

Intercontinental Press

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MARIO SOARES: SP leader forms caretaker government in Portugal.

Soares Comes to the End of the Rope

Political Legacy of Seamus Costello
Election Platform of the French LCR
Why Sadat's Trip Won't Bring Peace
New 'Minimum Program' of Italian CP

1977

NEWS ANALYSIS

Soares Comes to the End of the Rope

By Gerry Foley

The Portuguese Socialist Party government headed by Mário Soares was defeated December 8 on a vote of no confidence. The premier remains in office as the head of a caretaker regime directly dependent on the authority of the president, General António Ramalho Eanes.

All of the other parties in the Assembly of the Republic voted against the SP government. The vote of confidence was forced by the two bourgeois parties, the Centro Democrático Social (CDS—Social Democratic Center) and the Partido Social Democrata (PSD—Social Democratic Party). They refused to accept the continuation of a government based on the SP plurality in the assembly.

Only the Communist Party vote was in question. Up until the no-confidence motion was put to the assembly, CP leaders had left open the possibility that they might come to Soares's rescue.

The premier himself expressed contradictory views about accepting CP support. In an interview broadcast over Europe-1 in late November, he said that a government based on the CP-SP majority in the assembly would threaten to provoke a right-wing coup.

In a news conference December 1, Soares said that he would accept CP votes to prolong the life of his government. He defended this decision by saying that the SP was opposed to any attempt to exclude the CP from political life and that its votes were "as good as anybody else's."

In an editorial December 12, the *New York Times* expressed some uneasiness that the fall of the SP government could lead to polarization. It attributed Soares's defeat to factionalism.

The Socialists, though the largest bloc in Parliament, lack a majority. So he looked to two parties on his right and one on his left. They accepted the idea of austerity but let partisan differences block agreement.

The fact is that polarization is an inevit-

able result of the continuing economic crisis in Portugal. It is hardly likely, moreover, that the U.S.-backed International Monetary Fund did not know that it was going to heighten polarization in Portugal when it presented Soares with an ultimatum in October demanding a sharp step-up in austerity.

The real concern of the American capitalists is undoubtedly not about polarization as such. It is probably worried that the Portuguese right may try to move too quickly. It has proven itself dangerously hasty in the past, as in the case of the abortive coups in September 1974 and March 1975. Furthermore, the situation is certain to turn uglier in Portugal and the voice of "liberal" U.S. imperialism wants to make it known in advance that it was not objectively impossible to continue a "middle of the road" policy.

The fact is, however, that the Soares leadership of the SP has worn itself out trying to balance between the demands of the workers and the bourgeoisie.

At the end of September, António Lopes Cardoso, the left face of the Soares leadership in 1974 and 1975, described the political situation in the following terms in an interview published in the October 10 issue of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*:

It is an undeniable fact that the petty-bourgeoisie, a section of the middle bourgeoisie, and even a certain section of the working class in the North are beginning to ask what April 25 and "socialism with freedom" has done for them. . . . This is because a theoretically socialist government and democracy have been associated with economic decline.

In this situation, the SP was disintegrating:

For months we excluded the possibility of splitting. Today we have changed our attitude. This is primarily because every day it is more and more confirmed that there is nothing that

can be done in the SP. The rank and file have walked out of the party. We have striven for months to keep members from leaving the party, but in vain. They are quietly walking out and falling into inactivity. What remains in the party is the apparatus and recipients of political favors.

Lopes Cardoso expressed his fear that the openly rightist policy of the SP government was opening up a "political vacuum." After he left the party in early November, he said:

Today we are in a climate where despair and disenchantment are growing every day, where people don't give a damn. For the moment, people accept things in a more or less passive manner. But if ever it starts to burn, it will take unbelievable dimensions.

At the same time, the bourgeois parties have insisted more and more that the economic "day of reckoning," that is, an all-out attack on the workers, cannot be put off much longer.

One of the major bourgeois parliamentary figures, Francisco Sá Carneiro of the PSD, has gone on a campaign to demonstrate to the military and to Washington that Portuguese capital is going to accept much less in the way of compromises with the workers in the future. Aggressive right-wing demonstrations have resumed in the main Portuguese cities, although working-class demonstrations have been much bigger.

During a November 19 rightist demonstration in Oporto, a mob of several hundred rightists and fascists attacked the headquarters of the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI—Internationalist Communist League, sympathizing organization of the Fourth International). The facilities were wrecked and some LCI activists were injured, including Political Committee member António Brandão.

Sharpening class confrontations are on the agenda. Politically, the masses are still being held back by the SP and CP, which place their confidence in military bonapartes at the very time when the bourgeoisie is demanding that the military defend its interests uncompromisingly. But over the past three years the workers have shown that they want their parties to defend their interests and not to subordinate themselves to any military arbiter. □

Schedule

This is a reminder that our last issue of the year will be dated December 26. It will contain our index for 1977. There will be no issue for January 2. We will resume our regular weekly schedule with the January 9 issue.

Young Picks Up Bludgeon Against Cuba

By Ernest Harsch

Following the lead set by his boss, President Carter, Andrew Young has unleashed a series of strident denunciations of the Cuban involvement in Africa. Three times within one week, the self-proclaimed "point man" of the Carter administration took Castro to task for not heeding previous White House warnings.

Speaking at the United Nations December 6, Young tried to tag the responsibility for the repressive policies of some African states on the Cubans. "What we are finding," he said, "is that the Cuban military presence ends up becoming associated with the purging of some of the better trained and more skilled people in

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Africa." He cited a number of countries in Africa where he said the Cuban "military role seems to be to support a repressive regime that maintains power by killing off the opposition."

Speaking two days earlier on the CBS radio and television program "Face the Nation," Young charged that the Cuban role in Africa was "a kind of new colonialism" that contributed to "the destruction and chaos of Africa."

Coming from a chief spokesman of American imperialism, nothing could be more hypocritical.

Does Young really expect the African masses to believe that Cuban assistance to some African regimes represents a "new colonialism," when it is American, British, French, South African, and other imperialist companies that are plundering Africa's wealth and blocking its industrial development?

Does he really expect them to swallow the charge that the Cuban presence is responsible for "the destruction and chaos of Africa," when it was Washington that supplied arms to the Portuguese colonialists and backed the South African military intervention in Angola?

Does he expect them to believe that the blame for the repressive policies of a number of African states rests with Havana, when it is American imperialism that helps to prop up dozens of repressive capitalist regimes on that continent, ranging from Mobutu's Zaire to Vorster's South Africa?

Young himself acknowledged the Carter administration's real attitude toward colonialism and repression in Africa on that very same CBS program. He told his interviewers that he would not recommend any new measures against the white supremacist regime in South Africa.

Coming just after an official inquest in Pretoria absolved the police of any blame in the murder of the young Black leader Steve Biko and at a time of increased repression against Black activists in general, Young's remarks can only be interpreted by the Vorster regime as a tacit seal of approval.

Castro responded to the White House attacks December 6. Defending his government's sovereignty, including the right to conduct its own foreign policy, he said, "If the issue of Cuban-American relations is placed in the context of Africa, the restoration of relations will not advance. We are not willing to enter into any kind of compromise on that." □

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Why Sadat's Trip Won't Bring Peace to Middle East

By David Frankel

[The following article is scheduled for a future issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist newsweekly published in New York.]

* * *

When Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat returned from his trip to Israel November 21, one overexcited official in Cairo declared: "We can now say that 30 years of hostilities have been eliminated in 30 hours."

Few people would subscribe to such an optimistic evaluation, but it is undeniable that Sadat's trip—his "epic mission," as one prominent reporter called it—raised the hopes of millions around the world that the doorway to peace between the Zionist state and its Arab neighbors had at last been opened.

Unfortunately, Sadat's diplomacy has not brought peace in the Middle East any closer, despite the claims in the capitalist media. To understand why, it is necessary to step back from the day-to-day ducking and weaving of the governments involved in the conflict and to recall the roots of the problem.

An Irrational Conflict?

Among liberal commentators, it is common for the Arab-Israeli conflict to be explained as the product of irrational hatred. This is the essence of the Zionist argument—that the Arabs refused to tolerate the establishment of the Jewish state because of blind prejudice; that they are fanatics, would-be Hitlers whose aim was to exterminate the Jews.

Sadat himself gave a certain amount of support to this argument when he told the Israeli Knesset (parliament) that 70 percent of the problem was due to "a psychological barrier between us, a barrier of suspicion . . . a barrier of illusions. . . ."

But the fact is that there is a rational and understandable basis for the Middle East conflict. The struggle ceases to be a mystery as soon as one realizes that the Zionist movement aspired to establish a Jewish state in a country already inhabited by another people.

At the end of World War I, 90 percent of the population of Palestine was Arab. This Arab population was confronted with a movement of European settlers that supported British colonial rule throughout the 1920s and 1930s, since an independent

Palestine in this period would have put an end to hopes for a Jewish state.

Sir Ronald Storrs, the first civil governor of Jerusalem under the British, expressed in his memoirs the view of an imperial bureaucracy experienced in the tactics of divide-and-rule.

"Enough [Jews] could return," he wrote, "if not to form a Jewish state . . . at least to prove that the enterprise was one which blessed him that gave as well as him that took, by forming for England 'a little loyal Jewish Ulster' in a sea of potentially hostile Arabism."

In addition to confronting the Palestinian Arabs as supporters of British colonialism, the Zionist movement sought to establish domination of the country's economic life at the expense of the majority of the population. In this regard, the Zionists raised three slogans that were central to their movement—"conquest of labor," "the produce of the earth," and "conquest of the land."

Beneath the highflown language, these slogans outlined a policy of hiring only Jewish workers, of boycotting Arab stores and Arab agricultural products, and of buying land from absentee landlords and evicting the Arab peasants who farmed it.

Testimony of a Zionist Leader

An example of how these policies were implemented in practice was given in a speech by David Hacohen quoted in the November 15, 1969, issue of the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*. Hacohen, a member of the Knesset for many years and at that time chairman of its most important committee, defense and foreign affairs, also shed light on the socialist pretensions of many Zionists.

"I remember," he said, "being one of the first of our comrades to go to London after the First World War. . . . When I joined the socialist students—English, Irish, Jewish, Chinese, Indian, African—we found that we were all under English domination or rule. And even here, in these intimate surroundings, I had to fight my friends on the issue of Jewish socialism, to defend the fact that I would not accept Arabs in my trade union, the Histadrut; to defend preaching to housewives that they should not buy at Arab stores; to defend the fact that we stood guard at orchards to prevent Arab workers from getting jobs there. . . . To pour kerosene on Arab tomatoes; to attack Jewish housewives in the markets

and smash the Arab eggs they had bought . . . to do all that was not easy."

From the very beginning, the Zionists confronted the Palestinian Arabs as enemies in their own country. As the Zionists put it, their goal was to set up a state that would be "as Jewish as England is English."

Supporters of Zionism describe the resistance of the Arab majority to this colonial enterprise as "anti-Semitic." By using their logic, the resistance of Blacks to minority rule in South Africa could with equal justice be called "anti-white." It was the reactionary policies of Zionism—not the fact that these policies happened to be carried out by Jews—that provoked the struggle in Palestine.

The Palestinians were willing to live together with the Jewish settlers; they were not willing to have their country taken away from under them. But the Zionists insisted on a Jewish state. As Moshe Dayan explained in a statement quoted in the September 30, 1968, *Jerusalem Post*:

Every solution—including the establishment of a bi-national state—faced the alternative of either making allowances for the views and desires of the Arabs and putting an end to Zionism, or carrying on with immigration, land purchase and settlement while denying the right of the Arabs of Palestine to determine the future of the country."

Palestinian Demands

The Zionists got their way, and the Palestinian Arabs—two-thirds of the population of the country in 1947—were denied the right to determine its future.

In fact, most of them were denied the right to live there at all. In keeping with their demand for a Jewish state, the Zionists expelled some 700,000 Palestinians in the course of establishing the state of Israel.

Understandably enough, the Palestinians have raised a series of demands that would reverse the effects of Zionist oppression. They want compensation for the land and property that were taken from them, the right to return to their former homes, and the establishment of a single Palestinian state in which Arabs and Jews could live together.

These demands would require the elimination of the Zionist state of Israel, and supporters of Israel, headed by the U.S.

government, have tried to portray the Palestinians as irresponsible extremists for raising such an idea.

Nor have the Zionists been alone in this effort. The Stalinist regimes in Moscow and Eastern Europe, which backed the creation of Israel in the first place, continue to support its existence within its pre-1967 borders. Further opposition to the demand for a democratic, secular Palestine comes from almost all of the Arab regimes, which have indicated their willingness to recognize Israel as part of an overall Middle East settlement.

Against such a line-up, and in the context of Sadat's dramatic diplomatic offensive, it is not surprising that the demands of the Palestinians appear utopian to many. But the fact is that the real utopians are those who think the Mideast conflict can be resolved while maintaining the existence of the Zionist state.

The oppression of the Palestinians is not some historical episode that can be shunted aside; it is a continuing, day-to-day reality that defines the nature of Israeli society, and that ultimately determines the relations between Israel and the Arab regimes. And this oppression will continue as long as the state of Israel exists.

Continuing Oppression

An analogy might help to better illustrate why the Palestinian struggle is so central to Israeli society, and therefore to the whole Arab-Israeli conflict. Suppose that the American ruling class had taken the land of the American Indians but failed to exterminate them. Imagine a situation in which roughly 100 million Indians inside the United States, and an equal number in exile in Canada and Mexico, were demanding the return of their land. That is the situation that Israel is in.

Moreover, the expropriation of Arab land and the expulsion of the Arab population is not something that happened in 1948 and then ceased. During and after the June 1967 war, 500,000 Palestinians were driven out of the newly occupied territories by the Israelis.

In March 1976 Palestinians inside the pre-1967 borders of Israel staged a general strike to protest continuing expropriation of Arab land. Six Palestinian protesters were murdered by Israeli troops during these "Day of the Land" demonstrations.

An article in the October 17 issue of *U.S. News & World Report* describes the continuing expropriations in the West Bank. In the case of one settlement south of Hebron, it says, "The Yattir settlers are farming 1,000 acres and want to fence off thousands more for grazing sheep."

The article quotes Edward Dribben, an American who moved to Israel in 1964: "Dribben concedes that there will be trouble with the Arabs. 'We are going to hit

them where it hurts,' he says. 'By fencing the land, we will deny them grazing land for their sheep and take away their livelihood. Hopefully, they will then leave the area.'"



