

## **Moscow Unable to Stem Debate in West European Communist Parties**



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Fight Against Seabrook A-Plant Continues

Concorde Protest in New York

*By David Frankel*

## **No Surprise in Outcome of Israeli Election**

# NEWS ANALYSIS

## Nixon Rides Again—a Reminder of the Movement That Really Brought the GIs Back From Vietnam

By Jon Britton

It was the third segment of the "Nixon-Frost Show," and the actor with star billing put on quite a performance the evening of May 19. The subject was "Mr. Nixon: His War at Home and Abroad."

The show wasn't exactly what you would call entertaining. But it was enlightening for the millions watching.

The exchanges between British interviewer David Frost and former President Richard Nixon provided a timely reminder of the truths revealed during the Vietnam War and Watergate years regarding the illegal and undemocratic methods the rulers of capitalist America resort to in trying to maintain their power and profit system.

Moreover, Nixon's brazen defense of his conduct in office sheds new light on the real attitude toward popular dissent and the powers of the presidency long held by the politicians of the Democratic and Republican parties.

Thus, while it will earn Nixon and Frost a princely sum (reportedly close to a million for the ex-president) and perhaps sell more of the dog food advertised in the intermissions, the television spectacular isn't likely to help much in rehabilitating the war criminal who formerly occupied the White House.

Nixon, of course, did not acknowledge his criminal role. On the contrary, he portrayed himself as the persecuted victim, an embattled president bent on bringing the war to an "honorable" close. And if he was a bit "paranoiac" at times, that was understandable given the large number of enemies besieging him at the White House. And besides, "paranoia for peace isn't that bad," as he put it.

Those who spoke out against the war, according to Nixon's twisted reasoning, were the real criminals: "The effect of what they did was to prolong the war," he said. Moreover, the millions who demonstrated in the streets were "violence prone." And Daniel Ellsberg, who commit-



NIXON: Makes killing in show business.

ted the "crime" of making the Pentagon Papers available to the American people, was called a "punk" by Nixon.

Far from prolonging the Vietnam War, the massive protest movement brought U.S. intervention to an end much more quickly than would have happened otherwise. The troop withdrawals Nixon began in 1969 were clearly a response to pressure from the antiwar movement, for example.

And despite Nixon's claims at the time that he wasn't being affected by the antiwar protests, in fact they were driving him up the wall: "Nobody can know what it means for a president to be sitting in that White House working late at night, as I often did, and to have hundreds of thousands of demonstrators around, charging through the streets."

What raised interviewer Frost's eyebrows, and caused much comment in the news media the next day, was Nixon's candid presentation of his concept of the presidency. This could be summed up as "the king can do no wrong." Or, as the fascist-minded mayor of Jersey City, Frank "Boss" Hague put it in the 1930s: "I am the law."

This revealing exchange occurred during the interview:

*Frost.* So what in a sense you're saying is that

there are certain situations . . . where the president can decide that it's in the best interests of the nation or something, and do something illegal.

*Nixon.* Well, when the president does it, that means that it is not illegal.

*Frost.* By definition.

*Nixon.* Exactly. Exactly. If the president, for example, approves something, approves an action, because of the national security, or in this case because of a threat to internal peace and order of significant magnitude, then the president's decision in that instance is one that enables those who carry it out to carry it out without violating a law. Otherwise they're in an impossible position.

Frost couldn't even get Nixon to clearly draw the line at committing murder, if necessary to maintain "peace and order," not to speak of merely lying. It was this reactionary logic, undoubtedly, that led the National Guardsmen at Kent State University on May 4, 1970, to think it perfectly proper to shoot down students protesting the war.

A high point in the farce was reached when Nixon likened himself to a modern-day Lincoln, waging an ideological civil war to achieve national unity in the face of the Vietnamese "enemy."

Nixon apparently still has hopes that he will go down in history as a "great president," another Lincoln no less, and this series of television interviews was to mark the first steps in a whitewash job.

But, as was the case after the earlier segment dealing with Watergate, the polls taken after this installment will no doubt show that the great majority of the American people haven't changed their opinions about this ignominious figure.

For its part the ruling class undoubtedly finds Nixon a great embarrassment and would like its former top servant to go back into seclusion in San Clemente and stay there. Nixon's return to the television screens comes at an awkward time—right in the middle of Carter's top-priority effort to restore the deeply shaken trust of the American people in the government. No sooner had the most recent interview been aired, than Carter released a vexed statement through his deputy press secretary, Rex Granum:

President Carter does not feel any President has a right to break the law. He feels very strongly that it is a tragic mistake to follow that philosophy as past events have shown so dramatically.

He does feel there are adequate judicial means to prevent danger to the country.

Carter's attempted cover-up of the disclosures of CIA payoffs to foreign leaders, his shipment of \$15 million worth of supplies to Zaïre to prop up the dictatorial Mobutu regime, his use of a phony CIA oil report to inveigle the American people into supporting his call for sacrifices, and his push for identification cards for all U.S. workers, are all indications that Carter's methods in substance will be no different from Nixon's. □

### Coming Next Week

A review of the policies of the Spartacist League.

On the Black movement; on the oppression of women; on defense of political prisoners. With entertaining and illuminating examples to substantiate the polemic.

## Carter's Proposal for an Internal Passport

President Carter is moving step by step to carry out a probe—initiated by Ford—of public reaction to compulsory identification cards for all Americans.

Initial moves included issuing "resident aliens"—that is, legally recognized immigrants—with so-called imposter-proof identification cards, containing their photographs, fingerprints, and signatures.

Other proposals were prepared by cabinet committees of both the Ford and Carter administrations and presented to Carter at the end of April. Widely publicized in the press, they included the following:

- Making it illegal for employers to knowingly hire workers without immigration papers.

- Providing immigration police and authorities with additional staff and equipment to screen "illegal" from "legal" aliens.

- Establishing "amnesty" for undocumented persons who have been in the United States for at least five years.

To be implemented, each step would obviously require some means to distinguish between "aliens" (both "legal" and "illegal") and "citizens." Such an identification document would amount to an internal passport.

Although the initial target is one of the most downtrodden and least protected sectors of the American public, it is crystal clear that proposals for an internal passport could not stop there. A key figure in the Carter administration's publicity campaign acknowledged this in a speech in New York May 13.

Addressing an outfit called the "American Immigration and Citizenship Conference," Secretary of Labor Ray Marshall argued that to be effective, such identification cards would have to be carried by *all persons seeking jobs in the United States.*

This, he piously contended, would be necessary to *lessen* discrimination against Spanish-speaking workers. Without some fool-proof system of identifying all workers, he said, employers subject to fines for hiring "illegal aliens" might simply avoid hiring "anyone who speaks with a Spanish accent."

In effect, the administration has come full circle. Beginning with the racist argument that special identification is needed "to protect American jobs," it now contends that "to protect immigrants" everyone must have such identification.

Carter's problem, and the reason behind the public-relations effort to enhance the image of the ID card proposal, is that tens of millions of Americans reject it out of hand. The latest Gallup poll, released April 24, shows the population nearly evenly divided, with a plurality of 50 percent opposing compulsory identification cards and 45 percent in favor. □

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### No Surprise in Outcome of Israeli Election

By David Frankel

Perhaps the most surprising thing about the Israeli election May 17 was that the outcome was seen by bourgeois commentators as such an upset.

Since the last election in December 1973 the Labor party coalition governing Israel has been faced with the country's increasing international isolation, a stagnant economy, a rate of inflation approaching 40 percent, discontent over some of the highest taxes in the world, and, most recently, a series of financial scandals that forced the ruling prime minister out of office.

It would have been surprising indeed had the Labor alignment escaped untouched from such a situation.

As things turned out, the Labor bloc declined in strength from fifty-one seats to thirty-four, although final election results are not yet in. Fourteen of the seventeen seats lost by Labor were picked up by the Democratic Movement for Change, which based its entire strategy on winning the votes of discontented Labor supporters.

Likud was the other main electoral bloc. It appears that the Likud won forty-three seats in the Knesset (parliament), which is only a few more than it held after the 1973 election.

Looked at from this angle, there has not been much change in the underlying reality of Israeli politics. On the surface, however, the shift has been great. With barely one-third of the seats in the Knesset, the Likud is now Israel's largest single party. Likud leader Menahem Begin will now try to form a coalition government, taking over as the first non-Labor prime minister in Israel's history.

#### Predictions of Doom

Because of Likud's stand in favor of formal Israeli annexation of the West Bank, the Golan Heights, and the Gaza Strip, Begin's ascension to power was greeted by many as the kiss of death for President Carter's diplomatic plans in the Middle East.

A typical response came from columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak who declared, in a May 20 article: "Not only have the odds on a new Middle East war escalated with the surprise election of hard-line Israeli nationalist Menahem Begin and his right-wing Likud party, but the region's entire political fabric has been ripped to shreds as well."

A similar sentiment was voiced by columnist Anthony Lewis in the May 19 *New York Times*. "We have allowed ourselves to hope, this year, that there was

at last a real chance for settlement in the Middle East . . .," Lewis said. "To those who hope the election in Israel has dealt a numbing blow."

In practice, however, the Israeli Labor party has been following a completely annexationist course in the occupied territories for the last ten years. It has spent some \$500 million on the establishment of Zionist settlements in these territories.

For diplomatic reasons, the Israeli regime has carried out this process of colonization without formally annexing the territories involved, except in the case of Jerusalem. Whatever his personal inclinations, it is unlikely that Begin would be able to change this policy without the acquiescence of powerful forces outside of his own Likud bloc.

Settlement plans might be speeded up, but the biggest obstacle in this regard is simply finding people willing to leave Israel's established cities and towns and go live in the new colonies. It was not surprising, in view of this, that James Reston advocated a calmer view of the prospects under Begin in his column in the May 20 issue of the *New York Times*.

"The reaction to the Israeli election here [in Washington] has naturally been a little jumpy, but after the first official hiccup, the most thoughtful people have begun to take a more philosophic view," Reston wrote.

Having kept the Arab regimes on a string for the past three years with nothing but promises, and at virtually no expense to themselves or their Israeli client state, the American imperialists have now been handed a new excuse for delaying the long-promised payoff.

"When President Carter met the Congressional leaders at the White House after the Israeli election, according to our information, he urged everybody in attendance to be patient," Reston pointed out. "He agreed that the Israeli election complicated things, and might delay the process of trying to find a compromise Middle East peace at Geneva, but insisted nothing *enduring* had happened." (Emphasis in original)

#### Palestinians Move to Left

With international attention focused on the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow—the prospect of an overall Mideast peace settlement engineered by American imperialism—there has been virtually no comment on one big shift that was indicated by the May 17 vote. That is, the

growing radicalization of the Palestinians inside Israel.

This radicalization was reflected in the vote of the Israeli Communist party. Running in a front with a layer of Palestinian notables and some small radical groups, the CP appears to have increased its vote among the Palestinian population from the 35 percent it obtained in December 1973 to more than 50 percent. This increase was at the expense of the Zionist parties, particularly the Labor party.

If anything, the vote of the Israeli CP may even have been diminished by its participation in a front with Arab mayors who have been notorious collaborators with the Zionist regime in the past. The conciliatory policy of the Stalinist-led front towards the Zionist parties, and its outright support for the Israeli state, led some Palestinian militants to favor abstention in the election. This position was also taken by the Trotskyists in the Revolutionary Communist League (Israeli section of the Fourth International).

But the important thing to note is not the electoral form in which the radicalization of the Palestinians has been expressed in this particular election. Rather, it is the existence of the radicalization itself, which is a factor that will have to be faced by whatever government is in power in Israel.

#### 142 Recent 'Disappearances' Reported in Argentina

Amnesty International issued a list May 18 of 142 persons who have "disappeared" in Argentina since the organization's last investigations there in November 1976. Many of those listed are "relatives of persons suspected of leftwing political activity," an accompanying press release stated.

The release also said, "Since the beginning of 1977 AI estimates that at least 300 politically motivated deaths have occurred in Argentina, the majority of which involved persons suspected of 'subversive activities'. Some of the dead include official prisoners detained in La Plata prisons such as Dardo Cabo and four others who were allegedly shot while trying to escape."

These facts lead Amnesty International to conclude, "There is no evidence to support the thesis that the situation is improving. . . ."

#### Prices up 45 Percent in Uruguay

The cost of living increased by 45 percent in Uruguay during 1976, and new price rises were reported at the beginning of 1977.

Leading the increases were urban rents, which rose 58.1 percent in December 1976, and fuels, which rose between 15 and 32 percent. Gasoline reached US\$2.46 per gallon, one of the highest prices in the world.

## Carter's 'New' Policy Toward Vorster Regime

By Ernest Harsch

On May 21, the first day of his visit to South Africa, Andrew Young urged a gathering of 200 South African businessmen to make a few reforms in their racist systems of apartheid.

Although the American representative to the United Nations has tried to portray himself as a champion of Black rights, he did not call for an end to white supremacy. He did not even call for reforms that would affect all of the country's twenty-two million Blacks. He simply told the South African capitalists that "four or five million blacks have to be brought into the system."

Young assured his listeners that his proposal was not aimed at undermining capitalist property relations, but rather at strengthening them. He said that "when goods are shared with those at the bottom of the system, it doesn't mean they have to be taken away from those at the top."

To justify his position, Young employed the standard argument that has been used for years by apologists of corporate rule in South Africa: that continued capitalist economic growth will inevitably weaken white domination and allow Blacks to acquire more rights. In fact, his remarks closely reflected the positions put forward by Harry Oppenheimer, the head of South Africa's largest monopoly interests, who invited Young to South Africa and organized the meeting.

"My argument," Young said, "boils down to my conviction that the free market system can be the greatest force for constructive change now operating anywhere in the world."

The experiences of South Africa's Blacks have clearly proven the opposite. The period since the Second World War, which has been marked by a high rate of economic growth, has also been a period of ferocious attacks on the last remaining rights of the country's Black majority. The entire system of white supremacy and repression has been continually strengthened.

It is, in fact, the national oppression of Blacks, with the accompanying low wages and superprofits, that has made this rapid capitalist economic development possible.

In this light, the Carter administration's "new" policy toward South Africa is, in its essentials, similar to those of previous administrations. The aim of the American imperialists is to protect their significant interests in South Africa, while at the same time urging Pretoria to make a few minor concessions to the Black population



ANDREW YOUNG

and "streamline" its racist policies with the intention of better preserving white supremacy in the long run.

Direct American investments in South Africa are currently estimated at \$1.6 billion and some of the leading U.S. banks have lent about \$2 billion to South African companies and the Vorster regime. Although Washington does not directly supply arms to Pretoria, it has approved the sale of "dual purpose" equipment, such as aircraft and computers, that can be used for both civilian and military purposes. None of the possible measures American officials have raised so far to reduce Washington's overt ties to the apartheid regime would affect this aid.

The main new element in Carter's policy toward southern Africa is thus rhetorical. Since shortly after Carter's inauguration in January, the White House has conducted a sustained effort to convince the world that some real policy changes are involved. This sales campaign was put into high gear in May. Besides his visit to South Africa, Young toured several other African countries and attended a UN-sponsored conference on southern Africa. Vice-President Walter Mondale held talks in Vienna May 19-20 with South Africa Prime Minister John Vorster.

The meeting in Vienna was preceded by a series of carefully orchestrated American

declarations, in which the Carter administration sought to give the appearance of "talking tough," while at the same time reassuring the Vorster regime.

Citing "two high-level Administration officials," *New York Times* correspondent Graham Hovey reported in a May 3 dispatch from Washington, "Vice President Mondale will emphasize at a meeting with Prime Minister John Vorster in Vienna on May 19 the Administration's conviction that South Africa must abandon apartheid, officials said today."

On May 17, Carter declared that Washington and four other Western powers would take "strong action" against Pretoria in the United Nations if the South Africans refused to grant independence to Namibia.

These American declarations were coupled with assurances to Vorster. According to the May 16 *Washington Post*, "Vice President Walter Mondale sought today [May 15] to deflate reports that he would confront South African Prime Minister John Vorster with a tough new policy opposing apartheid when the two men meet later this week in Vienna."

Mondale said that he preferred to speak of "full participation" by Blacks in the South African government, rather than call for "black majority rule."

In April, Carter also reaffirmed Washington's traditional attitude toward Pretoria, declaring that South Africa "has a legally constituted Government and is a stabilizing influence in the southern part of that continent."

The Vienna talks themselves produced nothing unexpected. Vorster agreed to support American and British efforts to revive the negotiations over the conflict in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia). He also signaled his willingness to allow some form of "free" elections to a constituent assembly in Namibia, an apparent retreat from Pretoria's earlier attempts to unilaterally impose a white-dominated "multiracial" regime before granting Namibia's formal independence. (Pretoria had indicated a possible shift in its policy toward Namibia before the talks began.)

As expected, Vorster also rejected Mondale's call for "full political participation" by Blacks in a unitary state. "We don't want them [Blacks] to swamp us," he said.

Vorster did not appear overly concerned about the American statements critical of his regime. The May 22 *New York Times* reported, "One thing was doctrine and theory, and another thing was practice,

Mr. Vorster observed. He added: 'We'll see in six or nine months how it works out.'

The main job of lending some credibility to Carter's southern Africa policy has been given to Young. Using his credentials as the first Black U.S. representative to the United Nations and as a former civil-rights activist in the South, he has sought to win more American influence with the Black regimes and liberation organizations.

By polishing up its political image in Black Africa, Washington hopes to gain a better position from which to derail the expanding Black freedom struggles. Young himself has indicated as much, stating, "My work is to compete with those who advocate armed struggle. . . ."

Young's frequent and controversial pronouncements on southern Africa have been designed to capture headlines and enhance his prestige among Blacks. He has called the Vorster regime "morally illegitimate" and "unrepresentative" and has said that the Cuban troops in Angola have contributed to "stability" in that country.

Young's efforts to provoke South African criticisms of his remarks have also been calculated. According to a report by Lee Lescaze in the April 19 *Washington Post*, "U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young said yesterday he doesn't mind attacks by South African politicians because they bolster up his credibility with black African representatives at the United Nations."

Young's remarks have also been directed at the American population, particularly Blacks, who are strongly opposed to American intervention in Africa and to Washington's complicity with the racist white minority regimes.

This concern was reflected by Young March 7, when he discussed Washington's difficulties in controlling the situation in Zimbabwe. "There are a number of alternatives," he said, "but U.S. troops are not one of them. . . . In a sense, I regret that, because the transition period is critical, and no one has any confidence in the British."

Young's assignment is to defuse the American antiwar sentiment by making it appear that Washington no longer supports the white regimes, but is now intervening in southern Africa to aid the Black liberation struggles.

The *New York Times* took cognizance of this goal in a May 17 editorial. It said that Carter's policy "could greatly increase American prestige and diplomatic effectiveness in the rest of Africa. It could unite our own people behind this country's exertions abroad."

Initially at least, the White House has achieved a degree of success. The Black American press, which looks to the Democratic party by and large, has been generally uncritical of Carter's policies in southern Africa.

Young also scored some limited gains in Africa itself, during a tour of several African countries that he began May 10. Just before the South African visit, he attended a UN-sponsored conference in Mozambique. It was the first time an American representative had officially participated in one of the UN's "anticolonial" conferences.

On his first day in Mozambique, Young met with Mozambican President Samora Machel and with Sam Nujoma, the leader of the South West Africa People's Organisation, which is fighting for Namibia's independence. In a May 17 dispatch from Maputo, Mozambique, *Washington Post* correspondent Jonathan C. Randal reported:

Young's two meetings neatly illustrated his success—so far at least—in dealing with black African radicals who until recently viewed the United States and its African policy with undisguised hostility and skepticism.

In a phrase underlining his change of heart about the Carter administration, Machel said today, "I am not saying the United States has a solution, but it has a great contribution to make. This is why I say welcome."

Nujoma had sharply denounced the United States only last week in Luanda, Angola. He met here Sunday with representatives of five Western powers, including the United States, and then junked a tough draft speech denouncing the Western initiative, in favor of a milder version.

As the conference progressed, however, Young drew a colder response from the African delegates. Randal reported May 19 that "Young's lengthy invocation of the moderation used in the American civil rights movement left many of his black African listeners unconvinced, disappointed and even angry." Young's failure to outline any specific measures Washington would take against the white minority regimes only added to this anger.

