local governments, etc.) and, particularly in certain regions, into the socio-economic fabric of the system. The Soviet bureaucracy has lost all chances of really influencing it. Don't forget that Berlinguer went so far as to say that if Communists participated in the government, not only would they not condemn NATO; they would even regard it as a safeguard.

Q. So the basic difference between the PCI and the Social Democratic parties has disappeared?

A. The dynamic now leads in that direction. But one difference remains: namely, the PCI still considers that the existence of the USSR and other "socialist" countries represents a historic gain and a factor that reinforces its own struggle. More concretely, in

contrast to the big Social Democratic parties, the PCI has always been on the opposite side of the barricades from imperialism at times of crucial confrontations, such as the war in Vietnam.

The Crisis of the Far Left in the Aftermath of June 20

Q. At a time when the system is in a violent crisis and the mass movement is on the rise, the PCI's reformist line has been subjected to strong criticism by a number of fairly large far-left organizations. Yet, as June 20 demonstrated, these organizations do not appear as a credible alternative to the working class. Why?

A. The self-criticism that followed June 20, and that bordered on self-flagellation, should not obscure what the far left has accomplished. It has been an expression of the new social vanguard that has played an important role in working-class struggles, has dominated the student movement for years, has contributed to the radicalization of wide layers of the petty bourgeoisie, has sparked social movements (for example, around housing, prices, and so on), has initiated a series of actions in the soldiers' movement, has helped get the women's liberation movement off the ground (although in this area it is now experiencing a very serious crisis), and has forced recognition of its existence in Parliament and a certain number of regional and municipal councils.

Still, at crucial moments, it has not been capable of taking advantage of the existing possibilities. I emphasize *existing*. I deny that the limited results actually obtained were predetermined by objective factors, by a given relationship of forces in the working-class movement.

As I have already explained, a new working-class vanguard, with ties to the mass movement and with a capacity for influencing it and partly leading it, has appeared in Italy over the past ten years, to a greater extent than in any other country. The far left has established links with this vanguard, has influenced it, and has even, at certain times, been seen by it as an alternative in the course of certain limited struggles. But the far left has proved incapable of winning these layers to a strategic perspective and to a program for building the revolutionary party. This is why a large section of this vanguard remains in the PCI or under its influence. There has even been a tendency to return to the PCI on the part of some militants who at one time were under the influence of the far left. These elements, while not subscribing to the PCI's entire strategy, consider the party the only instrument that has the slightest viability. In addition, the far left has not even succeeded in organizing this vanguard to wage a common fight in the context of the workers' struggles. The struggles around renewal of national contracts in basic industry have political implications as a confrontation between the classes, being the rather special form in which such tests of strength take place in Italy. And they have shown several times that tremendous possibilities have been criminally wasted. In the preparatory rallies, in the various episodes of the struggle, and in final assemblies where reports on the results are presented, fairly sizable groups have appeared that oppose the outlook and methods of the union bureaucracy; in some of the big plants, these have even been in the majority. In the initial period—up until around 1972—the far left jeopardized its chances by its infantile spontanéist attitude, which made it reject or turn its back on the delegates and councils in the name of "working-class autonomy," and by its sectarian line on the unions. *Il Manifesto* even came up with a theory of a historical decline of the unions. Subsequently, these attitudes were gradually abandoned, but they were not replaced by clear and systematic orientations. As a result, the far left wavered between tail-ending the union bureaucrats—for example, by accepting the meaningless platforms put forward by the so-called left wing of the bureaucracy even in the preparatory stage, at most making some criticisms of limited aspects or methods—and new flare-ups of sectarian ultraleftism.

Q. Did the far left raise the question of forming a tendency in the unions? Have revolutionary Marxists done this?

A. It is precisely in this area that the weakness of the far left is most evident. In fact, many militants have done work that logically should lead to building an antibureaucratic, class-struggle tendency. But their organizations have always rejected such a perspective—for different and even opposing reasons, but with the same net result. Some reject working as a tendency for fear of being “coopted,” seeing the unions as a hunting ground—you have to be in them in order to promote splits through actions at specific points. Others do not want to challenge the union bureaucracy, which may be forced to tolerate criticism on the part of unorganized dissidents but which wouldn’t accept tendencies being formed. This is the case, notably, of one whole wing of the PdUP [Partito d’Unità Proletaria—Party of Proletarian Unity], which does not want to risk losing the positions its members occupy in the apparatus, including at the top.

Q. Isn't your opinion of the PdUP a little sectarian?

A. I do not mean to lump all the unionists in the PdUP together. But I could cite examples of members of this party giving reports in plant assemblies, in the name of the bureaucratic leaderships, or supporting bureaucratic expulsions of revolutionists, including our own comrades. This happened in Taranto, for example, and these expulsions were later retracted under pressure from the rank and file. An even better example is the tragicomic incident that took place at the Alfa Romeo plant in Milan. Upon breaking into the director’s office, the workers found Lettieri, a leader of the metalworkers and a member of the PdUP “left wing,” in the men’s room in the company of other bureaucrats. These unlucky individuals were hiding because they were in the process of negotiating behind the backs of the workers.

Q. Have there been any instances of union tendencies?

A. As a matter of fact, a kind of tendency was formed in the pre-congress discussion in the teachers and technical staff union in the CGIL [Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro—Italian General Confederation of Labor]. The far left rallied behind a motion put forward by a member of the outgoing steering committee, who was close to Avanguardia Operaia [AO—Workers Vanguard]. However, not wishing to acknowledge the real situation, the far left used the term “bloc” instead of “tendency.” What is even worse is that when the struggle began to heat up after an attack by the bureaucrats, the PdUP members crossed over to the other side of the barricades, and the AO members began to retreat. In the end they decided against presenting the motion to the provincial congress, even in their stronghold of Milan. Only our comrades, some of the Lotta Continua members, and some independents waged a consistent fight. And yet, in the union in question, about 20 percent of the membership is under the influence of the far left.

Q. Did our comrades also make the mistake of putting the emphasis on actions and groups outside the unions, with a perspective of bypassing the workers movement as it is now constituted?

