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AN OPEN LETTER

Release the Chinese Trotskyists Now!

[The following is an open letter, dated "October 1977," addressed by six Hong Kong publications to the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and the projected Fifth National People's Congress.]

* * *

On the occasion of your celebration of the first anniversary of the downfall of the "gang of four," the promise made by the Eleventh Congress of your party to convoke the Fifth National People's Congress, and its solemn pledge to "develop democracy,"¹ we would like to put to you the following elementary democratic demand.

Twenty-five years ago, on the night of 21 December 1952, your police secretly, and therefore illegally, arrested most members of the Chinese Trotskyist movement. We now demand: to show that you are sincere about "developing democracy," please make public immediately what happened to the more than 300 Trotskyists you arrested, and set free all those who are still alive in your prisons.

Not all the undersigned are of Trotskyist political persuasion. Some are, others are not. But we agree on one point: that it is extremely undemocratic and outrageously illegal of you to secretly arrest some hundreds of political dissidents without giving them a public and impartial trial, and to jail them for twenty-five years!

We also agree that the Chinese Trotskyists, like Trotskyists all over the world, are revolutionary communists. Over the past fifty years they firmly opposed the reactionary forces in China (Peiyang warlords, then the Kuomintang²), firmly opposed

imperialism, and firmly participated in the democratic and socialist revolutions in China.

Many of them were given long prison sentences by the Kuomintang for their revolutionary activities, and some even paid with their lives. Therefore, no matter what differences there may have been between your party and the Chinese Trotskyists on revolutionary strategy and tactics, the Trotskyists have never been counterrevolutionaries (as Stalin would have people believe), and should never have been arrested and imprisoned.³

Among the arrested were well-known veterans of Chinese communism like Cheng Ch'ao-lin, Ho Chi-shen, Ying K'uen, Chiang Tseng-tung, Lin Hwan-hua, Liu

3. For more on the Chinese Trotskyists, see the article "Demand Mao's Heirs Free the Chinese Trotskyists" by Michael Baumann. *Intercontinental Press*, October 4, 1976, p. 1380. Also *Revolutionaries in Mao's Prisons*, by Li Fu-chen and Peng Shu-tse. New York: Pathfinder Press, 1974. 23 pp. \$5.00.

Kwang-hsiu, Li Lo-ming, Chou Jen-sheng, Liu Ping-chao and Lin Soong-chi. You know as well as we that they joined the revolution and acted as its leaders at various levels ever since the early twenties. They made brilliant contributions to the revolution of 1925-27. They were terribly persecuted by the Koumintang after the defeat of the revolution, and under persecution they showed themselves without exception to be loyal and unbending communists.

If you are really communists, as you claim to be, you should never have treated revolutionary communists such as these in the way you have done. You should now meet our demands by immediately setting them free and allowing them to express their opinions freely and to carry on their activities without restriction.

The first and least thing you should do is let the world know what has happened to Cheng Ch'ao-lin and the others and what their present situation is.

Only in this way can you show that you are really on the way towards the establishment of democracy and legality in China.

Only in this way can you show yourselves to be genuinely different from the "gang of four."

October Review
Rive Gauche Monthly
Equator Monthly
Combat Weekly
Sincere Publishers
Reawakening Monthly

NEWS ANALYSIS

Begin Dumps the Apple Cart

By Michael Baumann

Jimmy Carter's image as a "peacemaker" received a rude jolt January 17, when President Sadat ordered the Egyptian delegation to break off negotiations in Jerusalem and return to Cairo.

The blowup, which came during the first day of official talks between the foreign ministries of the three governments (Washington was represented by Secretary of State Vance), followed an unusually candid speech by Israeli Premier Begin.

At a formal dinner following the opening session, Begin used the occasion of a "toast" to tell the Egyptian representatives that he flatly refused to withdraw from the territories occupied by Israel after the 1967 war.

As for the question of the Palestinians, he said, this has already been taken care of: "They have self-determination expressed in the existence of 21 sovereign Arab states.

..." There is room for only one kind of "self-determination" in Israel, he added—the maintenance of Israel as a "Jewish state."

For good measure, he concluded his remarks by comparing the Palestinians' call for the right to return to their homeland to Hitler's takeover of Czechoslovakia in the 1930s.

Although Carter tried to pick up the pieces by telephoning Sadat personally to seek a continuation of the talks and by dispatching Vance to Cairo, the damage had already been done.

But even before Begin's public humiliation of the Egyptian delegation, it had become increasingly difficult to conceal that the phony "peace" talks were going nowhere.

No amount of television diplomacy could

1. Chiang Ch'ing, Wang Hung-wen, Chang Ch'un-ch'iao, and Yao Wen-yuan, all members of the Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), were arrested by the Hua Kuo-feng regime on October 7, 1976, a month after the death of Chairman Mao (September 9). Although they were among the late dictator's closest associates, they were dubbed the "gang of four" by Mao's successors and accused of innumerable crimes. Their present fate is unknown.

The Eleventh Congress was held August 12-18, 1977. No date has been set as yet for the Fifth National People's Congress.

2. The Peiyang (Northern Ocean army) was the main instrument of warlord rule in North China until the country was brought under Kuomintang rule in 1928.

The Kuomintang, or Nationalist Party, was China's principal bourgeois political party, founded by Sun Yat-sen and headed after Sun's death by Chiang Kai-shek.

paper over the fact that Israel, armed to the teeth by the Pentagon, stands as the main fomenter of violence in the Middle East. An artificial creation of imperialism to begin with, it was founded on the basis of the expulsion of its original Palestinian inhabitants. There can be no peace until they are allowed to return with their full rights.

Since the current talks began with Sadat's de facto recognition of Israel, and thereby of the expulsion of the Palestinians in at least some form, the only thing really left to be discussed is what further concessions he could be compelled to make.

In the heat of the moment Sadat himself acknowledged this: "Israel wants land and not peace, which makes the negotiations useless," he said January 18. Nothing if not abject, he added three days later in a speech before the Egyptian parliament, "the door to peace is still open" providing that Israel were willing to make concessions, particularly on the Sinai.

Begin isn't offering any and says that he is under no pressure from Washington to do so. Judging from the fact that no White House official has contradicted him and that there has not been a hint of the only kind of pressure that would matter—a cut in U.S. military support—there is no reason to disbelieve his statement.

The official Washington position on the negotiations, restated by Vance at the opening session of the talks in Jerusalem, certainly makes minimal requests of the Zionist regime.

"True peace," Vance said, "must be based on normal relations among the parties to the peace. . . . Second, there must be withdrawal by Israel from the territories occupied in 1967 and agreement on secure and recognized borders for all parties . . . in accordance with U.N. resolutions 242 and 338. And third, there must be a resolution of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects. The solution must recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and enable the Palestinians to participate in the determination of their own future."

This can be roughly translated as follows:

A settlement ("true peace") requires the Egyptian government to grant full diplomatic recognition to Israel ("normal relations"). In return, Israel will withdraw from some unspecified portion of the occupied territories ("resolution 242"), while reserving the right to retain troops where it sees fit ("secure borders"). As for the question of what to do about the Palestinians, this will be discussed at some later date.

To which the Israeli regime has replied, Why give up a slice of the pie when we can have it all? □

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Price of 'Respectability' Rising for Italian CP

By Gerry Foley

The Christian Democratic government headed by Giulio Andreotti resigned on January 16, following the announcement of the Communist, Socialist, and Republican parties that they would vote against its legislation.

Previously, these three parties had abstained on key bills, allowing the Christian Democrats to govern with only a plurality in parliament.

Since the June 1976 elections, the Christian Democrats have been in a position in which there is no politically feasible way for them to form a majority bloc excluding the CP, which now has 228 of the 630 seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

Actually, the Communist Party has had one foot in the government since the elections. Its agreement not to oppose the Andreotti cabinet's legislation allowed the Christian Democrats to launch an austerity program in the fall of 1976. For its cooperation, the CP was rewarded with some posts in parliament and in the state apparatus.

In July 1977, the Communist Party increased its collaboration with the government. Along with the SP, the Republicans, the Social Democrats (a right-wing splitoff from the SP), and the Liberals, it signed a "limited legislative agreement," pledging to support laws on "public order, the economy, and social reform" to be introduced by the cabinet.

This pact represented an anticipation of the "government of national unity," or coalition of all the "democratic parties" (that is, all parties in parliament except the neofascists) that the Communist Party has been calling for.

In an article on the open-forum page of the January 17 *New York Times*, one of the CP's main parliamentary leaders, Senator Gerardo Chiaromonte, tried to explain the CP leadership's aims to an American audience, in fact to U.S. bourgeois political circles:

The patience, perseverance and caution with which the Italian Communist Party worked for months to reach the July 1977 agreement are well known.

From the very moment that the agreement among the six democratic parties was reached, the Communists made it clearly understood that they wanted a new relationship among the political forces to obtain a government that could guarantee not only at the legislative level but also at the executive level that the agreement they helped work out would be fully implemented.

But in July no appreciable result was obtained on the question of the executive. This produced a glaring contradiction: Here we had an agreement that was worked out and signed by six parties, and

a Government made up only of Christian Democrats.