Symptomatic of the African reactions

was that of Leslie Harriman, the Nigerian representative to the UN. "If this is to be the [U.S.] approach there can be no common ground," he said. At another point he stated, "We're talking about liberation. People are dying in Zimbabwe and children were killed in Soweto. Meanwhile, United States investment in South Africa has grown from nothing to \$2 billion. . . ."

The limits of Washington's policy were evident on the last day of the conference, when two documents were adopted calling for more forceful measures against the South African and Rhodesian regimes. A statement—jointly signed by American, British, Canadian, West German, and French representatives—was released dissociating those five powers from certain clauses in the documents. A similar declaration was issued separately by the nine members of the European Common Market.

Although the imperialist powers did not specify which provisions they were opposed to, it was thought to include a call for a mandatory arms embargo against South Africa and the extension of sanctions against the Rhodesian regime to include a halt to all communications.

Carter's "new" policy toward southern Africa has also not made much of an impression on Khotso Seatlholo, one of the central leaders of the mass Black protests in South Africa last year who is now living in exile. He said in April, while in the United States, "The Carter government is not interested in the masses in the U.S. . . ."

"It is even less interested in the struggling masses in southern Africa. Carter's only aim is to exploit the masses here in the U.S. and the Black masses in southern Africa. Young is just another puppet being used by this government to pursue their profits." □

## Manila Slum Leader Jailed, Tortured

One of the best-known leaders of Manila's one million slum dwellers, Mrs. Trinidad Herrera, has been tortured by Philippine authorities, who had her placed under military detention for undisclosed reasons, according to a report by Bernard Wideman in the May 11 *Washington Post*.

Herrera, thirty-five, is the head of Zoto, an organization representing 175,000 persons in the slum area known as Tondo in central Manila. In the past she has met with President Marcos to discuss slum problems and has conferred with officials of the World Bank to obtain funds for community development.

Her attorney, Soc Rodrigo, charged in a letter to top government officials that he had been unable to trace his client after she was quietly arrested April 25.

After finding her in a detention center May 6, he was told at first that she was too "sick" to see him.

Eventually he was permitted to talk with her. "It took some time before she showed signs of recognizing me," he said. "I found it almost impossible to communicate with her. The few statements she made were evasive and incoherent."

Wideman said that prisoners in the center have smuggled out reports that Herrera was given electrical shocks "on very sensitive parts of the body." The torture made her incapable of bathing or feeding herself for days after.

Following Herrera's arrest, three more leaders of Zoto were detained, apparently in an attempt by the Marcos regime to disrupt Zoto's annual meeting on May 15.

## Moscow Unable to Stem Debate in 'Euro-Communist' Parties

By Gerry Foley

The Kremlin tried to organize a de facto world conference of Communist parties in Prague at the end of April to rein in the "Euro-Communist" parties. Extraordinary measures were clearly called for.

The attempts of the Euro-Communist CPs to dissociate themselves from bureaucratic dictatorship had touched off a process that was quite detrimental to Stalinism. However, not only did the Prague conference fail, but it led to new rebuffs to the Kremlin and in fact to extending the process unleashed by Euro-Communism, rather than containing it.

The Soviet bureaucracy's attempt to portray the discussions in Prague as authoritative in an article in the May 9 issue of *Pravda* forced the Euro-Communist parties to publicly reject this. In its May 12 issue, the French CP organ *l'Humanité* wrote:

Let us recall that the meeting the *Pravda* article deals with was organized on the initiative of the editorial board of the *World Marxist Review* [the international magazine of the CPs] and was entirely devoted to the work of this magazine. Contrary to what the *Pravda* article suggests, it was not and could not in any case have been a conference of Communist parties.

In its May 10 issue, the Italian CP organ *l'Unità* said:

No statement was voted on and no document was approved. . . . Proposals aimed at introducing questions that did not concern exclusively the work of the publication either fell flat or were rejected.

The *Pravda* article was obviously intended as a major political statement. One of its introductory paragraphs said:

Such meetings inevitably become major political events. The Communist movement, which is now on the rise, has become such a force that without it no serious question in world politics can be resolved. This is both an expression of the constantly growing role of the Communist movement and of the constantly growing consciousness on the part of Communists of their responsibility for the fate of humanity.

The statement that no major problem in world politics can be settled without the CPs is reminiscent of the claim constantly put forward by the Portuguese CP during the summer 1975 crisis that no "democratic government" was possible in Portugal without its participation.

This proposition expresses the Stalinists' conception of world politics and provides the measure of their ambitions. They seek to become a force that the capitalists will have to negotiate with; yet their final

objective is simply a deal. On this, all Stalinists agree.

The problem is that the bureaucratic regimes holding state power and the big Communist parties in capitalist countries have different ideas on what and how much each should be willing to sacrifice to further a modus vivendi with the capitalists.

### Whose Political Fence to Mend?

The Kremlin sees itself as the fountainhead of the strength of the CPs and thinks that they should continue to pay the high overhead political cost necessary to defend maintenance of the dictatorial regime in Moscow. From the bureaucracy's standpoint, any concessions the CPs may have to make to reassure the bourgeoisies or public opinion in their countries should not be at the expense of its political needs at home.

The big CPs, on the other hand, see themselves as standing in the front line of the fight for détente and are convinced that the best thing they can do for world Stalinism is to increase their vote and general influence, even at the cost of tearing some holes in the bureaucracy's political fences.

A debate between these points of view has already taken place more or less openly, including in the pages of the *World Marxist Review*.

The Soviet position was presented, for example, in a pamphlet by the Bulgarian party boss Todor Zhivkov published in English in Sophia at the beginning of the year.

His arguments were echoed in an article entitled " 'Euro-communism': whence and wither?" in the February 1 issue of the *Daily World*, the paper that reflects the views of the American CP.

The author of that article, Eric Bert, summarized Zhivkov's points in the following order:

1. The "outstanding characteristic of the present international situation" is the détente.

2. The détente was won by the strength of the Soviet Union and must be maintained by fighting the resistance of reactionary forces, which requires "close cohesion of the socialist countries," and "unity and united action of the fraternal [Communist] parties."

3. Some enemies of détente "interpret peaceful coexistence as something incompatible with proletarian internationalism."

However, "realities brought about by détente" have "confronted the Communist movement" with the necessity of defining anew the "content and forms" of proletarian internationalism.

Concluding this line of rationalization, Bert quoted Zhivkov as follows:

"All tolerance or neutrality in regard to anti-Sovietism is, in effect, a departure from proletarian internationalism."

In an article in the January 1977 issue of *World Marxist Review*, Italian CP Central Committee member Antonio Rubbi implicitly replied to the kind of argument presented by Zhivkov: ". . . we believe that the biggest contribution a Party can make to internationalism is determined by what it does, independently and concretely in its own field of battle, to promote détente, new international relations and the independence and progress of the peoples."

At the Prague "seminar," Boris Ponomarev, boss of the Soviet CP's West European work, raised another argument for the Soviet side. It was that any criticism of the Soviet regime also undermines the "prestige" of the West European CPs. In the May 9 *Pravda* article, Ponomarev's argument was projected as one of the most notable conclusions of the conference:

Representatives of many Communist and workers parties expressed their determination to firmly and consistently oppose all attempts by the imperialists to wage ideological-political campaigns against the socialist countries, and against the Communist movement as a whole. In their speeches, spokesmen of sister parties stressed that the hysterical campaigns about 'restrictions of civil rights' in the USSR and other countries were aimed at discrediting the idea of socialism in general and thus to obstruct the work of the Communist and workers parties in the capitalist countries.

The implicit threats against the Euro-Communist parties raised by parasitic sects such as the U.S. and Canadian CPs, which the Kremlin uses as ventriloquist's dummies, were also played up in the May 9 *Pravda* article:

Representatives of a whole series of parties put special stress on the need for consistent and determined struggle against right and left opportunism, against new attempts to divide the Communist movement, regardless of where these attempts come from.

*Pravda's* own accounts of the Prague conference at the time indicated that the Euro-Communist parties had resisted the pressure put on them. Virtually the only

statement quoted from an Italian CP representative was the following:

The magazine must be mainly an organ of objective information about the policy and positions of each party and a forum for discussing collectively agreed-upon topics.

The best, apparently, that the *Pravda* editors could cull from what the Japanese CP representatives said was that their party "expressed . . . its willingness to 'actively collaborate in the work' of the magazine."

It was considered noteworthy that the Japanese CP even agreed to collaborate in the work of a magazine that is supposed to be the international publication of all the CPs.

#### Alliances Between Parties

Following the Prague meeting, a Japanese CP representative had discussions with the Ceausescu leadership in Romania, which pursues a relatively independent foreign policy and has given certain support to CPs seeking to maintain greater autonomy from the Kremlin.

This meeting was noted by *Avge*, the daily paper of the Greek CP ("interior"), which was evidently not invited to the Prague meeting. In its May 13 issue, *Avge* printed a dispatch from Bucharest saying:

In this meeting, which took place in an atmosphere of warmth, agreement was reached between these two parties on the basic problems of international life and the international Communist movement. Both sides stressed the need for respecting the independence of every party and its right to set its own line as well as to make the decisions about the specific forms of the transition to socialism.

A policy of party-to-party alliances seems to be the form the various Euro-Communist CPs have chosen to defend themselves against Kremlin pressure. In an article on the Swedish CP in its May 15 issue, *Avge* noted the extension of such individual alliances.

We know that a representative of the VPK [Vänsterpartiet Kommunisterna—Left Party of Communists, the Euro-Communist Swedish CP] had discussions recently with the French, British, and Romanian CPs and that these parties assured the Swedish comrade of their readiness to tighten the relationship still more with his party. It is possible that the developments in the Swedish Communist movement will become another source of differences between the CPs of the socialist countries and the Euro-Communist parties of the West.

The old-line Stalinist faction of the Swedish CP split from the party at the end of February; and recently the official press in the USSR and Poland has begun to smile on the splitters.

On the other hand, despite the fact that the criticisms of bureaucratic dictatorship by the Euro-Communist parties have helped encourage the development of open protest movements in Yugoslavia and

Romania, Ceausescu and Tito are clearly not abandoning their support of parties seeking more autonomy from the Kremlin.

The Yugoslav CP did send a representative to the conference of ideological secretaries of the Central Committees of the East European CPs in Sophia at the end of March, which was called to coordinate a counterattack against the criticisms of the denial of democratic rights in these countries. The Soviet and Hungarian press have, moreover, featured reports of protests by "dissidents" in Yugoslavia and defended the Tito regime against them in a heavy-handed way.

However, Tito and Ceausescu have a vital stake in defending the respectability of the CPs taking positions independent of the Kremlin. They are caught between fear of their own masses and fear of Soviet domination. But the threat of the Kremlin's strong-arm methods is the most immediate and most tangible.

Thus, in its May 15 issue, *Nin*, a prestige weekly magazine published in Belgrade, ran a favorable review of the book *Euro-Communism and the State* by Santiago Carrillo, general secretary of the Spanish Communist party. The article stressed Carrillo's attempt to trace the move of the CPs toward autonomy from the Kremlin to the Yugoslav rejection of Stalin's ultimatum in 1948 and to the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia. It quoted him as follows:

The Yugoslav experience strengthened the autonomist tendencies . . .

Continuing the tradition of unconditional subordination to the Soviet Union in 1948, many CPs . . . followed along like sheep in condemning Comrade Tito and other Yugoslav leaders. And later when Khrushchev made an effort to undo this operation, we felt that we had been deceitfully manipulated, and so this destroyed the awe-filled and quasi-religious attitude to the Soviet CP. . . .

For us, for the Spanish Communist party, the culminating point in winning our independence was the occupation of Czechoslovakia. The methods used in preparing this operation were the same as those used in the historic trials of 1936 and in setting the stage for the condemnation of Yugoslavia. Czechoslovakia was the last straw. It made our party say: no, we are through with that kind of internationalism.

#### Logic of the Criticisms

Despite the efforts of the Euro-Communist leaderships to keep their parties' opposition to Stalinist dogmatism and the Kremlin in tight limits, such criticisms inevitably tend to assume broader and broader political implications.

In an interview in the May 16 issue of the West German magazine *Der Spiegel*, Carrillo presented the Dubcek regime as the model for the future of the USSR and Eastern Europe:

The Dubcek phenomenon appeared in Czechoslovakia because this is the most developed and probably the most ripe for democratic socialism of all the East Bloc countries. If the East Bloc

develops economically, Dubcek will become a stronger and stronger symbol.

And if in the Western countries, socialist forces gain influence, so that in the East the fear of aggression from the capitalist countries cannot be exploited as it has been, then efforts in the East for a political change will grow.

The Euro-Communist parties' intellectual representatives are under particular pressure to draw general conclusions from the criticism they make of aspects of Stalinism. In an interview also in the May 16 issue of *Der Spiegel*, French CP historian Jean Elleinstein was asked to give a general explanation for the lack of democracy in the USSR. Although his statements were vague, they could not but be jarring to CP members trained in even the post-Twentieth Congress school of Stalinism:

The interviewer said:

In almost all Communist countries, the means of production are not in the hands of the people but in those of a new ruling stratum.

Elleinstein responded:

The phenomenon of bureaucracy is an essential feature of Stalinism. The problem is whether there is an exploiter social class. Certainly a party secretary in a given district gets privileges as a result of his position. This includes a house, a higher salary. These privileges flow from a position of power. But this does not make an exploiter class, since this stratum does not socially reproduce itself.

The interviewer commented:

Trotsky said that already, and he has always been anathematized by you.

Elleinstein said:

I support the views Trotsky expressed in 1939.

The reporter responded:

It is really astonishing to hear a Communist say that he supports Trotsky. Is Trotsky no longer taboo?

Elleinstein said:

I maintain that Trotsky has to be rescued from the present-day Trotskyists, who have made him into a kind of idol. Trotsky was right about a lot of things. Stalin had Trotsky killed; otherwise in 1941 he might have had to bring back the former head of the Red Army.

Since the Euro-Communist leaderships remain essentially Stalinist and their positions are determined by the needs of an opportunist strategy, the theoretical generalizations made by representatives are also tailored to suit opportunist ends. They are often more openly reformist than in the past.

Sometimes this results from becoming caught up in the logic of avoiding a fundamental analysis of Stalinism, trying to confine criticism to the more unattractive surface phenomena. The nationalistic arguments used by the Euro-Communists to disassociate themselves from Stalinism in the USSR and East Europe are an example of this.



But often such formulations seem to represent an attempt to attract voters influenced by the Social Democracy. And there are also examples of Euro-Communist representatives identifying with left criticisms of Stalinism when this suits their purpose.

#### Elleinstein on the French CP

In his interview in *Der Spiegel*, Elleinstein explained rather clearly the needs of the French CP leadership and illustrated the way it picks up bits and pieces of theory from various sources to adorn its maneuvers.

The Communist party finds itself in the following situation. It can stagnate in a position that it has held for thirty years and in which it can, of course, remain for another thirty. It might win a few more city governments, maybe increase its membership. But I don't think that would be in the interests of the workers or the French people in general. Socialism in our country can only come about through a process of reforms. This may last another fifteen or twenty years. In this respect, I am closer to Kautsky's theses in 1910 than to the traditional theses of the Social Democracy.

That is, the French CP can maintain the pseudomilitant posture necessary to justify the old-line Stalinist way of operating. If it does this, it can retain its traditional support and perhaps add to it as the crisis of capitalism deepens. But as long as the party remains identified with dictatorship and dogma, it will be condemned to remain a besieged minority.

Elleinstein tried to build a theoretical bridge to the Social Democrats. Carrillo did the same, speaking of a convergence between the CPs and SPs: "We Communists will become more democratic and the Social Democrats more socialist."

But when Elleinstein wanted to justify maintaining an overall positive attitude to the Soviet Union, he chose to identify with Trotsky's argument that the Stalinist bureaucracy is not a new class.

The Euro-Communist parties' criticisms of aspects of Stalinism tend to broaden, as does the linkage of these parties to proreform elements in the Soviet and Eastern European CPs. This has already been shown by the Italian CP's work with Roy Medvedev.

Carrillo's presentation of the Dubcek regime as a model is another example. Such a position is subversive in the eyes of the Kremlin bureaucracy. The Tito government itself does not tolerate anything like the kind of freedom that developed in Czechoslovakia under Dubcek.

The fact that the Euro-Communist positions have tended to open up the way for discussion in these parties themselves is also rather well established by now.

#### Tendency of Discussion to Spread

The latest development is the tendency of a discussion begun in one Euro-

Communist party to spread into others. This seems to be at least partly a consequence of these parties reacting along similar lines against Soviet pressure. In its May 8 issue, *Avge* reprinted a letter from the leaders of three Paris cells of the French CP, originally published in the May 3 *Le Monde*.

The letter was prompted by an attack that Jeannette Vermeersch leveled against Elleinstein in the April 9 *Le Monde*. Vermeersch is one of the most prominent old-line Stalinist leaders in the party, and so her guest article in a mass-circulation bourgeois daily appeared to be the beginning of open factional activity against the leadership, almost certainly encouraged by the Kremlin.

The fact that the response of the cell leaders clearly referred to the possibility of a Kremlin-promoted split may have recommended it to *Avge*, which represents the most roughly handled of the Euro-Communist groups. Also, the old-line Stalinist party in Greece was largely built up by the French CP while the latter was still the keystone of Stalinist servility in West Europe, and even since the French CP's turn, it has not warmed to the Greek CP ("interior").

However, to score some points against the French CP and the Kremlin, *Avge* had to publish an article that criticized the old-line Stalinists from a generally left position. That was a shift for the CP ("interior"), which has focused almost exclusively on the way the dogmatism and outside control of the Greek CP interfered with its parliamentary operations.

The three cell leaders wrote that the policy of the Soviet Union toward the Western countries "is aimed above all at perpetuating the status quo, as shown by the Soviet ambassador's visit to Giscard d'Estaing between the two rounds of the 1974 presidential election. But what is this status quo but the perpetuation of the exploitation of the workers, against which the French people are struggling?"

The letter described Elleinstein as a representative of a petty-bourgeois democratic current in the party and drew the conclusion that it was dangerous to let such elements be the only ones to raise criticisms of Stalinism.

This [petty-bourgeois democratic character] is the reason for Elleinstein's dislike of a period when the USSR served as the guide for all the forces of emancipation in the world. This reflects his underlying point of view that the present alliance of petty-bourgeois democrats and the working class cannot last unless the working class renounces the principles on which its own political action is based.

The problem, of course, is not that he thinks this way. . . . This can be the starting point for discussion. The problem is that today in the French CP, he is the only one expressing a point of view. This cannot but be seen as a continual attempt to impose control on the thinking of the workers movement.

The danger, the authors said, was that

an old-line Stalinist faction could split the party by pretending to represent a more working-class point of view. The remedy they suggested was "a democratic debate permitting all the real social and ideological currents in the party to express their views."

There has been no indication of how the Greek CP ("interior") feels about this suggestion. "Democratic debate" would certainly enliven the pages of *Avge*. But the French CP was quick to throw cold water on the proposal.

In the May 13 issue of *l'Humanité*, the first secretary of the Paris federation, Henri Fiszbin, delivered a sermon about democratic centralism, in the Stalinist style:

The view of the party held by these three comrades has nothing to do with reality. The Communist party is not a sum of social and ideological currents; it is the organized form of the revolutionary current in the workers movement. . . . The upshot of all this is that the move of these three cell leaders was fundamentally wrong and cannot be considered proper in form or in accordance with the principles of democratic centralism. Let no one make any mistake! We are more determined than ever to base the entire life of the party on respect for these principles.

However, Fiszbin could not come down hard on these cell leaders without ruining the new image the CP is trying to project. So, he assumed to pose of an indulgent parent.

Does this mean that in this case of the three cell secretaries that we are going to follow a line mainly of invoking discipline? Certainly not. It would be astonishing if such things did not happen.

Fiszbin explained that the CP has been experiencing "an impetuous influx of militant but inexperienced young forces," whom, despite their "inexperience," the CP has put in posts of responsibility. He added:

The fact that such growth has not been without some problems is not something to worry about. Such problems are the law of life, and we have no doubt whatever about our capacity to resolve them.