A. It is possible that at times we have made errors of this sort, and haven’t fully taken advantage of the possibilities for working to build a tendency in the unions. But for us, building such a tendency remains a central goal, and in the last analysis our whole activity in the struggle around the contracts was aimed in that direction. It should be made clear that the “Coordinamenti” [Coordinating Committees], which arose on several occasions in several big plants and in some cities, and to which we made a real contribution, were and still are seen by us as tools for organizing the vanguard, as a first step toward organizing and mobilizing this vanguard in mass struggles, in the councils, and in the union organizations—and not as an alternative structure to the councils and unions. We have proceeded in this spirit since 1969, when

there were only a few of us to do this work, and when we were totally isolated.

Having said this much, it would be wrong to take an overly “institutionalist” view of our intervention in the mass movement. Given the politics of the union leaderships, it is not only legitimate, but absolutely necessary to undertake actions outside the “organizational” framework of the unions, providing, of course, that we don’t lose sight of the overall framework and maintain the perspective of unity in a recomposition [restructuring] at a higher level as soon as possible. There are three examples of this. The first one should be familiar to everyone. From the spring of 1969 to the end of July, the goals of equal pay raises for all and a forty-hour week, the central demands of the great struggles of the previous fall, were fought for *in opposition* to the union bureaucrats on every level and of every stripe, and even outside the structure of the unions, by workers who as often as not were not in the union, and by rank-and-file committees of a heterogeneous and transitory character. As for us, we tried to carry this fight on within the union structures as well. I myself, as a delegate from a small union, participated in the provincial congress of Rome unions, and became the target of particularly vicious attacks from the bureaucrats when I raised the slogan of equal pay raises for all and pointed out it was inevitable that the movement would overflow the union channels in various forms. In any case, it was these “extrainstitutional” initiatives that gave impetus to a mass mobilization with very far-reaching goals, and finally forced the bureaucrats to make a turn, and try to ride the wave.

The second example is much more recent. In the first half of October, in the face of the inertia on the part of the union apparatuses, some worker militants, shop stewards and so forth, took initiatives to fight the Andreotti government’s austerity measures in several plants, such as Fiat, Alfa Romeo, and Italsider. The movement did not succeed in sweeping the country, but it had a certain impact, forcing some of the union leaders to make readjustments, even if they did so hesitantly. In any case, without this response, the government would have been able to move ahead much more aggressively and with greater success. A major defeat for the working class would have taken place.

The third example concerns the vanguard militants fired on various pretexts by Alfa Romeo and by OM in Milan. At first, the union bureaucrats had given the go-ahead to the bosses on the grounds that these militants were “ultraleft adventurists.” But initiatives were taken outside the official structures by “Coordinamenti” or by activists and political groups. The repercussions inside the plants were such that even some of the bureaucrats and “conservative” delegates retreated and were forced to defend the victims of the firings, who were finally reinstated.

Q. Let's return to the far left. How would you explain the attitude you criticized, the inability to project a credible alternative?

A. The far left has mainly suffered from social deformation, so to speak. Its character was largely determined by the fact that it grew out of, or gained mass influence in, the student movement and among petty-bourgeois layers. For an entire period the far left reflected the radicalization of the petty bourgeoisie much more than a process of politicization and radicalization in the working class. To the extent that the far left has carved out a base in the working class, it has tended to attract workers who are rebels, capable of playing a role in spontaneous or semispontaneous explosions, rather than revolutionary workers capable of organizing the class and carrying out work over a long term.

On the theoretical and political level, the far left has been influenced by Maoism, particularly on such questions as the transition to socialism, the character of the world political situation, and the conception of the relationship between political organizations and mass movements. It has ignored and continues to ignore the central problem of the notion of bureaucracy; on the basis of its own interpretation of Maoism in the Cultural

Revolution (similar to Bettelheim, at best), the far left has in fact watered down the basic criteria of the materialist method of Marxism and Leninism. To give Sofri his due, he described this tendency most clearly at the last congress of Lotta Continua [LC—The Struggle Continues], where he pointed out “Maoism’s overwhelmingly subjective character, which is not only the antithesis of Stalinist economism, but is also far removed from the objective realism of the Leninist theory of crisis and revolution.” To all the fundamental questions—the relationship between the vanguard and the masses, the role of the unions and soviets, etc.—the far left has given only vague, if not outright incorrect answers, at best permeated with empiricism and impressionism. In practice, the far left groups have alternated between immersing themselves in the “movement,” which is seen as the highest expression of “working-class autonomy,” and manipulative methods, which have greatly facilitated the decline of the student movement, for example, as well as helping along the PCI’s growth in this arena.

Q. What strategy is being worked out by Italian revolutionary Marxists at the present stage? What are their political projections, as they say in Italy?

A. At the risk of being called archaio-Leninists, we remain convinced that a revolutionary strategy, that is, a program of struggle with an anticapitalist dynamic that leads to posing the question of power, cannot be projected without employing categories like “revolutionary crisis,” “dual power,” “taking power through a revolutionary qualitative leap,” which are basic to the Marxist and Leninist conception of revolution. The Fourth International’s position on these questions was clearly spelled out in the Tenth World Congress resolution on Europe, which incorporated the collective thought and experience of our movement. The draft resolution for the next world congress complements this resolution in some respects. The main points of our position were reiterated in the interview with Ernest Mandel published in *Critique Communiste*; I won’t go into it. I will only say that the Leninist and Trotskyist strategy, involving a struggle to build soviet-type organs of proletarian democracy that are based on democratic centralism and closely linked to the workers’ movement, is far from being a schema, good only for the colonial and neocolonial countries. It is even more imperative in

the more developed countries. In developed countries, it is necessary to operate more on the level of “civil society” as a whole—to recall Gramsci’s phrase—that is, to mobilize substantial and heterogeneous social forces as a whole. It is necessary to insure that, right from the beginning, there are organs capable of fulfilling the functions that in capitalist society are carried out by a range of institutions and structures, which are the product of a long historical process. I would add in a country where the working class and other exploited or noncapitalist social forces—such as poor peasants, the new middle classes, and so on—represent two-thirds or more of the active population, and where the working class has reached a high level of social cohesiveness and political maturity, and a cultural level incomparably higher than that of the Russian workers in 1917, the conditions are much more promising for putting into practice a “model” of transitional society that in Russia was attempted only during the crucial months of the revolutionary crisis and, to some extent, for a few years thereafter. In the case of Italy in particular, it is significant, for instance, that the periods of the most advanced struggles and the most advanced political consciousness have been marked by the emergence of workers councils, which could evolve toward soviets.