Despite this "glaring contradiction," Chiaromonte stressed, the CP would have remained "patient." However, "the economy and public order have deteriorated," and the "Republican and Socialist Parties have assumed positions critical of the Government and its activity, which in the last three months have showed signs of deterioration, if not of actually falling apart." And so the CP made the following decision:

It is no longer possible to wait for the Christian Democratic Party to mature so that it can accept Communist participation in the Government. Italy needs a government that can act with justice, that can wipe out corruption, that can address itself to all Italians—to the workers, to youth, to intellectuals—and to ask of all of them a hard and prolonged effort, hard work and an exceptional commitment to save and transform the country, to resolve the current crisis successfully.

Such a government, Chiaromonte said, should:

... inspire a great unitarian drive, both social and political. It should also carry out a rigorous policy in all fields, especially, in defending public order and the security of citizens. Within the framework of our Constitution, it should respond clearly to violent attacks on our institutions, democracy, and on the Republic itself.

Chiaromonte described the CP's objectives as nothing if not "responsible." He pledged his party's best efforts to shore up the faltering rule of the bourgeoisie. The CP's backing for the Andreotti government's austerity program demonstrated, moreover, that it does not intend to demand great sacrifices from the capitalists but rather is willing to help them shift the costs of the economic crisis onto the shoulders of the workers.

However, the response from U.S. ruling circles has been distinctly unappreciative, even though Washington is clearly still counting on CP cooperation.

When the CP's request to be included in the government was being discussed in the Christian Democratic leadership toward the end of the second week in January, the Carter government issued a warning against this, undoubtedly reinforcing the opposition. The *New York Times* editors were hardly more friendly to the idea, although they did not take so categorical or bullying a stand as Washington. In an editorial January 18 they said:

The evolution of the Italian Communist Party has been such that only other Italians can truly

judge whether to entrust it with some political power. Only they can weigh the risks against the alternatives. Will the turmoil in Italy grow worse without the party's participation? Will the Communists split into revolutionary and democratic wings if they attain responsibility—or if they continue to be denied? Will the Christian Democrats be more dangerously split by collaborating further with Communists or by rejecting them?

While not ruling out tactical flexibility toward it, the *New York Times* editors made it clear that in their eyes the Italian CP is still an outlaw party and should be so considered:

... we can only emphasize from afar that the precepts and tactics of Communist organizations the world over have long represented an assault on the political and social ideals and values of our society. Some Communists may be less menacing to the extent that they do not also directly serve the interests of the Soviet Union. Communists are now recognized as coming in many shades, from Chinese to Cuban, Portuguese to Italian. Some are more easily understood than others historically; some are more easily dealt with diplomatically. But none so far can be said to share our political and economic liberalism, the culture of the American-led industrial societies; indeed, most Communists perceive that culture as the cause of the world's misery. They give a higher priority to overturning that culture than to preserving its democratic freedoms, which we cherish above all.

Nothing less than a complete and open break from its entire past, and from the Soviet Union, would convince the *New York Times* editors that the CP had become acceptable as a government party, except perhaps temporarily, for tactical reasons.

If that is not the case [i.e., if the CP is not out to overturn Western "culture"], then the word "Communist" has lost all historical and global meaning—as some believe has now occurred in Italy. Maybe so. But if the Italian Communists, led by Enrico Berlinguer, are now only Social Democrats in the tradition of Willy Brandt or Olof Palme, then in due time they will prove it by putting Leninism entirely behind them, truly changing their identity along with their internal party procedures. They have not done so because, we suspect, a significant slice of their following refuses to accept "bourgeois" values or refuses to reject the Soviet-inspired political culture.

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The Rome daily *Repubblica*, which is close to the SP, expressed surprise and shock at the kind of language the government and press in the U.S. used in responding to the CP bid for a few posts in the cabinet. It reported this reaction in its January 17 issue under the headline: "The U.S. on the Italian Situation: 'The Reds Are at the Gates.'"

The surprise at Washington's attitude in the Italian press was all the greater because most observers, except for the far right, thought that the CP stepping up the pressure for seats in the cabinet was a very small shift, and about the least it could do in view of the pressure it was under from its ranks.

In the January 17 issue of *Repubblica*, Giorgio Galli compared the CP's move to the tactic of the SP when it was in the center-left cabinets:

The center-left governments, in which the SP participated, were marked by periodic resignations of the premiers—Mora and Rumor—who then reconstituted a government more or less the same as before. It seems that in the case of this government, for which the Communists share responsibility, a similar procedure is being adopted: Andreotti is handing in his resignation, in order to form another government more or less the same as the present one.

In the 1960s, the Socialists, who provoked these crises by demands for reforms, later agreed to help lend new credibility to the previously existing setup for fear that it might be replaced by something worse. So, in the 1970s, it seems that the CP, which provoked this crisis, is ready to put a new face on the status quo out of fear of something worse, which is what it has done since June [1976].

However, the situation in Italy has changed since the 1960s. The masses are demanding real changes much more insistently, and Galli thought they could not be put off any longer by parliamentary shell games:

In this way, of course, the CP is helping to prepare the way for a greater and not lesser evil. The evil feared by the SP—political tension, economic crisis, and social breakdown—came about not because the party opposed the arrogant pretensions of the Christian Democrats but because it passively accepted them.

The reason that the CP leadership took a harder line, Galli wrote, was evident. The CP cadres had made it clear to the leadership that the sight of the Christian Democrats relying on the CP to stay in power while keeping it in a purely servile role made their job impossible. They could no longer "control social tensions."

In fact, in the January 18 *Washington Post*, correspondent Bernard D. Nossiter indicated that U.S. State Department officials also thought that the present governmental crisis would lead to very little change, and that the statements opposing CP participation in the government had limited and precise aims:

U.S. authorities believe last week's statement has stiffened the backbone of the Christian Democrats and has assured that they will resist giving the Communists any ministries. These officials

believe the Communists have now been frightened, too, and are pulling back from their demand for Cabinet positions.

The American point of view holds that some lesser Christian Democratic gesture to give the



ANDREOTTI

Communists a greater degree of legitimacy would be acceptable provided that a new Christian Democratic government in turn extracted pledges of support for specific austerity measures from the Communists.

Nossiter's description of the attitude of "the U.S. authorities" is consistent with the tactic recommended for dealing with the big Western CPs in the magazines of State Department advisers: Keep them hungry, let them taste the spoils of parliamentary "respectability" only little by little, and then they will stretch their snouts until they topple once and for all into the parliamentary political trough, alongside the Social Democrats.

Washington did not intend to reject the CP's help, Nossiter said. It just intended to drive the hardest possible bargain:

Almost everyone here agrees that Italy is now ungovernable without the consent of the Communists and their worker followers, particularly at a time of raging inflation.

Repubblica correspondent Galli expressed the fear that the capitalists were driving too hard a bargain with the CP for their own good:

The Christian Democrats have used the CP's abstention [in parliament] to wear out its credibility. But at the same time, this has been wearing out our social fabric. The left has gone into crisis, but the breakdown of society has accelerated.

There is, in fact, good reason to fear that if no political party takes the leadership of the growing masses of the exasperated and

desperate, social tensions in Italy will increase in an uncontrolled way, leading to violent spontaneous explosions and spreading chaos. The result of this could be tragic for the Italian workers and poor masses and dangerous enough for most Italian politicians themselves.

However, the leading local capitalists and Washington have no reason to be particularly inhibited by the possibility of such a development. As long as there is no alternative leadership capable of organizing a socialist revolution, spontaneous blowups will eventually exhaust themselves, leaving the bases of capitalist power intact.

Washington has not begun to use up its options. Whatever place the capitalists may decide is necessary and useful to give to the CP in the cabinet, Washington has the power to set limits that cannot be exceeded by any government unprepared to set up a socialist economy. Nossiter pointed this out:

Top U.S. officials are working on a set of recommendations for an International Monetary Fund watchdog team due here right after a new government is formed, sources said. Whether or not Italy gets the IMF team's approval will have a profound effect on Italian output, employment and income. . . .

The Andreotti government had forecast that its deficit would run \$22 billion this year [somewhat over the \$17 billion limit the Italian government promised the IMF that it would observe]. Moreover, if the new government does not get Communist support to cut public spending and raise charges for public utilities, the deficit will run an estimated \$33 billion—twice the IMF limit.

If . . . the IMF team disapproves of the conduct of any new Italian government, Italy could lose \$7 billion that foreign banks have on deposit here.

Nonetheless, in a situation where such large masses of workers and youth are in motion, Washington cannot be certain that new and more militant leadership could not develop quickly. Furthermore, the loosening of the internal regime of the CP, designed to make it more attractive as a parliamentary party, may also make it more vulnerable to pressure from below than Stalinist leaderships have normally been.

Certainly, it has been clear that the CP leadership is under more and more heat from a disgruntled rank and file. Such a steady buildup of powerful pressures against the class-collaborationist policy of the CP leadership is a new factor in Italian politics and is undoubtedly being closely watched in many quarters. □

Peru General Strike Canceled

According to a Reuters dispatch carried in the January 22 *New York Times*, the general strike that had been set for January 23-24 by the General Confederation of Peruvian Workers was called off three days before it was to begin. The report said the Morales Bermúdez government had offered to discuss demands for higher pay and for reinstatement of the thousands of workers fired after the July 19, 1977, general strike.