SADAT

While the expropriation and expulsion of the Palestinians is the most glaring example of their oppression, it is by no means the only one. All the forms of racist oppression suffered by Blacks in the United States are also suffered by Palestinians.

In 1970, for example, average per capita income of Arabs inside Israel's pre-1967 borders was only 40 percent that of Jews.

In 1973, while 25 percent of Israel's Arab population lived four or more persons in one room, the corresponding figure for the Jewish population was 1.5 percent.

Figures on the ownership of durable goods by Jews and Arabs are equally revealing. In 1970, 38.1 percent of Jews in Israel had telephones, compared to 3.4 percent of Arabs—a ratio of 11 to 1. That same year, 16.7 percent of Jews had private cars compared to 3.1 percent of Arabs—a ratio of 5 to 1.

Discrimination against the Arab population is so thorough-going that an Arab town like Um el-Fahem, with a population of about 18,000, is officially classified as a village in order to minimize the amount of public money that it is eligible to receive.

Imperialist Outpost

No people on earth could be expected to accept such discrimination in daily life. And experience has shown that the struggle of the Palestinians against Zionist

racism cannot be confined within the borders of Israel, no matter what deals the governments involved may make.

This would be true if only because hundreds of thousands of Palestinians with a direct stake in the struggle have been pushed into Jordan and Lebanon. But that is not the only factor ensuring continuing conflict between the state of Israel and the Arab regimes.

Israel has an imperialist economic structure of its own, and this, along with its entire colonial history, has made it into a military outpost for world imperialism in the Middle East.

Each of the three Arab-Israeli wars fought after the establishment of the Zionist state in 1948 were the direct result of Israeli expansionism, and of Israeli attempts to determine the character of the governments in neighboring Arab states.

In 1956, following the cutoff of U.S. aid to Egypt, the decision of the Nasser regime to turn to the Soviet bloc for arms and economic aid, and Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal, the Israeli army invaded Egypt in conjunction with British and French forces.

This clear-cut war of aggression was followed by a second one in June 1967. At the time, the Zionists used the pretext that the Arab states were preparing a war of extermination against Israel's Jewish population.

But the Israeli general staff knew better. Former Chief of Staff Chaim Bar Lev admitted in an April 18, 1972, interview in the Israeli daily *Ma'ariv*, "No, there was no danger of extermination on the eve of the six-day war. We neither thought nor spoke in those terms."

Former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who served as chief of staff during the 1967 war, later said of Nasser: "The two divisions that he sent into Sinai on May 14 would not have been sufficient to unleash an offensive against Israel. He knew it and we knew it."

However, the Israeli regime, intent on expanding its borders and hoping to provoke the overthrow of the nationalist regimes in Egypt and Syria, unleashed its armies. The October 1973 war, in which the Arab regimes hoped to exert pressure for the return of the territories occupied by Israel in June 1967, was only a continuation of that earlier war.

A Mideast Settlement?

Since the October 1973 war, diplomats, scholars, newspaper commentators, and politicians around the world have been talking at great length about plans for a negotiated settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. How does this talk square with the actual situation?

To begin with, it is absolutely clear that the Israeli ruling class simply does not want any settlement—at least not at the price of withdrawal from the Gaza Strip,

the Golan Heights, and the West Bank.

The Arab rulers are well aware of this problem. They have been begging Washington for years now to put pressure on the Israelis to withdraw from the occupied territories. All to no avail.

The only pressure that the American capitalists have exerted on the Zionists has been in the realm of public relations exercises designed to reassure the Arab rulers and keep them begging. Meanwhile, the billions of dollars in U.S. arms and economic aid keep right on flowing into Israel.

There is *no prospect whatever* of this aid being cut off, and short of that, illusions about American "pressure" on Israel notwithstanding, there is no reason to suppose that the Israelis would agree to withdraw to the 1967 borders.

Talk by imperialist politicians like Jimmy Carter about Palestinian "rights," and even a Palestinian "homeland" in the West Bank is even more transparently insincere than the lip-service they pay to the necessity for Israeli withdrawal from the Arab territories seized in 1967.

Carter himself, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, and former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger have all taken care in the last six months to stress their opposition to any independent Palestinian state in the West Bank. They argue—and they are probably right—that such a state could not be insulated from the struggles of the Palestinians inside Israel and in Lebanon and Jordan.

Behind Sadat's Trip

Despite all the talk about a Mideast deal, the fact of the matter is that both the Israeli and U.S. governments are united in a stance that virtually rules out the type of settlement that the Arab regimes have been talking about. *That was the reason behind Sadat's trip to Israel.*

Faced with a situation in which there was no real motion toward an overall settlement, Sadat decided to open up the possibility of a separate deal. Both Sadat and the Carter administration have protested vigorously that they do not want a separate deal between Cairo and Tel Aviv, but that is what they would say even if such a deal had already been concluded.

If Sadat were to go through with his thinly veiled threat of a separate agreement, the result would hardly lead to peace. On the contrary, a deal with Sadat would greatly strengthen Israel's already dominant military position, and encourage the Zionist rulers to engage in adventures in Lebanon and against Syria. In the long run it would make war more likely.

Furthermore, even if an *overall* settlement could be reached, it would do nothing to end the oppression of the Palestinians. Israel's existence would still be based on the continuation of this oppression, and it would only be a matter of time—and it

would not be decades—before the area exploded again.

In the most basic sense, Sadat's trip to Israel was not a step toward peace because

it was an attempt to evade the issue around which everything else in the Middle East conflict revolves—the fate of the Palestinian people. □

American Farmers Protest in 31 Cities

Angry farmers from Maryland and Virginia drove their tractors and trucks into Washington, D.C. on December 10 to back their demand for higher government subsidies for farm products.

After parking their vehicles along streets leading to the Capitol, the farmers walked to a rally at a nearby amphitheater. The crowd, estimated to number around 700 persons, cheered as one speaker shouted, "We won't buy, we won't sell and we won't produce until we can make a decent living from farming!"

The American Agriculture Movement, the group leading the protests, is calling on farmers to strike beginning December 14, and to refuse to plant corn or buy nonessential goods until their demands are met.

Protests were held the same day in thirty other cities. The largest demonstrations were held in President Carter's home state of Georgia, where 6,000 persons rallied at the state capital.

In Oklahoma City, Agriculture Secretary Bob Bergland was burned in effigy by protesters.

Earlier, Bergland had expressed support for the aims of the strike. In a December 11 television interview, however, he made

it clear that the government would not meet the farmers' demands.

Prices for farm products have fallen steadily in the last two years. Prices for wheat and corn are now below the cost of production.

Meanwhile, food prices in supermarkets continue to spiral upward, and millions around the world continue to go hungry.

An editorial in the December 16 issue of the revolutionary-socialist newsweekly the *Militant* points out:

"The ruling class has always replied to such demands [for increased government subsidies] by attempting to pit workers against farmers. The capitalists claim that high farm prices mean high food prices for consumers.

"But the fact is that only a tiny fraction of the money spent by consumers in supermarkets ever finds its way back to the working farmer. The lion's share goes to the same corporate giants that exploit workers in every arena of the American economy.

"It is in the interest of the labor movement as a whole to support the demands of working farmers and to forge an alliance with them against the capitalist rulers."

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AROUND THE WORLD



Suicide, Motherhood, or Madness

The panel set up by President Carter to dream up alternatives to abortion has been dissolved by its director. In a memorandum to Health, Education and Welfare Secretary Joseph Califano, panel head Connie Downey concluded that the only real alternatives to abortion are "suicide, motherhood and, some would add, madness."

"Consequently," Downey admitted, "there is some confusion, discomfort and cynicism greeting efforts to 'find' or 'emphasize' or 'identify' alternatives to abortion."

The administration suppressed the memo for several weeks until a copy of it was obtained by Associated Press.

Labor Party Trounced

The Liberal Party of Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser won a more than 40-seat edge over the Labor Party in the December 10 elections to the Australian House of Representatives.

With nearly three-quarters of the votes counted, the liberal Party coalition had won at least seventy-two of the 124 House seats, according to a dispatch from Sydney published in the December 11 edition of the *New York Daily News*. The Labor Party had won thirty-two seats.

Former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam promptly announced that he was stepping down as head of the Labor Party.

In the last election, held in December 1975, the Liberal Party coalition won 91 seats in the then 127-seat House, compared to the Labor Party's 36 seats.

Phony 'Independence' for Another Bantustan

A little more than a year after the Transkei was proclaimed a "separate" state against the wishes of its inhabitants, the South African regime has imposed a fraudulent "independence" on a second Bantustan, Bophuthatswana. Designated by the racists as a "homeland" for Tswana-speaking Africans, Bophuthatswana is one of ten similar impoverished reserves.

The Tswanas expressed what they thought about the "independence" scheme during elections in September, when only 13 percent of them even bothered to vote. In the urban areas of "white" South Africa, where about two-thirds of them

actually live, most boycotted the elections as a protest.

Their feelings were voiced by a Tswana journalist at the "independence" ceremonies December 5, who said that he rejected "independence" because "we are South Africans. This land is ours. I don't want to see it broken into bits and pieces that will only turn to islands of poverty."

Bophuthatswana itself is composed of six unconnected fragments, in which only about 700,000 of South Africa's 2.1 million Tswanas live (another 200,000 Africans in Bophuthatswana are of different ethnic groups). For the first year, about 70 percent of the Bophuthatswana administration's budget will be supplied by Pretoria.

By declaring Bophuthatswana "independent" and forcing Tswanas to become "citizens" of it, the racist Vorster regime hopes to deprive them of their last remaining political rights as South African citizens.

Less than a week earlier, Vorster won approval for his white supremacist policies from the all-white electorate. His National Party took 134 seats in the 165-seat House of Assembly, the biggest majority of any regime since South Africa was officially founded in 1910.

Biko Family to Sue Vorster Government

The family of Steve Biko will seek compensation for his death from the South African government, according to a December 4 Reuters dispatch from Johannesburg.

The young Black leader died in police custody on September 12. An inquest verdict handed down on December 2 cleared the Vorster government's security police of responsibility in Biko's death, despite expert testimony revealing that Biko died of brain injuries caused by blows on the head.

Congressmen Ask Pardon For Wilmington 10

In face of stepped-up pressure from civil liberties groups, six congressmen recently asked North Carolina Governor James B. Hunt to pardon the Wilmington 10.

"The culminating circumstances are such that the Governor really should do that," one of the congressmen told reporters.

The prisoners, all but one of whom are

Black, have been in jail since 1972. They are serving twenty-five- to thirty-four-year sentences on charges stemming from the burning of a white-owned grocery store during a rebellion in the Black community of Wilmington in 1971.

Amnesty International recently adopted all ten prisoners as "prisoners of conscience" after the main prosecution witnesses retracted their testimony against them.

Torrijos Polishes Image

Panamanian strongman Brig. Gen. Omar Torrijos Herrera has pledged to take some steps toward restoring elementary democratic rights.

In a recent letter to the U.S. Senate, Torrijos said that on December 2, the Panamanian Council of State had "repealed in its entirety" the 1969 martial-law decree referring to political crimes and outlawing public meetings. Torrijos also stated that some restrictions on press freedom would be lifted.

India Cyclone Victims Protest Inadequate Aid

A tropical cyclone struck the state of Andhra Pradesh in southeastern India on November 19, in what was described as the worst natural disaster to hit the area in recent memory.

At least 20,000 persons are estimated to have died. Whole villages were wiped off the map, and in many areas survivors were left without food or shelter.

According to a report in the November 25 issue of *Le Monde*, the government's inadequate emergency relief measures have aroused strong criticism:

"A former governor of Uttar Pradesh visiting the disaster area declared that the aid measures were nonexistent or inadequate. Thousands of survivors are 'starving, naked, and exposed to mortal illnesses such as cholera,' he said.

"In Vijayavada, a thriving city located eighty kilometers off the coast of the Bay of Bengal, many buildings have collapsed. At least forty deaths have been recorded. . . .

"The inhabitants are angry that the authorities have not removed the corpses of human beings and animals, which are a source of grave danger to the survivors because of their advanced stage of decay."

The Political Legacy of Séamus Costello

By Gerry Foley

More than two months' time has gone by since Séamus Costello, leader of the Irish Republican Socialist Party, was gunned down as he sat in a car parked on a Dublin street.*

No arrests have been made, nor has any warrant been issued, even though the assassination was carried out in a public place in the middle of the day, and witnesses gave police a detailed description of the murderer.

The police have said that they are working on the assumption that Costello's killer was a member of the "Official" IRA, and that the motive was vengeance for some incident in the conflict in early 1975 between the "Officials" and the IRSP. This tragic split thus continues to haunt Irish politics.

If Costello did not die as a direct result of the virulent factionalism unleashed in 1975, it certainly created the kind of atmosphere that could serve as a cloak for assassins.

The imperialist and proimperialist forces have exploited to the hilt the confusion generated by such factionalism. It was symptomatic that within hours of Costello's death, the main Belfast Unionist paper, the *Belfast Telegraph*, had a story out that the Dublin police suspected the Provisionals of killing Costello. Only two months before, a postal bomb had been delivered to the home of a well-known Provisional in the South bearing Costello's name and address. Such obvious provocations, however, fell flat.

In June 1975, a Protestant murder gang tried to bomb a train carrying a large group of "Officials" to an annual commemoration. They obviously hoped that the IRSP would be blamed, as it was. But despite attempts by police and the press to attribute this crime to them, the IRSP managed to prove they had nothing to do with the aborted bombing.

Ironically, the "Officials" may have given the Loyalist terrorists the idea for such provocations. They tried in 1975 to encourage the Protestant gang leaders they had contact with to attack the IRSP as "Catholic sectarians."

Costello sought to forestall provocations. He left a testament saying that if he was assassinated there should be no reprisals.

This was consistent with the attitude he took in 1975.

The "Official" leaders unfortunately also took an attitude consistent with their stance in 1975. They made no statement that could help dispel factionalism. Moreover, speaking at a public rally in New York on October 23, "Official" Sinn Féin secretary Seán O Cionnaith raised the possibility that the murdered man might have been killed by some of his friends since he supposedly associated with criminals.

At the time of the split, the "Officials" had tried to interest the police in going after Costello, claiming that he was a "bank robber." O Cionnaith described the two main leaders of the IRSP, Costello and Bernadette Devlin McAliskey, as a "Bonnie and Clyde" couple.