In conclusion, I would say that it is precisely because of its peculiar features that Italy is a typical example. This is because these peculiar features have the effect of making the social contradictions more explosive, the economic bottlenecks more constricting, and escalating to dramatic levels the tension between what has been ripening in “civil society” and the ossified political and ideological superstructures. These peculiar features made it possible for the working class to play its role in a more systematic way and with greater power, since because of them the Italian proletariat is more homogeneous and has a longer tradition of political radicalization through broader and more sustained mobilizations. Moreover, movements of other social forces were able to develop on a larger scale, with a dynamic tending to tear apart the system. This is precisely why the underlying contradictions of capitalism, the potentialities of the forces antagonistic to this system, and even some preliminary indications of the forms of transition from capitalism to socialism, have emerged here more than they have elsewhere, more distinctly than they have elsewhere.

[To be continued]

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Selections From the Left

klasse-kampen

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

The Danish Communist party was one of the Western CPs hardest hit by "de-Stalinization." In 1958, one of the party's historic leaders led a split based on opposition to the most repellent aspects of Stalinism, including subservience to the Kremlin. For decades, the breakaway group, called the People's Socialist party (SF), eclipsed the official CP.

But the SF did not break fundamentally from the CP's reformism and bureaucratism. In 1967, it suffered a major split to the left, which became the Left Socialist party. In the 1973, 1975, and 1977 elections, it lost about half its remaining vote, falling to the same level as the official CP. Meanwhile, the CP, responding to the same pressures as the initial nucleus of the SF, has begun to make timid gestures of independence from the Kremlin.

After its latest electoral defeat, crisis deepened in the SF. The April 19 issue of *Klassekampen* focuses on this crisis, as revealed at the SF congress, under the headline: "Is the People's Socialist Party Finished?" An article expressing the opinion of the editors said:

"What are we going to do with the SF? This question was raised by many of the party's members themselves after the congress last weekend. The workers have just suffered a setback in the struggle to defend their living standards. . . . The main task of any workers party is to respond to this challenge. What have we done as a party, and what can we do better? But there was virtually no discussion of this. To the contrary, the SF decided to dig itself deeper into the old rut of short-sighted 'practical politics,' like their support of the [anti-working-class] Labor Law.

"The teachers, students trying to get an education, opponents of nuclear power, the women's movement, and many other forces are fighting today against the effects of the capitalist crisis. Where has the SF been in this struggle? Where is the SF in the struggles continuing today? This decisive question was not discussed either at the congress.

"By excluding this decisive question and by passing limited resolutions, the congress decided that the PSP neither can nor wants to become an effective alternative for the working class and other groups in their struggle.

"There was a lot of talk about grass roots . . . but this was not connected to

any policy. What is the party going to say and do in the factories and elsewhere? . . .

"This lack of effectiveness reveals the underlying weakness of the PSP. In reality, the party believes that politics is for the parliament alone. Work in the mass movement can only support parliamentary work. Class struggle is only for speeches. . . .

"The SF cannot affect developments in the class struggle when the party does not participate in the mass movement, which determines the relationship of forces among the classes. . . .

"So who needs the SF?"



banshee

Journal of Irishwomen United. Published in Dublin.

Irishwomen United have begun a campaign to overturn the ban imposed by the Irish Censorship Board on the British feminist magazine *Spare Rib*.

An editorial in No. 7 scores the ban as "a blatant infringement of our rights as women to read the literature of our choice."

On February 12, representatives of Irishwomen United picketed to protest the ban and openly brought 200 copies of the latest issue of *Spare Rib* through customs to Dublin.

Dublin police backed off from attempts to arrest one of the women and seize the "obscene" literature after they were surrounded by feminists who chanted, "Lift the ban on *Spare Rib*" and "We'll read what we want and not what we're told."

Banshee reports that *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir and *Rubyfruit Jungle* by Rita Mae Brown are also banned in Ireland, that the Project Arts Centre lost a grant because it presented two plays about homosexuality, and the television series "Executive Suite" was withdrawn because it dealt with abortion and lesbianism.

RETO

"Challenge," weekly organ of the Socialist Youth. Published in Caracas, Venezuela.

The first issue, dated April 27, states the aims of *Reto*: to write about "the central problems facing students and other young people," and to "present socialist solutions to them in the midst of the abundance of propaganda the bourgeoisie directs at the masses."

Several of the articles focus on the right of Venezuelan young people to a decent education.

"Of the 130,000 students who have

applied for admission to [Venezuelan] universities for 1978, only 60,000 will be enrolled," the newspaper reports, as a result of cutbacks in government funds allocated to education. During the 1977 school year, 40,000 students were turned away for the same reason.

This crisis in education has begun to draw students and professors from private universities into the struggle to overturn President Carlos Andrés Pérez's Education Law. At Avila University a strike was called April 12 to protest overcrowding and high tuition.

Another problem faced by Venezuelan students is the lack of a democratically elected and controlled student federation. In the upcoming student elections at the Caracas Teachers Institute, the Juventud Socialista calls for a joint slate to be formed around this issue and in opposition to the government's Education Law.

ARRITTI

Weekly paper supporting autonomy for Corsica. Published in Bastia.

In August 1975, Corsican nationalists occupied the Aléria wine cellars to protest against the misuse of agricultural land on the island by *colons* (former French settlers in Algeria) who were able to outbid the local farmers. Many of the *colons* had to abandon their estates, at least temporarily, as a result of scandals about the production of cheap wine, some of which was manufactured entirely from industrial chemicals. When the police tried to crush the Aléria occupation by force, an armed clash developed, which paved the way for trials of leading nationalists.

The February 18 issue of *Arritti* reports on new occupations, this time carried out under the responsibility of a recognized farmers union. The article begins:

"Farmers in the eastern plain of Corsica peacefully occupied six estates belonging to the bankrupt *colons* Juncqua, Depeille, and Siegel between February 12 and 14. In this way, they sought to demonstrate their desire to see these lands, which are the object of a court case, turned back . . . to Corsican farmers. This action was immediately supported by the FDSEA [a farmers union]. The next day, the Alliance of Corsican Patriots expressed solidarity."