Former High Officials Voice Alarm Over Increasing Discontent

By Gerry Foley

Since June 1976, the ground has been visibly crumbling under the Stalinist regime in Poland. The Gierek government has been unable to halt the process. And now all sorts of observers have their eyes fixed on the country, watching to see if there is going to be an avalanche and when it might come.

Among those interested in the fate of the Gierek government are the Western capitalists, to whom it owes considerable debts. For example, in its December 19 issue, the U.S. magazine *Business Week* wrote:

Poland's larders are being filled for Christmas feasting. But come January, shortages of food, particularly meat, and coal are going to show up.

That could spell trouble. In 1970, rioting dumped Gomulka from Communist leadership. This time a strange "conglomerate" is trying to save Gierek and the Polish economy: West Germany's Chancellor Schmidt has just been in Warsaw promising more aid. And U.S. Secretary of Commerce, Juanita Kreps, following on his heels, signed credits for \$300 million and took under consideration another \$200 million, probably for increasing American grain purchases.

Business Week pointed out:

... Almost everyone has a vested interest in trying to prop up the Gierek regime. Any major Polish blowup would quickly trip the Russian intervention wire. West Germany, which had a trade surplus with Poland of \$220 million in the first six months of this year, sees a peaceful Warsaw as essential to a tranquil Eastern Europe.

U.S. planners have long hoped that there could be a gradual transition in Poland to a more moderate Communist regime.

Nonetheless, the U.S. business magazine was doubtful if the efforts to prop up the Gierek regime could succeed. It quoted a "European observer" as saying: "One angry housewife in a butcher-shop line could unravel the whole thing."

In fact, just before the Polish Communist Party national conference held over the weekend of January 9-10, a group of veteran CP leaders raised an alarm about the worsening situation in the country. In a letter to Gierek, they wrote:

The political and economic situation in our country is very grave. Difficulties and tensions are steadily increasing, and the mood in broad sections of the population shows that the confidence of the citizens in the party and the state has been shaken. . . .

Severe shortages of food and industrial products, as well as hidden price rises, are creating an atmosphere of dissatisfaction and irritability. General indignation is being increased by the tone and content of the primitive propaganda in the press and broadcast over radio and televi-

sion, which is regarded by every thinking person as an expression of contempt for public opinion.

The conviction is growing among the population that nothing can be achieved by honest methods. There is an ever increasing trend to corruption, to the development of cliques as parallel economic channels, and to dishonest methods of making money. There is indignant talk about persons making easy fortunes, about greed, and the misuse of positions for personal gain.

The main problem, the veteran CP leaders said, was "political," and thus not the difficulties arising from the condition of the world market and the stage of Polish economic growth, as the government contends. The problem was the "undemocratic form of government." And the lack of democracy in the party as well was paralyzing it in the face of the grave situation in the country:

Essential for changing the situation in the country is change in the party. . . . The healthy forces in the party must be activated. The development of the party is being obstructed by the bureaucratic machine leadership, which conflicts with the democratic and social nature of the party.

This machine promotes unprincipledness, it leads to dishonesty and ossification, it kills the initiative that should be forthcoming from party bodies. . . .

The development of democratic forces in the party and the society is being blocked by a mechanical and false interpretation of the leading role of the party. . . .

The initiative and independence of the groups, trade unions, and organizations linked to the party must not be restricted. The party can discuss with these bodies, it can attempt to win them over to its positions. But it must not force them to make decisions by administrative means. The leading role of the party cannot be exercised by decree.

This statement was signed by, among others, Edward Ochab, Polish head of state from 1964 to 1968. In the latter year he resigned his position, reportedly in protest against the anti-Semitic campaign whipped up in that year by the Gomulka government in its attempt to crush the critical movements developing among students and intellectuals. Most of the other signers had been high officials before 1968 and were shoved into the background when the Gomulka government moved to stamp out the vestiges of the liberalization launched in 1956.

One signer, Mieczyslaw Marzec, was a member of parliament until 1976. Another, Janusz Zarzycki, was mayor of Warsaw until 1967. The group included a founder of the Communist youth organization, Jerzy

Morawski, and a former finance minister, Jerzy Albrecht.

The full text of the letter was published in the January 16 issue of the West German magazine *Der Spiegel*. However, the signers deny that they turned it over themselves to Western reporters.

The Gierek leadership tried to belittle the importance of this statement by suggesting that the signers were senile has-beens. In the January 12 *Le Monde*, correspondent Manuel Lucbert described the response of Central Committee Secretary Lukaszewicz as follows:

Referring to the advanced age of some of the signers, he said that he thought they should end their lives in "dignity and tranquility," without drawing too much attention to themselves. "It would be inhumane to take a position about their behavior."

At the same time, Lukaszewicz said that the signers, of course, had every right to express their views:

In the framework of the pre-congress discussion, party members have the right to express their opinions, but, to be sure, we would prefer that they address themselves to the collectives to which they belong.

However, the impact of such a statement by former top CP leaders cannot be so easily conjured away. This document amounts to a political manifesto of an opposition that must reach deep into the ruling stratum itself. In its concrete formulations and denunciations, it goes quite far. Such language has not been heard from well-known CP leaders, semiretired or not, since the Prague Spring in 1968, if then.

In the official press itself, moreover, the tensions have led to a muted debate, and in November to an open attack in the daily *Zycie Warszawy* on the editor of the weekly *Polityka*, Mieczyslaw Rakowski. What provoked the denunciation was an article suggesting cautiously that there might be limits to the degree that decision-making could be centralized.

In its December 24 issue, *Polityka* featured an article by Michal Radgowski entitled "Social Moods." It argued that the party leadership should make a greater effort to win the support of public opinion by offering some democratic concessions:

The more developed a society is (culturally, intellectually, materially), as in the case of Poland, the greater the number of people who give a special value to such goods as justice, respect for human worth, democracy, and politeness in the most social and broadest sense of the

word, that is, goods that are not items in distribution, trade, or the economic situation.

More justice in the eyes of the people, more respect for human worth, more respect for democracy, not only in form but in content, greater courtesy in all spheres—such things do not disrupt the balance of supply and demand. . . .

Achieving such benefits is the ideological-moral thread running through Edward Gierek's public statements, including at the Ninth Plenum. At that time, there was also mention of deformations, such as favoritism, nepotism, and injustice.

Eliminating such deformations by going to their root, not only in individual errors but in organizational malfunctions (lack of democracy, poor administration), would lead to improving social moods more than we may imagine.

Divisions in the Communist Party are evidently widening under the pressure not only of mass discontent, including a resumption of local strikes, but of organized opposition currents developing outside it. Thus, the letter of the veteran CP leaders mentioned the problem posed by "the activities of the KOR," that is, the Komitet Obrony Robotników (the Committee to Defend the Workers), which was formed to aid the workers victimized as a result of the June 1976 general strike.

After the workers were released, most members of the KOR joined the Committee for Social Self-Defense, an opposition movement of broader scope.

In Poland, an opposition press has developed to an extent unparalleled in the history of any Stalinist-ruled country. Even though the various unauthorized publications are available only to a vanguard, since the bureaucracy continues to hold a monopoly on mass-production printing equipment, they already constitute an important rival for the official press.

In its January 9 issue, the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*, which has been used by even some of the big bourgeois press in Europe as a source of information on Poland, estimated the combined number of copies of new issues of the unauthorized publication at about 20,000. In a country where the official press is so despised, the actual circulation must be many times the number of copies.

Furthermore, *Rouge* reports that the unauthorized publications now usually include an address and telephone number where the editors can be contacted. It described one of these semilegal journals, the fortnightly *Robotnik* (Worker).

About a thousand copies are run off on mimeograph machines or photocopiers. About a dozen issues have appeared. It is read by many workers . . . and circulates throughout the country. At the back of every issue are the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the editors living in Warsaw and the provincial cities. Half of the editors are workers.

Rouge quoted the statement of purpose in the first issue of *Robotnik*:

This is a paper in which the workers will be able to express their own opinions, exchange

experiences, and establish contacts with the workers in other factories.

The journal pledged to support and promote actions "leading to increased participation by the workers in making the decisions about the amount of pay they get, their working conditions, their hours, as well as social conditions and housing." It also promised to promote discussion on "what kind of independent workers representatives should replace the unions, which are dead institutions."

In face of the growing discontent and ferment, however, the Gierek leadership was unable to come up with any better answer at the January 9-10 conference than a call for "national unity" of "patriotic Poles" and a decision to introduce increases in food prices gradually.

Obviously spreading out the increases is not going to reduce already seething discontent. In fact, this can only prolong a potentially explosive situation in which even small incidents may provoke blow-ups.

Indonesian Students March Against Suharto

Since November, the Indonesian military regime has been confronted with increasingly vocal student protests.

The first major demonstrations were held on November 10, when 1,000 university students marched through Jakarta, the capital, to denounce corruption and criticize General Suharto's plans to run for a third term as president. Similar student actions were held in at least two other large Javanese cities.