If the Euro-Communist parties are going to achieve their objectives, allowing young militants in particular to express their own views is regarded as a necessary evil. However, the experience so far with the Euro-Communist turn and the tug-of-war with the Soviet bureaucracy indicates that the bosses of the Western CPs are going to have more than a few problems in keeping "democratization" under control. □

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# The Nuclear Arms Race Is Still On

The participants in the SALT conference held in Geneva May 18-20 are not saying much. After finagling behind locked doors and drawn curtains for three days, the representatives of Moscow and Washington jointly agreed to issue only a communiqué consisting of vague generalities.

The communiqué said that the two sides "agreed that the discussions in Geneva were necessary and useful and that progress had been made in developing a common framework for further negotiations."

In addition, "As a result of the exchange of views, the differences between the two sides on several of the previously unresolved questions have been narrowed. It is agreed that the discussions of all unresolved questions will be continued with the aim of an early conclusion of a new agreement."

News correspondents at the scene tried to dig out something more informative on the subjects discussed, the disagreements, and what real progress, if any, had been made.

## Gromyko Down at the Mouth

The best item they came up with was an admission by Gromyko at the Geneva airport. The Soviet diplomat said that while there had been "progress on a certain number of questions," this should not be taken to mean that there was "already progress on the road to a solution of the main problems."

In fact, Gromyko appeared to be venturing to acknowledge the obvious when he said: "From all I can gather, the United States has not given up its attempts to achieve unilateral advantages, nor has the United States given up its attempt to conclude an agreement that would undermine the security of the Soviet Union."

In contrast to Gromyko, Cyrus R. Vance made a positive assessment. He claimed that a unique three-tier "framework" package had been agreed on, although "substantial differences" still remained.

He did not enlarge on the nature of the three-tier framework or describe the substantial differences. According to Bernard Gwertzman in a dispatch to the *New York Times* (May 22), "The formula seems to be an effort to reconcile some of the key differences and of allowing each side to claim its basic goals were being met."

## 'Three-Tier Framework'

Reporters gathered, from what Vance told them at a news conference (they were probably told not to quote him directly),

that the three-tier framework included the following elements:

- A Soviet-American treaty, based on the 1974 Vladivostok accord, to run until 1985 with the force level for each side at or somewhat below a total of 2,400 bombers and missile launchers.

- A protocol to the treaty to last for three years after the treaty is signed. The protocol would presumably take care of such controversial issues as the American cruise missile and the Soviet bomber known in the West as the Backfire.

- A statement of general principles to guide negotiations for talks on the next treaty. These principles would include some of the ideas in the American proposal that was rejected by the Russians when Mr. Vance was in Moscow, such as major reductions below the 2,400 total. (*New York Times*, May 22.)

Vance told the reporters that while agreement had been reached on the "interdependent" package, the question of what weapons should be included in the various tiers remained to be worked out.

"He did not amplify," Gwertzman said, "and he repeatedly refused to be specific, but it was evident that the kind of problems he was referring to included the following:"

- The Russians, throughout the negotiations, have insisted that the American long-range cruise missile, which flies at low altitudes and is highly accurate, should be included in the limits to be imposed in the treaty. The Americans, arguing that only ballistic missiles of higher speed should be included, might be willing, however, to agree to a three-year restraint on cruise missiles in the protocol but not in the treaty lasting to 1985.

- The United States has argued that the Soviet Backfire bomber should be included in the treaty, and the Russians, claiming it was a medium-range bomber, have insisted that the plane should not be subject to treaty limits. But it is possible that in the protocol, lasting only three years, some curbs might be agreed to by the Russians.

- The Russians have raised, Mr. Vance said, the question of American tactical bombers based in Europe, known as forward-based systems. At Vladivostok the Russians dropped their insistence that these planes, which can bomb Russia, be included, but the Russians raised it again because of the American desire to cut the 2,400 total.

Gwertzman concludes from the discussions that have taken place since Vance's unsuccessful mission to Moscow last March that "the two sides have discussed ways of seeking a compromise, but are still far from an accord on details."

## The Two Positions

Moscow is sticking to the position of adhering to the Vladivostok treaty. This would preclude deep cuts in the nuclear stockpile held by each side. Moscow also opposes Carter's demand to defer considering the cruise missile and the Backfire bomber.

Carter is pushing for cuts in both nuclear stockpiles in return for which Moscow would agree to giving the Pentagon the go-ahead for development and production of the cruise missile, that is, improving the Pentagon's nuclear delivery capabilities.

As to further negotiations, Vance said they would be held in Geneva at the level of strategic arms limitation delegations, in the respective capitals at the ambassadorial level, and at another Vance-Gromyko meeting still to be scheduled.

In short, the results of the Geneva meeting can be summarized in seven words: The nuclear arms race is still on. □

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## 1,000 Cars Mobilized in 'Drive-in' at Kennedy Airport

By Fred Murphy

The largest protest against the Concorde supersonic jet so far this year took place May 22. About 1,000 cars filled with opponents of the needle-nosed noisemaker drove slowly through New York's Kennedy International Airport for several hours, tying up traffic and delaying airline operations.

The action was organized jointly by the Emergency Coalition to Stop the SST and the SST Concorde Alert Program. It was the second drive-in since the May 11 ruling by a federal judge, Milton Pollack, clearing the way legally for Concorde landings at Kennedy (see last week's *Intercontinental Press*, p. 566). An earlier demonstration sponsored by the Emergency Coalition on May 15 drew about 750 cars.

More such protests are planned. Leaders of the Emergency Coalition (which is based in suburban communities east of the airport) and of the Concorde Alert (of Howard Beach, a Queens neighborhood at the western edge of the field) have resolved tactical differences that had prevented united actions in the past.

At a meeting of 400 persons May 16 the two groups issued a joint call for the May 22 drive-in. Concorde Alert leader Bryan Levinson said, "I don't personally see our purpose of going to the airport to disrupt it. I want the world to see as many cars as possible with signs on them telling what we think of the Concorde."

Judge Pollack's decision that a U.S. Department of Transportation ruling overrides the power of the New York Port Authority to regulate Concorde flights into Kennedy has implications for communities near airports all across the country. A number of airport authorities have imposed late-night to early-morning curfews on aircraft operations in response to noise complaints by nearby residents. Airline companies may now challenge these restrictions, arguing that they don't have to abide by them since the Federal Aviation Administration does not limit flights to certain hours of the day. Other locally imposed noise limits or pollution controls could face similar challenges.

The Pollack decision also authorizes British Airways and Air France to initiate twice as many daily Concorde flights into Kennedy, and with fewer noise reduction controls, than the airlines themselves recently agreed to voluntarily.

Air France and British Airways may be facing charges of false and misleading advertising. Air France took out a two-page display in the May 22 *New York*



Rigby/New York Post

*Times* on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Charles A. Lindbergh's flight across the Atlantic. "Those of us who now fly the Atlantic in three and a half hours salute the man who showed us the way," it said. Similar statements have been made by British Airways.

But it seems that Lindbergh himself would not have returned the salute. He gave his opinion of supersonic transports in a 1972 column in the *Times*:

"I believe we should prohibit their scheduled operation on or above United States territory as long as their effect on our overall environment remains unsatisfactory."

The Emergency Coalition to Stop the SST is demanding that New York authorities order the airlines to stop their advertising linking Lindbergh and the Concorde and print his real views instead.

More evidence of the effects of high noise levels on health has been cited by *New York Post* columnist Harriet van Horne:

"A British study of a few years back—before Britain had a vested interest in the SST—showed that people living near Heathrow airport, adjacent to London, had a higher rate of hospital admission than people living farther away. Coincidence? Not likely. . . .

"Loud noise temporarily constricts the tiny blood vessels in the ear, resulting in the death of vital cells. Blood pressure is

elevated by long exposure to airport noise. Ulcers are often worsened.

"Long exposure to intense noise can actually produce fits in sensitive persons. Such fits are called audiogenic seizures."

If there are many more Concorde flights, van Horne adds, a new ailment may be detected—"SST fits." □

### North Sea Spill: 'Ecological Disaster'

The French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*, in its May 11 issue, features an interview with François Ramade, president of the French Federation of Associations for the Protection of Nature. Interviewer Denis Caron asked Ramade to describe the environmental impact of the Ekofisk oilfield blowout that dumped over 7.5 million gallons of crude oil into the North Sea between April 22 and April 30.

"It's a real ecological disaster on a continental scale," Ramade replied.

"The North Sea . . . is a very productive fishing ground. But fish cannot survive in the presence of crude oil. . . . Even if the majority of fish are not killed off by the oil, it gives them an unpleasant taste that makes them unmarketable.

". . . the use of chemicals to disperse oil slicks amounts to trying to cure a patient with tuberculosis by preventing him from coughing. It camouflages the effects of the oil by diluting it in the ocean. But this has its drawbacks, because when you disperse the oil like that, the speed of biological degradation is not at all certain—just the opposite.

"On the other hand, there are cases where the pollution gets homogenized in the water instead of staying on the surface. But this doesn't alter the situation. And it is now thought, with good reason, that this might slow down the rate of degradation. The tar layers that float on the surface are more easily oxidized.

"Oil can destroy some species [of algae] and encourage the growth of other species that are not necessarily desirable. . . .

"Up to now, no method of decontaminating the ocean has been perfected. The rudimentary techniques that now exist are merely preventive—in other words, they try to provide a minimum degree of safety. . . .

"At any rate, I think that a society like ours, which is based on profit, has not done all that is necessary to end pollution. To do this requires a political commitment that does not exist."

## I. How Theodore Roosevelt Robbed the Panamanians

By Judy White

[This is the first of a series of four articles.]

\* \* \*

On February 23 President Carter's representatives in the negotiations over the future of the Panama Canal returned to the United States saying that the ten days of talks with the Torrijos government had netted "some progress" but that there were still "major problems" remaining unsolved.

These "major problems" revolve around Carter's unwillingness to give up the direct economic, political, and military control the United States government has exercised over almost 2 percent of the land of Panama—a strip of territory ten miles wide that divides the country in two—and the concomitant indirect control the United States exercises over the rest of the country.

Washington has held this power since 1903, when the newly independent Republic of Panama signed a treaty granting the United States control of the Canal Zone "in perpetuity."

The record shows that from the 1903 independence struggle to the present day American imperialism has totally disregarded the Panamanian people's right to self-determination.

Moreover, the Pentagon has used the Canal Zone as a training and staging area for repressive operations throughout Latin America and other parts of the world.

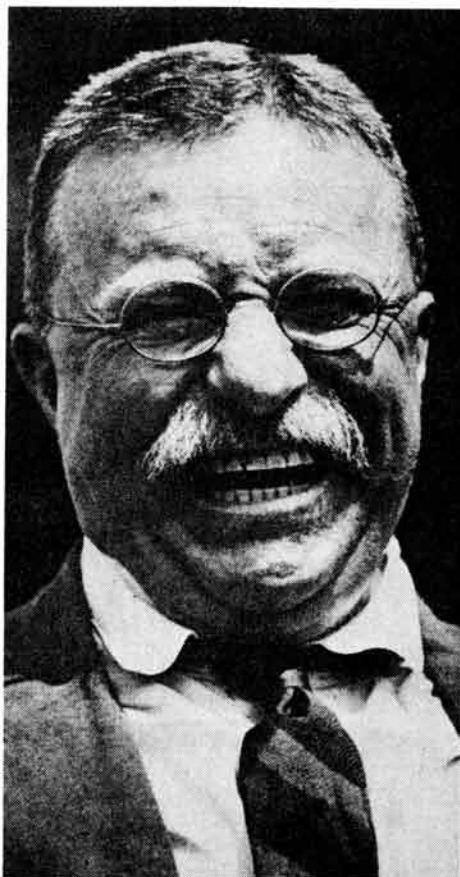
### Intervention Since 1846

Washington's interest in a canal was first codified in the Mallarino-Bidlack Treaty of 1846. That agreement between the United States and New Granada (Colombia) gave Washington a right of way and preferential duties across the Isthmus of Panama in return for a guarantee of Bogotá's sovereign rights over transit and the maintenance of neutrality in the area.

But Washington and New Granada were not the only powers eyeing the isthmus.

In 1848 Great Britain seized the Nicaraguan city of Bluefields, gaining control over the natural eastern access to a potential trans-Nicaragua canal.

The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, which Washington negotiated with London in 1850, stipulated that neither power would establish exclusive control over any trans-



T. ROOSEVELT: Happy user of 'Big Stick.'

isthmian canal that might be built. Furthermore, the signers were pledged to joint protection of such a facility and to making it accessible to all powers who agreed to respect this arrangement.

Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century the United States helped Colombia maintain its rule over its isthmian territory. During the 1860s, U.S. troops intervened five times to smash separatist rebellions in Panama.

Washington had several reasons to be interested in a canal. Most important was to provide an inexpensive shortcut to facilitate domestic trade and travel between the east and west coast cities of the United States. Such a shortcut would also expedite trade with the Far East. Finally, it would increase the effectiveness of the U.S. Navy, which was centered on the country's east coast.

The Spanish-American War, fought in 1898, was the deathblow to the crumbling Spanish empire. "American imperialists

took practically everything: Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines (three thousand-odd islands), Guam, etc.," Marxist journalist John G. Wright pointed out. "What an extraordinary and choice selection!"<sup>1</sup>

"A single glance at a map is sufficient," Wright continued, "to make clear that here was no accidental colonial grab . . . but a painstaking, fully considered, consciously planned and executed preparation of U.S. imperialism for its struggle to obtain the richest colonial prize in the world—the outlets of the Orient fronting the Pacific Ocean."

The territory gained by Washington placed it in a strong strategic position in the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean, and the Philippines. It provided coaling stations in the Pacific and a base of operations in the Far East.

As Wright said, "The American imperialists could not take the bull by the horns and set to the task of solving the question of the Panama Canal, that is, of a direct route to Asia, unless they had first seized Cuba and Puerto Rico, unless they had beforehand guaranteed their key harbors to the Orient, and had established their 'interests in the Far East' that must henceforth be so preciously protected."

Wright cited Harvard historian Archibald C. Coolidge to the effect that, after the Spanish-American War, "it [the United States] was now in a situation, as well as in a mood, to take up the canal question with an energy it had never before shown."

Historian A.L.P. Dennis said, "The lessons of the Spanish-American War were clearly before the American people: a canal was an urgent necessity both from a naval and commercial point of view."

To fill this need, President Theodore Roosevelt appointed experts to investigate possible routes. Two federal commissions recommended building across Nicaragua.

But other factors colored Roosevelt's decision to opt for the Panama route.

### An Abortive Attempt

In 1878 Colombia had contracted with private French capital to construct a canal across the Panamanian isthmus. Three years later a team headed by Ferdinand de Lesseps, who supervised the building of the Suez Canal, began work.

1. "The Spanish-American War," in *America's Revolutionary Heritage*, edited by George Novack (New York, Pathfinder Press, 1976).

But insufficient funds, landslides, floods, and yellow fever plagued the effort. By 1889 the French company, which had sold much of its stock to American speculators, went bankrupt and was taken over by Philippe Bunau-Varilla.

One of the Americans who had invested heavily in the project was William Nelson Cromwell. Cromwell was the legal representative of the French company and the virtual head of the Panama Railroad and other U.S. interests in Panama. He reportedly led an intensive lobbying effort to influence Roosevelt's decision.

Meanwhile, in 1901 Washington extricated itself from the prohibition against "exclusive control" of a transisthmian canal. The Hay-Pauncefote Treaty with Britain reversed all but the neutrality provisions of the 1850 pact.

The following year, the U.S. Congress approved the purchase of the Panama concessions from the French company for not more than \$40 million, and Roosevelt offered to pay Bogotá \$10 million plus an annual rent on the canal.

The Colombian Senate demanded a large increase in the cash payment the country was to get from Washington and unanimously refused to ratify the Hay-Herrán Treaty, which would have formalized the deal.

The failure of the French effort also had repercussions inside Panama.

### The Autonomist Movement

Since 1821, the year Colombia achieved independence from Spain and annexed Panama, divergent interest groups had been in control of the central government and the isthmus.

Panamanian merchants and land speculators wanted autonomy for the isthmus so that they could build a canal and establish a center of free trade there.

Every political crisis in the central government stimulated the autonomist movement in Panama. There were fifty-three revolts in the isthmus between 1846 and 1903 alone.

In 1855 the Colombian rulers tried to undercut the separatist movement by granting Panama a semiautonomous status as a federal state. However, the 1885 revocation of this status and a step-up of measures to tighten control over the area, along with the threat posed to Panamanian merchants by the French canal project, only heightened the determination of the autonomists.

Meanwhile, in 1899 a civil war broke out in Colombia, and in 1901 the faction led by Gen. Benjamín Herrera invaded Panama. The invaders opposed the Colombian central government and were quickly joined by local autonomists. The Thousand Day War, as it was called, terminated with Herrera's surrender in November 1902. However, as Panamanian historian Ernesto Castellero pointed out:

The Thousand Day War delivered the decisive blow to that political union (between Colombia and Panama) and definitively broke the moral tie that linked the Panamanian people with what had been our homeland for almost 100 years.

For the first time broad sectors of the Panamanian population had become involved in the separatist movement, which took on a national character.

This strife provided the pretext for Washington to intervene in support of the Panama independence movement.

In *The Rise of American Civilization*, Charles and Mary Beard described what happened:

And in this emergency two stormy petrels of revolution, Dr. Manuel Guerrero, a Panama conspirator, and Philippe Bunau-Varilla, a French adventurer, deeply involved in the intrigues of the French canal company,<sup>2</sup> realizing that the hour had struck, hurried to the United States to raise money for an upheaval in Panama and to gain assurances of protection from the federal government in case such a revolt could be engineered. Bunau-Varilla saw Roosevelt in the White House and visited Secretary Hay in the State Department. Though he got no official guarantees he at once sent word to the strategists in Panama that American war vessels would stand by them in an uprising against Colombia.

In the ensuing rebellion, American troops landed in Panama and U.S. ships refused to carry Colombian troops to aid in preventing a Panamanian victory, reversing what Washington had done in the past.

Panama declared its independence from Colombia on November 3, 1903. Three days later Roosevelt recognized the new regime, and on November 18 a canal treaty was signed in Washington by Bunau-Varilla—representing Panama—and Hay.

### Terms of the 1903 Treaty

The nature of the deal between Roosevelt and Bunau-Varilla can be gathered from the first two articles of the treaty:

Art. I. The United States guarantees and will maintain the independence of the Republic of Panama.

Art. II. The Republic of Panama grants to the United States in perpetuity the use, occupation and control of a zone of land and land under water for the construction, maintenance, operation, sanitation and protection of said Canal. . . .

Subsequent articles of the treaty spell

2. In *Panamá y su separación de Colombia*, (Bogotá, Ediciones Corralito de Piedra, 1972) Eduardo Lemaitre noted that "Although he [Bunau-Varilla] always tries to suggest in his books that his involvement in constructing the canal was mainly and almost exclusively for purely patriotic reasons, one must assume that through his participation in Sonderegger & Artiga (the contracting firm that dug the canal) he must have received profits, since some years later he took it upon himself to suggest that he possessed a huge personal fortune."

the arrangement out in more detail:

Art. III. The Republic of Panama grants to the United States all the rights, power and authority within the zone mentioned and described in Article II of this agreement and within the limits of all auxiliary lands and waters mentioned and described in said Article II which the United States would possess and exercise if it were the sovereign of the territory . . . to the entire exclusion of the exercise by the Republic of Panama of any such sovereign rights, power or authority. . . .

Art. VII. . . . The same right and authority are granted to the United States for the maintenance of public order in the cities of Panama and Colon and the territories and harbors adjacent thereto in case the Republic of Panama should not be, in the judgment of the United States, able to maintain such order. . . .

Art. X. The Republic of Panama agrees that there shall not be imposed any taxes, national, municipal, departmental or of any other class upon the Canal, the railways and auxiliary works. . . .

Art. XXIII. If it should become necessary at any time to employ armed forces for the safety or protection of the Canal, or of the ships that make use of the same, . . . the United States shall have the right, at all times and in its discretion, to use its police and its land and naval forces or to establish fortifications for these purposes.