The "Officials" were so factionally blinded they apparently did not realize that their charges that Costello engaged in criminal activities incriminated themselves, since he had been one of the central leaders of their organization. This blindness evidently continues. But perhaps the fact that the police have said they are looking for the murderer in the "Officials" milieu will trigger a basic reflex.

Whether the "Officials" come to their senses or not, their factional campaign against Costello and the IRSP has lost any effectiveness it might ever have had. The ugliest and most destructive conflict in the history of the republican movement has ended in "exhaustion," as Costello told me it would in May 1975. But it ended in a much more profound kind of exhaustion than he himself expected.

Both the IRSP and the "Officials," which turned in opposite political directions in 1975, have reached the end of the roads they took. The IRSP has been unable to maintain its initial momentum. It was unable to offer a strategic alternative. The "Officials," who were left with the apparatus and accumulated capital of the organization, maintain a more substantial operation. But they have become a relatively small sect with fading perspectives and waning vitality.

Although Costello failed to achieve his fundamental objective—to build an organization that could lead an Irish socialist revolution—his full stature has begun to be appreciated after his death. Against the background of his abilities and his heroic

qualities, his failures take on tragic proportions. This is all the more true because Costello's tragedy was that of an entire generation of republican leaders, those who had risen to leadership in the unsuccessful IRA campaign of the late 1950s and as a result of this experience had come to see the need for mass action and socialist politics.

Almost all the 1950s group went to the "Officials" in the 1969 split with the Provisionals. They formed the politically decisive element in the "Official" leadership. Since 1972, when the political conflict began that led to the formation of the IRSP, this group has been driven to destruction by a political dilemma none was able to overcome. Some have lost their lives as a direct or indirect result of factionalism. Others have become trapped into supporting policies and actions that are the diametrical opposite of what they had intended.

At the time of the 1974-75 split, the "Officials" explained the conflict by arguing that Costello was just a militarist, and his supporters militarists or ultraleftists or both. The IRSP was supposed to be a group of "mad dogs" who had stabbed the "Officials" in the back just as their campaign to achieve the unity of the Protestant and Catholic workers in the North was about to show success. The IRSP members were denounced in terms that not only read them out of the human race but portrayed them as the most dangerous threat to the Irish people.

The IRSP statements, in contrast, were free from fanaticism and sectarianism. They stressed the damage the conflict was doing to the anti-imperialist movement and the need to end it for the sake of all. These appeals, however, could not get through to the "Officials," who by this time had adopted the view that anti-imperialists who, as they saw it, "alienated the Protestant workers," were more of a threat than the imperialists and their allies.

Nonetheless, the "Officials" had to make the IRSP appear to be the aggressor. They did this by portraying Costello as a diabolically clever operator who talked peace only as a cover for making war.

The "Officials'" campaign against Costello was echoed by the capitalist press, for its own reasons. One factor in this campaign was that some liberal and Stalinist-oriented journalists identified with the

* See "The Assassination of Séamus Costello," *Intercontinental Press*, October 17, 1977, p. 1132.

gradualist perspective that flowed from the "Officials'" idea of the need for not alienating the "Protestant workers" at any cost. They also shared the "Officials'" sectarian frenzy against the IRSP, which they saw as threatening this perspective.

Three years after the IRSP split, it has become absolutely clear that fundamental political questions were involved. It has also become undeniable that Costello was not an apolitical gunman or "criminal." The fact that the "Officials" do not acknowledge that is the measure of their degeneration into a dead-end sect.

The final irony is that after Costello's death, the capitalist press was more generous to his memory than the men who had been his closest associates for twenty years and with whom he shared the great personal risks involved in leadership in a republican organization.

At the time of the founding of the IRSP, the *Irish Times*, Dublin's "prestige" daily, was particularly biased and provocative in its reports and comments about Costello and his organization. Following his death, it said in an October 6 editorial:

"Mr. Costello was an active and conscientious public representative in Wicklow local politics. He had clearly a real part to play on the more orthodox level. . . ."

The *Irish Independent* said:

"Seamus Costello's last public act was his bid to halt alleged 'land grabbing' at a meeting of the Co. Wicklow Committee of Agriculture. . . ."

In its October 9 issue, published the day after his funeral, the Dublin *Sunday Press* made the following assessment of Costello in an unsigned article:

Above all others Seamus Costello was responsible for ending Sinn Fein's parliamentary abstention policy, setting the party on a relatively democratic road and having it registered as a regular political party. In March, 1968, he himself received over 2,000 votes in a Dail [parliamentary] by-election in Wicklow where he already held a County Council seat as well as a seat on Bray Urban Council. Then having pushed Sinn Fein towards parliamentarianism, allied with militancy, he fought with the party on the grounds that it was betraying militancy and abandoning nationalism.

Seamus Costello regarded himself as a Republican and a Socialist in the James Connolly mould. He was above all an Irishman and he became horrified at Gardiner Place's [the "Officials'"] odd mixture of Stalinism and trendy Eurocommunism to the exclusion of Republicanism. . . .

He was essentially a lonely man spurred on by a burning nationalism and by fierce hatreds of those whom he considered enemies of the people, frustrated by circumstances and dull realities, saddened by the successes of the ungodly.

He was a Che Guevara without a Fidel Castro to keep him on the tracks. Whatever may have been his short comings few of his associates throughout the years now believe that his death will bring comfort to any but to those who back imperialism in Ireland.

The real Séamus Costello begins to



Irish Times

SEAMUS COSTELLO

emerge in this article and in others that have appeared in the press since his death. The reality forms a dramatic contrast to the gunman caricature promoted by the "Officials" and the capitalist media at the time of the split. The mendaciousness of that image, however, was apparent to anyone who listened objectively to what Costello had to say.

About a year after the split, Costello spoke at a seminar at Amherst College in Massachusetts, along with representatives of a wide range of Irish political currents. One of the other speakers, Noel Browne, a moderate Labour Party member of the Irish parliament, was prompted to write in the Dublin weekly *Hibernia*:

Seamus Costello spoke for the IRSP and gave a scintillating display of good humour, history, politics and facts. . . . I've never heard his brand of Republicanism before. . . . Is it not a triumph for our radio, TV and newspapers and of the venomous Dublin political denigration machine that none of us has ever read, heard of or seen this man's remarkable dialectical skill and political ability.

Costello's funeral symbolized the power and contradictions of his political personality. "Respectable" politicians and labor leaders felt obliged to put in an appearance. A large crowd turned out to pay their respects to a leader who was an example of the kind of "tribune of the people" that Lenin said Marxist revolutionists should strive to become. And young militants risked ten to fifteen years in prison to pay him the traditional republican honor of firing a volley of shots over his grave.

The funeral ceremony was presided over by Nora Connolly O'Brien, the daughter of James Connolly, leader of the 1916 uprising and founder of Irish Marxism. She called Costello her father's greatest follower in this generation.

The main speaker at the ceremony, James Daly, stressed that Costello represented a combination of the nationalist and revolutionary socialist traditions in Ireland. He began in Irish:

We are here to bury Seamus Costello, the greatest hero of the republican movement in our day [*an laoch is tábhachtaí i nGluaiseacht na Poblachta len ár linn féin*]. He was a man who spent his entire life trying to achieve Connolly's objectives. He understood as well that a fundamental part of this struggle was the fight for cultural freedom in Ireland [i.e., the Irish language]. . . . He fought together with the small farmers, the fishermen, and the urban workers. . . . He used every method of struggle to win the freedom of this country.

In the part of his speech in English, Daly said:

Singlehandedly, as Republicans and Socialists all around deviated into reformism and one sided concentration on the class or the national struggle, Séamus Costello gave clear leadership on the unity of the anti-imperialist and socialist struggle and on the need for a revolutionary approach.

The great venture of Costello's life was the attempt to find a conscious and scientific strategy to express the revolutionary aspirations and traditions of the Irish people, rooted in an almost one thousand-year-long history of struggle against the imposition of class society through foreign conquest and domination. This is the fundamental problem of all Irish revolutionists, and he sought a solution with an exemplary single-mindedness and clarity.

The comparison the *Sunday Press* writer made between Costello and Che was apt in many respects. Like Che, he was a dedicated and intelligent revolutionist without an adequate strategy for winning the revolution he wanted.

Costello had the moral qualities the writer discerned in him. He was an incorruptible defender of the oppressed and exploited. He was contemptuous of opportunists. He was absolutely devoted to winning the kind of free Ireland that generations of Irish revolutionists fought for.

But Costello's nationalism was reinforced by his convictions as an eminently practical revolutionist. He was considerably more experienced in practical political work than Che Guevara. And his contempt for opportunists had nothing otherworldly about it. He despised them for their pettiness, for their shortsightedness. He understood how little their "successes" amounted to. He set his sights higher, toward the only goals worthy of a revolutionist.

Costello's outstanding personal characteristic was his clear-eyed intelligence. He

could see through all the pretenses, sophistry, and illusions of opportunists with a ruthless clarity. He came out of a revolutionary tradition that never reached the level of scientific consciousness, but he was distinguished above all from other representatives of this tradition by his objectivity.

In the early 1970s, Costello was one of the few leaders of the "Officials" to recognize that the strategy the organization was following had been proven wrong by experience and was leading them in the opposite direction from where they wanted to go. The reaction of most of the leadership had been to make the Provisionals into a scapegoat for their failures. They ended up following this line to the point of seeing the Provisionals as a worse threat than the imperialists and their allies.

I first met Costello after the 1972 "Official" *ard-fheis* [congress]. He invited me for a talk because he thought an article I wrote, "Problems of the Irish Revolution," helped to explain some conclusions he had come to.

One of the things in it that interested him was the argument that the masses had to be led to socialist conclusions through their own experience. He told me that he thought the young Provisionals were going through the same experience the republicans of his generation had gone through. "We started out as nationalists full stop," but, he said, he and his comrades had learned that the whole capitalist system was their enemy and they could not win without defeating it.

The observation that the young Provisionals were like the youth who joined the IRA in the 1950s was an obvious enough one for any objective and knowledgeable person. But this truth was sealed with seven seals for the other "Official" leaders, who went from abstract nationalist ideas to abstract socialist ones without really understanding the process. The reason that Costello could see this, I think, was that he was objective with himself. He could look his younger self in the face and not suppress the memory of the things he once believed and that he no longer considered true or at least not entirely so.

Costello could also rise above personal fears and bitterness that blinded some other "Official" leaders. He told me that the Provisionals had threatened him at the time of the 1969 split, but he did not intend to let that influence his judgment about them or the possibilities of working with them against the common imperialist enemy. This contrasts in my memory with a discussion with another top "Official" leader who seemed to think that the main reason the Provisionals launched their campaign was to get into a position to liquidate the "Officials."

The "Officials" claimed that what led to the split with Costello was that he was in favor of a more adventurist guerrilla-



Irish Times

Bernadette Devlin McAliskey at funeral.

warfare orientation in the North than they. There is more than a grain of truth in this, and it explains why he was eventually isolated in the "Official" leadership and why he failed to build an effective alternative to the "Officials" after he had been driven out.

However, this claim cannot explain why the split was so deep, and represented so fundamental a turning point for the "Officials" themselves. The "Officials" can rightly claim that they have continued to follow the line that was laid out before the split, but no informed and objective observer could fail to see that it has taken them very much further, and brought them finally to a very different political destination, than they intended.

The 1974 split was obviously not a typical republican split. Most splits in the republican movement have been carried out on the program of more military action quicker. In such cases there is no point in having a political argument. The advo-

cates of "action" can go off and do it, which essentially is what the Provisionals did. However, Costello engaged in a prolonged political struggle against the economists and reformists in the "Officials." At the 1972 *ard-fheis* he stood on a programmatic document that has been proved correct in its basic points by the last five years' experience.

Thus, the split has to be explained politically and the fault cannot be Costello's alone. If he tended in an adventurist direction, it cannot be assumed that he could not have been diverted from this, if anyone in the leadership had offered a convincing revolutionary alternative to the course that he clearly and rightly saw was leading the organization to impotence and degeneration.

The basic document of the revolutionary republican bloc led by Costello and Seán Garland was entitled "A Brief Examination of the Republican Position: An Attempt to Formulate the Correct Demands and Methods of Struggle." It was a contradictory statement in many respects but it sharply criticized some key political errors in the strategy the "Officials" had been following. It began to reject the two-stage theory that democratic reform had to be completed within the framework of the Northern Ireland state before the national question could be raised:

It is feared that the people today are unable to distinguish between Republican and C.R.A. [Civil Rights Association] demands simply and solely because we have not been putting Republican demands before the Irish people, Catholic, Protestant, or Dissenter. The C.R.A. demands, which unfortunately people see as our ultimate demands, fit in very well with the Communist Part concept of struggle—reforms not revolution, the gradualist approach, the "Don't Rock the Boat School." Remember the call for Progressive Government in the 6 Counties which in reality meant 50 Unionists and 2 "Communists." Who in all reason wants that!

This position, the demand for a 6 County State, is of course occupied by Conor Cruise O'Brien [leading representative of the pro-imperialist Social Democratic line] and those left-sectarians who propagate the 2 Nation theory in Ireland [that is, that the Protestants are a nation and have a right to their own state]. To accept it, even in part, leads one inevitably to the position where, as one foreign observer pointed out recently, we expect and look to the British Army to play a progressive role in Ireland. What a position for Republicans!

How accurate an assessment this was of where the "Officials" line was leading them is shown by the evolution of the "Official" republicans after Costello was driven out and economist and Stalinist politics became dominant. Before the split, the "Official" leaders complained about the failure of British left groups to campaign for the withdrawal of imperialist troops from Ireland. After the split, the "Official" republican movement brought all its influence to bear to prevent organizations in Britain from calling for with-

drawal of British troops. "Official" Sinn Féin president Tomás Mac Giolla even welcomed and participated in the first demonstrations organized by the pro-imperialist "peace movement."

In the June 1977 parliamentary elections in the formally independent part of Ireland, the first two planks of the platform listed in the election flyer for Eric Byrne, an "Official" Sinn Féin candidate in the Dublin-Rathmines West district, were the following:

PEACE: In May, our Party fought in the Northern District Council elections under the slogan "Peace and Work." Now in the South, we are fighting a General Election on the same policy. We are the only Party that has made peace an election issue North and South.

Vandalism: People have the right to go about their business free from the fear of vandalism and crime. This right must be underwritten in the short-term through increased Garda [police] patrols in the problem areas.