One issue that students have focused on has been the reported plan to build a \$9.6 million mausoleum complex in central Java. Although the regime has denied that the mausoleum is being built for the Suharto family, at least one of those already buried there is a relative of Suharto's. One of the placards carried in the Jakarta protest said, "The people are hungry and the boss prepares his grave."

The student opposition gained momentum the following month when more than 200 student leaders met in Jakarta to map out a campaign against corruption and for a more equal distribution of wealth.

In response to the student criticisms, about two dozen top generals met with Suharto in mid-December and issued a statement afterward warning that the army would take strong action against anyone threatening "national leadership."

Undeterred, about 300 members of the All-Bandung Student Council demonstrated in Bandung December 28 against Suharto's reelection plans. Armored cars moved in to disperse the protesters and the following day the regime announced that half a dozen student leaders had been

Nor is a discredited regime going to succeed in rallying "patriotic Poles" around it, unless it gives the masses a chance to express themselves through free national discussion in a free press and through genuinely representative bodies.

However, no Stalinist regime can make such concessions. The rule of the bureaucracy depends on usurping all power in the society and the economy, and therefore on totally gagging the people. Despite three revolutionary explosions since 1956, the Polish Stalinist regime has not allowed any democratic institutions to develop. Every inch of freedom has had to be won by mass struggle and held against constant attempts to wipe it out.

Now the long tug of war between the Polish bureaucracy and the people seems to be reaching a critical stage. A regime that can neither win the support of the population nor effectively suppress opposition does not have much of a life expectancy, no matter how many powerful well-wishers may hope to prop it up. □

arrested.

The Suharto regime has charged the main Muslim "opposition" party, the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP—Development Unity Party), with being behind the wave of student protests. The PPP has charged government interference in the May 1977 general elections and it may have some influence on university students through the Islamic Students Society.

But the protests have not been limited to Muslims. The Catholic Students Association, for instance, also issued a statement critical of the regime.

In an apparent effort to stifle news reports of the student protests, the regime banned four major newspapers January 20. Two had reported attempts by student leaders to meet with Suharto and quoted them as saying that if he ran for reelection "blood will flow." □

Barassi, Alvarez Kidnapped

Word has been received from Argentina that Luis Antonio Barassi and Gerardo Julio Alvarez were kidnapped December 21 by uniformed personnel of the Federal Police.

The two were picked up in a Buenos Aires bar and taken to the police headquarters of the Second Section. They were held there several hours and then removed to another police installation.

Efforts to determine their whereabouts and physical condition through habeas corpus proceedings have been unsuccessful.

American Senators Begin to Line Up Behind Canal Treaty

By Fred Murphy

"It all bears an eerie resemblance to the typical congressional visit to Vietnam in the heyday of the war. The jungle looks the same, the helicopters are the same, the U.S. military briefing officers sound the same and—most striking of all—the presumption of American preeminence and omniscience is often the same."

That is how *Washington Post* correspondent Robert Kaiser described the atmosphere surrounding visits by forty-two U.S. senators to Panama during the early part of January. The junkets have been a prelude to the Senate's debate and vote on the proposed new treaties on the Panama Canal, expected to take place in February and March.

The treaties provide a facelift for continued U.S. domination of Panama. Although they grant Panamanian control of the canal and the Canal Zone (a ten-mile swath through the middle of the country, ruled by the United States since 1903), such control reverts only in the year 2000. Even then, the Pentagon will retain permanent rights to "defend the canal's neutrality."

One Panamanian summed up the change in this way: "Under the new treaty we get rid of the United States presence in perpetuity. But with the neutrality pact, they can come back for eternity" (*Los Angeles Times*, October 31).

Two-thirds of Panamanians voting in an October 23 plebiscite held by the Torrijos government approved the pacts, although opposition had been rising rapidly in the weeks leading up to the referendum.

The vote came just in time to head off further controversy generated by a joint communiqué that Torrijos and Jimmy Carter issued October 14. The statement made more explicit Washington's "right to act against any aggression or threat directed against the Canal." U.S. and Panamanian officials confirmed the next day that this meant "the U.S. could indeed land troops in Panama to protect the canal."

While almost half the members of the American Senate traveled to Panama and met with Torrijos, most of the U.S. press's attention focused on Democratic majority leader Robert Byrd of West Virginia and on Howard Baker of Tennessee, the Republican minority leader.

Baker considers himself a leading contender for the Republican presidential nomination in 1980. Thus he has made a special effort to appear "statesmanlike" in the treaty debate.



MacNelly/New York Daily News

Right-wing opposition to ratification, on grounds that the treaties represent a "give-away" to a dangerous "Communist," has been concentrated in Baker's party. At the same time, other influential Republicans, such as former President Ford (who could rival Baker for a second run at the presidency in 1980), support the treaties and have warned against "cannibalizing" the Republican Party over Panama.

Baker is therefore seeking to defuse the right-wing opposition by putting forward amendments that would make Washington's military "rights" an integral part of the treaty.

Baker met with Torrijos January 7. Upon returning to the United States, he said Torrijos had "shown enough flexibility" to accept such amendments.

Democratic leader Byrd announced January 13 that he would also support the treaties if they could be fixed up along the lines suggested by Baker.

The Carter administration's main concern now is to work out a compromise with Baker and the Republicans to assure that any changes made in the treaties will not be so drastic as to require a second ratification vote in Panama.

Robert Kaiser reported from Panama City in a January 5 dispatch to the *Washington Post*: "Panamanians and U.S. officials here both say Torrijos will resist changes so substantial that he would have to refer them again to the electorate. A new

plebiscite . . . would offer Torrijos' otherwise-silenced opponents a gratuitous opportunity to challenge his one-man rule."

So Baker's "statesmanship" could backfire. The editors of the *Washington Post* warned Baker January 10 that "continued American use [of the canal] depends on keeping the goodwill of the Panamanians, not on imposing concessions bound to rattle nationalistic Panamanians in the years ahead."

Amid all the haggling among ruling-class politicians over how best to secure continued American domination over Panama, the views of those supporting an immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops and immediate Panamanian sovereignty over the canal and the Canal Zone have received little notice in the United States.

Americans will soon have an opportunity to hear such views, however. Miguel Antonio Bernal, a prominent revolutionary-socialist opponent of the Torrijos regime, will begin a U.S. speaking tour in Houston February 1.

Bernal was deported from Panama in February 1976. No charges were brought against him, but his outspoken opposition to Torrijos's concessions to Washington in the canal negotiations clearly played a role in the regime's decision to exclude him.

In Bernal's view, the proposed treaties "establish a new 'perpetuity' that backs to

the hilt American imperialism's efforts to prolong its military presence in Panama so as to continue exploiting and dominating our people.

"The slogan that the Panamanian peo-

ple have raised throughout the long years of struggle remains valid: Not one single base, not one single Yankee soldier on our soil" (*Intercontinental Press*, September 12, 1977). □

Unibell Flattened by Bulldozers

Vorster Orders Demolition of Black Shantytown

By Ernest Harsch

In yet another display of the apartheid regime's brutal disregard for African rights, bulldozers and armed policemen with dogs moved into an African shantytown north of Cape Town January 16. On the first day of the demolition effort, about 100 shacks were destroyed, at a rate of about one every five minutes.

Although the 2,000 shacks that made up the shantytown of Unibell were little more than jerry-built structures of tin, plastic sheets, cardboard, and wood, they were the only homes available for about 15,000 Black residents.

According to South African law, Unibell is an illegal squatter settlement and must be destroyed. Its fate is to be the same as that of Modderdam, another African shantytown of 11,000 inhabitants east of Cape Town that was razed in August 1977.

The residents of Unibell, Modderdam, Werkgenoot, and other unauthorized African settlements in the Cape Town area had been successful for a few years in staving off the white regime's demolition orders by appealing to the courts. But the recently adopted Squatters Act removed this right to appeal and cleared the way for the new wave of demolitions.

The inhabitants still put up some resistance, however. Modderdam residents clashed with police in June 1976 and staged protests during the shantytown's destruction a year later. An ad hoc group, the Unibell Action Committee, was formed to fight the razing of Unibell. A spokesman declared that the residents would not voluntarily move, because they had no place else to go. "The bulldozers must bury us with our shacks," he declared.

Despite this spirit of defiance, the regime's armed might is so great and Black political rights are so restricted that the shantytown dwellers have thus far been unable to halt the steady advance of the apartheid bulldozers.

Many of those now being made homeless are women and children who originally came from rural areas to live near their husbands and fathers working as migrant laborers in Cape Town. They were driven out of the African reserves, called Bantu-

stans, by economic necessity, since food production in the impoverished Bantustans is too low to support them, even at a bare subsistence level.

In this respect, one of the economic factors behind the growth of shantytowns in South Africa is similar to that in many colonial and semicolonial countries in Asia, Latin America, and the rest of Africa, where peasants are forced off the land by overcrowding and then drawn to the cities in search of jobs. Because of the low level of industrialization in these countries, many of them cannot find jobs and are compelled to settle in makeshift squatter settlements. Others who do find work cannot afford the generally high rents in the cities.