And, in case there should be any doubt about what the phrase "in perpetuity" meant, the treaty stipulated:

Art. XXIV. No change either in the Government or in the laws and treaties of the Republic of Panama shall, without the consent of the United States, affect any right of the United States under the present convention, or under any treaty stipulation between the two countries that now exists or may hereafter exist touching the subject matter of this convention.

The terms of the treaty were worse than what had been offered in the Hay-Herrán agreement. Instead of obtaining the rights for 100 years, the United States had now gotten them "in perpetuity."

"In Panama there was talk of refusing to ratify," Richard Severo wrote in the March 20, 1973, issue of the *New York Times*, "but Bunau-Varilla wrote a letter still in the official archives. In it, he warned, 'If the Government is thinking about not adopting this little resolution, I do not want to be responsible for the calamities that could follow.'"

"He made it clear he felt that the United States would not support Panama if Colombia attacked her former colony."

Bunau-Varilla's letter reached the new republic "as two Colombian gunboats were on their way to Panama," Diógenes de la Rosa, an official of the Torrijos government, told Severo.

Panama ratified the treaty, accepting \$10 million from the United States—the same sum that had been offered to Colombia. The French company received \$40 million.

And on August 15, 1914, the first ship went through the canal.

[Next: Seven Decades Under an Iron Heel]

## Rising Polish Dissidence Meets With Police Violence

By Gerry Foley

The new campaign of intimidation that the Polish bureaucracy launched against the movement for democratic rights in late April has escalated rapidly into gangster-style murders and the indictment and jailing of more and more leading representatives of the Committee to Defend Worker Victims of the Repression Connected With the Events of June 25, 1976.

Instead of stifling protests against bureaucratic dictatorship, these attacks have sparked an upsurge of opposition.

On May 15, five thousand students attended a memorial in Cracow for Stanislaw Pyjas, a twenty-three-year-old comrade murdered a week before by the bureaucracy's thugs. At the end of the rally, the formation of the Student Solidarity Committee was announced.

Writing in the May 18 issue of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*, Sacha Blumkine commented:

"After nine years of silence, this dramatically marked the revival of the Polish student movement.

"In the very tense social situation in the country today, this new extension of opposition activity may touch off mobilizations by the discontented masses."

Such tension can only have been increased by the bureaucracy's reaction to the memorial rally. The Stalinist authorities denounced it as "a provocation deliberately organized by a committee that is a flop" designed to "exploit for political ends a death that is of course regrettable but was an accident."

At almost the same time, they arranged another "accident."

Returning home from the Cracow demonstration, two democratic-rights activists, Vernon Onyskiewicz and Lasarski, were seriously injured when their car was forced off the road by a truck.

On their way to the memorial rally, six well-known antibureaucratic fighters were arrested: Jacek Kuron, Adam Michnik, Antonin Macierewicz, Piotr Naimski, Mirosław Chojecki, and Wojciech Ostrowski. All were detained under Article 132 of the Polish penal code, which sets penalties of from six months to five years in prison for anyone who maintains contact "with persons acting on behalf of foreign organizations, with the aim of damaging the interests of the People's Republic of Poland."

Jacek Kuron had already been indicted under this article earlier, along with Jan Josef Lipski, another leading representative of the committee. Adam Michnik was

indicted on this charge on May 3, two days after returning from a trip to West Europe. Those previously indicted had been out on bail. A May 17 Associated Press dispatch reported that the persons arrested in connection with the Cracow memorial were still in jail.

On May 7, Stanislaw Pyjas's body was found in the hall of an apartment building in Cracow, in a part of the city far from his home. He died of head wounds. Jacek Kuron was quoted in a dispatch in the May 11 *Washington Post* as saying:

"One thing is certain, his [Pyjas's] head injuries were not caused by a fall. He was beaten up with something hard."

Kuron had commented on the bureaucracy's new campaign against the democratic rights movement in a telephone interview published in the May 16 *Rouge*. He cited the specific charges contained in the indictment as follows:

"In the period from 1975 to the present, following a consistent course of action both inside and outside the country, the defendant, in concert with Michnik and Lipski, entered into liaison with the representatives of enemy centers abroad, in particular with *Kultura* in Paris and Radio Free Europe, with the aim of acting against the political interests of the People's Republic of Poland and utilizing the financial means of these organizations."

Kuron made the following comments on these charges:

"The government is trying to present the question of freedom of speech as a 'diversion.' I never had any contacts with Radio Free Europe and I never received any money either from *Kultura* or Radio Free Europe or any other 'foreign center.' Further on they accuse me of having published information; but if my 'Reflections on an Action Program' were published in *Kultura* [a probourgeois monthly magazine], that was in no wise a 'diversion.'

"They are trying to take the exchange of views out of the realm of ideas and make it some kind of terrorism. Because of the publication of an article, I am being accused of 'espionage,' 'creating a diversion,' and 'collusion.'"

Kuron reported that the government has stepped up its campaign of harassment against the human-rights movement and that a high official source let it be known that from now on "we are going to physically beat some sense into the heads of these people from the committee."

This leak, Kuron said, seemed to be confirmed by the beating to death of Pyjas and the beating up of another young committee activist named Sulecki.

"The government is trying to liquidate opposition and to break the independent social organizations at the cheapest cost, that is, by fear."

Asked about how extensive the committee's support was in Poland, Kuron replied:

"I have to say honestly that it is impossible to measure this, since in a totalitarian system no one knows what their neighbors are thinking or doing. The society is atomized. Nonetheless, there are indications that show in general that the committee has more support than any other institution in Poland except the church.

"For example, we have distributed so far about three million zlotys [about US\$90,361 at the official rate], which is equivalent to 3,000 months of an average worker's wage. The bulk of this money came from tens of thousands of individuals throughout the country. About 3,000 persons have signed petitions, including the 1,100 Ursus workers who signed a letter demanding reinstatement of workers who had been fired.

"Finally, and this is the essential thing, the campaign the authorities launched in December to get workers to sign petitions against the committee has failed totally."

Protest of such scope and duration against the bureaucracy's repression is almost unprecedented under a Stalinist regime. It is a deadly danger to the survival of a government that depends on depriving the workers of all right to organize independently of its bureaucratic transmission belts and to express their opinion—a government that depends on the continual, unchallenged repetition of the big lie.

It is not surprising that the campaign against the Committee to Defend the Workers is being stepped up. However, this repressive campaign differs from previous ones in the 1950s and 1960s. It is more surreptitious, wavering, and inconsistent.

The bureaucracy has not made clear how far it intends to press prosecution of the committee leaders. It appears to be following a deliberately on-again, off-again policy of harassment and intimidation. It is not sending oppositionists en masse to concentration camps. It has just stealthily murdered one young student. It acts as if it were testing a tactic commonly used by weak, corrupt, gangster governments, like

the Latin American military regimes.

One thing that has clearly changed since the purges and repressions of the past in Eastern Europe is that now the bureaucracies do not count on any significant force in the world workers movement coming to their defense. They are moral pariahs, almost as isolated internationally as the Brazilian, Argentine, and Chilean dictatorships.

In a statement he made in Paris before returning to Poland, Adam Michnik pointed out the importance of protests by the Western left against the bureaucracy's denial of democratic rights. (See the text of this statement elsewhere in this issue.)

Such protests, Michnik said, have already played a key role in forcing the bureaucrats to release leading fighters for human rights such as Leonid Plyushch and Vladimir Bukovsky. He appealed for

the support of the left for his comrades and for himself, since he knew he would face repression on his return.

The effect of the broad protests in the workers and socialist movement against the suppression of democratic rights in the countries ruled by Stalinist regimes is shown by the fact that instead of using the frame-up methods of the infamous Moscow trials, the bureaucrats are resorting to back-alley murders. But these more stealthy practices can be deadly enough if not met with a strong international response.

Now that it has shown that it has the power to deter the bureaucratic repressors, the international workers and socialist movement has a still stronger obligation to come to the defense of the Polish human-rights fighters, who have become the first targets of a new Stalinist crackdown. □

particularly the Western left and the trade-union movement. I was convinced that what I was doing was helpful to you, too; I knew that, just like you, in our country I might have to pay a heavy price for doing it. . . .

Today I am leaving Paris. Before my departure, I want to once more appeal to Western public opinion, to the left in particular. The official complaint lodged against us is preposterous to all who know us, inside or outside Poland. The real motive behind these charges is quite different. They are accusing us—and indirectly accusing the hundreds who agree with us—of having our own opinion, and of failing to respect the state monopoly on words and deeds. What most alarms the authorities is not our supposed contact with fictitious foreign organizations hostile to Poland, and that is not what they want to try us for. What worries them infinitely more is Jacek Kuron's letter to Berlinguer, my visits, together with Leszek Kolakowski, to Pajetta, a member of the Political Bureau of the Italian Communist party, and to Craxi, the general secretary of the Italian Socialist party, and Kolakowski's meeting with Willy Brandt.

## Michnik's Appeal to Help Polish Dissidents

[Before returning to Poland from Paris on May 1, Adam Michnik, a leading figure in the movement for democratic rights in Poland, issued the following appeal to the Western left. On May 3, two days after coming home, he was charged along with Jacek Kuron and Jan Jozef Lipski, representatives of the Committee to Defend Worker Victims of the Repression Connected With the Events of June 25, 1976 [KOR] with maintaining contact with persons representing foreign organizations intent on damaging the interests of the People's Republic of Poland.

[Michnik was released on bail, like Kuron and Lipski, but arrested on May 14 for trying to protest the murder of a young student sympathizer of the committee.

[In its May 11 issue, *Le Monde* published the following major extracts from Michnik's appeal. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

Right from its inception, the KOR has conducted its activities in broad daylight. Its meetings were held openly. Its representatives were present at the successive trials of workers, in full view of everyone. We collected money without attempting to conceal it, and published communiqués describing how it was to be spent. We openly maintained contact with foreign correspondents in order to inform world public opinion as well as, through them, to inform Polish society about the repression, the activities of the KOR, and about other activities by Polish citizens. Furthermore, we openly communicated by telephone with friends now living in the West about what was happening inside the country. The KOR, and the hundreds of persons who collaborate with it on a day-to-day

basis took up the defense of the workers.

Under the pressure of public opinion, the government began to retreat, little by little. It is largely on account of the KOR that almost none of the workers sentenced after the June events are still in prison. . . . The victimizations are continuing, but it has to be recognized that this is now taking a milder form.

Expecting a rapid decline in activity among the most militant working-class sectors, the authorities have recently stepped up their attacks on members of the KOR and the persons working with it. Searches, detentions, and interrogations are becoming more and more frequent. . . .

I hope that this letter will also reach my friends in Poland. I feel the need to explain why I did not return as soon as the KOR was founded . . . , why I was out of the country while its members and collaborators were under attack. I was not motivated by fear, although I was and am very fearful for my cothinkers in Poland, and I am not unapprehensive about my own future. But I believed I could be of more use to our common cause, which is to widen the narrow margin of freedom and justice in our country, by staying in the West. Within the limits of my modest abilities and opportunities, I tried to bear true witness to the situation in the country and the Polish opposition. This testimony was contained in articles of mine that appeared in several Western journals, in interviews that I gave, in conversations I was able to have with politicians, trade-unionists, and reporters in the countries that I had time to visit—France, England, Sweden, the German Federal Republic, Denmark, and Italy. I was guided by the belief that we have an important ally in the West, namely, public opinion in these countries,

In these last two years, Western public opinion, and the Western left in particular, have done a great deal to save dissidents in Eastern Europe from becoming victims of repression, from victimizations, prison, and the Gulag. It is sufficient to mention the actions in defense of Plyushch, Bukovsky, Müller, and Shtern. The Western left offered its solidarity in defense of Charter 77 and in defense of the Polish workers victimized after June 1976.

Such solidarity was offered when these people were sentenced, imprisoned, or deported. For obvious reasons, it is much harder to mobilize public opinion when the consequences of steps taken by the authorities are not yet known, and when the motives for the repression, or the grounds for an arrest, are still not completely clear.

However, it is precisely at such times that intervention by public opinion can be most fruitful, can have the greatest impact on the actions of the authorities in these countries, can discourage them from engaging in unjustified repression, which will solve nothing, and can only add to the accumulated hate and bitterness.

Above all, I am appealing to the Western left. I am not pleading, since I think that aiding the victims of repression in Eastern Europe is as important for the Western left, of whatever affiliations—Socialists, Communists, or trade-unionists—as it is for us. For, whether I like it or not, we are a chapter in the history of the left. And this is why the left above all should be struggling today to force respect for elementary human rights in Eastern Europe. And tomorrow it must fight to establish complete freedom and democracy in these countries. □



Kayhan

'Kayhan' photograph of some of defendants at appeals court awaiting verdict handed down by minions of shah.

## Eleven Victims Appeal Prison Terms

# Shah Stages Show Trial

By Ali Golestan

In a recent face-saving effort, the shah of Iran submitted a much-publicized measure to his parliament declaring the use of torture illegal. This law, of course, will be as little respected as other democratic guarantees in the constitution.

In another move, the shah allowed a correspondent from *Le Soir*, the Belgian daily, to visit a few prisoners and speak with them.<sup>1</sup> Even in this case, the prisoners were intimidated by the authorities before the reporter interviewed them. Most either refused to speak, or were very cautious in answering questions.

The most recent display of "open dealing" was a public military trial of ten men and one woman in Tehran. The government-controlled press went all out in reporting the trial of the eleven, who were charged with membership in a Maoist organization, the Revolutionary Organization of the Tudeh party.<sup>2</sup>

Typical headlines were: "The Accused Came to Iran With Hands Full of Bombs, Grenades and Machine Guns," "The Accused Were in Contact With the Leader-

ship Abroad," "Civil War Was the Objective of the Eleven."

It was alleged that some of these individuals joined the Maoist organization while studying abroad in countries such as the United States, Germany, and Turkey.

The April 13 issue of *Kayhan*, a semi-official Iranian daily, said that the eleven were members of an underground cell of nineteen persons, of whom eight were "killed because of their armed resistance at the time of arrest."

The Maoist organization to which these people allegedly belong has only acknowledged that one of those who were killed by the police was a central leader of the organization. A statement published in the February issue of *Red Star*, the organization's monthly newspaper, said that the news of armed clashes with the police "is nothing more than a lie. The security agents of the regime, instructed by the Shah, surely murdered our comrades under torture."

During the trial, according to *Kayhan*, the eleven defendants pleaded guilty to the charges. It is obvious that SAVAK (the Iranian secret police) forced them, possibly under torture, to "confess." With these "confessions" in hand, the government staged a public show trial. SAVAK—as is its custom—accused the defendants of

being terrorists, armed to kill innocent people, and so on. However, nowhere in their "confessions" did they admit carrying arms or engaging in armed actions.

Reporting on these trials from Tehran, William Branigan wrote in the May 12 issue of the *Washington Post*:

Their confessions were first made during pretrial interrogation by SAVAK, the feared Iranian secret police. Neither the military tribunals nor the court-selected defense lawyers ever tried to determine whether the confessions, on which the initial guilty pleas were based, resulted from threats, fear or coercion during the interrogations.

A local newspaper said the prosecution's evidence against the defendants also included "investigations by SAVAK into their activities in Iran and abroad." This confirms earlier reports of surveillance by SAVAK agents in the United States and Europe, where most of the accused studied.

Foreign legal observers during last month's trial said, after interviewing the defendants, that none had ever received the charges against him in writing. Some were either not informed of the law under which they were accused or not allowed to see a lawyer for weeks or months after they were arrested late last year.

The court-assigned lawyers of the accused are themselves members of the shah's military. They have at no time pointed out that these individuals are innocent; that even if they belonged to an organization, it is their democratic right to do so; that they have the right to read, write, and distribute any literature they wish; that they should be free to say what they want; and that a military court has no authority to try them.

Instead, the attorneys made speeches about how their clients were misled and duped, since they were studying abroad

1. See *Intercontinental Press*, April 11, 1977, p. 384-385.

2. A split-off from the pro-Moscow Tudeh party.



and not able to witness the shah's revolution in Iran.

One of the lawyers suggested that the eleven need a "prescription to cure them." The prescription handed down was imprisonment.

On April 12, three of them were given life terms and the rest received jail sentences running from three to fifteen years. All of them appealed to a higher court.

Reporting on the appeals, the May 11 *Washington Post* said:

Eleven Iranian "terrorists" convicted of Communist affiliations last month began a series of personal pleas for leniency before a military appeals court today.

The proceedings, which have been opened to foreign journalists and the public, are widely viewed as an attempt by Iran to improve its human-rights image abroad.

After commenting on the fact that these trials were "called a 'show trial'" by critics, the dispatch continues:

The proceedings had all the appearances of being staged, as five defendants mechanically read confessions they had hand-written on government letterhead paper. In their appeals they praised Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi and blamed their alleged subversive activities on corrupting foreign influences.

Reporting on the decisions of the appeals court, Branigan wrote in the May 12 issue of the *Washington Post*:

In a show of leniency apparently intended to counter criticisms of human-rights violations, a military appeals court today reduced the prison sentences of 11 Iranians convicted last month of subversive activities.

The verdicts, which had been anticipated, came after a two-day appeal hearing. Some foreign observers said the outcome appeared to have been decided before the 10 men and one woman appeared in an unusual public trial.

The defendants, all but one of them university-educated, appeared calm and even bored during the appeal, as they had during the trial a month ago.

The headline of this article was "Iran Cuts Sentences For 11 in 'Show' Trial."

Does all of this mean that the Iranian government is about to uphold human rights? Branigan does not think so:

Some foreign observers said the show of leniency was largely cosmetic rather than a signal of any profound change in Iran's treatment of political prisoners.

Branigan cites the conclusions drawn by observers who attended the proceedings:

Observers at the trial, including two lawyers from Britain and the United States, said they felt that several aspects of the case amounted to human-rights violations.

Those sentenced to life imprisonment had their terms reduced to ten years, and others had their sentences cut by half, according to Branigan. All the defendants appealed these verdicts for a second time. But this time the shah himself must approve the appeals. □

## Opposition Rejects Proposal

## Pakistan—Bhutto Calls Referendum on His Rule



BHUTTO: Champion juggler of ballot boxes.

In a new attempt to defuse the mass protests against his regime, Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto announced May 13 that he would hold a national referendum to decide whether he should stay in power or resign.

He indicated that if he "won" the vote he would rule with expanded powers. "The framework of the country," he said, "the structure of the country will have to be adjusted . . . to be able to meet all future crises and future problems of Pakistan—according to our wisdom and according to our judgment."

Although his announcement was a limited acknowledgment of the demands for his resignation, it side-stepped the widespread calls for new parliamentary elections.

The mass upsurge against Bhutto began after the March 7 elections, in which Bhutto's Pakistan People's party (PPP) claimed to have won 163 seats in the 200-seat National Assembly. The opposition Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) charged the PPP with massive vote fraud and called demonstrations and strikes to press its demands for Bhutto's resignation and new elections under military and judicial supervision.

Significantly, Bhutto offered no details on his referendum proposal. He did not say what question would be asked, who would supervise the voting, or whether martial law would be lifted and opposition leaders

released from prison. In light of the vote rigging in the March 7 elections, there is nothing to indicate that the referendum, if held, would not be rigged once more.

The PNA rejected Bhutto's offer and called for a boycott of the referendum. Hassan Mahmud, a member of the PNA's general council declared, "He is a dictator and now he wants his dictatorship to be endorsed by the people, but he'll never get it. It is clearly not acceptable to us."

Despite the PNA's rejection, Bhutto pushed through the National Assembly an amendment to the constitution providing for the referendum before September. The bill also blocked high courts from hearing legal challenges to martial law.

On May 15, the Pir of Pagaro, the last remaining high PNA leader not already in jail, was placed under house arrest in his home town of Sanghar. According to a May 16 Reuters dispatch, "Gun battles broke out today between Hur tribesmen protesting the detention of their spiritual and political leader, the Pir of Pagaro, and the police in the desert town of Sanghar in southern Pakistan, reliable sources said.