A wide spectrum of organizations expressed solidarity with the farmers, including the Corsican National Liberation Front and the local Socialist party organization:

"The occupation of the Depeille and Juncqua wine cellars brings the question of agricultural unionism to the fore in Corsica. We noted with real pleasure that

the FDSEA immediately took up the cause of the occupiers."

Arritti quotes the statement of the Alliance of Corsican Patriots, as well as that of the FDSEA. The nationalist organization said:

"Once again it is the government that is responsible for this action. It has not kept the promises made by Prefect Gilly following the Aléria occupation to set up a body empowered to buy the lands of the bankrupt colons and distribute them to local farmers.

"Ten months have passed. This body has not been set up. These lands may be sold tomorrow at auction, and end up once again in the hands of the same swindlers because of the power of their purse."

The FDSEA explained that it was taking legal responsibility for the farmers' action "in view of the fact that this fully justified and peaceful occupation was a trade-union-style action, and in order to prevent the development of anarchy and disorder."

ПРАВДА

"Pravda" (Truth), organ of the Communist party of the Soviet Union. Published daily in Moscow.

The Soviet press has had extensive coverage of the conflict in Northern Ireland since the latest upsurge began in 1969. Recently, it has increased its reporting of this situation. Apparently at least one reason for this is to counterattack against the criticisms by Western governments of the lack of human rights in the USSR and East European countries.

For example, the April 6 issue of *Pravda* carries a report from Belfast by correspondent V. Ovchinnikov, who begins by saying:

"Recently London TV broadcast a report on training at the Sandhurst military academy for using troops to 'maintain internal order.' . . . On a special testing ground, they set up a model of a city afflicted by disorders. They did not leave out the appropriate light and sound effects. A turbulent 'mob' threw stones and built barricades. . . .

"But no imitation, of course, can be compared with the reality . . . of Ulster, where new methods of crushing 'subversive and insurrectionary activity' can be tried out and improved in real military conditions, in conditions, in fact, of civil war."

In Belfast, Ovchinnikov interviewed a representative of the "Official" republican movement, who said:

"We Irish are being used as guinea pigs. They are trying out new methods and means of repression against us, which are not intended for use against us alone."

Ovchinnikov continues: "The Northern Irish Civil Rights Association stresses that more than 300 technical innovations in the ever increasing arsenal of repression have been tried out in Ulster. . . .

"Finally, besides being a testing ground for innovations in police techniques, Northern Ireland serves as a laboratory for repressive laws.

"In recent years, said Deputy General Secretary James Stewart of the Irish Communist party, the army, the police, and the courts, under the pretext of fighting terrorism, have developed a whole complex of harsh repressive measures that give the ruling circles new weapons for suppressing opposition. The Prevention of Terrorism Act, which operates over the entire territory of Great Britain, allows the government to detain any suspect for seven days. And it is not uncommon for suspects to be held for months awaiting trial."

Elsewhere in the article, Ovchinnikov points out that computerized information is kept on one out of every two inhabitants of Northern Ireland. Apparently this correspondent thought that the extent of repression carried out in Ulster by the British army would impress even those who live under Stalinist dictatorship and convince them that things are not that much better in the West as regards human rights.

was tun

"What Is To Be Done," weekly paper of the International Marxist Group. Published in Frankfurt, West Germany.

Faced with growing opposition in their own organizations to their pronuclear power policy, right-wing Socialist party leaders and union bureaucrats are on a campaign to stamp out dissent before it gets too big to handle. One example of this is the Metalworkers union "investigation" of Heinz Brandt, a principal speaker at one of the February 19 antinuclear plant rallies, which were attended by more than 50,000 persons.

The front-page article in the April 28 issue of *Was Tun* appeals for a campaign in defense of Brandt and of trade-union democracy:

"An investigation has been launched against Heinz Brandt, former editor of the Metalworkers union magazine *Metall*. He is accused of 'activity harmful to the union.'

"This is a grotesque, almost laughable accusation against a man who has been active in the workers movement for decades and spent thirteen years in Nazi concentration camps and prisons and also in jails in East Germany because of his opposition to the bureaucracy. But the accusation is meant in all seriousness. And it may prove 'successful.' That is, this would be a success for the accuser—the Berlin and national leaderships of the Metalworkers union—and a defeat for the unions that claim to be the workers movement. Brandt has not acted in a way harmful to the union. What is harmful to

the union is this 'investigation,' the stifling of discussion and democracy in the unions, the 'incompatibility resolutions.'

"Heinz Brandt has been condemned for two things. One is his strong rejection of atomic energy and his criticism of union officials who have been materially and spiritually corrupted by their links with the energy companies. The other is his support for his fellow unionists in the Berlin teachers union, who have been expelled from the national union and from the German Federation of Labor because they opposed the 'incompatibility resolutions' and thereby opposed the stifling of discussion in the union.

"In taking such a position, Heinz Brandt took a stand that is being taken by tens of thousands of unionists, Social Democrats, and left forces in the German Federal Republic. This shows that the attack against him is aimed at all criticism of atomic energy and the incompatibility resolutions. This is not a case against Heinz Brandt as a person. What is involved is a principle, one that must be defended this May Day. Without freedom of discussion and criticism, there can be no living movement, no strong workers movement, no strong defense of the workers interests.

"Many persons understood immediately what was involved. A committee has been formed to defend Heinz Brandt. Statements of solidarity started coming in from the unions within hours after the investigation was opened. This was a beginning. Solidarity is growing and must lead to a counteroffensive against the suppression of discussion in the unions and to win trade-union democracy."

revolución socialista

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

Colombian authorities have granted the first divorce under a new law passed in 1976, the April 21 issue reports.

The law applies only to those married in civil ceremonies, a minority of those married, and the grounds for divorce are so extreme that it is still virtually impossible to get one.

In the one divorce granted, the article says, the couple was married "for five years during which they had no sexual relations since the woman refused to perform her 'duty.' Although they had such an obvious reason for getting a divorce, they had to present witnesses and file papers for almost a year."

In the absence of full freedom to divorce, some couples opt for legal separation. In Bogotá alone in 1976 there were more than 3,000 such cases in the courts. But this option is not accessible to Colombia's poor because of the considerable expense involved.

AROUND THE WORLD



Strikes Up Sharply in Britain

The number of days lost due to strikes in March topped the million mark in Great Britain for the first time since 1974, the April 28 London *Times* reported.