According to the United Nations, between 30 percent and 40 percent of the entire population of the "Third World" lives in slums or shantytowns. Many of the neocolonial regimes try to deal with the problem in the same manner as the apartheid authorities—with force.

At the same time, the situation in South Africa is markedly different. The country is not underdeveloped, but has a highly industrialized capitalist economy. Both the growth of the shantytowns and their continued illegal status is a direct result of the regime's white supremacist policies.

To provide an ample supply of cheap Black labor for the white-owned mines and factories, it has been official policy for more than a century to *drive* African workers off the land and into the cities. This was done largely through the theft of African land, restrictions on agricultural production in the reserves, and the imposition of stiff taxes. As a result, about a third of South Africa's African population is now urbanized.

But to prevent this large and powerful Black urban population from transforming its social weight into political power, the white minority regime has steadily whittled away more and more of their remaining rights. Essentially, Blacks are allowed to stay in the urban areas only as long as they work for a white employer.

Most everyone else—who are known as "superfluous appendages" by the white regime—are shipped off to the reserves.

Around most South African cities, about half of all African workers are permitted—for the time being—to live with their families in segregated Black townships like Soweto, near Johannesburg. Though the conditions in them are wretched and the residents cannot own the land they live on, their existence is nevertheless legally authorized.

Not so in Cape Town. The Western Cape has been declared a "labor preference area" for whites and Coloureds, who are of mixed ancestry. Because industry needs a certain number of African workers, some are allowed in, but largely as temporary contract workers who cannot have their families with them and are housed in barracks-like "hostels" in the townships of Langa, Guguletu, and Nyanga.

Despite this policy, many African workers came to the Cape Town area illegally in search of jobs. And many migrant laborers who were there legally brought their families without permission. Because of the overcrowding and the constant police raids in the three official African townships, they were forced to build the flimsy shantytowns on vacant land outside the city, from whatever materials were at hand.

Some of the shantytowns developed into fairly stable communities. In a report from Cape Town in the October 1, 1977, issue of the New York weekly *Nation*, Andrew Silk described Modderdam before its destruction:

Committees were formed—judicial, executive and women's. Minimal sanitary conditions were enforced; patrols kept the place safe from strangers; a court, operating according to village law, sat each week to try petty grievances. Community workers from the University of the Western Cape, the "coloured" institution nearby, helped to draw up a constitution.

... Many with whom we spoke said they preferred the life in the camp to that in the township, despite the flimsiness of their homes. They said there was much less crime at Modderdam, and a better spirit, as everyone lived close together.

But in South Africa, where white rule is maintained only through massive force, any fundamental departure from apartheid policy is seen as a potential threat to the entire white supremacist order. If the unauthorized shantytowns were allowed to remain, Blacks would be encouraged to press for other concessions. In the wake of the massive Black uprisings in Soweto and other townships around the country, the Vorster regime considers it necessary to maintain a "tough" posture.

So illegal settlements like Modderdam and Unibell are flattened by the bulldozers. The result is even more suffering and misery for a people who have already faced countless barbarities under the apartheid system. □

Swing to Right at British Student Union Conference

By Colin Talbot

The National Union of Students held its annual conference in Blackpool December 2-5 under the shadow of a number of attacks on student unions. More than a thousand delegates and observers, representing the NUS's 800,000 members, debated some of the most crucial issues facing the student movement in Britain.

The conference represented a triumph for the new right-wing coalition of reformist and Conservative Party forces. For eight years the NUS has been dominated by the Broad Left, an organisation of Communist Party and left Labour party students, which came to power in the aftermath of the student radicalisation of the late 1960s.

Over the past two years, however, a powerful right wing has emerged, represented by the Federation of Conservative Students (FCS), the student organisation of the Tory party. For almost a year the policies of these two groups have gradually converged as the Broad Left have abandoned position after position they previously held, under pressure from the right.

Together, the Broad Left and FCS were able to muster sufficient votes to push policies through the conference on student-union autonomy, racism, education, and Palestine. However, they far from had things their own way. Almost half the conference consistently supported policies put forward by the Socialist Students Alliance (SSA), the eight-month-old organisation that was formed to win NUS to a perspective of mass-action campaigns. The strength of the SSA and the rest of the far-left was much greater than at previous conferences.

The press were overjoyed with the results of the conference, heaping praise on NUS President Sue Slipman for her "moderation." Slipman is a leading member of the Communist Party.

The influential right-wing *Daily Telegraph* gave prominent coverage to Slipman's speech opening the conference. Under the headline "Root out Left extremists, says NUS president," a report in their December 3 issue said Slipman had warned "against the infiltration of Trotskyists and other extreme Left-wingers" and "politically motivated students who try to manipulate students' unions for their own ends," who should be "rooted out before they destroy the entire student movement."

The year-end review of student affairs in the December 30 issue of the weekly *Times*

Higher Education Supplement also praised NUS "moderation." "The student year" Peter David wrote, "culminated in a triumph for moderation, as the new model National Union of Students met in December to ditch the extremist policies which had brought the union into disrepute and undermined the important educational campaigns the NUS was keen to wage."

David continued, "the NUS had good reason to polish up its image, for there were important challenges to face. In January [1977] the Council of Local Education Authorities [CLEA] decided to look into the management of funds by student unions, and "the issue cropped up again in November, when the government's Comptroller and Auditor General expressed concern about the open-ended nature of the system under which more than £11m is spent annually on students' capitation fees [union subscriptions]."

These moves by the CLEA and the auditor general were the major national efforts in a developing campaign to erode the independence of the student unions. In 1972, attempts by the Tory government to limit students' rights were defeated by a mass mobilisation that involved more than 250,000 students. Now, five years later, the NUS leaders have capitulated to the main demand of the right wing, that student-union finances should be legally and politically "publicly accountable," that is, subject to sanction by the state.

This was by far the hottest debate at the NUS conference, with the SSA spearheading an all-out assault on the Executive-Broad Left-Tory position. The SSA's resolution was defeated by 338 to 325, a margin of only 13 votes. Speaking for the resolution, Mick Archer, president of Birmingham Polytechnic union, said that he and other members of his Executive faced possible imprisonment for a donation their union had made to striking firefighters.

The major issue raised by the press prior to the conference, in their customary at-

tempt to influence its decisions, was that of Zionism and of supposed attacks "on the rights of Jewish students." A number of student unions had taken steps to restrict the rights of Zionist (not "Jewish") students to propagate Zionism and support for Israel in the colleges, largely at the instigation of the Socialist Workers Party (formerly International Socialists). The Zionists and the Executive used this as a pretext for a witch-hunt against the whole far-left and to confuse the debate on the actual issue of Zionism and the Palestinians. The Executive threatened to take powers to suspend any union that "infringed the democratic rights of its members."

The SSA firmly opposed any restrictions on the rights of Zionists, while at the same time opposing the Executive having such powers. The SSA argued that these powers would be far too wide-ranging and that only the national conference of NUS, which is a federal body, should be able to terminate membership. In the event, both the SWP's position and the Executive's were defeated, the Executive accepting the SSA's position in mid-debate. However, the bogus "issue" sufficiently obscured the debate on Palestine to enable the Broad Left-Tory alliance to pass a resolution recognising Israel, while making a gesture towards some vague "Palestinian rights."

The most explosive event at the conference was the visit of Shirley Williams, the Labour secretary of state for education. Williams has been responsible for the closure of thirty colleges of education, massive rises in tuition fees, and thousands of student teachers on the unemployment queues. Hundreds of delegates joined in barracking [heckling] Williams, especially when she announced a further increase in fees.

The *Guardian* on December 3 reported that Williams "struggled through her speech . . . against barracking from a small group of Far Left and College of Education students. . . . During the uproar which greeted her speech students waved posters reading 'Williams is a Tory—she must go' and 'Williams closed our college.'" Three members of the Executive joined in the protest.

While the overall effect of the conference was a shift to the right in NUS policy, militant students left the gathering confident that they can win thousands of students to their banner and set the NUS on a new course. □

Police Harass Delegates From Northern Ireland

By Stuart Paul

The NUS conference was greeted during its opening session, December 2, with the news that one of its delegates was being held under the Prevention of Terrorism

Act. The delegate, nineteen-year-old Emanuel Hand, seemed an unlikely victim, as he was the delegate from the Belfast College of Business Studies. But the reason for his

detention was not long in coming out.

Emanuel's brother Peter Hand is a victim of British torture in Northern Ireland who is speaking out against the treatment of political prisoners. The week before the NUS conference opened, Amnesty International sent a mission to the North, with investigation of the treatment afforded police and army detainees as its main area of concern. Peter Hand's case was one, in particular, the mission investigated.

Emanuel Hand was one of six NUS delegates arrested as they got off the plane from Belfast. After an hour, and phone calls presumably to Belfast, the other five were released. Those originally detained included Peter Davies, the official representative to the conference from the Union of Students in Ireland (USI). USI members in Northern Ireland are also members of NUS (United Kingdom) and twenty Northern Ireland college delegates were sent to the NUS conference.