Thus, these so-called Irish republicans arrived at positions that imply not only that the British army is playing a progressive role in Northern Ireland but that the Dublin government's police can do so as well.

"Brief Examination" had begun to face up objectively to the problem posed by the Provisionals' successes:

Correct or not . . . the feeling is abroad, that a lot of people in the country and many of our members have the idea that we are not in favour of the "National Struggle" or the ending of this "Struggle." This is one reason why the Provos are still a force today and why they will not fade away for a long time. *We must begin to show people and demonstrate clearly to all that our objectives are National Unity and Independence and the Socialist Republic.*

Further on the document took up the question of the Protestants:

It is easy for some people to say that the civil-rights struggle has made the division between the Protestant and Catholic worker deeper instead of drawing them together, but if they are realists they will see that the political struggle of the minority to gain their rights was a fight against the caste system which was bound to alienate the Protestant worker who was reared and kept in an environment which taught him that he was privileged and that all Catholic/Nationalists were only concerned in denying him his just rights.

In the view of these people the struggle should only be fought on economic issues or . . . there should be a large economic content to this struggle, and don't alienate the Protestants with talk of National Unity.

Most of this view point presumes that the Protestant and Catholic workers' interests are identical now immediately, and that anyway, workers are not really going to advance their interests or improve their lot by civil rights. As socialists we must accept that economics are the main driving force in history, at the same time history has many examples and it would be utter stupidity to ignore them of secondary interests or factors changing the course of history.

One of the authors of this document,

however, Seán Garland, remains a leader of an organization that carried the line he criticized to the point of seeing republicans as the main enemy. As a result, this organization, which with some justification criticized the Provisionals in 1969 for being manipulated by the right, has reached the point where it is much more in danger of being directly manipulated for reactionary objectives than its rivals.

The key to understanding the tragedy of both Garland and Costello is why they were unable to go forward from the positions in "Brief Examination." Many things about this remain obscure. Two general points are clear:

Many of those who supported the Costello-Garland bloc in 1972 interpreted its victory as a go-ahead for "more action," to which Garland was opposed. Secondly, following a break with Costello, Garland decided that the best practical perspective for the organization lay in a closer alignment with the Communist Party in Ireland and with the Kremlin internationally.

Also, it is very difficult to conduct a political debate within the traditional republican framework. This is most strikingly shown by the fact that "Brief Examination" was not even distributed to the delegates, even though it was quoted several times in speeches from the podium. The proposal to distribute it was voted down on "security" grounds.

Moreover, the republican leadership is not chosen on the basis of political position, and thus tends to be sort of a club, or even a family circle. One republican leader, who was not a Stalinist, told me with considerable bitterness that Costello tried to remove him and an older leader from the national executive, after all they had done for the movement.

Costello's problem, however, was that although the organization had adopted a different orientation in theory, the leader-

ship continued to apply the old line. If Costello tried to remove individual veteran leaders, this reflected a lack of tact, which was not his strongest point.

But in order to assure a working majority without removing the leading representatives of the opposing line, Costello would have had to build a disciplined group based on a declared political program—a faction. And that was strictly against the legality of the republican movement. In fact, Costello did not permit it in his own organization.

It seems that rather than see the "Official" leadership be pulled apart or risk being pulled into adventures, Garland decided to accept the Stalinist line as a safe and practical alternative. This was a more fundamental error than any Costello may have made. As a result the "Officials" have been led into a more profound type of failure and deeper disgrace than any republican organization in history.

Costello left an example of revolutionary honesty and many correct lessons, and his stature will grow and inspire new generations of revolutionists. That process has already begun. The "Officials" have lost any power to blacken his name or obscure what he stood for.

Costello did not get a chance to draw the full lessons of his experience. But he did mark out a path that can be followed further by those who worked with him in the IRSP, and who have the opportunity to learn from his and their failures as well as successes. They represent a vital thread in the continuity of the Irish revolutionary movement. If they follow Séamus's best example, his ruthlessly objective and constant reassessment of his own political work and conceptions, they can advance much further toward the goal that he pursued indeviatingly no matter what the cost. □

MEMO

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'Waving Green Flag Doesn't Attract Young People Anymore'

[In its November 10 issue, *Socialist Challenge*, the weekly paper that reflects the views of the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International, published an interview with Ruairí O Brádaigh, president of Provisional Sinn Féin. The interview was given to a correspondent of *Socialist Challenge* in Dublin, following the Provisional Sinn Féin congress, which was held on the weekend of October 22-23.

[O Brádaigh began by discussing the defeat of the openly proimperialist coalition government in the June elections in the section of the country that is under the jurisdiction of the Dublin parliament.]

* * *

O Brádaigh. There were two reasons for the big swing in opinion, one on national grounds, the other on socio-economic grounds.

On national grounds there was a feeling amongst the people that not only had the coalition government failed to pursue national aspirations, but they had not even paid lip service to them. The coalition were making out that they were ashamed to be Irish.

I could go over the incidents. The handling of the Frank Stagg funeral,¹ the bogus state of emergency,² the brutality in the police stations and the conditions in the prisons. All this culminated in the intervention of Amnesty International. There was a feeling that the government was becoming increasingly fascist and had shamed us as a people before the world.

On the socio-economic aspect there was the loss of our fishing grounds, our mineral wealth, the 160,000 unemployed, the cost of living rising by 24 per cent in one year, and the full membership of the EEC [European Economic Community].

Question. What difference will Fianna Fáil [which formed the present govern-



Socialist Challenge

O BRADAIGH

ment after winning the June elections] make?

O Brádaigh. Since they came into office they have wriggled. They are waiting until the people's struggle makes a British declaration of intent [to withdraw from Ireland] imminent, then they will come out and demand it. At the same time they will—as quietly as possible—put leading and influential republicans behind bars, so that they will have the field to themselves. It's as cynical an operation as that.

Fianna Fáil are politically clever and perhaps dangerous. They act imperialist but they speak republican.

Q. What is your attitude towards the demand for an independent Six Counties [of Northern Ireland], which some nationalists are putting forward as a stepping stone to reunification?

O Brádaigh. We reject it. The Southern state was meant to be a stepping stone, now it has become a stumbling block. Once these systems are set up they perpetuate themselves. Once the struggle is halted it is very difficult to get it going again.

Q. What do you see as the long term solution?

O Brádaigh. On government structures

we have suggested four provinces. With the exception of foreign affairs, defence and national finance, every power should rest with the provincial government and below. In the old province of Ulster the loyalists will still be in a majority of 58 per cent [the historic province of Ulster includes nine counties, six of which are in Northern Ireland, and the remaining three—Monaghan, Cavan, and Donegal—in the formally independent part of the country]

South and West Ulster would be a nationalist majority. Belfast would have a Loyalist majority. There would be nationalist councils [local governments] within a Loyalist region and vice versa. We don't just want to redistribute wealth, but political power as well.

No section of the community will be denied political power, as happened with the nationalist minority in the North.

We still see the state as the major instrument of economic development and that the key industries would be nationalised. Other things could be owned at provincial level, the whole process could filter down to local co-operatives.

We don't say our aim is a united Ireland anymore. We call it a federal Ireland. We want to dismantle both states, make a new beginning.

Q. How do you see the immediate struggle developing?

O Brádaigh. There are an increasing number of men "on the blanket" in Long Kesh [political prisoners who have to go naked because they refuse to wear convicts' uniforms]. It is becoming more and more of a live issue, involving more and more people. We intend to press it very hard.

Q. Do you see Sinn Féin mobilising people on this issue by itself, or in cooperation with other organizations?

O Brádaigh. Well, like it or not, we are the one radical movement in Ireland which has a mass following. We are the principal organisation so we must lead. But the door is always open to others.

Q. What is the present state of Sinn Féin?

O Brádaigh. Our members are raising more and more the ideological questions. This is very important. We are in the world anti-imperialist camp. Waving a green flag doesn't attract young people any more.

1. A Provisional IRA man who died on hunger strike in a British prison. His body, on its return to Ireland, was seized by Irish police, who supervised the burial in order to prevent a republican funeral. The body was recently exhumed by a commando team and reburied according to the wishes Stagg expressed before his death.—IP

2. "State of Emergency" legislation passed in September 1976 gives the Dublin regime the right to ignore constitutionally guaranteed rights of citizens.—IP

Quite rightly they want to know about people's rights and the quality of life. The war will end but liberation will go on.

We see ourselves as a working class party. We look forward to the workers running the industry in which they work and each worker owning a share in his place of work.

Q. What are your policies for fighting inflation and unemployment?

O Brádaigh. The difficulty is we don't see any solution to these sort of problems within the existing set-up. It is reformist to think otherwise.

Q. What about women's rights: abortion, contraception and divorce?

O Brádaigh. On contraception we believe it is a matter for individual conscience. On abortion—we are against it.

Q. Is this official policy, or your estimate of what the membership think?

O Brádaigh. It is what I think the membership would think. It has never been adopted as policy, but I am completely and entirely convinced this is what the membership believes. To put it crudely they would think abortion is murder.

On divorce, yes we feel there should be a legal right to divorce, but we wouldn't favour making it terribly easy.

I don't think the question of women simply revolves around these issues you mentioned. We believe in women taking their stand on terms of full equality with men. This was present very early in the century in the revolutionary movement in Ireland. Women were very much involved in the struggle. The first woman to be a cabinet minister outside of Soviet Russia was a member of our revolutionary parliament.

At the present time women have been fully, totally involved in the struggle. They are admitted to the IRA in terms of full equality. They have been involved in taking charge of operations. We have had women killed in action.

We do not see women being relegated to secretaries or preparers of tea.

Q. Finally what can people in Britain do to aid the Irish struggle?

O Brádaigh. An anti-war movement against British involvement in Ireland. For Britain to get out of Ireland and let the Irish people run their own country. That is what we would like to see.

We would also like to see the Scots and Welsh people running their own country. Within England we would like to see the overthrow of imperialism and the workers of England running their own country. □

Lawyers Demand International Commission of Inquiry

Unanswered Questions About West German Prison 'Suicides'

[The following letter was sent to the organizers of the Bonn tribunal initiated by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation to investigate massive violations of civil liberties in West Germany. It was signed by Hans-Heinz Heldmann, attorney for Andreas Baader, and by Jutta Bahr-Jendges, attorney for Irmgard Möller.

[Baader, a leader of the Red Army Faction, allegedly committed suicide in Stammheim prison October 18, along with RAF members Gudrun Ensslin and Jan-Carl Raspe. Möller is another RAF prisoner who, according to the authorities, also tried to kill herself but failed.

[We have taken the text of the letter from the November 29 issue of *Le Monde*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

After the official explanations, the Stammheim "suicide pact" appears more inexplicable than ever.

Why has the time of death not been established? Isn't this the duty of every medical examiner, especially when the possibility of homicide cannot be ruled out? Or were Mallach and Rauschke, the doctors in charge of the autopsy, and their superior of the opinion that homicide could be ruled out from the start?

Don't the different stages of rigidity and

the bruises on the corpses of Ensslin and Baader lend greater plausibility to the hypothesis that Baader's death took place at least several hours earlier?

Wasn't Baader wearing crepe-soled leather shoes in his cell for the first time, with heavy traces of sand sticking to them—fine, clean sand? Why are the authorities silent on this point?

Baader, who was decidedly left-handed, had powder traces on the fingers of his right hand. Were there powder traces on Raspe's fingers too?

Why haven't the authorities given a satisfactory answer to these questions: How did firearms and ammunition get into the best-guarded prison in the Federal Republic, when even a paper clip in a coat pocket did not go undetected?

Why the obvious, public lie to the effect that the lawyers "probably" carried the weapons into the cells *per anum* or *per vaginam*?

Why did the cell inspections—in which earphones, radios, Morse code transmitters, plastic material, explosives, atomic bombs, and so on were discovered—take place in the absence of neutral witnesses, without lawyers?

Why are the authorities hushing up the fact that while in "solitary confinement," Baader's, Raspe's, Ensslin's, and Möller's cells were switched several times?

Why is the autopsy report, whose conclu-

sions have been public for some time, withheld from the lawyers for the families of Baader, Ensslin, and Raspe?

Why is it stated publicly and officially that homicide can be excluded? Didn't one of the two doctors participating in the autopsy refuse to let his name be used to rule out the homicide hypothesis, at least as a possibility?

Why is Irmgard Möller still being held in solitary confinement, isolated, without news, left alone with her declaration? There is not a single word of truth in the entire story of the Stammheim suicide pact.

Why does she have a guard with her day and night? To prevent a suicide attempt from being repeated?

After the bloody night of Stammheim, after the reinforcement of isolation measures for political prisoners in West Germany (maintaining the "solitary confinement law"), we are forced to conclude that only the concrete support of public opinion, particularly from abroad, can obtain an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the deaths in Stammheim prison, and the protection of the lives and health of political prisoners in West Germany.

We demand and support the establishment of an international commission of inquiry to shed light on the bloody night of Stammheim. We thank you for your cooperation. □

Selections From the Left

Socialist Challenge

Newspaper sponsored by the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International. Published weekly in London.

The November 24 issue contains an interview with Adele Faccio on the struggle for legal abortion in Italy. Faccio is a deputy of the Radical Party, a small bourgeois party with a history of support to abortion rights and other civil liberties campaigns.

"Abortion in Italy is strictly forbidden by the law," Faccio explains. "But every year there are 1½ million women who have an abortion."

Faccio and others founded the Center for Sterilization and Abortion (CISA) in 1973; CISA now performs abortions at little or no cost in eighteen centers around Italy. "We have had problems with the law," Faccio says, "and some of us have been in prison—some for a week. I was imprisoned for 36 days in early 1975. Now, however, the Government leaves us alone because it is useful to the State that someone does abortions. Even the police come to us and ask us if we can give their wives an abortion."

The Radical Party is organizing toward a national referendum guaranteeing abortion on demand. Faccio explains that referendum supporters encounter opposition not only from the ruling Christian Democrats but also from the Italian Communist Party. The CP bows to the powerful Order of Doctors on the abortion question, and CP chief Berlinguer recently stated that women had no business telling doctors how to do their jobs.

Socialist Challenge points out that the Radicals have been criticized for their parliamentary tactics in the referendum campaign. The Radicals are trying to prevent the passage of a new, still-restrictive, abortion "reform" law, because it would rule out the possibility of a referendum campaign in 1978. In this effort they have blocked with extreme anti-abortionists in parliament, who have the opposite reasons for not wanting the new law passed.

rouge

"Red," revolutionary communist daily, published in Paris.