"At least five persons were wounded in the clashes, which flared when the armed tribesmen blocked all roads into Sanghar, the Pir's home town, some 200 miles north of Karachi."

On May 17 Bhutto sent troops into Sanghar in an attempt to quell the protests, but backtracked the next day by releasing the Pir from house arrest.

In other clashes, police fired into a crowd of antigovernment demonstrators in Multan, killing one and wounding about twenty. Security forces also fired on a demonstration in the industrial city of Karachi, killing another protester and injuring five. More than 300 persons have been killed by police, troops, or paramilitary forces since the March 7 elections. □

## India Says "No Thanks" to Soviet Help in Expanding Steel Output

India's state-owned steel industry is being revamped by the new government of Prime Minister Moraji Desai, according to a report in the May 16 *Wall Street Journal*. Steel minister Biju Patnaik has told the Soviet Union that India has decided to use its own capital and technicians in the construction of a Russian-designed \$450 million cold rolling mill.

Patnaik also indicated he wants to allow foreign business interests to build steel mills in India, and he questioned the Gandhi government's plans for massive state investment in steel production.

## How the Workers Commissions Developed in Portugal

By Charles Michaloux

[The following article is reprinted from the April issue of *Cahiers de la Taupe*, a French Trotskyist publication concerned with issues of interest to the labor movement. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

On May 27, 1974, one month after the overthrow of the dictatorship headed by Marcelo Caetano, Salazar's successor, the postal workers of the CTT [Correios, Telégrafos e Telefones—Mail, Telegraph and Telephone, the state postal system] decided to call a national strike. They were demanding a minimum wage of 6,500 escudos per month [about US\$290 at the time], a thirty-five-hour week, the right to have veto power over firings, the right to strike and union recognition, publication of the salaries of all top-level executives, and purging of the fascists.

During this short period, the 40,000 CTT workers nationwide had elected committees of delegates in their workplaces. These committees had begun to coordinate their work. In addition, a union organizing committee (or pre-union committee, as they call it in Portugal) had been established to draw up a list of demands. After some hesitation, it too issued a call for a strike.

The general climate at the time was permeated with demagogic appeals for "national unity" and condemnations of strikes. The big demonstration on May 1, 1974, partially reflected this. The Central Committee of the Portuguese Communist party published a communique demanding "an end to the strikes that were leading to the installation of a Chile-type dictatorship."

Under the pressure of the reformist leaderships of the SP and CP, which were included in the Spínola government along with the major right-wing party, the Popular Democratic party (PPD), workers' demands were put under wraps; for instance, the metalworkers dropped their central demand for a minimum wage of 6,000 escudos per month [about US\$270], a demand that they had been fighting for since long before the fall of the dictatorship, and which had been taken up by other sectors.

Under these conditions, the chances of organizing a nationwide strike seemed slim. The CTT workers, while a very militant sector, had no underground trade-union traditions, unlike the textile workers or metalworkers, for example. The leader-



SOARES: No friend of workers committees.

ship of the developing struggle had very little time to set up a completely new organization that would enable them to mobilize the thousands of workers at post offices scattered across the country.

There was only one answer—to use the telegraph and telecommunications system to advance the struggle. Postal equipment, therefore, was used to relay all information: news of the progress of the negotiations at first, later of the strike itself. The delegates elected in all the workplaces relayed the opinions of the workers to the strike headquarters in Lisbon, and for one week, national assemblies of delegates met every day to make plans for the strike, basing their decisions on the information they received. These decisions, in turn, were instantly reported back to the local areas. The pre-union committee was transformed into a central strike committee. All the preparations had been made.

Within two days, all the postal centers were occupied. Teams were organized to carry out a mass distribution of leaflets explaining the strikers' demands to the public. In the big cities, postal workers demonstrated in the streets. But the

response was not long in coming. The CP condemned the struggle on the grounds that it was "sabotaging the work of national reconstruction," and went so far as to organize demonstrations—with the help of its appendage, the Portuguese Democratic Movement—to forcibly reopen the occupied post offices, as in Viseu and Aveiro.

After having succeeded nonetheless in winning some of their demands, the CTT workers went back to work. The foundations had been laid for a trade-union organization. But above all, because of the huge impact this struggle had had on the working class, it pushed to the forefront the problem of the relations between the unions and the committees of delegates elected in the workplaces, the workers commissions.

The time bomb that was set to explode in the months that followed had built up over forty-eight years of dictatorship. By the end of 1973, for example, average monthly earnings were 2,600 escudos [US\$117] for men and 1,300 escudos [US\$58] for women in the textile and garment industries. In the metal and parts industries, they were 3,800 [US\$171] and 2,400 escudos [US\$108] respectively. In the plants and the large agricultural enterprises in the South, police informers and PIDE agents [the Salazarist secret police] had established an atmosphere of terror.

After April 25, the weakness of the CP's reformist infrastructure, the lack of an SP apparatus in the factories, and the shakiness of the state apparatus that emerged from the military coup at first gave almost completely free rein to the numerous struggles that broke out in all the branches of basic industry. As a general rule, these struggles began by posing the need for the workers to organize at the level of their plants.

It was in this context that the workers commissions arose. Before April 25, the CP had made various attempts to set up structures for the purpose of negotiating with the bosses, such as the short-lived "unity commissions." This approach was soon abandoned, however, and the CP's worker cadres concentrated on entering the corporatist unions. They were able to gain control of some bodies, particularly in the textile and metal industries, and they brought these together in 1970 to form the Intersindical. But the Intersindical could never claim to represent more than the three or four thousand worker activists

who were members and sympathizers of Alvaro Cunhal's party. After the fall of the dictatorship, the workers organized where they could express themselves most immediately and freely—at the level of the individual plants, which frequently were deserted by the bosses and the management.

Thus, the workers commissions represented the outcome of a threefold process. The first aspect was a lack of confidence in the corporatist union structures (as many as forty craft "unions" in some plants), together with the workers' desire for self-organization. The second was the contagious effect of the first big strikes that took place, which, like those in the CTT or the TAP [Transportes Aéreos Portugueses—Portuguese Air Transport], developed in opposition to pressure from the reformists. And the third was the need to set up structures at the plant level capable of conducting a successful struggle to win the demands that the workers raised in this period—cleaning out the fascists (*saneamento*), a chance for the workers to participate in political life, and better working conditions.

Throughout this initial phase of the Portuguese revolution, the workers commissions constituted the main axis of the working-class radicalization. In particular, in the big complexes of the Lisbon-Setúbal industrial belt, the workers commissions were the medium for the most advanced forms of workers control. In this area, measures were taken that pointed toward the socialist planned economy of the future. Forms of coordination arose, and the first steps were taken toward centralizing structures of self-organization that were actual embryos of an alternative power based on the workers and tenants (*moradores*) commissions.

In the first wave of struggles from May to September 1974, it became obvious that the bureaucratic apparatuses could not keep the social explosions from spreading. A decree was issued limiting the right to strike—which was supported by the SP, CP, and, of course, PPD ministers, all presided over by General Spínola. But it proved impossible to enforce it on a single occasion.

In December 1974, amid growing economic sabotage, the flight of capital, and phony bankruptcy claims, the situation took an important turn. Workers control became a weapon for survival. A wave of land occupations began to spread to prevent the crops and animals on the big estates from being abandoned. More and more workers mobilized to demand nationalization of the major sectors of industry and the banks. Meanwhile, most of the workers commissions had already been constituted.

In his report to the last congress of the Portuguese Communist party, Alvaro Cunhal referred to a survey taken by the party, which reported that by the end of 1973

"there were 1,250 workers commissions, half of which were in the Lisbon area." It is hard to determine whether these figures are accurate; in any case, they do give a general indication that tends to confirm the following points:

a. In all of the large enterprises, the workers commissions represented most, if not all of the workers, regardless of their party loyalties.

b. The degree of representativeness of the workers commissions sometimes varied considerably from one region to another. In the North, where the workers movement is scattered throughout hundreds of small-scale enterprises, the workers commissions sometimes existed only on paper, even when they were not an outright creation of the bosses. In the Lisbon and Setúbal regions, on the other hand, the workers commissions were highly representative. Moreover, their composition varied according to the degree of radicalization of their working-class base, which voted for them en masse. The lack of any tradition of centralized mass working-class organizations—even centralized bureaucratically by the SP or CP, as in most of the European unions—was visible in terms of the feeble coordination or centralization of the workers commissions. Thus, at its peak, the Provisional Secretariat of the Workers Commissions of the Lisbon Industrial Belt (SPCTCIL), initiated by the CP during the big mobilizations in the summer of 1975, included representatives from no more than 200 enterprises—although, to be sure, these were the largest in the country.

c. Despite this lack of real centralization,<sup>1</sup> the workers commissions were clearly seen by the mass of workers in struggle as *their* organizations. At the height of the crisis in the summer and fall of 1975, it was the agricultural workers commissions that organized the defense—frequently armed—of the occupied great landed estates in the Alentejo region. It was at the call of the construction workers commissions that the building-trades workers left their sites on November 12 and went to surround the São Bento Palace. Again, it was the workers commissions that issued the call for the huge demonstration on the Praça do Comércio in Lisbon November 16, the demonstration that brought Admiral Pinheiro de Azevedo's sixth provisional government to its knees until the Amadora Rangers came to his rescue on November

1. One or two sectarian caricatures were set up hastily and separately by the Maoist MRPP [Movimento Reorganizativo do Partido do Proletariado—Movement to Reorganize the Proletarian Party] and UDP [União Democrática do Povo—People's Democratic Union] and the MES [Movimento de Esquerda Socialista—Movement of the Socialist Left], but they never succeeded in substituting themselves for the real thing.—C.M.

25.<sup>2</sup> In short, there can be no doubt that in the middle of the prerevolutionary crisis that shook Portugal from July to November 1975 the workers commissions did indeed constitute the backbone of a developing power beginning to arise in face of the paralysis and incompetence of a bourgeois state that was in an advanced stage of decomposition.

What, then, was the internal weakness of the workers commissions that prevented them from realizing their vast potential?

According to Intersindical statistics, the number of workers on strike rose from around 200,000 in 1974 to nearly 1,500,000 in 1975, representing almost the sum total of wage workers in industry and public services. Furthermore, the number of enterprises under self-management is estimated at 220 in the same period, and the number of enterprises nationalized or under state supervision, at more than 300.

These figures give only an inkling of the depth of the process that was taking place. However, this wave of strikes and occupations, the resumption of production, nationalizations imposed by the workers, attempts by the workers to reconvert factories—coming at the same time that bourgeois political domination had still not been overthrown—created new problems. How could workers control be applied to public administration? How could growing unemployment and rising prices be dealt with? These questions were beginning to become central concerns of the workers, who were confronted by virtually no established authority, either on the part of the bosses or the state. And it is precisely here that the primary limitation of the role of the workers commissions became apparent.

What strikes the reader about the documents written at the time for discussion in the workers commissions is their extremely general character, in both the good and bad sense of the term. The questions discussed, of course, reflect the strength of a working-class radicalization that is trying to respond to the country's political problems, the key to the further advance of the revolution: the nature of workers control, economic planning, the institution of different modes of production, reconversion of industry, and so on.

But the primary weakness of the workers commissions was their failure to consolidate their real base among the proletariat by taking up its most elementary material and democratic demands. In this way they could have really organized the workers and centralized their struggles nationally, under the leadership of bodies that workers would see as organs of their

2. On November 25, 1975, paratroop units in the Lisbon area occupied four air force bases and seized radio and television stations in a coup attempt that was quickly crushed by the government.—IP.

power, of an infinitely more democratic regime than the most democratic type of parliamentary republic.

Consciously or unconsciously, the majority of far-left organizations fell into the trap. They spouted "revolutionary" rhetoric. But they seldom focused their energies on getting the workers commissions to adopt a few definite goals whose achievement would unquestionably establish the authority of the workers commissions to lead struggles and at the same time promote real unity among the workers split into opposing camps by the divisive policies of the SP and CP leaderships.

Not the least paradoxical aspect of the situation is the fact that the demand for a 2,000-escudo wage increase—a demand frequently raised in the struggles that preceded April 25—is only now beginning to be raised again in a massive way, in the defensive struggles against the austerity policy proclaimed by Soares. At a time when the government was entirely powerless, this demand had all but disappeared from the written statements of the workers commissions.

To sum up, it can therefore be said that the primary limitation of the workers commissions consisted in their delay in taking up the immediate demands of the workers.

This limitation allowed a kind of division of labor to continue within the plants, between the workers commissions on the one hand and the union on the other. The latter, because of its organizational linkup with a national apparatus, played a centralizing role in practice in two major areas: establishing the collective bargaining agreements (CCT), and negotiating working conditions.

The construction workers' struggle in November 1975 is a good illustration of this contradictory situation. It was on the initiative of the elected delegates of the workers commissions that the strike was called and the struggle took the radical form it did during the siege of São Bento. However, when it came to formalizing the relationship of forces created by this impressive national mobilization, the construction workers union appeared on the scene to provide a minimal degree of coordination and to sign the contract, whose provisions were a reflection of the victory that had been won by the workers commissions.

The continuation of this same situation also explains the ease with which, during the second phase of the Portuguese revolution that began on November 25, the union leaderships (the CP in the case of the industrial unions and the SP in the white-collar unions) have been able, even without an entrenched bureaucracy to rely on, to channel the mobilizations into the frameworks of the union apparatus.

Finally, the orientation of the reformist leaderships, their consistent practice of utilizing struggles as a means of lobbying

with the successive provisional governments or with the various wings of the MFA [Movimento das Forças Armadas—Armed Forces Movement], had an impact on a large number of workers commissions. Under the fourth and fifth provisional governments, many workers commissions under CP influence adopted a "battle for production" line.

The demagogic language exemplified in the following quotation from a document published by the SOCEL [Sociedade de Industrias Celuloses] workers commission on May 5-6, 1975, shows that the "battle for production" played no small part in undermining the credibility of some workers commissions in the eyes of the workers. With a sure class instinct, the workers concentrated more on the fight for a government that would satisfy their legitimate demands. The SOCEL document said:

The workers can only be organized to carry out this vast campaign of struggle for power if they are inspired with the necessary determination to deal with the worsening economic crisis. This task can be accomplished only if a genuinely revolutionary spirit of mass enthusiasm takes hold of everyone, if a consistent and resolute struggle is waged—a struggle that consists at the moment of the battle for production! For us, comrades, there must be neither a minimum nor a maximum program; there is only one program, that of socialism. That is the minimum program we must put into practice at once. At stake are the workers' professional pride and their duties as citizens. This puts everyone of us under an obligation not to fall below a certain level of efficiency, to maintain a standard corresponding to the average abilities of each of us.

In this way, many workers commissions became isolated, allowing the unions to take the initiative in economic struggles. Thus, in a society in which the socialist revolution was still to be accomplished, the extension and coordination of the workers commissions was blocked by General Vasco Gonçalves's demagogic appeals for "socialist exertion."

While it is true, fortunately, that "the battle for production" never became a reality, the fact remains that this orientation of capitulating to the class-collaborationist government left deep wounds in the Portuguese workers movement, pitting SP workers against CP workers for a long time. In particular, because of this orientation, the workers commissions in the CP-dominated main industrial concentrations were cut off for a whole period from any chance of being recognized by all the workers—Communists, Socialists, and revolutionists—as weapons for their day-to-day struggles, instruments that could in the future develop into effective organs of power.

These limitations of the workers commissions, which were the predictable outcome of the reformists' policy, point up the full importance of a correct policy of a workers' united front. The condition for achieving

such a united front was for the workers commissions to take up all of the workers' immediate demands. This would have made it possible to unite large numbers of workers around these demands, thereby creating authoritative and representative workers organizations that would really have been capable of offering working-class solutions to the crisis of Portuguese capitalism. The workers had demonstrated their readiness to mobilize around these solutions in order to win.

The majority of workers commissions were set up around the end of 1974. However, delegates were elected in different ways. At Sorefame [Sociedades Reunidas de Fabricações Metálicas], a large metal-fabricating plant outside Lisbon, the workers commission is made up of thirty-two delegates, elected by the various categories of workers, who meet once a month. In most of the plants in the industrial belt, a similar procedure has been adopted—delegates from each shop and category are elected directly by all the workers. In some cases, these delegates are mandated to carry out a program that has been discussed in the plant. This discussion culminates in an initial vote.

It is through this process that the workers commissions have been elected in the two red bastions represented by the Lisnave and Setenave shipyards. The composition and political coloration of these bodies has changed several times in accordance with the evolution of the political situation in the country and of the orientations of the reformist and revolutionary workers organizations. But this type of democratic elections of the workers commissions by the rank-and-file workers themselves was not the general rule.

Before giving way to the first constitutional government headed by Mário Soares in June 1976, the SP and PPD ministers in the sixth provisional government made the the outgoing cabinet shoulder the blame for a decree restricting workers control to exclusively Portuguese-owned enterprises with more than fifty workers. Moreover, workers control had to be applied by workers commissions elected by secret, universal vote, under the supervision of the Ministry of Labor, by which in turn they had to be recognized. The decree specified: "Workers control may not interfere with the ability of management structures or any of the various supervisors to exercise their functions."

If it were applied, this decree on workers control—which the present Soares government has of course reaffirmed—would transform the workers commissions into mere appendages of the government or the corporations. At one point, the CP, out of concern for legality did try to make the workers obey it. But the workers have ignored the decree, even in areas heavily dominated by the CP. After these unsuccessful attempts, the party headed by

Alvaro Cunhal was finally forced to condemn the measure. Nevertheless, it always left the door open for a compromise.

In his report to the party's Eighth Congress, the CP general secretary said that "workers control has been instituted gradually, as a result of employers deserting the plants." He added that, "given the demands of the process itself, the functions of supervision and control gave way to managerial functions," and finally, that "control and management were not a matter of principle or a panacea; they were an emergency measure."

It is useful to compare Alvaro Cunhal's deliberately ambiguous statements with what actually happened. It is true that the majority of Portuguese workers began to apply workers control, and in some cases forms of worker management, out of necessity in the face of sabotage by the employers. But it is undeniable that, despite all the difficulties encountered, they did consider this practice a "panacea," and correctly so. They discussed workers control enthusiastically as a means for solving the crisis of the capitalist system in their country.

The most positive lessons of this experience are far from being forgotten. There is the example of the workers at the Braço de Prata arsenal, who refused to manufacture weapons without first knowing what they were to be used for. There is the example of the workers at the giant CUF [Companhia União de Fábri] trust, who worked out a very effective system for monitoring prices and billing at cost, particularly for chemical fertilizer, in order to deliver such products directly to workers in cooperatives and collective agricultural enterprises. Another example is that of the bank workers, who went over all credit applications in order to give first priority to loans, at no interest, to enterprises under self-management or occupied farms. This list is far from exhaustive, but it says a great deal about the supposed lack of a "matter of principle."

Some workers commissions did not always manage to avoid the traps, such as comanagement, or long-term self-management, leading nowhere. In the first few months after the overthrow of the dictatorship, the TAP workers commission, controlled by the MES at the time, agreed to the inclusion of three of its members on the administrative council. While this disastrous experience was short-lived, since the workers put a stop to it by dissolving the workers commission, it created no end of confusion, as this kind of thing did in other nationalized enterprises where it occurred. In every case, these comanagement deformations were quickly corrected, simply because of the rapid pace of events in the country.

These deformations reflected, moreover, the weak tradition of independent organization among certain sectors of workers,

who embraced comanagement in the hope of thereby achieving their goal of bettering working conditions and gaining control in the plants.

Today we are faced with a very different



CUNHAL: Master of ambiguous statements.

problem, because there is a conscious convergence between the Social Democratic program of the SP and the Stalinist program of the CP in calling for comanagement of the nationalized sector. The official documents of the SP leadership—and thus of the government—no longer refer to workers control, but to "a check on management."

The positions of the CP leadership speak for themselves:

The workers' struggle must take into account the economic and social transformations that have occurred in our country. Nationalizations, workers control, agrarian reform, state intervention, and worker management, among other things, have led to the formation of a large sector of our economy that has a noncapitalist dynamic. In this sector, new relations of production are developing that lead in the direction of socialism. The workers' economic struggles cannot be separated from the need to consolidate and defend this noncapitalist economic formation and to reconstruct our economy. . . . In their struggle, the workers must take into consideration not only wage demands, even though these demands are in line with the need to better their living conditions. Limiting themselves to such demands will make the workers lose sight of the need to defend the noncapitalist economic formation and to prove that enterprises can function efficiently [*O Militante*, organizational bulletin of the Portuguese Communist party, January 1977].