Although the NUS Executive opposed a demonstration at the police station where Hand was originally held, about 200 delegates joined a picket organised by several Northern Ireland delegates. Before the picket, hundreds of delegates joined in chants demanding that Labour MP Shirley Williams, speaking at the conference, intervene to secure Hand's release. The combination of the two protests splashed the story all over the national press, and this publicity, Hand said, led to his release:

"Before all the publicity, the police had given me no indication that they would be releasing me. All they said was that they knew I was in the Provisional IRA and that they were going to charge me or exclude [deport] me. I said 'charge me.'" Hand said the police decided the next day that he was in the "official" IRA.

Hand's brother Peter, released in May 1976 after being tortured, was recently held for several months "on remand" on the charge of having known where the "official" IRA kept its weapons in 1973.

"This time," Emanuel Hand said, "all the police did to get him to sign a false confession to the charges was to bring in the same torturers to threaten him with more. He has had a bad case of nerves ever since the last time and he signed right away." The British police, he said, knew a lot about his brother's case. □

U.S. Nuclear Sub Protested

A protest involving about seventy boats greeted the U.S. nuclear submarine *Pin-tado* when it arrived in Auckland, New Zealand January 16. Police and navy vessels were mobilized to escort the sub.

A ten-year-old ban on nuclear-powered ships entering New Zealand ports was lifted in 1976.

Another Election Promise Scrapped

Janata Party Introduces 'Preventive Detention' Bill

By Sharad Jhaveri

JAMNAGAR—The Janata Party regime, in face of considerable opposition from other parties, introduced a controversial bill into the Lok Sabha (lower house of Parliament) December 23. It calls for the repeal of the draconian Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA), but at the same time seeks to incorporate a new section on preventive detention into the Criminal Procedure Code.

The bill has been described as an attempt at "smuggling [in] of MISA through the backdoor." The proposed nineteen-clause addition to the Criminal Procedure Code, under the heading "prevention of treasonable and other dangerous activities," seeks to institutionalise MISA-type powers. Its effect will be to place preventive detention on the statute books as a permanent law.

If passed, the bill would empower the regime to detain anyone with a view to preventing him or her from acting in any manner deemed prejudicial to the defence and security of India, the maintenance of supplies and services essential to the community, or the maintenance of "public order."

Under the bill, such persons could be detained without trial for an extendable one-year period, with no right to appeal to the courts. The only right provided is that the prisoner must be given the grounds for

his or her detention within five days of the arrest.

Thus, in essence, this new measure retains all the obnoxious features of the repressive MISA, which was used extensively under Indira Gandhi's state of emergency.

The bill drew protests from the opposition benches. For nearly three-quarters of an hour, the Lok Sabha heard angry and agitated opposition members charge the regime with going back on its promises to do away with such repressive measures.

Since the bill was introduced on the last day of the current session, and also because of opposition from some prominent Janata members themselves, the regime has simply chosen to introduce the bill. It will be considered by the next session of Parliament.

In addition, a dispatch from New Delhi in the December 23 *Indian Express* reported that the regime also wanted powers to declare an emergency in case of armed rebellion in any part of the country.

So far, no major leftist party in India has firmly stood up to this challenge, nor made any plans to mobilise the masses in opposition to this move. None of them has an independent working-class perspective nor an effective policy on the question of defence of democratic and trade-union rights in general.

December 30, 1977

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The Legislative Elections in France

By Jean-Claude Bernard

PARIS—The campaign for the upcoming legislative elections on March 12 and 19 is already under way.

The parties of the right are in a state of "holy disunion." The Gaullists of the RPR [Rally for the Republic], led by Jacques Chirac, have just broken the agreement that bound them to their partners in Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's "presidential majority," accusing the latter of having formed a secret bloc designed to thwart their dominance within the right. The RPR announced it was therefore reasserting its right to run candidates where it saw fit, without worrying about the consent of the three other parties with which it signed an election platform not long ago.

On the left, the alliance the Socialist and Communist parties formed by signing the Common Program in 1972 first gave way to fierce competition leading to the breakoff of negotiations around updating the program and has now been transformed into an open split.

The SP has published its own version of the Common Program for the legislative elections. The CP is getting ready to do the same. In the meantime, the CP decided at its national conference January 7-8 to take no position at present on the question of withdrawal in favor of SP candidates on the second round of the elections, choosing instead to wait until its own vote total from the first round is known. The nub of the crisis is that there is no longer either a union of the left or a common program.

* * *

In March 1977, the Union of the Left—a coalition including the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, and the Movement of Left Radicals—carried the municipal elections. All the polls indicated that the workers parties would also win an absolute majority in the subsequent legislative elections. The Giscard-Barre government's austerity policy only helped to further discredit the ruling coalition. In this situation, the trade unions organized a national strike on May 24, which, despite its lack of perspectives, was marked by the biggest demonstrations since May 1968.

They way in which the bourgeoisie was preparing for the possibility of the Union of the Left coming to power was revealed by Giscard d'Estaing himself, who had just written:

The success of the opposition in the municipal elections, by giving weight to the likelihood of its coming to power, changed the nature of the Com-

mon Program. From a mere platform, which the public always regards with manifest skepticism, it became the "official guide" to the decisions to be taken by the government in the event of a victory for the opposition.

The "manifest skepticism" Giscard was talking about was that of the bankers and other bosses who were convinced of the eternity of their rule.

While the working class has not undergone any decisive test of class forces, the campaign for the legislative elections is unfolding in a changed political situation, now that a split has hardened between the CP and SP. The conflict between these two parties has become the major concern of the working class—which had been promised a change by its organizations, through an electoral victory for the Common Program signed by the CP, SP, and Left Radicals

Rebuilding the SP Through an Alliance With the CP

By signing the Common Program in 1972, the SP executed a political turn, breaking with its tactic of the previous twenty-five years. By signing a class-collaborationist agreement that might involve CP participation in the government, the SP was fulfilling a goal clearly outlined by François Mitterrand. The aim was to recover, in a period of working-class upsurge, territory lost to the CP. The balance sheet of the last five years shows that the goal of the SP's first secretary has largely been attained.

In 1972, the SP was overshadowed by the CP in the electoral arena. It had only meager support in the trade unions, and that through its influence in the FEN (National Education Federation) and Force Ouvrière, the smallest of the trade-union federations, representing the least conscious workers.

In 1978, however, the SP far surpasses the CP in voting strength, with the polls giving it around 27 percent while the CP remains stagnant at its 1967 level of about 21 percent. Furthermore, the SP has begun to establish a new foothold in the unions by winning most of the apparatus of the second largest trade-union federation, the CFDT (French Democratic Confederation of Labor).

These major gains for the SP were bolstered by the prospect of an electoral victory. The hope that the SP would come to power—and the patronage this would make available—brought an influx of new members who had come out of the state apparatus and were eager to occupy posts

within the new government. Even though the SP did succeed in winning some trade-union cadres, the leading layer of the party is different from the traditional bureaucracy of the old French SP, which until the 1950s mostly came out of the trade-union bureaucracy.

The highly varied backgrounds of SP activists, together with the political pressures, generated problems that up until now have been kept under control by the authority of François Mitterrand. His two presidential campaigns made him a figure of special political importance in the institutions of the Fifth Republic. His prestige as a leader of a workers party was fabricated by the Communist Party, when it called on him to be the single candidate of the left in 1965. At that time, Mitterrand was nothing more than the leader of a bourgeois grouplet who was doing a stint in the opposition, having previously held cabinet posts in nearly all of the governments of the Fourth Republic.

It was as a result of the following that Mitterrand gained in 1965 that he was able to join the Socialist Party a few years later, immediately become its first secretary, and preside over the rebuilding of French Social Democracy.

The Socialist Party had high hopes of reaping the benefits of its newly won position in the workers movement. For the SP, the updating of the Common Program was an opportunity to display the new relationship of forces established between it and the CP. By stating a firm "no" to the CP's proposals, Mitterrand meant to show that it was he who made the rules. In doing so, he was telling the bourgeoisie that he was the one in the best position to contain the workers' demands, going beyond the CP's proposals. At the same time, he was telling the workers that the time had come to make the "sensible" choices required to administer a crisis-ridden capitalist regime.

While five years ago the SP talked of nothing but "self-management" and wanting to "change life," the approach of governmental responsibilities produced cracks on this demagogic veneer. For months the SP refused to incorporate trade-union demands for raising the minimum wage in its program, adopting them only in January 1978 in face of the popularity of these demands.

To carry out its policy of class collaboration while continuing to make gains, the SP must simultaneously maintain its alliance with the CP and go on making deals with the bourgeoisie. That is why the Social Democrats have avoided any direct confrontation with Giscard, preferring instead to

plead with him to keep up a neutral role in the elections, thereby retaining possibilities for collaboration in case they do come to power.

That is also why the SP clings to the small bourgeois party called the Movement of Left Radicals. To assure itself the most favorable position in the elections vis-à-vis the CP, the SP negotiated an agreement with this bourgeois party for dividing up the election districts. In the great majority of cases, the SP will not have to compete with the Left Radicals, who will call on the defenders of private ownership to vote for the SP. But in return, the SP gave up thirty secure election districts, guaranteeing the Left Radicals a bloc of seats in the next National Assembly.