Writing in the November 21 issue, Eric Eauxvives reports on the successful outcome of the first major demonstration called to protest recent government measures that violate the rights of immigrant workers in France:

There were 6,000 persons in the street this

Saturday [November 19] in Paris, demonstrating their opposition to the Stolérú measures, which since October 1 have been used to organize and systematize the government's war on immigrants. It was a mass demonstration, made up of as many immigrants as French citizens, a model of calm and determination. A demonstration that proved—to those who might doubt it—that conditions are ripe for a broad-based struggle uniting French and immigrant workers. What will be a long drawn-out campaign has now gotten under way. . . .

Up front, a wide red banner proclaimed the objectives of the demonstration, three slogans in large white letters: "Rescind the Stolérú measures," "French workers, immigrants, a single working class," "Long live the coordinating committee." Behind it, the Sonacontra [an immigrant workers' resident] coordinating committee sound truck, heavily guarded. Next, contingents from many other residences beneath a profusion of banners, crudely painted or artistically cut out, serving as so many examples of the kind of fate in store for immigrants nowadays: "No to forced celibacy, we want our families with us," "Legal status for all," "Stop racist crimes and arson against our residences," "No to repression, deportations, and identity checks by the police," "Stop banning our organizations," "Keep the million,* we won't be divided."

COMBATE

"Combat," central organ of the Revolutionary Communist League, Spanish section of the Fourth International. Published weekly in Madrid.

A statement by the Madrid Region Provincial Committee of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR) appears in the November 30 issue, calling for participation in an antinuclear march between Alcalá de Henares and Guadalajara scheduled for November 26 and 27.

The statement points out that it is "the interests of the entire community," and not profit considerations, that must govern decisions about the use of energy resources.

To that end, "an informational campaign is necessary. Unless such a campaign is launched, the threat of new nuclear installations will hang over our heads. We demand a moratorium on all nuclear construction and projects in existence up to now."

The statement concludes by demanding a five-year halt to the building and operation of new nuclear plants, "in order for the debate on nuclear power to develop fully," as well as the consideration by the government of alternative energy sources:

"We think that only nationalization of

*The slogan refers to the government's offer of 10,000 francs (about US\$2,000), the equivalent of one million old francs, to immigrant workers who "volunteer" to leave France permanently.

the electricity sector can begin to resolve some of the chaos surrounding the use of energy in Spain so that the crisis—in this case the cost of energy—does not fall on the backs of the working class."

Militant

DIRECT ACTION

Socialist weekly published in Sydney, Australia. Presents the views of the Communist League and the Socialist Workers Party.

"Two thousand people rallied in Brisbane's King George Square on November 11 in one of the largest civil liberties demonstrations yet seen in the city," Renfrey Clarke reported in the November 17 issue.

Brisbane is the capital of the state of Queensland, whose right-wing premier, Joh Bjelke-Petersen, imposed a ban on political street demonstrations September 4. Since then students at the University of Queensland and other groups have organized a series of protests against this attack on democratic rights.

The November 11 demonstration, Clarke reported, "was centred on the demands for the right to march, the right to organise, and for a Bill of Rights. . . ."

"That a demonstration of such size could be built at this time was an important victory for the civil liberties movement. The action was held on the day before the Queensland State elections, and both the ALP [Australian Labor Party] and the Trades and Labor Council, fearing that a possible confrontation with the police could damage Labor's nonexistent chances of winning government, had refused to support the demonstration or to mobilise people to attend."

When 500 of the persons attending the rally attempted to march out of the square in violation of Bjelke-Petersen's ban, "a squad of several hundred police moved in behind them, shutting off their line of retreat. . . ."

"During the evening, 172 people were arrested, most of them in the space of 10 minutes. Those marchers who were not arrested were forced to run a gauntlet of police while moving in small numbers to the footpath. . . ."

"In these demonstrations, as in previous ones, the police pursued provocative tactics with a view to making large numbers of arrests. They are well aware that, given such ammunition, the bosses' press can ignore the government's attacks on civil rights and downplay the demands of a demonstration while pontificating about the 'people who want violence'—who for some reason are always the unarmed, untrained civil liberties marchers."

Reunification Under Way Among Trotskyists in Spain

By Fred Murphy

A five-year-long split among Spanish Trotskyists is being overcome.

The fourth congress of the Liga Comunista (LC—Communist League), held in Barcelona October 29–November 1, voted to seek immediate unification with the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR—Revolutionary Communist League).

During the weekend of November 12–13, the Central Committee of the LCR met and unanimously agreed to the LC's proposal.

Both groups have been sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International since a split in the original Liga Comunista in 1972. That division reflected political differences that were developing in the world Trotskyist movement as a whole. In recent months those differences have narrowed considerably, and splits similar to the one that occurred in Spain have already been overcome in a number of countries.

The central committees of the two organizations will hold a joint meeting in Madrid December 17–18 to work out the organizational details of the reunification. A joint newspaper, *Combate*, is already being published, with "organ of the LC and LCR" appearing on the masthead. The fusion process is scheduled to be completed at a reunification congress in March, preceded by a discussion among the entire membership of the new organization.

In an interview published in the November 9 issue of the LCR's newspaper *Combate*, LC Political Secretary Juan Zuriarraín said:

"This decision was based on the recognition that neither historical nor political reasons justify the division into two organizations; that a principled common basis exists: our adherence to the fundamental program of the Fourth International."

Zuriarraín explained that the LC's fourth congress corrected some "sectarian deformations" that had resulted from positions taken at the organization's third congress. "A negative attitude toward unification with the LCR figured prominently among these deformations," he said.

For its part, the LCR had proposed reunification at its first congress in August 1976 and made this a "primary objective." An article in the November 16 issue of the LCR's *Combate* said that congress had "made a critical evaluation of the split, characterizing it as a grave error that had enormously weakened the forces of the Fourth International in the Spanish state

and that had not been justified from the political point of view. . . ."

The LC has now adopted a similar attitude to the 1972 split:

"The [fourth] congress analyzed the history of our party's relations with the LCR. The clear conclusion drawn was to recognize that *no political or organizational justification had ever existed for maintaining such a division*; that we should always have been seeking a reunification congress, since both organizations formed part of the Fourth International and based themselves on the program and principles of Trotskyism" (*Combate* [LC], November 10; emphasis in original).

The LC congress was preceded by seven months of debate and discussion, during which more than forty internal bulletins were published and circulated to the membership.

Four currents of opinion developed in the course of this debate: the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency, which encompassed the majority of the organization and favored immediate reunification; the Trotskyist Faction, which stood on the positions adopted at the LC's third congress; the Marxist Tendency, which rejected traditional Trotskyist positions on the nature of the Soviet Union and the other workers states; and the Tendency for the Defense of the Fourth International, which held views similar to those expressed by the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International (OCRFI).

On the eve of the congress, leaders of the Trotskyist Faction declared that they were forming a public faction and refused to participate in the congress. The Marxist Tendency also walked out of the organization just before the congress, and a part of the Tendency for the Defense of the Fourth International did the same. Together, the three splits took about a third of the LC's membership.

An article in the November 10 issue of the LC's newspaper, also called *Combate*, explained:

"All these splits were motivated by a crucial political point raised in the congress: . . . overcoming the division that has existed since 1972 between the LC and the LCR. The response of the majority tendency of the Liga Comunista to this question was clear: It was and is necessary to reunify the LC and the LCR rapidly and create the Spanish section. The other tendencies . . . gave a sectarian response: Today such unification is not possible; the

division should be maintained. Basically, what led these comrades to split and refuse to respect the decisions of the congress was the knowledge that the congress would declare itself in favor of unification. In splitting they have demonstrated their profound sectarian character." (Emphasis in original.)

Some delegates from the tendencies that split, however, chose to remain at the congress and argue for their positions, and have remained in the organization while continuing to hold their differing opinions.

"Over and above the splits," Zuriarraín said in the *Combate* (LCR) interview, "we must point out the importance of the decision to fuse. This is historic because it shows that a big Trotskyist organization can arise in the heat of the class struggle. . . . The unified party will be an important pole of attraction for all those hundreds and thousands of militants who are looking to the Fourth International as a banner of victory in the present situation."

A representative of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International brought greetings to the LC congress and made a similar point:

"The unification of the Trotskyist organizations that will take place here in Spain will go far beyond the simple sum of the forces of the LC and the LCR; it will also resolve the difficulties of those who are uncertain and who justify their hesitations by saying, 'Why join an organization of the Fourth International? It can't be too correct, since there is another organization, also Trotskyist, that thinks the first organization is so bad that it's necessary to build a second one!'"

"At the international level," the United Secretariat representative continued, "this is part of a process that has already been completed with great success and often far-reaching repercussions in Greece, Canada, and Mexico, and which is going to take place in Colombia, Peru, and Australia."

The political resolution adopted at the LC congress reevaluated the organiza-

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tion's call for a boycott of the parliamentary elections earlier this year:

"The results of the elections showed that, despite the obstacles put up by the Stalinists and Social Democrats (which condemned to failure at the outset tactics of boycott or general strike), the workers and popular movement is capable of dealing hard blows to the bourgeoisie even in the electoral field. . . .

"The duty of Trotskyists is to strengthen the action of the workers in whatever arena they are forced to fight. In no case should Trotskyists stand aside from electoral activity and leave the workers in the hands of the Stalinists, Social Democrats,

and centrists. They should take advantage of elections to advance the construction of the party. For all these reasons the congress considered the position of boycott of the elections that our party took to have been an error."

The LC congress was attended by sixty-five delegates representing units of the organization in Euzkadi (Vizcaya, Alava, Guipúzcoa, and Pamplona), Madrid, Catalunya, Castile, Asturias, Valencia, and Zaragoza. Observers from the Canary Islands were also present.

Besides the representative of the United Secretariat, guests brought greetings from the Socialist Workers Party of the United

States, the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire of France, the OCRFI, the Workers Socialist League of Britain, and the LCR.

The LCR representative welcomed the decision to end the split, and "said the fact of unification will not resolve all problems and will not mean an idyllic path, but democratic centralism and the solid principles the new party will be based on will permit and assure that we advance together in the struggle to build the party."

The youth organizations in solidarity with the two groups are also fusing. The new organization will be called the Juventud Comunista Revolucionaria (Revolutionary Communist Youth). □

'Austerity Is an Unavoidable Necessity'

The New 'Minimum Program' of the Italian CP

By Livio Maitan

[Livio Maitan, a leader of the Fourth International, presented a contribution on the recently published intermediate-range program of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) to a seminar in Turin, held September 3-5. Major excerpts from his presentation were published in the October 1 issue of *Bandiera Rossa*, twice-monthly newspaper of the Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari (Revolutionary Communist Groups), the Italian section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

An intermediate-range economic program undoubtedly fills a need in this period. It is clear to everyone that the Italian economy cannot get out of the profound crisis it is in today simply by means of short-term measures, or through emergency steps such as international loans or credit.

Moreover, the real effect even of the short-term measures can only be seen in broader perspective. The leadership of the PCI perceives this problem all the more acutely because in the past year they have found themselves supporting, directly or indirectly—or at least not opposing—a series of measures of the Andreotti government that produced certain results, but which did not exactly correspond to the promises that the PCI made during the 1976 election campaign and which still play a central role in its propaganda and agitation.

The rate of inflation has been reduced. The deficit in the balance of payments has been kept down. Obligations to foreign creditors have been met. Productivity is up, as are hours of work. Some important industrial sectors have begun to come out of this slump. Wage increases have slowed down. And, overall, the income of working people has decreased in terms of actual buying power. Even this brief summation of the results shows how the bourgeoisie has managed, thanks to the skill of the bosses and the slick maneuvers of the Andreotti government, to shift much more of the burden of the crisis onto the shoulders of working people than they were able to do in the preceding years.

What does not appear in this list of accomplishments is the projected recovery in industrial production. It had been expected that even if there was not a revival in all sectors that there would be a widespread enough upturn to make a difference. Moreover, investment remains sluggish.

The continued lack of any perspective for a thoroughgoing industrialization of the South is symbolized by the Gioia Tauro affair, in which a huge steel complex was condemned to death before it ever saw the light of day. And the crisis of the public sector, which has hit a range of big projects going from Italsider's steel-making "colossus" to Unidal's food-processing "colossus," has certainly done nothing to inspire confidence in the projections that call for this sector playing a leading role in a revival and restructuring of the economy.

The most dramatic aspects of a situation of impasse and paralysis are persistently rising unemployment and the threats that face important industries in the coming months, if not in fact in the coming weeks.

It is clear that the PCI cannot just continue to offer its members and supporters nothing more than the uninspiring prospect of backing the Andreotti government and its emergency measures. The pact signed in July among the six parties of the so-called constitutional arc does not offer a very exciting vista either.

The PCI has to show—or at least give the impression—that its activities and its current goals fit into a broader plan, which when accomplished will produce much more impressive results than the measures that have actually been carried out over the past year or are projected for the near future. It has to come up with some prospect for real economic or political gains for working people and the oppressed strata. The proposals in the intermediate-range plan that was worked out by a special commission of the Central Committee and completed in June are an attempt to fill this need.

Starting from the premises enumerated above, the PCI could only come up with goals that remain within the framework of the system. It could do nothing more than raise again for the umpteenth time general objectives that are so obviously desirable as to seem a tiresome litany of pious hopes—development of the South, jobs for all. We will see further on how realizable these goals are, either in the present context or in the one the PCI leadership anticipates for the short and intermediate terms.

Consistent with their analysis, the PCI's proposals do not call for breaking with, and doing away with, the structure of capitalist economy but rather for eliminating the most immediate causes of the crisis. They are aimed at overcoming the distortions, malfunctions and deformations caused by certain patterns of income

distribution, or, to use a more general term, parasitism, on which the leading group in the PCI has focused its criticism and protests. It is worth noting what the PCI says in the part of the plan that deals not with the intermediate term of three to five years but with the long-term social transformation:

The fundamental goal of expanding and restructuring the productive base involves profound changes in social relationships. This means really stemming the tremendous waste caused by parasitism and nonproductive labor. It means doing away with positions of privilege, rigidity, and maladjustments, which are obstacles to achieving a healthier type of economic and social development, that is, a greater concentration of material and human resources in productive activity, in the sectors whose growth is essential, if the nation is to develop in a modern and progressive way.