This aberrant way of analyzing nationalizations under capitalism naturally amounts to a justification for holding back economic struggles on the one hand, and on the other for pressuring the workers

commissions to play the role of "efficient" plant managers. The CP does not use the word comanagement, but that is what it is talking about.

As in the past, however, the chances are slim that the CP will be able to put comanagement into practice. The economic crisis has reached catastrophic proportions, and the Portuguese workers' level of combativity is too high for the CP's pronouncements about "real austerity" or "efficient management" to take on the slightest credibility, at least for the time being.

To the contrary, the attacks on the workers' standard of living and on the gains they have won are helping to bring about a revival of the workers commissions in the plants. Assemblies are taking place everywhere, and struggles are under way in the main sectors of industry against firings, the wage freeze, price hikes, the effects of the recent 15 percent devaluation of the escudo, and in general against the austerity policy of the Soares government, which the bourgeoisie is supporting until it can come up with a regime better able to bring the workers "to their senses."

In this new upsurge of defensive struggles now unfolding in Portugal, the unions will play a primary role in defending the elementary interests of the proletariat. The fact that a nationally recognized trade-union federation now exists, after the first national trade-union congress held in January of this year, will also help put them in the forefront of the strikes brewing nearly everywhere.

But the workers commissions are far from dead and buried. The government's policies are even partly helping to resurrect them. By answering all demands with the claim that they cannot be met because of the depth of the crisis, Mário Soares is only encouraging the workers in the belief that there is only one overall solution to the crisis that can satisfy their demands in the long run, and therefore that they are fully justified in defending workers control and the indispensable tool for achieving it, the workers commissions.

Moreover, the workers commissions are organizations close to the rank and file. The delegates to these commissions are well known to the workers in the plants and offices. Given the conditions that exist, in the strikes and nationwide political struggles that are clearly on the horizon these features can make the workers commissions the crucible for forging genuine sovereign organs of workers democracy.

The workers commissions represent a great legacy of the Portuguese revolutionary experience. Despite their limitations and past errors, they remain the undisputed symbol of the proletarian revolution that began in Portugal on April 25 three years ago. □

## Under the Grip of General Eyadéma

By Jim Atkinson

LOMÉ, Togo—General Gnassingbé Eyadéma, the dictator who has ruled the West African republic of Togo since an army coup in January 1967, suddenly announced November 13, 1976, that he was planning to turn over the regime to civilian rule. "We sincerely believe that the army's mission is finished," he told reporters in the village of Pya.

Within hours of Eyadéma's announcement, the government, the state-run media, and the Rassemblement du Peuple Togolais (RPT—Togolese People's Rally), Togo's only legal party, got to work to mount a massive campaign to "plead" with the dictator to stick to his job. According to government estimates, 200,000 people jammed the streets of Lomé, the Togolese capital, November 18 to demand that Eyadéma withdraw his resignation "threat."

This elaborate stage-managed exercise came to a predictable end November 22 when the general, in a national radio broadcast, bowed to the "popular will" and declared: "As a soldier, I am a servant of the people, ready to sacrifice my life for my country if the circumstances demand it."

Eyadéma has employed resignation ploys to strengthen his rule no less than three times since he came to power. On the second of these occasions, the "servant of the people" was "forced" to stay in office by a landslide vote of 868,941 to 878 in a national referendum, held on January 9, 1972.

The resignation speeches—and the government-orchestrated "spontaneous mobilisations" that ensue—are designed to portray the dictator as a man of disinterested dedication and self-sacrifice, to create the illusion that the regime rests on a popular mandate, and to provide a rationale for the enormous concentration of political power in the hands of the "indispensable" ruler.

### After the Coup

The military coup was staged in 1967 to restore stability and national cohesion after seven years of political turbulence and regional friction. The coup-makers, led by Eyadéma, decided to act as arbiters of the country's destiny by putting a definitive end to all civil politics and "getting rid of the politicians."

The National Assembly was dissolved shortly after the coup. Since then, there has been no elected (or even appointed) legislative body, and all laws have been

issued by presidential decree. On May 13, 1967, the Eyadéma regime outlawed all political parties. The country's elected local government bodies (the Conseils de Circonscription and Conseils Municipaux) were dissolved on January 27, 1967. By a law of July 12, 1973, these bodies have since been reestablished, but—in contrast to the precoup period—they are not elected. They are appointed by decree.

Though resting in the final analysis on the army, the Eyadéma regime decided in 1969 to launch a "national movement" to buttress its rule. In August of that year, during a speech given in the western city of Kpalimé, Eyadéma raised the idea of "a vast movement which regroups all the Togolese in a same national crusade." The RPT was founded at a constituent congress in Kpalimé the following November 29-30.

The RPT, which is described as a "movement" rather than a party to stress its supposedly "national," nonpartisan mission, is designed to rally the masses behind government policies. All Togolese are urged incessantly to enroll in its ranks. It is organized in hierarchical pyramid style, according to "a system of vertical relations," as the French writer M. Prouzet puts it in his book, *La République du Togo* (Paris, 1976). There are successive tiers of neighbourhood and village committees, canton and regional committees, and national leadership bodies, each level being strictly subordinate to the one above it. Though formally ratified by the RPT congress, which meets about once every five years, appointments to the party's Central Committee and Political Bureau are made personally by Eyadéma himself.

The RPT's bourgeois nationalist ideology, codified in a document known as the *Livre Vert* (Green Book), justifies military dictatorship on the grounds that "the exclusion of the army from the political life of nations is today a thing of the past." According to Prouzet, its aim is to "provide a political religion to unite all Togolese"—that is, unite them behind one of the most reactionary, proimperialist regimes in Africa.

Flanking the RPT are its so-called "*aires marchantes*" (marching wings). These include the Confédération Nationale des Travailleurs du Togo (National Confederation of Workers of Togo), a government-run syndicate set up on January 8, 1973, after the dissolution of all independent trade-union bodies; the Union Nationale des Femmes du Togo (National Union of

Women of Togo) and the Jeunesse du RPT (RPT Youth), both founded in 1972.

To bolster its rule, the regime has also placed great stress on cultivating the support of tribal political leaders and promoting their authority and prestige. These relics of precolonial political structures have been integrated into Eyadéma's dictatorial setup through a body known as the Union des Chefs Traditionnels du Togo (Union of Traditional Chiefs of Togo), which was founded in May 1968 and is another of the *aires marchantes* of the RPT.

There is no independent press in Togo. The only newspaper is *Togo-Presse*, which is edited by the minister of information, Kwaovi Benyi Johnson. This journal is so devoid of either news or analysis that it is scarcely surprising that its national press run is only about 20,000. Not many people could be expected to snap up copies of a paper whose aim is, in the words of Johnson, to assure "liaison between the summit and the base, by explaining to the population the decisions and acts of the government and by spreading the slogans of the Green Book" (*Europe-Outremer*, No. 561, Paris, 1976).

### Arrests and Torture

According to an "Open Letter on the Repression in Togo," published last year clandestinely in Lomé by the Comité Togolais de Défense des Prisonniers Politiques (Togolese Committee for the Defence of Political Prisoners), "in this country, under the military dictatorship, the elementary rights of man are scoffed at. Constitution, laws, public liberties—the military regime has ignored all those for ten years and governs the country by decrees." The Open Letter went on to state that a number of Togolese political prisoners had been tortured and killed. Independent evidence obtained here confirms that one of the victims named in the Open Letter, Paul Comlan, was murdered in his cell on July 31, 1975.

Political detentions are less common in Togo than in most neocolonial dictatorships, but this is not a sign of benevolence. It merely shows that thus far the regime has not faced a serious challenge to its rule, has not found it necessary to resort to the scale of barbarism practiced by some other dictatorships, and, for the present, finds it opportune to parade itself as more "liberal" than its ultrarepressive antecedents. These were the civilian regimes of

Sylvanus Olympio (1960-63) and Nicolas Grunitzky (1963-67), both of whom sanctioned the use of death squads and imprisoned scores of political opponents to shore up their shaky governments.

A striking feature of the Togolese regime is the massive personal accumulation of political power by Eyadéma himself. In the absence of a written constitution (since the previous one's abolition the day after the 1967 coup), Eyadéma is effectively the source of all constitutional authority.

He has personally issued all documents on the organisation of the state. Since the dissolution of the National Assembly, he has effectively monopolised all legislative and executive powers, ruling the country by presidential decree. He works closely with a Council of Ministers, a team of "experts" and technocrats (all of whom, with the exception of Eyadéma himself, are now civilians); but Eyadéma personally appoints all ministers, just as he nominates the members of the RPT's Central Committee and Political Bureau.

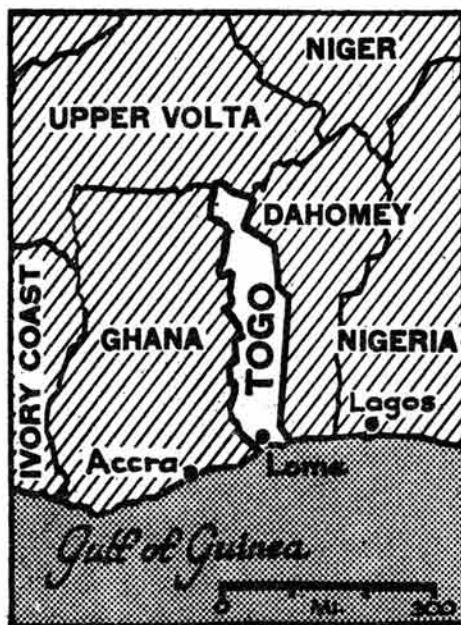
At the same time, Eyadéma is surrounded by a grotesque personality cult. Giant portraits of the general adorn city streets; and anyone looking for or wishing to keep a job knows that it is wise to sport an Eyadéma lapel button. *Togo-Presse* carries one of the general's cryptic "sayings" every day in a box on its masthead and ritualistically describes every speech he gives as "masterful" or "brilliant."

Furthermore, whenever he appears in public, he is welcomed by hordes of *militants animateurs et animatrices*, RPT singers and dancers who wear political uniforms made out of printed cloth bearing the general's portrait. The performers, who often number in the thousands at presidential functions, engage in an elaborately orchestrated ritual to the accompaniment of live bands and phalanxes of drummers—to project, in dramatic but repetitive form, the slogans of government policy and to glorify Eyadéma as the saviour of the country. The RPT's *animation* is modelled closely after that used by Zaïrian President Mobutu Sese Seko's *Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution* (People's Movement of the Revolution).

Eyadéma is flattered and fawned over endlessly by the press, radio, and television, as well as by RPT officials, government ministers, and all kinds of hangers-on and careerists. He is officially described by the regime and its mouthpieces as the "Father of the Nation," the "Prophet," the "Guide," and the "Helmsman," terms lifted from the cults of Mobutu, Mao Tsetung, and Kim Il Sung.

#### Kim Il Sung Lends a Hand

The Stalinist regime in North Korea has given Eyadéma special assistance in the techniques of personal glorification. The Pyongyang government gives all-out political support to the Togolese dictatorship



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and even got one of its Socialist Realist sculptors to produce a monumental and hideously pompous statue of the Togolese Helmsman that now stands, about three times larger than life with fatherly hand outstretched, in the centre of Lomé in front of the Maison du RPT, a massive prestige construction which dwarfs all other buildings in the city.

The Kim Il Sung regime, whose envoys are much in evidence here, has ranged itself (for narrow diplomatic reasons) against the Togolese masses, who will doubtless increasingly question the absurd Eyadéma cult and press forward to demand their democratic rights (the right to independent unions, the right to form political parties, the unshackling of the press, the convocation of a Constituent Assembly—to cite just a few).

Kim Il Sung, of course, is not the only fan of Eyadéma. Another prominent supporter is Franz Josef Strauss, the leader of the Christian Social Union (CSU), the right-wing Bavarian ally of the main bourgeois party of West Germany, the Christian Democratic Union. Strauss, who is a personal friend of Eyadéma, has been here four times since 1972. His latest visit was in March. "Togo," he said in a speech in Lomé on March 4, "is considered a stable country in which capital invested by West Germany and its economy is put to good use." In the same speech, Strauss announced that the CSU's Hanns-Seidel Foundation would launch its first-ever international project by funding a new "Eyadéma Foundation" in Togo. The foundation will open four schools in the country, starting with an "Institute of Political Studies."

West Germany has important economic interests in Togo. Besides providing over 11% of Togo's imports in 1975 (more than

any other country besides France and Britain), West German capitalists have a large stake in the Togolese economy. The Brasseries du Bénin, Togo's big brewing concern, is 60% German-owned; the country's principal textile company is 65% German-owned; and German capitalists will be putting up 70% of the capital for a projected bottle factory and 20% of the capital for a new glue factory and leather plant. Forty-nine percent of the capital of the Société Maritime Atlantique du Togo has been provided by two West German companies and the West German Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau is investing 60 million marks<sup>1</sup> in expansion work in the port at Lomé. Almost all the surveying and construction contracts at the port have been won by West German companies, including Strabach of Cologne; and the West German firm of Polyseus has recently won an order worth 150 million marks for the installation of machinery in a new cement clinker plant whose construction for the Société des Ciments de l'Afrique de l'Ouest is set to start in July.

Togo, which is a signatory of the Lomé Convention, is tied hand and foot to the imperialist economies of the European Economic Community, which (to cite 1974 figures) take 89.8% of Togo's exports (all primary products—phosphates, cocoa, and coffee) and sell to Togo 61.4% of its imports.

France has the biggest stake of all in the Togolese economy, both in investments and trade, providing (in 1974) 33.6% of Togo's imports and taking 45.3% of its exports. To protect these interests, successive governments in Paris have given military assistance to the Eyadéma government. In September 1975, for example, the French government announced that it would supply five Fouga Magister light jet aircraft in 1976 and train Togolese pilots.

Economically, Togo is at the mercy of the major imperialist powers. The country depends overwhelmingly on the export of phosphates, whose prices have fluctuated wildly on the world capitalist market, rising to some \$75-80 a ton in 1974 and plummeting to around \$30-35 a ton at the end of last year. Falling sales and prices led to a 50% drop in the value of Togo's phosphate exports in 1975—and a further fall in 1976. The impact of this is enormous when it is remembered that phosphates accounted for 76.4% of Togo's exports in 1974.

The sharp fall in the value of Togo's phosphate exports pushed its foreign trade position into deficit to the tune of 5 billion CFA francs<sup>2</sup> in 1975, caused a sharp fall in the country's foreign exchange reserves (from \$75.9 million in 1974 to \$15.8 million

1. One Deutschmark equals US\$0.42.

2. One U.S. dollar is equivalent to 249 CFA francs.

a year later) and increased its burden of foreign debt.

While continuing to welcome foreign imperialist investment, the Togolese regime has used its control of the government apparatus to take limited measures to promote the share of Togolese capitalists in the economy. This mirrors developments in most other neocolonial African countries in the wake of formal political independence.

Thus, the Togolese government's *Annuaire Statistique* of 1974 explains that "thanks to the quite appreciable assistance of the CNPPME [Centre National de Promotion des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises—National Centre for the Promotion of Small and Medium Businesses] and of the SNI [Société Nationale d'Investissement—National Investment Company], many Togolese are entering the industrial sector." The RPT's Second Congress, which was held in the northern city of Lama-Kara on November 26-29 last year, decided to further this process by calling for the Africanisation of small businesses (many of which are presently controlled by Lebanese small businessmen).

Despite these developments, the Togolese capitalist class remains extremely weak. This fact is stressed by Prouzet, who notes that the Togolese share in the Brasseries du Benin is only 25% and that the Togolese share in other sectors (cement, marble, drinks, textiles) is also small. The very limited amount of capital accumulated by the Togolese capitalists, Prouzet argues, is the reason why the *state* has had to play a pivotal role in expanding the Togolese bourgeoisie's share in the economy. It is why the Eyadéma government decided to nationalise the phosphate-mining *Compagnie Togolaise des Mines du Benin* in 1974, while guaranteeing massive compensation payments to its former owners.

### A Land of Poverty

As in other semicolonial countries, social conditions for the masses are harsh. According to government figures, some 45% of the country's population of 2.3 million is illiterate. Life expectancy is only thirty-seven years for men and forty-one years for women. Eighty-five percent of the population lives in the rural areas. According to *Europe-Outremer*, only 58% of children register for the first year of primary school, while only a tiny minority (about 60,000) are enrolled in secondary school.

Unemployment is acute, the urban unemployment rate in 1975 standing at 11% according to the 1975-80 Third Development Plan. This, however, does not take account of the mass of underemployed, among them the *vendeurs ambulants* (street peddlers) who, according to Prouzet, earn as little as 3,000-4,000 CFA francs per month but are included in the statistics as

part of the "economically active population."

Life is very difficult indeed for the mass of farmers, who are at the mercy of climatic conditions and fluctuations in the prices offered for their produce. This is one reason for the annual migration of some 20,000 to 25,000 peasants to the cities, where the majority end up in the ranks of the unemployed and underemployed. "In the final analysis," Prouzet notes, "one can consider that the unemployed, the small street peddlers, and the great majority of the peasantry constitute the same, single social group."

The 4.6% of the population who are wage earners also face acute economic difficulties—the mass of low-paid workers sometimes receiving as little as one-fifteenth of the salaries of top civil servants. Without legal trade unions, the workers have a hard time defending their standard of living against the ravages of world inflation (which pushed up food prices in Lomé by 23.9% in 1975, according to the government's *Annuaire Statistique*).

Some regions of the country are also seriously disfavoured. According to Prouzet, the revenue per inhabitant diminishes the further you go from the capital, declining from 38,000 CFA francs per year in Lomé to 24,000 CFA francs in the northern regions of Kara and Les Savanes. Figures published in the 1974 *Annuaire Statistique* show too that the percentage of children who enroll in the first year of primary school diminishes from 72.6% in Maritime region to only 24.6% in Les Savanes. These inequalities tend to reinforce ethnic divisions, which came to the fore in the political turbulence of 1960-67.

### The Ewe Peoples

The national question is also highlighted by problems inherited from the arbitrary frontier demarcations imposed by the colonialists during their scramble for Africa. The sufferings of the Ewe peoples serve as a clear illustration of the problem.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, the Ewe peoples (who today make up about 45% of the Togolese population) migrated from their original centre, the town of Nuatja, because of the persecutions of the tyrannical King Agokoli. They established themselves over a wide area in the southern regions of present-day eastern Ghana, Togo, and Benin (formerly Dahomey).

The Ewe region, however, was progressively chopped up by the imperialist map-drawers. First, at the Congress of Berlin on December 24, 1885 (and five subsequent treaties in the 1880s and 1890s), Germany's colonial annexation of 85,000 square kilometers of "Togoland" was recognised by the major imperialist powers. Most of the Ewe ended up in German Togoland, but some (the Anlo, Tonu and Peki) found

themselves under the heel of the British in the Gold Coast (now Ghana).

The Ewe were to suffer a worse fate, however, as a result of the imperialist rivalries which plunged the world into the 1914-18 slaughter. On August 26, 1914, the German garrison in Togoland was defeated by British and French troops at Kamina; and the two imperialist victors proceeded to divide Togoland between them. The final division of the spoils was set on July 10, 1919, when France was allotted 56,000 square kilometers and Britain 29,000 square kilometers of western Togoland.

"The most flagrant result of the Franco-English division of 1919," Prouzet concludes, "was to accentuate the artificial character of the frontiers. This division effectively chopped the Ewe geographical area in two, one English, the other French." Several northern peoples were cut in two as well: the Kolomba, the Tyokossi, and the Mamprussi.

On May 9, 1956, a referendum on the future of British-ruled western Togoland was held, and a majority (of 93,055 to 67,492) opted for joining the Gold Coast on its accession to formal independence as Ghana. However, in the Ewe-speaking south of western Togoland, a majority (of 36,010 to 15,798) voted for incorporation with Togo.