The 1.12 million production days lost through walkouts in March brought the total number of strike days in the first three months of 1977 to 2.33 million—more than two-thirds the total days lost during the whole of 1976. By comparison only 303,000 strike days were recorded in March 1976.

The 1977 figures reflect the major strike by toolroom workers at British Leyland as well as an eleven-week strike at Massey Ferguson. Other walkouts have occurred so far this year in shipbuilding, engineering, metals, and vehicle production.

The *Times* cited "growing frustration" over wage controls as a major factor in the sharp increase in strikes.

314 Prisoners Released in Peru

Peruvian President Francisco Morales Bermúdez freed 314 prisoners April 27. Many of them were identified as political prisoners arrested under state security proceedings over the past year.

Immigrants Face Sex Quiz

Under new immigration rules issued March 22 by Britain's Labour government, police and other government authorities are empowered to find out whether a marriage between a male immigrant and a British woman is "genuine" or not. Where officials can show that the marriage was one of convenience for the purpose of obtaining citizenship, the man can be deported.

The May 1 *Manchester Guardian Weekly* provides several examples of what the regulations mean in practice. An article by David Pallister cites the case of Mr. and Mrs. Iftikhar Mahmud of London, who were visited by police four times over a period of six weeks. They were asked if they slept together, and their house, including their bedroom, was searched. Mrs. Mahmud was asked about her husband's clothes and what he was given for breakfast. "It was inhuman and disgusting," she said.

A letter to the editor in the same issue of the *Guardian* recounts another episode of British sex sleuths at work:

"On March 3, 1977, a police officer banged on the door of a house in Southall. He demanded to see a certain person, who he knew was married and lived there. He was told that the man concerned was upstairs in bed, and he therefore pushed his way upstairs and opened the bedroom door without so much as knocking first. He found the couple in bed together and then left the house. He had no warrant: under the 1971 Immigration Act he does not need one."

Trotskyists Victimized in Japan Airport Struggle

We reported last week (p. 527) on the demonstration of 20,000 persons held at Narita, Japan, April 17 to protest the land seizures and environmental damage caused by the new Tokyo International Airport.

As this action was ending, riot police attacked a section of the crowd and arrested a number of demonstrators. Among those attacked was a contingent of 1,200 members of the Communist Youth League (JCYL), the youth organization affiliated with the Japan Revolutionary Communist League, Japanese section of the Fourth International. Seven members of the JCYL were arrested.

In addition, a press statement issued by the JRCL April 23 reports, "Early next morning, the police raided four of the JCYL's local offices and several comrades were injured by the police violence. On the pretext of 'searching,' local police terrorized our comrades and destroyed the office facilities."

Handicapped Win Discrimination Ban

Months of demonstrations by handicapped persons—including a three-week sit-in at the Health, Education and Welfare department's San Francisco offices—have resulted in new regulations banning discrimination against 35 million disabled Americans. Also affected are 10 million alcoholics and 1.5 million drug addicts.

Congress passed the Rehabilitation Act banning such discrimination in 1973, but the actual implementation of the law was left to HEW. The department's new chief, Joseph Califano, requested more time to study a set of draft regulations, but pressure built for him to act quickly.

The regulations, which take effect June 1, could force changes in employment

practices, building design, and services in schools, colleges, hospitals, and other institutions that receive federal support.

One of the most sweeping changes will be to force school administrators to test and place a million disabled children who are currently barred from attending public school. Another provision will force employers receiving federal funds to hire a handicapped person who is otherwise qualified.

All schools, colleges, social service centers, and medical facilities built after June 1 must be completely accessible to handicapped persons, including those in wheelchairs. Older facilities will have three years to remodel.

According to a report in the April 29 *New York Times*, the full effect of the regulations is clouded by the vagueness of parts of the regulations, which allow exceptions based on "undue hardship." Lawsuits seeking to blunt the impact of the changes could remain in the courts for years.

India—New Elections in 9 States

At the request of the new Indian cabinet, President B.D. Jatti dissolved nine state legislatures April 30, paving the way for new elections in those states June 11. Since all of these legislatures had been controlled by Indira Gandhi's Congress party, the move will give the ruling Janata party an opportunity to extend its control over those states.

Although the Congress party was defeated in the March 16-20 elections to the Lok Sabha, the lower house of Parliament, it retained control of most state legislatures, to which no elections were held. In the Lok Sabha elections, the Congress party lost overwhelmingly in the nine populous northern states in which state elections are now scheduled. They are Bihar, Haryana, Himechal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal. In addition, elections are also expected in Kashmir, Tamil Nadu, and Nagaland, which are now under federal rule. The state elections will affect more than half of India's voters.

In another move designed to strengthen the Janata party regime, Defense Minister Jagjivan Ram announced that his Congress for Democracy, which had been allied with the Janata party in the election, would formally merge with it. Ram, who had been a cabinet minister in

Gandhi's government, split from the Congress party in February, greatly weakening her position during the elections.

Ram's decision was announced at the first convention of the Janata party May 1. The other components of the Janata party—the Organisation Congress, the Jan Sangh, the Bharatiya Lok Dal, and the Socialist party—also voted to dissolve their individual party organizations and merge completely into the Janata party.

CIA at Work in Australian Unions

The Central Intelligence Agency was "manipulating the leadership of labor unions" in Australia in order to suppress strikes by transportation workers there in 1974, according to a former employee of TRW Corporation who monitored secret CIA communications as part of his job.

Christopher Boyce, who was convicted of espionage in Los Angeles April 28, testified at his trial that the CIA was working "around the airports" and with railroad workers and pilots. According to a report in the April 29 *New York Times*, "He is also said to believe that the C.I.A. was infiltrating the Australian labor unions to dampen opposition to the [CIA satellite intelligence] bases in the country as well as to further pro-American feelings."

Inquiries From Amnesty International Ignored by Cambodian Government

In a statement issued May 8, Amnesty International expressed concern at the failure of the Cambodian government to answer past appeals and inquiries.

The international human-rights organization said that in February it had appealed to Cambodian President Khieu Samphan to look into the fate of twenty-six Cambodian citizens forcibly returned to Cambodia by the Thai government in November 1976. The twenty-six persons, mainly farmers but including an eleven-year-old child, were later reported to have been executed shortly after their return.