However, such an endeavor can be accomplished only on a basis of consensus. Therefore new ideals and goals will be central in carrying it through. And it must proceed simultaneously as an economic reform and an intellectual and moral reform of society. [Proposal for an Intermediate-Range Plan, (Rome: Editori Riuniti) p. 25.]

The vagueness and the almost banal abstractness of these goals is not compensated for by the immediately following proclamation of the need to fight for "values that are advanced in a human and social sense and for taking a determined course to eliminate" all sorts of bad things. On the contrary, the attempt to put a cloak of ideological orthodoxy on their ultramoderate gradualism leads to murky formulations: "productive and creative work" with "a new scale of values" based on "an upgrading of socially useful productive labor" (p. 26).

It is significant that in some of the comments on the plan published in the party's weekly, *Rinascita*, the whole concept of a long-term social transformation has been criticized. One example is an article by Claudio Napoleoni, an economist elected to parliament on the PCI slate who has not hesitated to use explicitly revisionist concepts and formulas to support Berlinguer's basic strategy, and continues to do so even today. Napoleoni writes:

The combination of these two characteristics (productive and creative) seems to me a constant theme of the text, which tends to consider them as interchangeable. The difficulty which arises from this is the following: if you attribute to the term "productive" the meaning that it has in capitalist society, then the two terms not only are not interchangeable but in fact are mutually exclusive. Productive means in fact "producing surplus value" and therefore refers to abstract, or alienated labor, which is the opposite of creative work. [*Rinascita*, no. 31, August 5, 1977.]

Further on, in reference to particular problems, the PCI plan slides into empty rhetoric. For example it says that "dignity and seriousness must be restored" to Italian schools. It says that it is necessary "to expand everyone's personal capabilities and strengthen bonds of solidarity among human beings" (p. 30). It speaks of sports as a "means of physical and moral enrichment for individuals and of achieving an important dimension of collective relationships" (p. 31). Even the question of equality is presented in purely idealistic and abstractly democratic terms. And the paragraph on "social relations" could have been written by any liberal or well-meaning philanthropist:

Steps should be taken to substantially improve the standard of living of the broad masses of the population, and particularly the most neglected and needy sectors. This should be done through a redistribution of income systematically reducing privileges that result in intolerable waste of the national wealth. [p. 32.]

The plan does take up the themes raised by the women's movement. However, it presents the solutions to these problems as achievable within the framework of the family. There is not even the most discreet reference to the need for going beyond this institution (pp. 30, 34). This is just another expression of an approach which is not just gradualist but represents a very moderate form of gradualism.

It is significant that at the very beginning of the first part of the plan, the theme of austerity is introduced in a special section.

Austerity is an unavoidable necessity if we are to deal with the present economic difficulties. There is no alternative to it. But we do not conceive of austerity as a temporary expedient, a short period of severe sacrifices, just so that we can go back to the old ways. We do not see it as a short-term cutback in some fixed quantity of consumer goods. We see austerity as a means for transforming the way of functioning and the social goals of the economic system according to a precise program. We see it as a means for reorienting investment, production, and public expenditures, and even changing the quality of consumption, and thus of changing the life styles bound up with consumption. We see it as transforming patterns of culture and behavior of entire sectors of Italian society. [p. 21.]

To put it somewhat plainly, the distinguished drafters of the plan are playing a con game here. They are not unaware of the reaction that their calls for austerity have provoked among substantial layers of workers who vote Communist, and even among members of the party. They have been forced to sugar-coat the pill by mixing up different concepts and by unduly broadening the definition of austerity. The term "obfuscation" is particularly appropriate to describe this operation. They invoke vague vistas of future transformations and raise rhetorical smokescreens to conceal what they are actually up to here and now. What the PCI has been doing and in all probability will continue to do in the coming period, is not pursue some notion of an austerity related to a remote future. It is supporting the concrete, down-to-earth austerity the Andreotti government has already begun to impose on Italian workers—not without a certain success from its point of view.

The plan does not go on to pose any new questions or goals. In substance, it reiterates the concept of a new phase of the "democratic and antifascist revolution," helped along by "the antifascist content and progressive thrust of the constitutional pact." Thus the text keeps coming back to the need for "democratic management of the economy," for "decentralization and reorganization of the structure of the state," for the "development of a democratic pluralism in society and in politics," for the "renewal and democratization of the European economic community" (pp. 36-41).

The plan also takes up, of course, the need for "elements of socialism" which could be introduced gradually "into the functioning of the economy and society." But, if such a thing were possible, such elements appear in even more watered down and insubstantial form than in previous formulations. To put it in the exact words of the plan, the elements of socialism "consist above all in choosing a conscious direction for the development of society and setting serious economic goals based on the needs for justice, solidarity, liberty, and improving the human condition" (p. 19).

It is obvious that at least theoretically there could be very broad convergence around such "needs." The plan foresees multi-class agreement even for the "transformation and renewal of Italian society"—and not only for the intermediate term. In other words, the plan assumes that "forces with different political orientations, corresponding to the general political conceptions of each component of the democratic and people's movement," can help in the campaign to satisfy the needs it outlines.

In reality there is no difference between the CP's more general plan for transforming society and their intermediate-term plan. The more immediate program is the product of the party's gradualist approach, which seeks to avert any qualitative leap in the power and consciousness of the working class. This approach seeks to channel the conflicts between opposing classes into the present institutional framework, and to confine such clashes to "arguments" between the distinguished representatives of various currents in an almost idyllic political and social pluralism.

The workers movement—both the workers parties and the trade unions—do need an intermediate-range plan in this period. Although the old and new revisionists and all the more or less fanciful "inventors" of the truth about how the transition from capitalism to socialism is to take place have created much confusion about this, the Leninist conception has always rejected any sterile dichotomy between a minimum program of immediate

gains and a maximum program of goals bound up with taking power. Leninists have always recognized the need for the bridge, the link between the two, that is provided by a transitional program.

But the scope of such a program—which takes on immediacy in periods of great social and political crisis, that is in revolutionary and prerevolutionary situations—has never been confined to simply correcting or eliminating the “distortions” of the system, or helping to “democratize” it.

The purpose of a transitional program is to raise demands for the mass movements that seem reasonable to the masses and that would lead to an attack on the very framework of the system. A transitional program based on Leninist principles, far from worrying about respecting certain “compatibilities” (to use the current term) tries to increase the “incompatibilities” in the interests of a struggle for power.

In his contribution on the plan that I already mentioned, Claudio Napoleoni writes:

We are in a situation in which the working class has achieved results that are not compatible with maintaining the private-enterprise mechanism for developing the economy, but in which the production of material wealth depends more and more on that mechanism.

Leaving aside the exaggerated character of his opening statement, Napoleoni's observation is roughly accurate. It follows directly from this that such a situation cannot continue indefinitely and that it would be a mistake to consider it irreversible (as Napoleoni is inclined to do).

Antagonistic social forces, unlike chess players, cannot let the contest end in a stalemate. The question is in which way the present relative equilibrium of contending classes will tilt, which class is going to get the upper hand and impose its solution. The bourgeoisie has to try to drive the workers rather far back from the positions they have won. This course is not the result of reactionary stupidity or political insensitivity, but of the vital need to accumulate capital, to assure what the system needs to function. If the capitalist class is not able to do this, it is going to have to face an explosive situation in its own country. And in the international market it is going to be torn to pieces by the sharks, who, contrary to what the authors of the plan seem to be dreaming, are not inclined to play by any polite rules.

The working class should not have any illusions that it can remain on the defensive without suffering a serious defeat. In the abstract, it can choose between moving toward a rapid confronta-

tion or preparing for a test of strength in the not too distant future. For a whole number of reasons, it is undoubtedly preferable to aim for a confrontation a little further off. The most important reason for this is the present balance of political forces in the working class, that is, the overwhelming predominance of the reformist organizations. In order to prepare for a confrontation in somewhat longer perspective, the working class needs an intermediate-range economic plan, drawn up in accordance with the method of the Transitional Program. That is, it needs a program not of reformist gradualism but of revolutionary change.

To give only a few examples of what is required: In the fight against unemployment, the workers' interests have to be put first, and it has to be fully understood that defending these interests causes severe contradictions in the functioning of the capitalist system that cannot be resolved without establishing a *new* political power and a *new* social system. The struggle must center around the demand for dividing up the existing work and this requires reducing the working hours without a cut in pay.

At the same time the demand must be advanced for nationalization of the big trusts that are responsible for the crisis and profit from it, as well as of the big trading companies (starting with the importers of essential foodstuffs). In order to avoid a repetition of what happened in the case of the nationalization of the electric utilities, the takeover of the big trusts must be carried out without paying compensation and under workers control.

To fight inflation what is required is an intransigent defense of the sliding scale of wages, which offers the only existing guarantee of workers' buying power, although it is only partially effective. Defense of the sliding scale requires the workers keeping a check on prices from production costs to the prices paid by consumers.

The reformists of the PCI will object that such proposals raise a perspective of class war on an international scale. But how can such a war be avoided? How can anyone who is not naïve fail to understand the gravity of the situation? The problem is to get into a winning position. Despite the tremendous difficulties and risks of such a struggle, there is a basis for modest optimism. Fighting capitalism is in the interests of more than three-quarters of the economically active population of the country. Moreover, in the coming years major battles will be waged in decisive countries such as France and Spain, where the workers movement is now on the rise.

August 28, 1977

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Election Platform of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire

[We are reprinting below the campaign platform of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR—Revolutionary Communist League, French section of the Fourth International) drawn up for the legislative

elections scheduled for March 1978.

[We have taken the text from the November 29 issue of *Rouge*. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

I. Twenty Years Is Enough!

The society of "advanced liberalism" means hardship and the exploitation of the great majority of workers by a minority of profiteers.

Those who occupy the television screens wanted to lull us to sleep with promises. Giscard, the "brilliant graduate of the Ecole Polytechnique," and Barre, the "best economist in France," swore that the end of the economic crisis was within reach.

Let's set the record straight.

What working-class family today does not live with the fear of layoffs, the impossibility of finding a job, and with crimped budgets in order to get a brief taste of a vacation under sunnier skies? The government is trying to divert attention from this by controlling the price of a cup of coffee at the counter or by pretending to freeze the price of a croissant, but what's going up are the things that are a thousand times more important to workers—meat, vegetables, basic consumer goods, transportation, rents, Social Security taxes, and so on.

Price increases are at record levels. Since the Barre plan was introduced, prices have gone up by more than 10% while our wages have lagged behind. This year our buying power went down by an average of 3%, and by 5% in the public and nationalized sector. "The French are living beyond their means," according to Barre. Which of the French? No doubt those who belong to the same class as the premier. There is nothing new in that.

The implementation of the Barre plan, which has meant austerity for the workers, has had its counterpart in a spectacular rise in profits for the bosses: Thomson-Brandt, up 29%; Shell-France, up 120% (a hefty two billion francs); Peugeot, up 105%; Citroën, up 85%.

Although Barre has been able to restore profits by allowing prices to rise unchecked, he now holds the double championship for inflation and unemployment. For each day since his plan was launched there have been an additional 1,200 persons out of work, a total of 1.5 million. Of these, women and young people are the hardest hit.

While unemployment is rising, the law providing for a maximum work week of forty hours—which has supposedly been won—is being flouted. The average work week in France is one of the longest in Europe.

And that's not all!

Austerity, Giscard-and-Barre-style, goes hand in hand with repression. They send their cops and thugs against striking workers (as in the murder of Pierre Maitre, a worker in Reims¹). In the plants, the bosses are leveling an attack at trade-union rights and union officials (as shown by what the chief union-buster, Furnon, has been allowed to get away with). The Stoléru² measures against immigrant workers are threatening the most elementary human rights.

Giscard is in cahoots with the Social Democrat Schmidt to extend to France the emergency measures already in force in West Germany. He has handed over Klaus Croissant³ in the barracks, "military security" is being used to suppress soldiers organizing to defend their democratic rights (as was shown in April 1977 by the arbitrary arrest of fifty soldiers and their imprisonment for two months).

The news media are buckling under the weight of the press barons and profiteers, who, with Hersant in the lead, monopolize the means of communication and use their billions to squeeze out the journals of opinion. Workers in the publishing industry were forced to give ground in the final settlement of the *Parisien Libéré* strike, and other blows are being aimed at publishing workers which will also be attacks on freedom of the press.

In private medicine and in hospitals, implementation of the laws on abortion and the right of women to control their

bodies is being challenged. Health care has become a heavier burden for workers now that Social Security has come under attack.

Haby, Giscard's counterpart in the Education Department, is gradually transforming public education into a huge training ground for private enterprise, while the Guermeur law has reinstated subsidies to private schools. Young people are particularly oppressed, subject to unemployment, regimentation, repression, and racism directed against youth, as shown by the murder of young Mélyon outside a rock concert by a thug.

The rhetoric of the series of Giscard-appointed officials "in charge of the status of women" has made no fundamental changes in women's destiny, either in the legal (equal rights) or in the economic sphere (equal pay for equal work).

To extend its military bases, the government drives farmers off their land. To boost capitalist profits, it is building one nuclear plant after another without a shred of concern for the deadly risks incurred by the neighboring population.

We can expect nothing else from this unemployment- and poverty-mongering crew. We've had enough of austerity and repression! This policy is especially intolerable inasmuch as it has long been rejected by the overwhelming majority of workers, in fact by the majority of the country.

Every election since 1974—legislative by-elections, cantonal elections, and most recently, municipal elections—has proved that the so-called majority is really a minority, even in the electoral arena, with a voting setup that is particularly disadvantageous for the workers parties, and that it is both possible and necessary to put an end to the government and the Gaullist state.

Instead of organizing a movement to demand the resignation of Giscard and Barre and dissolution of the Assembly, the leaderships of the Communist Party and Socialist Party urged patience.

The workers were told to bide their time until the electoral victory promised for the spring of 1978. The big days of action by the trade unions, on October 7, 1976, and May 24, 1977, siphoned off militancy in a parade of forces that the working-class leaderships in no way wanted to engage in battle.

Yet it is nearly ten years since we demonstrated—on May 13, 1968—shouting "Ten years is enough!" Twenty years is definitely much too much.

1. See *Intercontinental Press*, June 20, 1977, p. 699.

2. See *Intercontinental Press*, October 24, 1977, p. 1167.

3. See *Intercontinental Press*, December 5, 1977, p. 1331.

II. What Workers Need

Neither austerity of the right nor austerity of the left! To counter the crisis that is drastically reducing buying power and massively increasing unemployment, the immediate demands of working men and women must be met without delay.