Since 1957, when British Togoland was integrated with Ghana, there has been a continuing movement for "Togoland unification" and strong secessionist sentiment remains in the Ewe-speaking southeastern parts of Ghana. The secessionists say that the 1956 referendum was rigged, partly because the British imperialists (for their own economic reasons) did not want to "lose" western Togoland to French-dominated Togo and so put strong pressure on voters to opt for inclusion with the Gold Coast. They also note that the question on the 1956 ballot was loaded, since the choice of independence as part of a unified Togoland was not included. They say that since a clear majority of southerners wanted unification with Togo, the referendum should have been divided between the two parts of western Togoland.

For its part, the Ghanaian government of General Ignatius Acheampong has taken a harsh repressive stand against the secessionists. On September 15, 1976, Acheampong unveiled a draconian "anti-subversion" decree which stated that "any person who organises, advocates or promotes the secession or breaking away of any part of Ghana shall be guilty of an offence and will suffer death by firing-squad."

The only just solution to this problem is one that rests on the right of self-determination of all the ethnic groups who fell victim to the arbitrary border demarcations imposed by the imperialists and inherited by the neocolonial regimes in Ghana and Togo. □



## Ten Dissident Groups Score Kremlin's 'Bomb' Lie

[The following statement is the response of representatives of ten dissident groups in the USSR to the charge raised by a Soviet journalist that the explosion on a Moscow subway train January 8 resulted from "a terrorist bomb" that "may have been planted by a Soviet dissident group."

[The charge appeared in the January 10 London *Evening News* in an article by Soviet journalist Victor Louis, who is known for "leaking" information for the Kremlin rulers.

[Prominent dissidents, like physicist Andrei Sakharov, immediately condemned the terrorist charge, asserting that the bureaucrats intended to use the explosion as a pretext for a crackdown against the dissidents. In March, the Kremlin attempted to create another pretext for a crackdown by trying to link the activities of the dissidents with espionage. Amidst their search for pretexts, the Stalinists in the Kremlin have proceeded with the crackdown. Since January a number of prominent dissidents have been arrested, including Yuri Orlov and Mikola Rudenko, signers of the document below, as part of the stepped-up offensive to crush the Committees to Supervise Compliance With the Helsinki Accords, which are beginning, as the relatively broad endorsement of this statement shows, to link up heretofore isolated sectors of the democratic opposition.

[The translation from the Russian is by Marilyn Vogt.]

\* \* \*

The not unknown KGB agent Victor Louis reported that some official sources (that is, obviously, KGB functionaries) thought the recent explosion in the Moscow subway was the handiwork of "a dissident group" of the Baader-Meinhof terrorist type. This statement received lively discussion in the world press and radio.

We, representatives of various dissident groups in the Soviet Union, believe it necessary to call to the attention of world public opinion that Victor Louis's use of the term "dissident group" in connection with real or imagined terrorists is a conscious provocation by the KGB, whose aim is to compromise the term "dissident" and place an equal-sign between dissidents and terrorists.

The name "dissidents" in the Soviet Union is firmly assigned to participants in the movement for human rights. The dissidents have various political, religious,

and philosophical views, but what unites them is that while striving for the realization of fundamental human rights, they totally reject violence or calls to violence as a means for realizing their goals. The dissidents' attitude toward terror is one of indignation and revulsion.

We call upon the workers in the communications media throughout the world to use the term "dissidents" only in this sense and not to extend its meaning to include people employing violence. For us, participants in the struggle for human rights in the USSR and the countries of Eastern Europe, this is not simply a question of terminology. For us, it is by no means an academic matter. The organs of repression in the USSR go to any lie and provocation in order to create a pretext for reprisals against the dissidents. They attributed to V. Bukovsky the organization of "assault squads" which they themselves dreamed up. They lie when they say that the Moscow Helsinki monitoring group acts according to instructions of the foreign emigrant organization NTS [National Trudovoi Soiuz—National Union of Workers, an emigré movement founded on the model of prewar European fascism]; they surreptitiously place foreign currency, pornography, and even weapons in the homes of dissidents so as to later "uncover" them during a search. In these efforts, they fall back on a wealth of experience. It was not so long ago that millions of people, guilty of nothing, were accused of espionage, terrorism, and sabotage, and disappeared forever. They were called "enemies of the people," the newspapers hurled filth at them, and frightened, stupefied people shouted at meetings: "Death to the enemies of the people!"

Whatever the real causes for the explosion in Moscow, KGB provocateurs and the obedient propaganda facilities will try to use the explosion to discredit the dissidents and to set the confused and misinformed Soviet people against them, since the KGB is more afraid of the dissidents than it is of the terrorists. Dozens or hundreds of KGB agents, instead of taking part in a search for the real criminals, maintain a round-the-clock tail on the dissidents—whose activities are absolutely open and legal. (While this statement is being composed, motor vehicles, packed with young, healthy and well-trained people, are posted day and night around the apartment of the leader of the Moscow Helsinki monitoring group, Yuri Orlov.)

We ask that the full text of this statement be publicized. Remember that every journalist or commentator who does not draw a clear distinction between the dissidents and terrorists is helping those who are trying to revive Stalin's methods of reprisals against those who think differently.

### Moscow Helsinki Monitoring Group

Y. Orlov  
A. Ginzburg  
L. Alekseyeva  
M. Landa

### The Working Commission to Investigate the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes

P. Grigorenko

### The Christian Committee to Defend Believers

O. Gleb Yakunin  
V. Kapitanchuk  
O. Varsonofy

### Amnesty International Group

V. Turchin  
V. Voinovich  
V. Kornilov  
Clergy S. Zheludkov

### Ukrainian Helsinki Monitoring Group

Mikola Rudenko

### Initiative Group for the Defense of Human Rights

T. Velikanova

### Jewish Movement for Emigration

M. Azbel  
V. Brailovsky  
N. Meiman  
V. Slepak  
L. Ovsishcher

### Initiative Group for the Defense of Human Rights in Georgia

M. Kostava

### Elder of the Fiftinik Christians\*

N.P. Goretov

### Member of the Fiftinik Churches

F.A. Sidenko

Moscow, January 14, 1977

\*Fiftiniks are Evangelical Christians who have split with the officially registered Baptists and who are fined fifty rubles when caught practicing their religion.

### Twentieth-Century Capitalism

The London *Times* reported April 28 that the Japanese police have organized a special riot squad of 200 women. Its function, according to the *Times*, will be "to control demonstrations by women, old people and those physically handicapped."

### Polk Case—a Frame-up Disintegrates

An article in the May issue of *More* magazine has charged that shortly after World War II the State Department, the CIA, and a group of prominent American journalists helped the Greek government whitewash an investigation into the death of George Polk, a CBS correspondent murdered during the Greek civil war.

Yiannis Roubatis and Elias Vlanton, Washington-based freelance writers, spent nine months uncovering long-buried evidence for their account in *More*, a media industry monthly.

The final phase of the Greek civil war from 1946 to 1949 pitted the Communist-led EAM (National Liberation Front) based in the north of Greece against the right-wing Athens government supported by London and the Truman administration. In this period the cold war opened, with Truman promising aid to any regime fighting "Communist aggression."

As top CBS correspondent in the Middle East, George Polk was assigned to cover the conflict. He was in the northern city of Salonika attempting to make contact with EAM leader Markos Vafiades when he disappeared on May 9, 1948. Seven days later a fisherman found his body floating in Salonika Bay. He had been bound hand and foot and shot through the head.

Greek authorities asserted from the beginning that Polk had been killed by the Communists to discredit the Greek government in the eyes of the American people. The Communist party maintained that Polk, who had grown increasingly critical of Truman's support for the Athens regime, had been murdered by ultrarightists.

Polk's death was believed to be the first politically motivated murder of an American journalist and aroused wide public concern in the United States. His colleagues in the Overseas Writers Association formed a special committee headed by columnist Walter Lippmann to conduct their own investigation. Other well-known journalists on the committee were James Reston of the *New York Times*, Ernest Lindley of *Newsweek*, and executives of the *Washington Post*.

Five months after Polk's body had been pulled from the water, Greek government prosecutors implicated four persons in the killing. Adam Mouzenides and Vangelis Vasvanas, high-ranking members of the Communist party, were tried and sentenced to death in absentia. They had allegedly been named as the killers by Gregory Stactopoulos, a Salonika reporter who confessed he was an unwitting accomplice. He served twelve years in prison. Stactopoulos's mother was tried as an accomplice and acquitted.

The cover-up began coming apart in June 1976 when Stactopoulos recanted his confession, charging that he was brutally tortured for two months before he agreed to go along with the government frame-up.

Vangelis Vasvanas, who has lived in exile in Romania since the end of the civil war, has also challenged the case against him and has offered to return to Greece to stand trial. The Greek government has refused his request.

The one piece of physical evidence introduced by the prosecution has also been called into question. Shortly after Polk's body was discovered, police received his identification card in an envelope that was supposedly addressed by Stactopoulos's mother. Attorneys for Stactopoulos now claim that the card was found on the docks by a local grocer who mailed it anonymously to the authorities. Although the grocer has died, his handwriting matches that on the envelope and his family is willing to corroborate the story.

Research carried out by Roubatis and Vlanton has further thrown the original verdict open to doubt by exposing the complicity of the Lippmann committee and the State Department in helping to pin the murder on the Communists.

The *More* article contends that retired Maj. Gen. William Donovan, who was hired by the Lippmann committee to be their chief investigator in Greece, ignored leads that pointed to the right. Donovan had been the wartime director of the Office of Strategic Services, predecessor to the CIA. He became a leading exponent of the cold war. Several months before he joined the Lippmann committee, Donovan wrote an article in *Atlantic* magazine advocating undercover operations inside the Soviet Union.

Enlisting Donovan to represent the interests of the American press, the *More* authors say, is equivalent to the *New York Times* hiring former CIA director Richard Helms to investigate torture in Iran.

Despite numerous doubts and inconsistencies raised during the trial, Donovan reported back to the committee that "the evidence which caused the conviction of Stactopoulos would have led an American jury to a similar conclusion."

The Lippmann committee asked Harvard Law Professor E. M. Morgan, the country's leading authority on the law of evidence, to review Stactopoulos's several confessions.

Morgan reported back to the committee after reading the transcripts: "If they [the confessions] are to be used as evidence of guilt of the persons named therein, and

particularly of Vasvanas and Mouzenides, they are in my opinion so inherently weak as to be practically worthless unless they are corroborated by other credible evidence."

There was no other evidence, but the Lippmann committee went along with Donovan's conclusion that the accused had received a fair trial.

The CIA and State Department did their part to block a thorough inquiry into the killing by "officially" discouraging anyone who might be inclined to pursue an honest investigation. Roubatis and Vlanton present the case of Lt. Col. James Kellis as especially revealing.

Kellis was "loaned" to the Lippmann committee by the Air Force to serve as its assistant counsel. An American citizen of Greek descent, he had served under Donovan in the OSS and spent a year in Greece during the war working with the anti-Nazi resistance movement in the north.

Kellis had initially accepted the police theory that Polk had been killed by Communists. After investigating for several weeks, however, he found most leads pointing in the direction of the right.

Especially intriguing to Kellis was evidence that a British intelligence agent in Salonika had been the assassin.

After learning that Kellis had developed doubts about the Communist theory, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires in Greece Karl Rankin wrote to Secretary of State George Marshall: "Embassy believes sooner Kellis removed from scene the better." Within a few days the Air Force reassigned Kellis to another post. His leads were not pursued by Donovan.

Who did murder George Polk? "We have no facts to prove who did kill Polk," said Stelios Papatthemelis, a member of Parliament who is acting as Stactopoulos's attorney. "What we hope to do is prove to the Americans that Stactopoulos did not kill him. Then the Americans themselves will open their own secret files and tell us the answers on who did kill him."

Stactopoulos has indicated he will file a formal appeal for a new trial this summer.

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# AROUND THE WORLD



## Vorster Regime Exiles Winnie Mandela



WINNIE MANDELA

Winnie Mandela, a prominent Black opponent of the South African regime, was exiled by the racist Vorster government to a remote part of the country May 16. She is a leader of the Black Parents Association, which was formed during the mass protests against the regime last year, as well as of the Black Women's Federation. Her husband, African nationalist leader Nelson Mandela, is currently serving a life sentence on Robben Island.

A squad of police arrived at her home in the Black township of Soweto at dawn on May 16 and loaded her furniture and possessions into a truck. She and one of her children were taken 200 miles away to a Black township near the small town of Brandfort in the Orange Free State. Brandfort is far from the major urban areas, which are the main centers of Black political activity.

Winnie Mandela was jailed for nineteen months in 1969-70 before being acquitted on charges of "subversive" activities. She was arrested again in August 1976 during the mass Black upsurge and held for four

months. After being released, she was "banned" for five years, a form of house arrest that bars virtually all political activity. Although about 150 persons are under banning orders at present, it is relatively unusual for someone to be banished to a remote part of the country.

Winnie Mandela's new "home" consists of a three-room house with no electricity, no running water, and no stove.

An editorial in the May 19 *Rand Daily Mail* denounced the banishment, declaring, "The ugly thing done to Mrs. Mandela is devastating to her and to South Africa."

Minister of Justice, Police, and Prisons James T. Kruger refused to discuss the reasons for her exile, but claimed that it had nothing to do with the possible visit to Soweto by Andrew Young, the U.S. representative to the United Nations.

### Head of CIA "Operation Chaos" Starts Fund for Indicted Agents

James Angleton, former CIA "counterintelligence" chief, has joined with other spy boosters to raise defense funds for "intelligence" operators who are investigated or indicted for illegal activities.

Angleton was forced to resign from the agency in 1974 after revelations that the CIA carried out illegal domestic spying under the code name "Operation Chaos," part of it under his direction.

At a May 11 meeting with reporters, Angleton alluded to recent statements by Attorney General Griffin Bell that the government ought to, but will not, pay the legal fees of FBI agents indicted for break-ins, wiretaps, mail tampering and other illegal activities.

Others involved in the fund-raising effort are former Vietnam envoy Elbridge Durbrow and a number of high-ranking former military officials who belong to the American Security Council, a Pentagon-oriented, anticommunist organization.

### Swiss Voters to Decide on Abortion

Swiss voters will go to the polls this September to decide whether to lift the country's ban on abortion, according to a report by Victor Lusinchi in the May 6 *New York Times*.

The Swiss Union for the Decriminalization of Abortions has gathered 50,000 signatures to force a referendum on its

proposal that women should have the right to choose an abortion within the first three months of pregnancy.

A representative of the proabortion group, Simone Hauert, said the group had decided to organize the referendum after rejecting a government proposal for a "liberalized" abortion law that would still force women to ask state permission before obtaining an abortion.

Lusinchi also reported that an attempt by the Swiss Parliament to soften the impact of the referendum failed May 5 after legislators were unable to agree on a substitute proposal. Under the Swiss system, the government can offer its own proposal to Parliament, then place it on the ballot next to that of the citizen-sponsored referendum.

In this instance, however, the Swiss Parliament, deeply divided over the abortion issue, was unable to agree on the original government bill or any alternative.

### Protests Banned in Brazil

Brazil's minister of justice, Armando Falcão, has ordered all state governments to ban any new demonstrations or marches, according to a May 11 UPI dispatch. The action came in the wake of student protests in half a dozen cities, including a march of 10,000 in São Paulo May 6.

Falcão's order was issued on the eve of a demonstration by students in Rio de Janeiro, who had planned to gather at Catholic University to protest the April 20 arrest of eight workers and students for distributing political literature.

### Peres Hints Israel Has A-Bomb

Acting Prime Minister Shimon Peres lent credibility May 15 to persistent speculation that Israel has secretly produced atomic weapons.

Peres, facing his major opponent, Menachem Begin, in a nationally televised election-eve debate, said: "We have our own airplane, our own tank, our own missile boats and we also have something in Dimona."

Dimona is the site of Israel's top-secret "experimental" nuclear reactor in the Negev Desert.

# Selections From the Left

## Y FANER

*"The Banner," Welsh-language weekly magazine, published in Bala, Wales.*

The April 22 issue features an article on the political situation in Cornwall, an old Celtic area incorporated into England as a county. As in the other areas of the British Isles that have maintained a Celtic culture into modern times, a nationalist movement has arisen in Cornwall, although it is much weaker and more recent in origin than the movements in Wales and Scotland.

The title of the article is "England's Oldest Colony." The author, Tim Saunders, who apparently favors the Communist party, describes the state of the left in Cornwall as follows:

"The Labour party has its little strongholds in the industrial areas, but these are continuing to decay, and not many of the leaders in Cornwall have had the capacity or the will to draw up a strategy to meet the objective needs of the working class. The only glimmer of work is the public opposition to the celebrations sponsored by the Queen of England, which gives an opportunity to currents such as that of Bruce Tidy . . . to call for a thorough study of the history of the Cornish proletariat, to determine what should be done.

"The revolutionary left is very small and most of its members work in the shadows to avoid being persecuted. The right has such a tight hold on the democratic institutions that the left has to abandon any hope of working in the establishment. The Communists are the revolutionary party with the most consistent tradition in Cornwall. Their program calls for democratic councils of socialists and nationalists for the workers of Cornwall, to lead their nation in the struggle to defend its economy and industry against the greed and destruction of the capitalists. Recently, the International Socialists have formed branches in Cornwall, and they are very uncertain about the national question. We will have to wait a while to see what road they take.

"Despite the scandals they have created occasionally by their campaigns against summer houses, laboratories that breed diseases, and other such things, the influence of the anarchists has been only fleeting. And they have lost some of their most faithful members to the chronic sickness of Cornwall, emigration. One of the newest branches of the left is the People's Socialist party of Cornwall, which was established by a group of students who have returned to the country. They tend to be anarchist-minded."

After surveying the political and cultural

nationalist movements, the author concludes:

"Perhaps it is too late for us, but if the Cornish nation perishes, it will not go to its death without an honorable fight. Since the socialist pretenses of the Labour party and the minimal nationalism of the Mebyon Kernow [a bourgeois group] are so feeble, there is an opportunity to form a broad movement that can win freedom for the people of Cornwall after centuries of oppression. Don't forget about the smallest nation on this island in the coming period."



PAISLEY: Fails in 'general strike' ploy.

## An Phoblacht

*"The Republic," weekly newspaper reflecting the views of the Provisional republican movement. Published in Dublin.*

The May 18 issue comments on the failure of the Loyalist general strike in Northern Ireland led by Ian Paisley:

". . . in many Paisley-controlled areas,

the strike appears to have succeeded rather better than the newspapers, radio and television would have people believe. Indeed, the manipulation of the media was the main feature of the strike, in the Crown's interest.

"A secondary outstanding characteristic of the strike was the exercise of the traditional gentility with which the Crown deals with loyalist 'subversives.' Even when, for show purposes, a few individuals were brought before courts, their breaking of the law proved to judges and convicted, their sentences were suspended.

"One of these persons was convicted of having put broken glass and nails on the public roadway. If he had been a Republican, according to tradition, he would have been sentenced to at least six months in jail. The sentence would not have been suspended! . . .

"The strike, from the moment it began, never appeared to be a serious confrontation with the Crown but, right up to the end, many elements were left in doubt.

"For this reason, over wide areas, the U.D.R. [Ulster Defence Regiment] and the R.U.C. [Royal Ulster Constabulary] wavered and floundered on the sidelines, acting decisively only when definite, unambiguous orders were given to intervene.

"Illegal roadblocks were set up and not interfered with in many rural areas. Farm machinery also caused widespread obstruction—in counties Antrim and Tyrone, for example—and was not interfered with nor its leaders challenged, never mind prosecuted.

"From all over the rural areas R.U.C. fraternisation with the strikers was reported to us and, presumably, to the other media, though unpublicised by the daily press and TV. . . .

"But the strike has failed even though it continues.

"How far Paisley has suffered will not be known, perhaps, until the local government elections in the Six Counties [Northern Ireland] later this month.

"The paramilitary groups supporting Paisley also have suffered considerably.

"The failure of the Paisley strike must disillusion many of the supporters of the paramilitary groups and weaken them, to the advantage of the professional, puppet politicians.