Amnesty International has also made a separate appeal to the Thai regime, urging that refugees not be forced to return to their country of origin when there are possibilities of reprisals.

The appeal to Khieu Samphan was contained in a letter that also inquired about reports alleging summary executions and maltreatment of civilians by local authorities in some areas of Cambodia. The letter has remained unanswered, as have all previous inquiries made by Amnesty International to the Cambodian government.

Commenting on the reports of executions, Amnesty International said that while the allegations have not been corroborated, their "number and gravity . . . cannot be ignored."

The organization said it was particularly concerned at the following charges made by the refugees:

"Reported disappearances of officials of the former administration and other persons, and allegations that some of those who have disappeared have either been executed or displaced to special work camps either because of their position under the previous administration or because of their political beliefs.

"Allegations that in some areas relatives of those who are considered as 'traitors' or 'enemies,' or of those who have fled the country, have been maltreated or executed.

"Reports that in some areas acts considered 'disobedient' or hostile to the new authorities are likely to be punished at the discretion of the local authorities, without any apparent legal process or safeguards."

Estimates of the number of executions and killings over the past two years "have varied considerably," Amnesty International noted. "Because there has been no opportunity for independent observers to report from within Cambodia, precise estimates on executions are not available."

CIA Spying in Micronesia

The U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee has revealed that in 1975 the CIA electronically "bugged" Micronesians who were holding talks with Washington officials on the future status of the islands. The committee report was issued May 3 over the objections of President Carter, who had asked that parts which revealed "intelligence sources and methods" be suppressed.

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger was one of the government officials named as having given the CIA permission not only to collect intelligence information, but to "assess the possibility of exerting covert influence on key elements of the Micronesian independence movement and on those other elements in the area where necessary to promote and support United States strategic objectives."

After World War II the United States took over many of the Pacific islands that comprise Micronesia under a "trust" agreement that called for future self-government and independence for the territory. The

islands have provided Washington with sites for both nuclear bomb tests and major military installations.

Striking a critical note, the Senate report noted, "Responsible officials failed to differentiate between intelligence techniques appropriate for use against an armed adversary and those proper for use against a people under United States administration and protection."

Baader-Meinhof Defendants Receive Life Sentences in West Germany

Three leaders of the so-called Baader-Meinhof urban guerrilla group were sentenced to life imprisonment April 28 on charges connected with a 1972 bombing in Heidelberg that resulted in the deaths of four U.S. servicemen.

The sentencing of Andreas Baader, Gundrun Ensslin, and Jan-Carl Raspe ended a twenty-three-month trial. The three were also convicted of thirty-two counts of attempted murder and forming a conspiracy for antistate terrorism.

A fourth defendant, Ulrike Meinhof, was found hanged in her cell in May 1976. Government officials claimed that she had committed suicide, but her lawyers expressed doubts about that verdict.

A fifth defendant, Holger Meins, died in November 1974 during a hunger strike protesting the cruel conditions under which the group was being held. Before his death, he documented the force-feeding torture used against him.

Conditions of confinement for the members of the group included:

- Systematic segregation from other prisoners.
- Special screens fixed outside cell windows to distort any perception of the outside.
- Handcuffing during yard exercises.
- A ban on all mail and visits except from relatives, with visits being supervised by political police.
- Censorship and confiscation of books and papers.

An appeal of the conviction is expected to be based in large part on revelations during the trial that the court permitted state authorities to electronically bug meetings between the accused and their attorneys.



Stevenson/Los Angeles Times

Capitalism Fouls Things Up

1,200 Antinuclear Activists Jailed in New Hampshire

New Hampshire state police spent fourteen hours May 1-2 arresting 1,414 of the antinuclear protesters who had occupied the Seabrook construction site of a nuclear power plant on April 30. (See last week's *Intercontinental Press*, p. 527.)

The occupiers were loaded into school buses and army trucks and transported to National Guard armories in the southern New Hampshire towns of Dover, Sommersworth, Manchester, and Concord. Many were held in the buses and trucks for up to fifteen hours without food or water.

All have been charged with criminal trespassing on the private property of the Public Service Company of New Hampshire. A few of the protesters have pleaded guilty and have been sentenced to 120 days in jail. (Those arrested on similar charges in protests last year were fined \$100 and given thirty-day sentences, which were then suspended.) A number of others, all New Hampshire residents, have been released on their own recognizance—that is, without being required to post bail. The vast majority, however, some 1,200, are continuing their protest by refusing to pay the \$100 to \$500 bail that has been set by the courts.

Authorities in the town of Seabrook placed all responsibility for handling the weekend's protests on the state government. After similar, though smaller, actions last year, the town sent a bill for police expenses to the Public Service Company, which refused to pay. (Seabrook residents voted 768-632 against construction of the nuclear plant in March 1976, but to no avail. One antinuclear activist called this "radiation without representation.")

In refusing to release without bail the bulk of those arrested, New Hampshire authorities have created some big difficulties for themselves. They are now holding more than three times the state's normal jail population at a cost of \$50,000 per day. Governor Meldrim Thomson (who once proposed arming the state's National Guard troops with nuclear weapons) has vowed that, as a matter of "law and order," none of those still held will be released without bail, no matter what the cost to the state.

Thomson sought before the protests to justify his tough stance on the ground that

the occupation would be "nothing but a cover for terrorist activity." He cited his "intelligence sources" as the basis for this charge.

The governor was aided in his efforts to discredit the antinuclear activists by the U.S. Labor Party, an extreme right-wing sect. Under the headline "Seabrook Warning Hailed," "investigative reporter" Arthur C. Egan Jr., wrote in the April 29 edition of ultraconservative publisher William Loeb's *Manchester Union Leader*:

... a Boston spokesman for the U.S. Labor Party, basing his comments on that group's research intelligence reports, told the *Union Leader* yesterday that Gov. Meldrim Thomson's statements concerning Seabrook "are an excellent warning to the people of New Hampshire as to what can happen there this Saturday and possibly in days to come."

George Geller said it was the Labor Party's opinion that "the Seabrook demonstration is nothing more than a cover for terrorist activity."

But then Egan went on to note that

members of a second group reportedly planning to join with the Clamshell Alliance [which organized the occupation] tomorrow belong to the National Caucus of Labor Committees. A member of the Clamshell said he fears the NCLC "could cause trouble" this weekend.