1. Maintenance and expansion of buying power. For a 2200-franc [about US\$456] monthly minimum wage retroactive to April 1977. This is the demand of the CGT and CFDT.⁴ It is really the bare minimum. The National Union of Family Allowances estimates that 3,515 francs a month are necessary to meet the "minimal" needs of an average working-class family with two children. Even a minimum wage of 2,200 francs plus social services still falls far short of this. Civil service workers are already demanding a 2,500-franc minimum wage, and Renault workers are calling for 3,000 francs.

For a 300 franc pay increase across the board for all workers, regardless of their branch of industry, geographical region, or job classification.

For a retirement wage and pensions at least equal to the minimum wage.

For unemployment compensation equal to the minimum wage.

For implementation of the principle "equal work for equal pay," especially for working women with the same jobs and training as men, who are systematically underpaid.

For a sliding scale of wages, social services, and pensions. The struggle to maintain buying power is crucial at a time when the Barre plan is lowering the standard of living for the majority of the working class. To safeguard buying power requires a genuine sliding scale of wages, pegged to a price index drawn up by the workers and trade-union organizations. The government's index must be rejected. A monthly review of wages must be obtained, for to accept annual or biannual adjustments means agreeing to allowing wages to lag behind prices, with the workers bearing the consequences of price hikes during these six-month or year-long intervals.

The scale of declared incomes now ranges from 1 to 105. There is no justification for such astronomical disparities. The CGT and CFDT suggest bringing it down to a scale of 1 to 5 or 1 to 6. It is legitimate to want to reduce the overall wage spread, provided that such a measure forms part of a wide-ranging offensive against the capitalists, inherited wealth, and fat incomes. For the problem of inequality is not simply

a matter of fat salaries, far from it. It has to do above all with incomes other than wages.

How can there be talk of making the rich pay without doing away with business secrets and opening the companies' books? How can there be talk of taxing medical-care profiteers without demanding nationalization of health services? How can swindlers and speculators of all stripes be unmasked without doing away with banking secrets and establishing a state monopoly on foreign trade?

The present tax system serves the owners' interests. It facilitates fraud (estimated to amount to around 60 billion francs a year, or one-third of the state budget). It exempts a mass of profits from taxation under the heading of overhead expenses or supplies, and grants stockholders the privilege of tax credits.

Above all, it weighs heavily on the bulk of the working class by way of indirect taxes, first and foremost of which is the TVA,⁵ which represents more than half of all tax revenues. The TVA, today's salt tax, must be abolished, and a highly progressive tax on the sum total of inherited wealth, capital, and legacies must be imposed.

2. Full employment must be guaranteed by:

Refusing to accept layoffs without prior job reclassification, in the same region and with the same wages and working conditions.

Giving workers veto power over layoffs.

Drastically shortening work hours. The immediate solution to unemployment and the problem of jobs for thousands of women relegated to housework does not lie in the hypothetical creation of new jobs and a step-up in the hiring of temporaries, as the government is now doing. The solution lies in spreading the available work to all who need jobs. What we must win is a thirty-five-hour workweek with no reduction in wages.

Slowing down assembly lines and improving working conditions under workers' control. Eliminating shift work wherever technical requirements permit, and giving workers a say over those supposed requirements. Instituting a fifth team for shift work immediately.

Abolishing the category of temporary workers, who furnish the same labor without any job security. Permanent employment for temporary workers! Equal work, equal status!

Guaranteeing women the right to work, through setting up collective facilities, particularly high-quality, twenty-four-hour

child-care centers with professional male and female staffs, and low-cost communal restaurants in workplaces and residential areas, establishing the right to professional training and hiring free of sexist discrimination, as well as the right to unemployment compensation equal to the minimum wage for all women who want to work.

Guaranteeing jobs for young people who have completed their education, corresponding to the skills they possess upon graduation.

Establishing equal social and political rights for immigrant workers. With the Stoléru measures, the government is pressing its attacks on immigrant workers. These workers must be defended by the entire working class, for the attacks on them foreshadow an offensive against all workers in the country. To achieve unity between French and immigrant workers, immigrant workers must have the same social, trade-union, and political rights, including the right to vote and hold any office. We demand abolition of all discriminatory measures, especially abolition of work and residency permits.

Protecting the buying power and right to work of agricultural workers and small farmers, including guaranteed wages and incomes at least equal to workers' wages.

3. Establishing the right to free, quality health care. All of the measures undermining Social Security, going back to the decrees issued in 1967 under de Gaulle, must be reversed. What we must obtain is the withdrawal of these decrees ("overlooked" by the trade-union leaderships at the time of the Grenelle negotiations in 1968) as well as of the measures imposed by Giscard and [Health Minister Simone] Veil.

This means establishing a single system with 100 percent reimbursement of medical fees, and expelling the bosses from the Social Security administrative boards. Abortion must be free of charge and genuinely available under the best hospital conditions. We want to see family planning centers set up in workplaces.

Pregnant women must have the rights that are necessary: a monthly doctor visit paid for by Social Security, job transfers to spare them from heavy work, extension of maternity leaves. Excused absences owing to a child's illness must be granted to either one of the parents, and not exclusively (not to mention grudgingly) to the mother.

4. Establishing the right to low-cost, quality housing. Building sites must be socially owned, rents and utility fees frozen, and a genuine public housing service must be set up.

5. Making comfortable public transportation a priority. It should be up to the employers to pay the cost of transportation between home and workplace.

6. Countering the bosses' stranglehold over education. Oppose implemen-

4. Confédération Générale du Travail (General Confederation of Labor). Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail (French Democratic Confederation of Labor).

5. Value Added Tax, similar to a sales tax.

tation of the Haby reforms. Against tracking and the compartmentalization of knowledge based on the division of labor. A single course of study up to eighteen years of age and a well-rounded education for all, open to wage earners in the context of a public education system.

Job security for employees of the national education system, and tenure for assistant teachers.

For an adequate education budget.

No more than twenty-five students per class.

The right to classroom experimentation for teachers.

Never before has the capitalists' offensive against workers and consumers taken on such large proportions in all branches of the national education system. In face of these attacks, it is urgent to give impetus to the creation of a broad front of struggles around education and for the right of workers to an education corresponding to their needs. What is needed is to force the government to retreat on its reactionary "reforms," and at the same time see to it that school is no longer an exclusive preserve.

To that end, high-school students, technical-school students, apprentices, and university students must be brought into the struggle against class education, capitalist exploitation, and standardized instruction. Also to be brought in are teachers, parents, and blue-collar unions, which are directly affected by youth unemployment, the question of skills, and the introduction of adult education.

7. For a moratorium on the government's nuclear power program. For the right to live and work in one's native region.

The government's policy is one of long-term austerity. It is aimed at reshaping the productive forces to the benefit of the most profitable sectors. This is what is behind their willingness to turn whole regions into wastelands for the benefit of those areas closest to the industrialized centers of the Western European capitalist countries. This is what is behind their option for a nuclear-powered society. To counter this policy of the bourgeoisie, we must establish:

The right to live and work in one's native region. Workers in the underdeveloped regions are not fighting just to preserve their jobs, which were already in bad shape before the crisis. What we must demand, over and above job security, is control by workers and trade-union organizations, with the right to a say over investments, establishment of industries, and their consequences for the region's economy and way of life. The right to live

and work in one's native region also means genuine recognition of the languages and cultures of national minorities, particularly in the schools and in the communications media.

A moratorium on the government's nuclear power program. With the Messmer plan, decided on in 1972 in the secrecy of the presidential office, the government set out on the road to a nuclear-powered society. Yet the dangers involved in the industrial use of nuclear energy have not been brought under control. Therefore, we must establish a moratorium on the nuclear program. Such a moratorium cannot be limited to the site of the Creys-Malville Superphénix breeder reactor or to new plants on order, but must apply to all nuclear plants now under construction. This, to be sure, also means retraining all construction workers affected, with no cut in their pay.

Refusing to accept industrial pollution and destruction of the environment, by establishing the right of workers, their organizations, and the affected population to decide on the question of the establishment of new industries and their harmful effects.

8. Against repression. The policy of the present government also means daily repression against the workers movement, discriminatory and oppressive measures against women and immigrants, and the oppression of regions and nationalities.

To counter repression by the bosses and the state, we call for *the extension of trade-union and political rights to the factories, schools, and barracks*; the immediate rehiring of workers fired for political activity, demanding that they be guaranteed jobs in the plants starting right now.

We demand *the abolition of emergency powers in jurisdiction and the courts*, both civil and military; abrogation of repressive legislation (the antiwrecker and antiterrorist laws), and recognition of the unrestricted right to political asylum.

We demand *that each person have the right to control his or her own body; sexual freedom for minors and abrogation of the oppressive laws against homosexuals. We call for a struggle against sexist assaults and rape.*

We are for the elimination of all forms of censorship, both direct and indirect (by financial and advertising pressures), and for the fullest artistic freedom and freedom of expression, beginning with genuine freedom of the press.

This presupposes expropriation of the

big presses and paper industries (without implying control by the producers over the content of news); the socialization of their use, insuring a voice for all currents and groupings, no matter how small; and the subsidization of small-circulation publications representing a current of opinion.

At the same time, we oppose the dismantling of state ownership of radio and television and their takeover by the private sector, and demand guaranteed access to these means of communication for working-class organizations, groups, and collectives.

For several years, *the development of soldiers' committees* has put on the agenda recognition of soldiers' right to organize in *a union independent of the military hierarchy and tied to the workers' organizations* in order to put forward their demands: free transportation; an increase in pay to the minimum wage; and shortening the length of service to the time of basic training, to be conducted in the areas where they live and work.

Now that the colonial wars in Indochina and Algeria are over, French imperialism is perpetuating its old gunboat diplomacy, especially in Africa, as was recently shown again by the Chad and Zaïre expeditions, as well as by the threats to the sovereignty of the Saharan people. We demand the withdrawal of French troops from these countries, annulment of neo-colonial pacts, and a halt to arms sales to racist and reactionary regimes.

9. For the right to self-determination for overseas territories and departments. France is one of the last colonial powers with a direct presence in the so-called overseas territories and departments, where exploitation of workers and national and cultural oppression is total. The French workers movement must fight against the presence of 12,000 to 14,000 men belonging to the three branches of the armed forces (land, air, and sea), plus the constabulary, in the Antilles, Guiana, Réunion, Mayotte, Polynesia, New Caledonia, the New Hebrides, and the Wallis and Futuna Islands.

The strongest and most visible solidarity actions must be undertaken with respect to the peoples in the French colonies, for their right to self-determination, against paternalism, repression, and colonial economic plundering. We support the demand for independence raised by the GRS [Groupe Révolution Socialiste—Socialist Revolution Group], Antillean section of the Fourth International.

III. How to Overcome the Crisis

1. Enter into struggle without delay. To put across our demands, let us rely above all on our own forces, on those of the working class, united and independent. *We must have working-class unity! We must*

have unity of the working-class organizations!

If we are divided, we won't make it.

Unity will not be achieved through empty chatter and long-winded speeches,

6. See "Massive Protests in France Against University 'Reforms,'" *Intercontinental Press*, May 3, 1976, p. 727.

but through action.

We should not put forward long lists of demands, but instead pick out the main ones, the most immediate, the most urgent, those that unite us: wage increases, full employment, shortening of work hours. We must have real, massive, ongoing actions around these demands.

We can be certain that if we can unite and struggle around these demands, without waiting for the elections, we will create a relationship of forces that will be decisive, whatever the outcome of the elections.

Wherever possible, *we must immediately undertake direct action against the austerity measures and the bosses' preparations.* Working conditions in the plants must be improved, by our organizing to refuse speed-up and standing firm against constant changes of work shifts. Let's demand the right to a say over assembly-line rhythms and the organization of our work by the bosses, by refusing to work when the safety measures we have decided on together are not applied. No safety, no work!

In this way, we will be in a stronger position to obtain a say over firings, and to begin to spread the work among all of us.

Together with the trade unions and consumer organizations, we should mobilize to exercise control over increases in prices, rents, and public service rates. When bakers change the shape and name of croissants to get around the price freeze, they are only applying a method used on a much larger scale by the industrialists! We should freeze the prices of basic necessities, rents, and tenant fees. We should make our interests count in the running of what ought to be free, high-quality public services—Social Security, hospitals, schools, kindergartens, child-care centers, transportation, housing, cultural and recreation centers.

Together with our trade-union organizations, *we should demand to be informed about all plans having to do with our jobs, working, and living conditions.* No secrecy surrounding the intentions of the bosses and the government. We must have prior knowledge about plans for investment and production, about policy on restructuring of industry and jobs, about transfers of goods and capital.

This is the basis for a more effective struggle. But the bosses will not voluntarily agree to turn over their secrets to us. We will have to force it on them by checking inventories ourselves, compelling them to open their books, demanding, together with bank workers, the elimination of banking codes and anonymous transactions, control over loans granted to businesses, as well as over the special repayment terms and cushy jobs handed out by the top banking circles.

We should demand of our trade-union organizations that they organize a mobilization of broad enough scope to meet these tasks.

On the basis of mobilizations at the plant level, we will be able to move forward to coordinate and centralize them. "National" and "general" strikes, even for one day, should be part of a wide-ranging plan of struggle that the trade unions must put forward in collaboration with rank-and-file assemblies of organized and unorganized workers.

Workers democracy is the key to the broadest possible working-class unity. All the trade-union organizations—CGT, CFDT, FEN [Fédération de l'Education Nationale—National Education Federation], and FO [Force Ouvrière—Labor Force] should collaborate in this. Strike committees should be elected, answerable to the workers and recallable by them. Up to now, the trade unions—the indispensable tool for defending workers' demands—have been divided, and the division between the CP and SP has been reflected among the workers. Stronger trade unions, unity, and fusion of the trade unions are all linked together!

How many workers hesitate to join the union, or resign from membership because they find this division unacceptable? How many struggles and strikes have been badly organized because each of the trade-union leaderships acted on their own? If there were *a drive toward a single trade-union federation*, wouldn't the great bulk of the working class lay claim to it, as a better weapon for their fight?

Up to now, the federation leaderships have declined to take this route, preferring to take up the quarrels and divisions between the CP and SP. Therefore, we in the LCR are fighting for a single trade union in the context of respect for trade-union democracy. A single working class, a single trade union.