"Working-class people, regardless of brain-washing and manipulation, are not fools. The time has come when they realise that the paramilitary leaders lack guts, lack the will to win, have no stomach for the ultimate confrontation with the Crown, and are like putty in the hands of opportunists, such as Paisley."

# young socialist

Monthly newspaper reflecting the views of the Young Socialist Alliance. Published in New York.

An article by Holly Harkness in the May issue describes the crusade against gay rights being waged in Miami by singer Anita Bryant. In January, Miami became the first southern city to pass an ordinance prohibiting discrimination based on "affectional or sexual preferences" in "employment, housing, and public accommodations." Harkness describes the reaction:

"Following the passage of the ordinance, Bryant and her group, Save Our Children, Inc., spearheaded a drive to overturn the ordinance. They filed a court suit, which recently failed. . . .

"Bryant and her antigay bigots also collected more than 64,000 signatures to force a countywide referendum, tentatively scheduled for June 7.

"Bryant claims that gays are 'not a legitimate minority.' On ABC's 'Good Morning America' show she compared homosexuals with 'fat people' and 'people who bite their nails.' She added that gays already have 'the best jobs and best housing.' . . .

"One of the most commonly used scare tactics is to imply that gays have some sinister influence over children. Bryant puts it this way: 'As a mother I know that homosexuals cannot biologically reproduce children, therefore they have to recruit our children.'

"Gays should be barred from teaching, Bryant claims, because they will 'recruit' young students."

Harkness reports that gay rights activists have formed the Coalition for Humanistic Rights of Gays to counter the vicious lies Bryant and her cohorts are spreading. The coalition has also correctly identified the Miami antigay crusade as part of a broader national effort, she says.

"Gay rights activists around the country are attempting to gain support for the National Gay Rights Bill, which would make it a federal crime to discriminate against gay people. Anita Bryant and Save Our Children plan to get involved in fighting this piece of legislation as well."

## labor Challenge

Fortnightly newspaper published in Toronto, Canada.

Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's unprecedented shopping spree for military equipment has sent Canadian war industries into ecstasy, Howard Brown reports in the May 9 issue.

"In accordance with its long-term defense-spending strategy, plotted in late 1975, the Trudeau government is commit-



BRYANT: Finds bigotry the best life style.

ted to jack up expenditure on military hardware by 12 percent a year. . . .

"In a twenty-page special report, deliciously titled 'What Canada's new Defense policy means for business,' and replete with advertisements from the 'defense' industry, the *Financial Post* hailed the new opportunities for profit making.

"The enormous scale of expenditures now planned . . . will hit Canada's taxpayers like a thunderclap,' the Bay Street weekly editorialized. But, more to the point, 'This could give some Canadian plants and their supplier industries an enormous boost.'"

Brown lists some of the more expensive items Trudeau is buying for the country's generals:

- Purchased already are eighteen long-range patrol aircraft—price tag: \$1 billion—from scandal-ridden Lockheed Corp.

- On order are 128 Leopard tanks from West Germany, priced at \$200 million. . . . Canadian industrialists can expect to take in at least \$30 million in reciprocal orders.

- More than \$174 million is being spent on 350 Swiss armored cars, to be built under license by General Motors of Canada's diesel division at London, Ont. . . .

- Ottawa is shopping for 130 to 150 new super fighters. Likely to cost at least \$2.5 billion, this purchase will be the biggest single order in Canada's war-spending history. . . .

The government is also poised to spend \$3.5 billion on new warships and tens of millions on new air and ground-based radar systems.

Brown reports that much of the new

equipment is destined for use by Canada's NATO forces in Europe. Other items, however, might find a use closer to home.

"The armored-car purchase, especially, has raised suspicions that Québec was in Ottawa's mind when it drew up its equipment orders. Former Tory defense critic Michael Forrestall, for example, has charged that Ottawa had only one reason for its 'lightning speed' purchase of the vehicles: 'Québec and the violence that can surround the push for separation.'"

## rood

"Red," Flemish weekly paper of the Revolutionary Workers League, Belgian section of the Fourth International.

The lead story in the May 13 issue is on unemployment. It contains some interesting figures:

More than 321,000 persons are entirely or partially unemployed [the population of Belgium is about 9,900,000]. And in September, tens of thousands of youth will rejoin the ranks of the unemployed. This is the hard reality for 10 percent of the working class. Only a sharp cut in the workweek and structural reforms can help eliminate this evil.

The National Bureau of Labor published the most recent statistics. On April 30, 252,600 persons were entirely unemployed. Of these, 18,264 were recent graduates. In all, 84,158 persons under the age of twenty-five are unemployed. These figures represent an increase of 32,435 over last year, despite all the so-called recovery plans!

Women have suffered most from unemployment. About 17.2% of the female workforce is unemployed. The figure for men is 5.7%. The overall percentage of unemployed is 9.5%.

However, to these figures we have to add the other persons seeking work, who are registered with the National Labor Bureau but are not entitled to collect unemployment insurance. That comes to 43,893 persons. And if we include the 68,545 partially unemployed, we get the phenomenal figure of 365,038! And this does not include the 12,392 trainees getting reduced wages.

Another impressive fact is the number of business failures last year. In 1973, the onset of the crisis was marked by 1,729 bankruptcies. In 1974, there were 1,714; in 1975, 2,700; and in 1976, 2,451.

These figures make it abundantly clear that the capitalist system is in a deep crisis, and that this situation cannot be changed simply by the "classical" measures.

Only resolute resistance by the working class, relying on its own strength, can protect the workers. Only the immediate introduction of a thirty-six-hour workweek without a cut in pay and the hiring of 10% more workers can eliminate unemployment. Only fundamentally anticapitalist reforms can stop the closing of thousands of factories in the outmoded Belgian economy. Only a government without capitalist ministers based on the mobilized working class can carry out a policy in the interests of the majority of the population of this country.

In this perspective, the May 14 demonstration against unemployment is a step forward. It is a step beyond isolated struggles.

# Capitalism Fouls Things Up



## Fight Against Seabrook A-Plant Continues

Protests against the 2,300-megawatt nuclear power station planned for the coastal town of Seabrook, New Hampshire, have continued since the release of activists arrested May 1-2 for occupying the plant's construction site. Four hundred persons rallied in Boston May 15 to celebrate the victory, and to demand an end to the continued prosecution of the protesters by the State of New Hampshire.

Ecologist Barry Commoner was a featured speaker at this event. Diane Jacobs, Socialist Workers party candidate for Boston City Council, also addressed the crowd.

Opposition to the Seabrook development was carried to Jimmy Carter's front door May 18, when a number of antinuclear protesters were arrested following a brief sit-in on the White House lawn.

Aside from the overall dangers of atomic radiation, the Seabrook plant's opponents have centered much of their fire on the plant's cooling system.

According to the Public Service Company's original plans, keeping the reactors from overheating will require a constant

and massive flow of sea water through giant tunnels that will extend several thousand feet into the ocean. Water will be pumped through at a rate of 750,000 gallons a minute, returning to the sea thirty-nine degrees Fahrenheit (22° Celsius) hotter than the surrounding coastal waters.

The effects of such a cooling system on marine life are described in a fact sheet distributed by the Clamshell Alliance, the group that is organizing opposition to the Seabrook reactors:

Clam, lobster and fish larvae would be killed when caught on the intake tunnel's screen. The heated water would force some types of fish to leave the area (a rich fishing bank), but would attract other species. When [the reactors] are shut down, fish attracted to the warmer waters die of cold shock from the temperature change. Kills of hundreds of thousands of fish due to cold shock have been reported at other coastal nuclear plants.

Such thermal pollution by atomic and conventional electric generating plants is prohibited by government regulations. But a loophole exists whereby the Environmen-

tal Protection Agency may grant exemptions—which the agency has regularly done. In fact, some 1,200 coastal cooling systems now operate under EPA exemption. And 300 more applications for such permits are currently being considered by the agency.

An exemption was routinely granted in the case of the Seabrook plant as well. But, for the first time in such a case, a regional EPA official withdrew the exemption last November after hearing objections by fishermen and environmentalists. Now EPA head Douglas Costle must make a decision on whether or not to uphold the regional decision.

His action will affect not only the 300 pending applications for exemptions but the 1,200 operating plants as well, since their permits must be reviewed by the EPA every five years.

Sensing the implications, the editors of the *Wall Street Journal* warned May 4 under the title "The Clamshell Test":

... energy will not flow in this country unless the legal procedures covering nuclear power . . . are changed to give due weight to environmental considerations, but not endless opportunities for militant minorities to frustrate national policy and majority will. Mr. Costle's decision on Seabrook will be the first test of whether the Carter administration has the courage to tackle this task.

But Costle may be forced to make a concession to the rise in antinuclear sentiment that was dramatized by the thousands who protested the Seabrook plant April 30-May 1 (see *Intercontinental Press*, May 9, p. 527). If he orders the once-through cooling system scrapped, the Public Service Company's only alternative would be to construct huge cooling towers at the site. Such a system has already been rejected once by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, although further hearings are set for May 23. EPA officials have pointed out that cooling towers would create a constant salt-laden fog in the area that would be harmful to plant life and create traffic hazards on a nearby expressway.

Opponents of the Seabrook plant are now organizing defense activities for the 1,414 persons that were arrested following the occupation of the construction site



Oliphant/Washington Star

April 30. All are appealing their convictions on trespassing charges by New Hampshire district courts. Local conferences of antinuclear activists, sponsored by the Clamshell Alliance, will be held throughout New England during the next few months to decide further steps in the Seabrook fight.

Meanwhile, New Hampshire Governor Meldrim Thomson has proposed putting some teeth into Jimmy Carter's energy program: "If President Carter meant what he said about cutting red tape in the building of nuclear plants, then Congress should look into a law making it a federal offense to do this kind of thing," Thomson said, referring to the Seabrook occupation.

### Narrow Escape for Mexican Patients

In order to get around a government prohibition on testing questionable substances on American citizens, officials of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency proposed in 1975 that Mexicans be used instead.

EPA researchers were studying a fungicide called EBDC that had already been shown to produce cancer in animals. When they wanted to determine the effect of massive doses of the substance on the human thyroid, EPA official Leonard Axelrod proposed paying \$100,000 to the Hospital de Gineco-Obstétrica to feed it to Mexican patients.

Edwin Johnson, one of Axelrod's superiors, vetoed this idea . . . but only after checking with an agency attorney and learning that the contract was fashioned in a way that required review by a broader number of officials than is usually the case.

### Progress on the Parramatta

"For too long we have considered the Parramatta River to be little more than an industrial utility; hardly more in fact than a drain. People who live and work nearby have little access to its shores, and it remains hidden and ignored: the dead centre of Sydney." This was the conclusion of a report released in September 1976 by the National Trust of Australia on the "degraded condition" of the Parramatta.

But great progress has been made recently toward restoring this river, which runs through Sydney. The New South Wales Pollution Control Commission established pollution checkpoints and took action against polluters. Mary Rabbone reports on the river's present condition in the May 12 issue of the Australian socialist weekly *Direct Action*:

"Less than three years ago, levels of dissolved oxygen, which marine life breathes, were often recorded at zero and were rarely up to 60 per cent. Today dissolved oxygen averages around 100 per cent. And as a result the fish have come back, followed by the birds. By the end of last year, 33 species of fish, many of them

absent from the river for decades, were found to be back in the Parramatta River. Pelicans, spoonbills, cormorants, wild duck, and seagulls can be seen any day now competing for fish catches.

"And people have started swimming in the river once again.

"This experience," Rabbone concludes, "shows that pollution can be beaten; but only if popular demand can force governments and corporate polluters to halt their degradation of the environment."

### Dam Safety Ignored, Report Says

The Teton Dam in the state of Idaho collapsed last June 5, killing eleven persons and doing some \$500 million in damages to livestock and property.

A report by the U.S. Department of the Interior on the dam's collapse was issued in early May. Investigators said engineers who designed the dam ignored safety measures that could have prevented the disaster. Designers had recommended only a thin mortar that wasn't enough to protect against cracks occurring in the dam's embankment or against erosion of the earthen core.

### Moscow Confident of Nuclear Safety

Nuclear experts from the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries attending the international nuclear power conference in Salzburg in early May submitted a paper outlining their views on the future of atomic energy. Paul Hofmann reported some of the paper's contents in the May 10 *New York Times*.

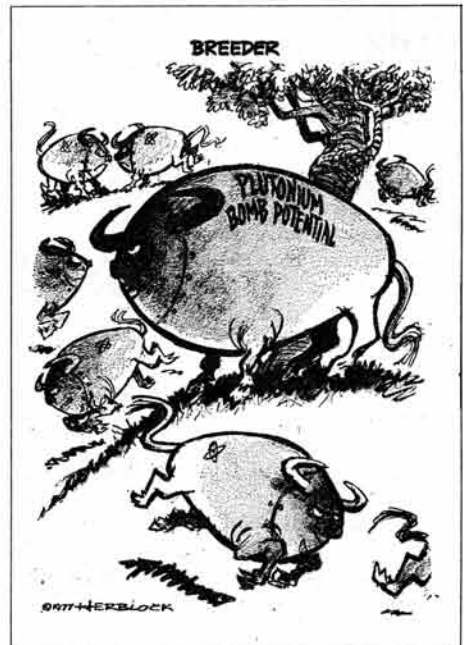
The East European experts are convinced that nuclear plants "contribute to the environmental improvement," it says. "Even now the actual data indicate a high degree of nuclear power plants' safety, their favorable impact on environmental purity. . . ."

"There has been no increase in the levels of radioactivity observed either in the immediate environment of nuclear facilities or in the world in general. It is proved, in particular, by the systematic monitoring of radiation safety carried out . . . in the basins of the Danube River, Black and Baltic seas."

The report was also enthusiastic about plutonium-producing fast breeder reactors. "One of the most effective means of solving the fuel problem of nuclear power engineering is through wide-scale utilization of fast breeders." The paper projects that by the year 2000 "the share of fast breeders . . . could reach 50 percent."

Regarding the disposal of nuclear waste, the report said: "It can be concluded from the research conducted in connection with plans for the burial of radioactive waste of all kinds in geological formations that the technical foundations for such burial underground are now established."

In an earlier report on the Soviet nuclear



Herblock/Washington Post

industry, Hofmann noted: "Unlike the West, the Eastern European nations have no powerful antinuclear lobbies to contend with in making their plans for alternative energy sources."

### Bonn Puts Brakes on Breeder

Faced with mounting opposition to nuclear power that has spread into the ruling Social Democratic party itself, the West German government announced a freeze on breeder-reactor research May 11. Breeders produce more plutonium fuel than they consume and are considered key to long-term reliance on atomic energy.

The move represented an abrupt policy reversal, since a research budget including \$96 million for breeder development had been approved on April 27. On April 26 Chancellor Helmut Schmidt had said his government considered the export of nuclear reactors the major future industry of Germany. Reactors would be sold to "any country that wants one or more than one," Schmidt said, according to an April 27 Associated Press dispatch.

Although government spokesmen denied it, the immediate reason for the breeder research freeze was no doubt a threat by Social Democratic members of parliament from Schleswig-Holstein to vote against the government's entire budget if the breeder funds were not deleted. Since Schmidt's ruling coalition enjoys only a five-vote majority, this could have brought down the government.

Brokdorf, a reactor site in Schleswig-Holstein, has been the scene of mass demonstrations of 50,000 to 60,000 persons opposing nuclear power (see *Intercontinental Press*, March 14, p. 274).

# FROM OUR READERS

A reader in Jordan writes:

"Enclosed is an Arabic translation from the August 2, 1976 *IP* of your translation of Israel Shahak's article, 'Israel—A Racist State Founded by a Racist Movement.' It appeared on the center pages of the Amman daily, *al-Dustour*, in its issues of March 21 and 22, 1977.

"Intercontinental Press really does get around! Although *al-Dustour* cites the source correctly as Intercontinental Press in Arabic phonetics, their Arabic translation of the title of your wonderful magazine is most majestic: The International Press Agency. Perhaps the day is not far away when *IP* will indeed become one of the great press agencies of the world."

"I found your publication through Pathfinder [Press] and am very impressed with it," writes J.L., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

"I am a student specializing on Iranian history and economics and spent several years in Iran. . . .

"Having established ties with the main opposition groups in this country, I'm trying to help them publicize their fate by writing a series of articles on Iran. For this reason all past issues of your fine publication containing articles on Iran would be most useful."

A friend of Intercontinental Press in San Francisco, upon renewing her subscription after a lapse of two years, wrote us:

"It looks very good and I really like the feature 'Selections From the Left,' with the individual mastheads.

"It feels good to keep up with the international news again, as only *IP* can report it."

In response to our No. 1 renewal notice headed "Frankly," we told our research department, "we're worried. Won't people think it's a countdown?" M.L., San Francisco, said:

"Well, you can tell your research department that it worked. The countdown was suspenseful and you did not co-opt and do any razzle dazzle 'Mad. Ave. trip'—your magazine is worth every penny. In fact, instead of renewing for just six months I am renewing for a whole year."

Requests for sample copies or back issues indicate a wide interest in what's going on in the world.

L.H.S. of Riegelsville, Pennsylvania, asks for a sample copy, explaining: "I am very interested in learning more about the freedom struggle in Africa. . . . I particularly want to hear more than one side of the issues as I would like to help all people gain their freedom."

T.Y., Lakewood, Ohio, sent for the back issues in which George Novack's articles "In Defense of Engels" and "My Philosophical Itinerary" appeared.

D.H., Cleveland, Ohio, sent this note with his renewal subscription:

"Please include any issues I missed due to lateness. . . . I'd hate to miss any of Harsch's series on U.S. corporate domination & exploitation in South Africa."

M.B., Nova Scotia, writes: "Please send me a copy of the collection of articles in defense [of] Hansen and Novack [against Healy's slander attack]."

When we read the following letter in the May 9 issue of *Labor Challenge*, a revolutionary-socialist fortnightly published in Toronto, Ontario, we thought our readers would like to know that we're not the only country having problems with the Postal Service. An editorial note reported that the letter was hand delivered:

I was wondering why my copy of *Labor Challenge* always arrives late, sometimes up to two weeks after the issue date. After all, I live in the same city where the paper is produced and mailed.

But an article in the *Globe and Mail* the other day suggested a possible reason. It seems that since January the Post Office has been sending all mail posted in Toronto to a central sorting depot in Mississauga, a township outside the city. This means that mail posted in Metropolitan Toronto for delivery in Metro is sent out of town before returning to be delivered. "At present," the *Globe* said, "national mail leaving Metro is having smaller delays than Metro to Metro mail."

OK, I thought, I'll ask *Labor Challenge* to put me on the special delivery list. The extra sixty cents per issue will still be cheaper than a trip downtown every two weeks to pick up my copy.

But another report in the *Globe* scotched that idea. It said that special delivery within Metro can take four days or more—they go through the Mississauga station, too. A postal official said they are getting about 1,300 complaints daily from the public.

But what really got to me was a report in the papers a few days later that the new automated letter-sorting machinery at Mississauga is chewing up hundreds of letters—an official said the average is 500 a day! The new machinery moves the letters so fast, he said, that they can either get mangled or explode if an air pocket develops inside the envelope.

The official saw cause for optimism: he said the amount of destroyed mail is going up, "but that's only because of the increase in volume. On a percentage basis, it's going down."

If this keeps up, maybe they should begin treating the postal system like a lottery—and give prizes for those who get delivery.

It won't make Jim Fralick of Toronto, author of the above letter, feel any better



Herblock/Washington Post

about the state of the Postal Service in Canada, but things aren't going so great here either. Not only is our mail mangled, but delivery goes like cold molasses.

In addition, a Postal Service study has concluded, according to Walter S. Mossberg of *The Wall Street Journal* May 9, "that without hurting service the debt-ridden agency could close 57% of the nation's post offices, all in small towns. . . ." This would mean "abandoning 17,000 of the 30,000 U.S. post offices. . . ."

On top of that, the "United States Postal Service began preparing a request today [May 6] for a rate increase to 16 cents for a first-class letter and a cutback to five days of mail deliveries a week. . . ." according to Ernest Holsendolph in the *New York Times*.

Most telling of all is the opinion of the Commission on Postal Service itself as reported by Herb Block in his cartoon. □

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