This small bourgeois party will accordingly be overrepresented in the assembly, putting it in a position to swing parliamentary votes whatever the outcome of the election.

This is a political stratagem that the SP had not tried during the previous election campaign because it was too weak at the time. A five-year partnership with the CP in the framework of the Union of the Left has enabled it to rebuild to the point where it is now strong enough to concoct a bourgeois organization, which will later be invoked to justify new betrayals.

Failure of the CP's Tactic

Six years after the signing of the Common Program, the Communist Party leadership faces a heavy reckoning.

The CP has rung up a defeat in the electoral arena, having had to yield first place to the SP. For the leadership of a party that had boasted of being the leading party in France from 1945 to 1958, and then of being the leading workers party, this was a rude shock, considering the electoralist outlook that had been instilled in the majority of CP cadres.

The CP also suffered a setback in terms of its hold over working-class struggles. Since 1968, the CP's former political monopoly over the working class has been thrown open to challenge. It cannot prevent the revolutionary far left from sinking more and more roots among the workers, as the growth of class-struggle opposition in the trade unions testifies. But neither has the CP been able to obstruct the steady growth of the CFDT, which is led by the SP. CFDT membership has increased by nearly 50 percent since 1968, while the CGT [General Confederation of Labor] has remained at the same level.

The signing of the Common Program did, of course, provide the CP with a credible political opening based on class collaboration, which it then used as a pretext for postponing social and political confrontations with the government. But the political framework provided by the Union of the Left could not stem the CP's loss of influence among the working class.

This double setback for the CP placed it in

Campaign of French LCR

The LCR is participating in the March 1978 legislative elections by carrying out a mass-action campaign for workers unity, in order to wrest satisfaction of workers' demands and unseat the Giscard-Barre government.

The political context is such that concrete actions are possible around the unified demands of the working class. It is possible to organize mobilizations against austerity and for a sliding scale of wages, for shortening the work week to thirty-five hours, and for adopting the principle of equal work, equal pay.

To counter the economic crisis, the CP and SP are proposing the nationalization of nine corporate trusts (leaving 85 percent of industry in the bosses' hands!). The LCR, however, demands the nationalization of all the key sectors of the economy, without compensation or repurchase by the state and under workers control.

The LCR is addressing itself to the majority of the working class, which has confidence in the CP or SP. It is doing so by calling for an SP-CP government, not in order to implement a class-collaborationist program, but to meet workers' demands and to break with the bourgeoisie, its parties, and its institutions.

Throughout the campaign, the LCR will publicize its decision to call for a vote on the second round for the workers candidate who comes in first, explaining why it is necessary that not a single vote go to bourgeois candidates, including the Left Radicals. As part of this, the LCR

candidates will demand that the CP and SP pledge themselves to adhere to the principle of standing down in favor of the workers candidate who comes in first.

A political agreement for dividing up the election districts has been reached between the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR—Revolutionary Communist League), the Organisation Communiste des Travailleurs (OCT—Communist Workers Organization), and the Comités Communistes pour l'Auto-gestion (CCA—Communist Committees for Self-Management).

This agreement reaffirms the need for workers unity around their demands, and calls for a vote on the second round for the candidate of the reformist parties who comes in first. The OCT includes a call for a vote for the Left Radicals. The text of the platform refers to the main disagreements bearing on the concrete implementation of a policy of workers united front. Under the designation "For socialism, for power to the workers," more than 200 candidates will run.

Each organization is running its own candidates, who will campaign on the program of their organization. For its part, the LCR will run about 150 candidates, men and women, a great majority of whom are blue- and white-collar workers. They will become the best defenders of workers unity, in a campaign in which the candidates run or supported by the LCR will be the only ones proclaiming that the time has come for socialism, for an end to austerity and unemployment.

a difficult situation. If it came to power with an unfavorable relationship of forces between it and the SP, it might play a mere auxiliary role, thereby forfeiting the institutional advantages that a reformist party gains by occupying the bourgeois state apparatus. Having lost its political monopoly over the working class, it is going through a real identity crisis with regard to its Stalinist history, which had made it the only party of the working class.

These difficulties, linked to the CP's position in the French working class, are compounded by the deepening of the crisis of Stalinism. The setbacks encountered by the CP leadership can no longer be explained by the need to obey Moscow's orders, as they could when Stalinism was at its height. The CP leadership must now account to the membership for the concrete implementation of its policy in France.

In this sense, the CP's tactical decisions are more and more determined by the na-

tional imperatives that underlie its policy of class collaboration and enable its apparatus to maintain itself as a bureaucracy based on the working class. The setbacks that the CP leadership has suffered are severe enough to be viewed as the factors behind its change of tactics, without turning to the hypothesis of the "long arm of Moscow."

The CP has therefore decided to change a tactical course that has resulted in the rebuilding of the SP, to its own detriment. For the CP, the crucial issue is the relationship of forces within the workers movement. After having waged a two-month-long polemic during which it accused the SP of shifting to the right, at the January 1978 national conference CP General Secretary Georges Marchais outlined what was at stake in the March elections:

The choice before the French people is clear. Either, on the evening of March 12, the Communist Party will not command enough support, and

then no matter who governs the country, a change cannot be brought about—it will be put off until later. Or the Communist Party will wield enough influence to act, and a change—a victory, that is—can be imposed. There lies the basic issue of the upcoming election—the number of votes obtained by the Communist Party on the first round. To pose the problem differently, to try to settle the question of the second round before the first, would be to abandon the struggle for an agreement on a good program, and so to wipe out with one stroke of the pen the very possibility of a real change.

Marchais then explained what “sufficient support” meant: “Twenty-one percent is not enough; twenty-five percent would be good.”

In this way, the CP bluntly declared that, as far as it was concerned, what was mainly at stake in the March 1978 elections was its own electoral showing. The decision of whether to withdraw in favor of the SP candidates who come in ahead of those of the CP was made conditional upon its own number of votes.

The election procedure established by the French constitution provides for a system of two rounds. On the first round, an absolute majority of votes is needed to be elected. On the second round, a plurality is sufficient. Beating the bourgeois candidates thus requires that at the conclusion of the first round, the workers party candidates stand down in favor of whomever comes in first. Otherwise, the present parliamentary majority will be maintained, especially since all the ruling parties have announced their decision to stand down for each other. The Communist Party is therefore threatening to leave the Giscard-Barre government in power if it thinks it has not garnered a sufficient number of votes.

Even though the CP has cynically displayed its willingness to place its own interests ahead of those of the majority of the working class, it is still leaving all the options open. The fact is that even if the CP has drawn the lessons of its past failures, it does not yet have a tactical alternative.

In the framework of its polemic with the SP, the CP leadership has declared its intention to reject an austerity program administered by the left. But at the same time, it is backing the policies of the Spanish and Italian Communist parties, which support austerity in their own countries. Above all, the CP's hard-line speeches condemning the idea of managing the capitalist crisis are paralleled by its consistent refusal to unify the working-class struggles against that same austerity plan.

Although in a period of demoralization and retreat by the working class, a Stalinist party can engage in radical-sounding rhetoric without the risk of powerful social movements developing, the situation today is marked by a rise in working-class militancy and consciousness, barring use of such a tactic over a long period. The CP has not, in fact, renounced its wish to come to power, but it aims to impose a condition on this—maintaining its political monopoly over the working class.

In the first phase of its polemic with the

SP, the CP centered the debate on the number of businesses to be nationalized, and on the procedures for naming administrators to head these nationalized businesses. This was not a pretext; it reflected the CP's wish to focus discussion on what guarantees it might obtain if it came to power. Given the strength of the CP and its trade-union activists in most of the industrial trusts that stand to be nationalized, it represented a desire to make sure that in return for entering the government the CP would obtain the advantages necessary to consolidate its hold over the working class.

The SP refused to grant the guarantees demanded by the CP. The CP was then compelled to jeopardize the chances of an electoral victory for the workers parties, preferring to take the risk of postponing its coming to power rather than take part in an experiment that might reduce its influence among the workers without anything in return.

However, for the CP, it is a matter of at most postponing the possibility of entering the government, while retaining the option of entering it sooner if the election results indicate a turn in the relationship of forces within the workers movement.

The fact is that aside from this perspective of entering the government, the CP has no alternative strategy that would enable it to maintain both its control over the working class and its policy of class collaboration. All of the Communist Party's tactical zig-zags, however abrupt they may be, fit into this strategic framework—a framework that it, as a Stalinist party in crisis, undergoing a process of social-democratization, cannot let go of.

The Divisions in the Working Class

So the Union of the Left has broken up on the eve of the legislative elections.

The onset of the crisis has not altered the relative electoral strength of the various parties, an indication that the CP and SP could still win a majority of votes, though not necessarily a majority of seats in the assembly. Whatever the uncertainty clouding the results of the polls, the CP seems to have held its ground throughout the first phase of the polemic. What this means is that the CP carried out a tactical course that is based on the demands of those workers who were the hardest hit by austerity, and on the deeply rooted anti-Social Democratic reflexes within the CP's sphere of influence.