Loeb's "investigative reporter" apparently failed to probe deeply enough to discover that the U.S. Labor Party and the NCLC are one and the same. The Clamshell Alliance justifiably feared that this group "could cause trouble," since it has become notorious for physical attacks on numerous organizations and activities of the American radical movement. The NCLC is also rabidly pronuclear power, and calls for saving the world from disaster through a crash program to develop "controlled thermonuclear fusion." No NCLC disruption occurred, although Clamshell monitors did discover several members of the group among the occupiers.

Loeb's and Thomson's garbled warnings notwithstanding, the protests at Seabrook April 30-May 1 were totally peaceful. Not one incident of physical violence on the part of any protester took place, nor has there been a single report of any PSC property being damaged. Thomson will be increasingly hard put to justify holding more than a thousand young persons who

have done nothing more than peacefully protest the construction of an unsafe nuclear power plant. □

The Right to Sunshine

Sixty-two families of Moriguchi, Japan, took the Japan Expressway Public Corporation to court in 1971, charging that construction of the Hanshin Expressway would deprive them of 30 percent of their daily sunshine.

On March 29 of this year, the Osaka Summary Court ordered the corporation to pay "sunshine rights" compensation to the plaintiffs. This was the first court decision in such a lawsuit.

The corporation must pay more than 22 million yen (US\$80,000) to the sixty-two families. In addition, an ordinance passed in February 1976 requires the expressway company to pay 240 million yen (\$864,000) to 590 households located along various other sections of the highway.

Effects of Chemical Blast Still Being Felt in Italy

On July 10, 1976, an explosion shook the Icmesa chemical factory near Seveso, Italy, releasing a cloud of dioxin, one of the most powerful poisons known.

Dioxin in minute quantities is fatal to small animals. In humans, it causes skin eruptions and damage to the liver, spleen, kidneys, and respiratory and nervous systems, and is considered likely to produce cancer and genetic defects as well. The U.S. Army used it as a herbicide in Vietnam.

The 20 to 100 pounds of dioxin that were dispersed in the Seveso area last year killed hundreds of farm animals almost immediately. For ten days Icmesa company officials tried to cover up what had happened, provoking a strike by workers at the plant. But as the extent of the disaster became apparent, the Italian government ordered the total evacuation of the 730 residents of the immediate surroundings. A ban on the consumption of foodstuffs grown in a much larger area was also imposed. Fearing the birth of deformed infants, many women who were pregnant at the time of the blast sought



abortions, which the government allowed to be performed legally over the objections of the Vatican.

The effects of this ecological horror continue. In early February, nearly 300 Seveso schoolchildren were found to still be suffering from chloracne, a skin ailment in which boils and pimples erupt on the face, limbs, and genitals. The mayor of the city ordered all the schools closed for decontamination. Local authorities then asked for government troops to keep people from returning to their homes in the most contaminated areas.

On April 20 more than 1,000 persons demonstrated in Seveso to demand the resignations of Christian Democratic Mayor Francesco Rocca and the municipal council. The demonstrators were protesting the "ineffective" handling of the situation by the town officials.

The Lombardy regional government decided the same day to have asphalt spread over the grounds of fifteen factories in Cesano Maderno, near Seveso, where high levels of dioxin contamination were reported. The authorities decided against ordering the factories to close, however, thus further endangering the 118 workers employed in them.

No effective antidotes for dioxin poisoning are known, and decontamination efforts have long been delayed. The most recently reported plan involves scraping up a thirty-five-centimeter layer of topsoil from the entire Seveso area. The 70,000 tons of earth will then be burned in a special incinerator, a process that is expected to take three years.

Even this offers no guarantee that the aftereffects of the 1976 explosion will not continue. Much of the poison has entered the watersheds of the Seveso and Po rivers. The Po, Italy's largest and longest river, flows through the richest industrial and farm land in the country.

Herbicide To Be Burned at Sea

Remember Agent Orange?

It is a potent herbicide also known as 2,4,5-T. The Pentagon sprayed more than

100 million pounds of the poison over one-seventh the total area of South Vietnam in the course of the American aggression there.

Agent Orange is contaminated with dioxin, the chemical that has turned Seveso, Italy, into a wasteland (see above). It did a lot of damage in Vietnam, too. The National Academy of Sciences has reported that U.S. spraying destroyed 36 percent of the country's coastal mangrove forests and extensively damaged inland forests as well. The academy concluded that some of this destruction may take a century to heal.

The U.S. Air Force is now preparing to dispose of several million gallons of leftover Agent Orange. It will be burned on an incinerator ship in the Pacific Ocean. The Environmental Protection Agency is requiring that waste gases from the burning be carefully monitored and that marine life in the area be checked for ill effects.

Acid Rain Killing Wildlife

Air pollution generated in urban areas around the Great Lakes is killing off fish and small amphibians in the Adirondack Mountains in central and eastern New York State. Brook trout and spotted salamanders are two of the most hard-hit species.

Two major air pollutants are responsible: nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide. These substances mix with moisture in the air to form nitric and sulfuric acid. The acids then fall to earth in the form of rain or snow and are concentrated in lakes and streams downwind from the source of the pollution.

A recent Cornell University study (cited in the March 28 *New York Times*) found that more than half the 217 Adirondack lakes located 2,000 feet or more above sea level are highly acidic. Ninety percent of the lakes are barren of fish, as against 4 percent in the 1930s.

The killing off of fish and small amphibians may have much broader ecological consequences. Since salamanders feed on

insect larvae, their absence could result in a proliferation of mosquitos and other pests. In turn, the depletion of amphibians in the food chain could affect the population of predators such as birds and foxes and other small mammals.

The Cornell study noted that the problem of acid rain and snow has been exacerbated by the introduction of high smokestacks that aid the dispersion of pollutants.

'Somber' Mood at Nuclear Conference

Some 2,000 governmental delegates, industrial representatives, and academic specialists from sixty countries gathered in Salzburg, Austria, May 2 for the International Conference on Nuclear Power and Its Fuel Cycle.

Walter Sullivan of the *New York Times* described the mood at the meeting as "somber." Previous conferences like this one sponsored by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have been held under the title "Atoms for Peace," but the name was dropped this year.