2. Nationalization of the key sectors of the economy, under workers' control and without compensation. *To safeguard workers' demands and overcome the crisis, our attacks must be leveled at the capitalist system.* Maintaining the capitalist market—that is, competition between national and international corporations—inevitably means continuing the crisis. To undo the pitiless logic of the market and the profit drive, and replace it with democratic economic planning corresponding to the needs and priorities collectively determined by the workers, *whole branches of the key private sectors of the economy must be nationalized without compensation.* Expropriating the capitalists is an essential step toward self-managed planning that would enable us to get out of the crisis.

It is not a matter of nationalizing nine, fifteen, or twenty-five corporations, with or without their subsidiaries, when the market economy predominates over all. We must get at the roots of a system built on private ownership of the major means of production and exchange. This means nationalization without compensation of

all the banks, including foreign banks, of the technologically sophisticated branches—the spearhead of capitalist accumulation—of the branches that are floundering and laying off tens of thousands while receiving state subsidies, of the means of communication, of branches such as health care, construction, and transportation, which are crucial to economic planning, and of all companies having production units of more than 500 workers.

Are we going to work to reimburse our exploiters, who have already lined their pockets from our labor? Agreeing to compensate the owners of nationalized businesses means forcing the workers, by way of taxes, to buy back the wealth produced by them and accumulated at their expense. This would be giving back to the bosses with one hand what we take away with the other, enabling them to invest it somewhere else where the profits are juicy.

That was how the CGE trust—one of the nine corporations to be nationalized under the Common Program—came into being, out of the compensation paid to former gas and electric utility stockholders when EGF was nationalized after the Liberation in 1945.

The SP proposes to allow stockholders to keep their shares and the privileges accruing to them, but with loss of decision-making power. The CP proposes paying thirty billion francs to compensate the stockholders of the nine corporations to be nationalized under the Common Program. Thirty billion francs—that equals the total wages of 150,000 workers paid at the minimum for twenty years! Let's kick out the profiteers, whether big or medium-sized!

Nationalizations are a necessary but insufficient step toward breaking with the logic of capitalist exploitation. A further question must be raised: What changes would the nationalizations make in our living and working conditions?

Would they mean eliminating double and triple shifts? Would they mean slowing down assembly lines and a thirty-five-hour week right away? What control and decision-making power will we have over what is produced in the plant and over working conditions? The CP and SP recently proposed setting up "shop committees."

Why do they limit these "shop committees" to the nationalized businesses? Isn't it because these committees are not supposed to be instruments of struggle, but rather administrative bodies, with all the risks of integration and participatory co-management that this entails? Why wait for a hypothetical victory at the polls to begin to build these united instruments of struggle in the shops and departments?

As long as economic and social conditions remain subordinated to the laws, institutions, and state of the bosses, the workers are in real danger of being

brought into the management bodies of private and nationalized companies so as to "comanage" their own exploitation and the "social peace" the bosses are demanding. The goals set by the CGT and CFDT leaderships do not get around this danger. The need for the workers to be on their guard and to keep tabs on their shop stewards becomes that much greater.

We are in favor of union locals in each shop. We are in favor of central trade-union bodies from top to bottom! To prepare for struggles, we are in favor of shop assemblies being held to elect strike committees.

We want to see come into being workers councils that can bring the mass of workers together in unity. We also want to see these committees make it possible to institute workers control and decision-making power, and to take power over all.

Whatever the circumstances or occasion vis-à-vis the CP and SP—with them if possible, against them if necessary—we will do everything to see to it that orga-

nized and unorganized workers, party members and independents, create united organizations of struggle.

Blue- and white-collar workers in companies slated for nationalization must speak out against the steps toward restructuring and shrinking of inventories, and demand immediate expropriation.

Workers control prepares for and accompanies the struggle for nationalizations and installing a workers government. Once such a government has been formed, and sectors of the economy nationalized, it is no longer a question only of control, but of workers' self-management in the context of a democratically determined plan. With the taking of power by the workers—which presupposes centralization of workers councils and destruction of the old state apparatus—the guiding principle of the economy will become that of the plan, which will establish the order of priorities according to the needs and goals decided on by the workers themselves through a congress of workers councils.

IV. For Socialism

But instead of taking that route, the CP and SP turn their backs on our demands. They're generous with fine words, promising to "change our lives"; but the Common Program—whether the SP or CP version—maintains the dominance of the capitalist market, ignores the special oppression of women, preserves the army as it is now, accepts the 1958 constitution, and maintains French colonial domination over the overseas territories and departments. It is a class-collaborationist program. Under these circumstances, it's logical that the Left Radicals, a small bourgeois party that supports free enterprise for the capitalist bosses, were able to sign it without renouncing their program.

1. The crisis of the Union of the Left. Today the Union of the Left is undergoing a crisis, but none of the parties has challenged the fundamental assumptions of the Common Program. The dispute over nationalizations is mere sleight-of-hand. Whether or not subsidiaries are nationalized, the great, overwhelming majority of companies would remain subordinated to the demands of capitalist competition, and the workers to the resulting exploitation.

The CP accuses the SP of swinging to the right, as though Defferre's statements, pledging to respect the bosses' right to dismiss workers or Rocard's, refusing to tamper with "regulation by the market," were something new. But in that case, hasn't the CP also swung to the right—repudiating the dictatorship of the proletariat, standing up for the atomic bomb, agreeing to a year-long military service and to a European parliament, and anticipating a sixteen billion franc increase in

revenue for government contractors?

The CP accuses the SP of seeking an alliance with the Center and the Gaullists. But don't the CP and SP agree on signing the Common Program with the Left Radicals, though the latter have no supporters in the plants?

During the municipal elections, didn't both parties support the candidacy of Charbonnel, the "left" Gaullist, protector of the CFT,⁷ and former minister of industry in charge of suppressing the Lip struggle?⁸ Don't they both agree on keeping Giscard as president in the event of a left victory, together with the extravagant powers conferred on him by the constitution?

The CP accuses the SP of preparing the way for an austerity policy, thereby following the example of the ruling British, Portuguese, or West German Socialists. But why doesn't the CP's criticism apply equally to the Italian and Spanish Communist parties, both of which sanctioned the austerity plans put forward by their governments?

The answer is that the Communist Party is well enough acquainted with the scope of the crisis to know that, short of breaking with capitalist rule, there is no other solution but austerity, be it of the right or of the left.

7. Confédération Française du Travail (French Confederation of Labor), a company union closely associated with the Gaullist movement.

8. A nine-month strike by watchmakers in Besançon, concluded in January 1974. One of the longest strikes in French history, it included a two-and-a-half month occupation of the factory in which the workers operated the plant themselves.

2. Workers' unity to get rid of Giscard and Barre! Nevertheless, the workers do have an alternative, one that rejects divisions and compromises, which is based on working-class unity to get rid of Giscard and Barre.

To overcome the crisis and do away with austerity, there is no other solution but to move toward socialism.

Instead of seeking favors from the bosses and putting off the unifying of struggles, what is essential right now is an uncompromising struggle against the decline of buying power and the rise of unemployment. What is needed is to give an impulse to workers' self-organization and to defending struggles against the operations of the repressive bodies (strike committees and pickets). The struggles of immigrants, women, and youth must fully take their place in the overall struggle of the working class.

We must combat all illusions that the bosses' power can be uprooted plant by plant, and from one isolated example of workers control to the next.

At the end of the struggle lies the inevitable confrontation with the bourgeois state apparatus, and *the necessity to fight for a government of the workers which will take the necessary steps in the march toward socialism.*

For us in the LCR, the main issue is to bring struggles together, to prepare for a general strike. We do not believe that the working class can take hold of the bourgeois state and "use it for their own purposes"; that state is wholly designed to serve the ruling class, from the smallest cog in a ministry to the chief of the army general staff. That state must be destroyed, and another state, a workers state, built in its place.

We are communists who have not repudiated the dictatorship of the proletariat. It will oppose the power of the majority of workers to the minority of those who exploited them. It will be a thousand times more of a democracy than all the bourgeois democracies put together.

The Common Program anticipates retaining the 1958 constitution instituted by General de Gaulle after a military coup. That constitution grants extravagant powers to the president of the republic, who is also chief of the armed forces. The implementation of any new law depends on his signature. He can dissolve the assembly at will and arrogate full power to himself in the event of a serious crisis.

The Common Program does project reforming the "excesses" of the constitution, but without challenging the present regulations on revising the constitution, which require either the agreement of the president or a two-thirds majority vote in the National Assembly and Senate.

So by pledging to keep Giscard and to obey the constitution, the CP and SP are agreeing to refrain from applying a program that would really correspond to

workers' aspirations (even the few nationalizations that they project could be challenged by the constitutional council); they are ruling out in advance giving the oppressed regions and nationalities real powers that might jeopardize what the saberrattlers call national integrity.

In short, they are submitting ahead of time to blackmail and a veto by Giscard, holder of supreme state power. There can be no real satisfaction of workers' needs, no break with a past of exploitation and oppression, no real change, without making a clean sweep of the Fifth Republic, beginning with abrogating the 1958 constitution and getting rid of Giscard; without purging the administration and dismantling the military hierarchy; without giving up nuclear weapons and getting out of NATO; without democratic planning of the economy and counterposing a state monopoly on foreign trade to the economic maneuvers of finance capital; without promoting international solidarity of the

workers and moving toward a Socialist United States of Europe.

Such are the demands that the struggle to overcome the crisis calls for, to do away with austerity and the capitalists' power. Whatever the importance and the stakes in the upcoming legislative elections, the only guarantee of forcing concessions from the bosses lies in our own mobilizations.

Today, the Communist Party and Socialist Party enjoy the confidence of the overwhelming majority of workers. Since the cantonal and municipal elections, it has even been clear that these are the majority parties in the country.

To meet the crisis, these parties must form a CP-SP government, of which we demand that it meet our demands; that it break all its ties to the bourgeoisie, that it end its alliance with the Left Radicals and other opposition Gaullists; that it stop making overtures to the bosses and kowtowing to the reactionary 1958 constitution.

V. For a Class Vote to Defeat the Bourgeois Candidates

So what is to be done? How can we move toward a real workers government, toward socialism?

The great majority of workers have confidence in either the SP or the CP, despite the policy of their leaderships.

The workers see these two parties as the means for getting rid of Giscard, Barre, and Chirac.

There is a contradiction between this desire of the working class and the real policy—class collaboration and division—followed by the SP and CP leaderships. This obstacle must be removed.

Before, during, and after the elections, the more visible the determination of the working class, the more the real policy of Mitterrand and Marchais will crumble.

The CP and SP do not want to enter the government to put forward working-class solutions to the crisis. So the CP and SP do not want to govern alone, without the Left Radicals, the Gaullists, and Giscard. By taking action to force them into it, the workers will open the way for a new situation. Working-class unity will forge a path for itself.

That is why we will give these parties a wide margin of votes, so that they have no excuse for backpedaling and compromising in the face of capitalist maneuvers and Giscard's blackmail, no excuse for making a deal with the bosses and their parties.

Not one vote must go to a bourgeois candidate, even if he suits the current fashion by appearing as a "left" Gaullist or Radical. To vote for a bourgeois candidate on the pretense of widening the voting majority means giving up the workers' independence and freedom of action and doubting their own strength.

It would not occur to any conscious worker to entrust his boss with defending

his interests. So then, why elect representatives to the assembly whose only function—Robert Fabre⁹ is a case in point—is to serve as a reminder of respect for capitalist property and bourgeois order, without having anything to answer for in the plants, where they have no supporters? The clearer things are, the more visible the real relationship of forces will be, and the more determined the workers will be to defend their rights and just demands.

The kind of workers unity we want is not the Union of the Left. It's not the Common Program. It's not an alliance with the bourgeoisie.

The kind of government that the workers must establish is not a Union of the Left government. It's a government of the CP and SP alone, of which the workers will insist that it meet their demands and respond to their aspirations.

The voting procedure in France requires that on the first round you choose and on the second round you eliminate.

On the second round, there is no alternative but to call for a vote for the *SP and CP alone*. There is no alternative but for these parties to stand down in each other's favor, in opposition to all the bourgeois parties.

But to vote for the CP and SP candidates on the second round in no way means blindly investing them with confidence, handing them a blank check, and least of all approving of their program.

On the first round—since you have a choice—are you going to vote for the leaders responsible for the division in the working class?

9. Leader of the Left Radicals.

Are you going to vote for the Common Program in its SP or CP version, neither one of which will meet your demands?

Are you going to vote for nuclear weapons and for NATO?

Are you going to vote for the bosses' Europe and their parliament, which is beholden to the multinational trusts?

Are you going to vote for the constitution of the Fifth Republic?

Young people, are you for private schools? Are you for a year of military service? Are you for "participation" in the university, Gaullist-style?

Women, are you for the Common Program's positions on abortion and contraception?

Immigrants, do you agree that you should be denied political rights, including the right to vote?

Soldiers, are you going to support those who do not support the fight by soldiers' committees for democratic rights?

Workers in the overseas territories and departments, are you going to support those who have refused to fight for your right to self-determination?

Are you going to vote for the Socialist International represented by Mitterrand, Helmut Schmidt, James Callaghan, and Mário Soares?

Are you going to vote for the so-called Eurocommunists who uniformly support the austerity plans of their ruling classes (Berlinguer and the Christian Democracy, Carrillo and the Francoists)?

Are you going to vote for austerity of the left?

Working men and women, by voting *on the first round* for the candidates run by or supported by the LCR, you will be telling Mitterrand and Marchais that, after the Barre plan, you won't hear of agreeing to any type of austerity of the left, whether in the style of Soares or of Berlinguer.

You will be telling them that you reject collaboration with the bourgeois parties, adherence to the 1958 constitution, and Giscard's tutelage.

You will be telling them that you won't hear of dividing the ranks of the working class to the benefit of the right.

By voting, as you did in the municipal elections, for revolutionary candidates, you will be delivering a warning to Mitterrand and Marchais. You will be showing them that, whatever ulterior motives and intentions they may have, they will have to reckon with your demands, your vigilance, and your readiness to mobilize.

By voting on the first round for the LCR and for all other revolutionary candidates, you will be:

Voting for workers against capitalists.

Voting against division and class collaboration.

Refusing to vote for the Union of the Left and its program.

Voting for workers unity, for your demands, for working-class solutions to overcome the crisis. □