The reason for the gloom was noted by IAEA Executive Director Ulf Lantzkze: "Today we find ourselves confronted with a paralyzing crisis of confidence in the future of nuclear power."

Participants in the meeting did not have far to look for evidence of this trend—the day before, 100 scientists, environmental specialists, and antinuclear activists from twenty countries had convened the Salzburg Conference for a Non-Nuclear Future. According to the May 2 *New York Times*, this group "condemned the commercial use of plutonium as a source of energy and called for a stepped-up fight against conventional nuclear power plants."

The *Times* also reported that "a radical group of European experts and activists said that it was necessary to stop the construction of nuclear reactors at once and that large groups of citizens should become involved in direct opposition to local power-plant projects."

"The radical group said in a statement that while President Carter's position on

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Parker/New York Post

nuclear power seemed to hold 'some hope,' his stand on light-water reactors—the standard type of nuclear power plant in the United States and other industrialized countries—was harmful because he intended to facilitate licensing procedures instead of halting them."

Meanwhile the official IAEA conference was hearing Robert W. Fri of the U.S. Energy Research and Development Administration outline Carter's plans: The U.S. would begin accepting foreign orders for enriched uranium, utilize new technological methods of enriching nuclear fuel, intensify uranium prospecting, and study alternative fuel cycles that involve thorium-fueled breeder reactors.

World's Oldest Trees Threatened

A grove containing some of the world's oldest and tallest trees may be threatened by logging operations that began the first week of April near Redwoods National Park in California.

Sequoia sempervirens, or coast redwoods, grow in timberlands along California's northern Pacific coast. In 1968, 58,000 acres of this land was set aside by the federal government as Redwoods National Park. Most of the rest of it is owned by three lumber companies: Louisiana Pacific Corporation, Arcata Redwood Company, and Simpson Timber Company.

After the park was established, the lumber barons refrained from cutting on lands immediately adjacent to it. But as moves began earlier this year to increase the size of the park, the companies decided to step up their logging operations on the lands that would be affected. On March 29, Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus asked the companies for a six-month moratorium on timber operations near the park, but they refused.

Although the trees in the present park are in no danger of being felled, cutting on the steep slopes immediately next to them will cause soil erosion that environmentalists fear will seriously undercut the roots of the giant redwoods. Among the trees affected would be those in the "Tall Trees Grove," which includes some that are 2,000 years old and over 350 feet high.

Some proponents of the park expansion plans have charged that the logging was not initiated out of a need to increase lumber production but rather to force the government into a hasty settlement with the lumber companies at a higher price for the redwood land.

The companies have threatened that 2,000 to 3,000 jobs in the logging industry will be lost if the park is expanded. Leaders of the lumber workers and construction trades unions in California have fallen for this argument and have organized demonstrations of up to 8,000 persons in towns in the timber region. On April 14, a protest motorcade of 100 logging trucks and other vehicles rolled



Vereth/Liberation News Service

into San Francisco, where Congressional hearings on the proposed park expansion are being held.

Mysterious Oil Slick Threatens Birds

A slimy black oil slick of unknown origin has invaded beaches on the Aland Islands, located off the southwestern coast of Finland.

Many birds have been found covered with the heavy fuel oil, which gradually destroys their protective outer coating and exposes them to freezing cold.

The islands are one of Europe's most important bird sanctuaries. They lie along a major migratory route between Finland and the south.

Maoris Fight Sewage Pollution

Andre Raihman reports in the April 22 issue of *Socialist Action*, the New Zealand Trotskyist fortnightly, on a struggle of the native Maori people against plans by the city of Porirua, near Wellington, to build a \$21 million sewage treatment plant at Komanga Point.

"The Ngati Toa people . . . point out that the proposed siting of the plant, and the sewer outfall at sea, will be a health hazard and will pollute their last remaining ancestral fishing grounds. The waters surrounding Komanga Point contain plentiful supplies of kaimoana (seafood): paua, kine (sea eggs), and mussels."

Environmental groups and trade unions have come to the aid of the Maoris in their fight. "Particularly welcome has been the support of the Wellington Drivers Union, which has placed a ban [boycott] on the site. This stand has been endorsed by the Wellington Trades Council."

Raihman details a long history of encroachment by the white settlers of New

Zealand on the land and water rights of the Ngati Toa people. Many of their fishing grounds have long since been destroyed by sewage pollution. Discharge of raw sewage into Porirua harbor was halted in 1957, "but by then it was too late; pollution of the harbour, added to by silt and mud from earthworks in the area, had completely destroyed the mudflats. Once an area abounding with a variety of kaimoana . . . the shores are now lined with signs warning the public that the taking of shellfish is a danger to human health."

2,000 in France Protest A-Plant

Two thousand persons demonstrated April 23 in Chalon-sur-Saône, a small town about forty miles south of Dijon, against the proposed construction of two 1,800-megawatt nuclear reactors and a uranium enrichment plant in two nearby hamlets.

The demonstration, sponsored by the Antinuclear Coordinating Committee of the Saône Valley, was the latest in a series of protests that have mobilized thousands of opponents of nuclear power plants across France.

Earlier the same day, a group opposing the construction of the Superphénix nuclear reactor sponsored a demonstration in Villeurbanne, a small town near Lyons. After unveiling a stone marker dedicated to the "unknown victims of radiation," the group announced plans to occupy the site on July 30.

While the Chalon protesters were joined by representatives of the Socialist party, the United Socialist party, and the French Democratic Confederation of Labor, representatives of the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) and the Communist party were noticeably absent.

During an April 29 visit to a nuclear reactor construction site, Georges Seguy, head of the CGT, said that the development of nuclear power represented the "decisive answer" to France's growing energy needs, according to a report in the May 2 issue of *Le Monde*. He warned against paying heed to the "utopian campaigns" of the ecologists, which he termed "scientifically unfounded."

No Dome for Acropolis

Not long ago, a group of Swiss architects proposed a means of protecting the Parthenon and other ancient ruins atop Athens' Acropolis from erosion caused by air pollution. Their solution was to erect a self-cleaning, weatherproof glass dome built on a metal skeleton enclosing more than 3 million cubic yards of space.

But Greek authorities have turned down the \$40 million project. "From an archeological, technical, aesthetic, and financial point of view it was not acceptable," said Professor Nicholas Plato, who chairs the committee that is seeking ways to protect the 2,500-year-old temples.