In fact, the class relationship of forces has not been concretely affected by the crisis in the Union of the Left. The upsurge of the working class is precisely what is making more and more obsolete the political system of bourgeois domination instituted by de Gaulle in 1958. A majority of votes for the CP and SP would in any case open up a period of political instability, in which new forms of class collaboration could be introduced. The breadth of illusions in the reformist parties explains why the CP and SP

could afford to break off their electoral alliance for now, with each party retaining the confidence of that section of the working class that it influences.

In other words, the onset of the crisis proves that the Union of the Left was not the last resort of the bourgeoisie in face of an irresistible advance by the working class. The upsurge of the working class is still limited. It is already capable of impeding the functioning of the institutions of the Fifth Republic, but it leaves open the possibility of class-collaborationist solutions that would keep the CP out of the government.

In this situation, while making a great deal of fanfare about their breakup during the election campaign, the CP and SP will do whatever they can to limit its consequences. For instance, up to now the polemic has not affected the municipal governments with a Union of the Left majority, where CP and SP members who are the most heavily involved in managing the affairs of the bourgeoisie continue to work together. Strict orders from the CP and SP kept the municipal governments outside the crisis, testifying both to the political aims of the leaderships of the workers parties and to the hopes of the layer of activists most closely involved in this direct management to maintain a solid framework of class collaboration.

The two major trade-union federations have each chosen their camp, issuing thinly disguised appeals to vote for the CP or SP. Nevertheless, the CGT and CFDT have not taken up the cudgels against each other nationwide. The general secretaries of the CGT and CFDT even felt compelled to state that they were agreed on common action, although they had no concrete perspectives to put forward. Their desire to keep open the possibility of unity in action indicates the desire of the reformist apparatuses not to set the stage for an irreparable break. The leaderships of the CGT and CFDT are trying to cushion the impact of the breakup, which has, on the other hand, led to bitter disputes at the middle echelons of the two trade-union federations, stemming from the division between the CP and SP.

Certain problems were unavoidable once the CP and SP plunged into their divisive course and confronted head-on a deeply felt desire for unity that had been sidetracked for years on behalf of the Union of the Left. The CP leadership, for instance, must deal with questions from many activists who are questioning the validity of the line followed by their party. Doesn't the major responsibility for the split lie with the policy of class collaboration that precluded the workers having a say in a unified way in the debate over the program and demands? This is the common ground for the critical groupings that are beginning to form within the CP. In accusing the SP of having shifted to the right, the CP leadership has made its own record suspect.

To answer these questions, and to gain a

hearing from the majority of the working class, only a political battle for workers unity to wrest satisfaction for their demands and unseat the Giscard-Barre government can meet the demands of the situation. The SP and CP must unite to form a government, which the workers will urge to break with the bourgeoisie and meet their needs. The CP and SP have equal responsibility for the split that has taken place. The CP's refusal to commit itself to standing down for the workers candidate with the best chance of winning is paralleled by the SP's refusal to take up the demands raised by the trade-union federations. This does not alter the fact that both the CP and SP agree on preserving a market economy and

the 1958 constitution.

Although the campaign for the legislative elections of March 1978 is under way in a period of worldwide capitalist crisis with austerity for the working class, the CP and SP, who are supported by a majority of the population, are approaching it without proposing any struggle whatsoever for socialism. An electoral victory for the discredited governmental coalition has gone from being unlikely to being possible. It will remain possible so long as bureaucratic divisions win out over the desire of the working class for the unity between its organizations that is necessary for the satisfaction of its demands and for a break with the bourgeoisie. □

From Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire

Open Letter to the French Communist Party

[We are reprinting below the text of an open letter from the Political Bureau of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (Revolutionary Communist League), French section of the Fourth International, to the delegates at the French Communist Party's national conference, which was held January 7 and 8 in Paris.

[Accompanying the open letter is an introduction by Pierre Julien.

[The open letter and introduction were published in the January 7-8 issue of *Rouge*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

The national conference of the Communist Party begins today at 9:00 a.m. at the Palais de Congrès in Paris.

The conference will open with a long report by Georges Marchais, lasting around two-and-a-half hours, before the discussion as such gets under way. According to some press reports, it is a foregone conclusion that no definitive position will be taken on the question of CP candidates' withdrawal in favor of the SP on the second round of the legislative elections.

This national conference, which received no mention in [the CP daily] *l'Humanité*, was called without any democratic discussion. The delegates, in their great majority, were elected by committees in each district during meetings held last summer, at a time when the national conference was scheduled to take place in mid-October. We know that it was pushed back three months after the negotiations around updating the Common Program fell through.

The lack of discussion, together with the uneasiness brought on by the breakup of the Union of the Left, set off a number of reactions among the party's ranks. Several

"opposition" documents were passed around, reflecting various points of view.

The most highly structured "opposition" grouping seems to be the one that has published documents in *Politique-Hebdo* under the collective pseudonym of Max Pierrat. In the last issue, dated January 9, "Pierrat" published a resolution addressed to the national conference, entitled, "To Overcome the Crisis, Get Rid of Capitalism."

In an editorial in *l'Humanité* January 6, René Andrieu replied curtly to a column by Claude Estier published in the same day's *Le Monde*. "If the Socialist Party is truly eager to renew discussion on a serious basis, why did they just now take the step of publishing their program, right on the eve of our party's conference? For no other reason than to present us with an accomplished fact!" Andrieu wrote.

Furthermore, [CGT head] Georges Séguy declared over Radio Monte Carlo on January 6: "As long as the Socialist Party refuses to implement the Common Program in its entirety, as long as they resist nationalizing the steel, oil, and automobile industries, as long as they reject the idea of taxing big business, and as long as they do not agree with the idea of a government of the left that would have real power to carry out an aggressive social policy and make the rich pay, the SP will give workers the impression that it is motivated by electoral ambitions rather than by a real desire for change." This statement fits in with the more and more open support given to the CP by the CGT [Confédération Générale du Travail—General Confederation of Labor].

Text of Open Letter

Dear Comrades,

At this conference you are going to draw

a balance sheet on the campaign you have carried out to explain the break off of negotiations September 22, and determine your party's approach to the elections. The high stakes involved are what have prompted this letter.

You must certainly be pleased at the number of new members that your party has announced. But to judge the real impact of your policy, you will have to consider the following question: Did it help to raise the consciousness and degree of mobilization of the broad masses of workers?

Regardless of whether one shares your political views, the answer must be no. Anxiety, disappointment, and even demoralization are the most widespread sentiments, even if the determination to put an end to the government's austerity plan and the bosses' arrogance is as strong as ever.

There are two reasons for this.

The first is related, in our opinion, to the unconvincing character of your polemics. "The SP is shifting to the right," you repeat. But the CP agrees with the SP on retaining the fundamentals of the 1958 constitution, on allying with the "left" Radicals and "progressive" Gaullists, on preserving a market economy in which the private sector will continue to dominate, and on honoring international commitments with respect to both the Common Market and NATO.

You energetically—and rightly—accuse the SP of wanting to "manage the crisis." But at the same time, you curry favor with the leadership of the CFDT [Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail—French Democratic Confederation of Labor]. Meanwhile, the latter is explaining more and more openly that it will be necessary to manage the crisis, "at least in the beginning," and praising the line of the Italian CP, which has come out for "class austerity," trying to make disaster seem like a blessing.

Finally, though [CP leader] Georges Marchais can easily point to the wavering of the SP leadership on the questions of the army, nationalization of the automobile industry, and the minimum wage, [SP leader] François Mitterrand can point to the CP's abrupt turnabouts, which are frequently announced on television without having even been discussed by the membership. These include dropping the dictatorship of the proletariat, maintaining the nuclear arsenal, lengthening military service to one year, and supporting direct elections to the European parliament.

And while it's easy for you to bring up the Social Democrats' history of loyal management of capitalism, it is just as easy to recall the Stalinist past of the French CP, when you voted for François Mitterrand on the first round in 1974, agreeing even to support his "personal"

program, a watered-down version of the Common Program.

The second reason has to do with the lack of any real effort to seek unity. The fact is that even if you are convinced of the power and clarity of your arguments, you will have to admit that this intense polemizing against the SP has not been accompanied by any mass mobilization capable of exerting pressure on the SP and on its leadership. While you have put your party's whole strength into defending your ideas—which is understandable—you have not put forward any proposals aimed at promoting unity.

You have not suggested organizing unified general assemblies in workplaces, neighborhoods, and schools, where the proposals of both sides could have been debated. You have confined yourselves to rallies intended primarily for CP members. You have not suggested forming broad unified committees, bringing together all the currents in the workers movement, that could have organized real struggles in the plants and neighborhoods against hardship and unemployment, while at the same time discussing the proposals of both sides.

Finally, you have not offered the workers any means for participating and deciding. Your only slogan has been "Join the CP!"

Nor can it be said that you have done your utmost to build a broad, unified social movement against the austerity policy and repression by the government. The SP did nothing to prevent the extradition of Klaus Croissant, and the CP did hardly more. Both the CP and the SP were missing from the demonstrations against the Stoléru [anti-immigrant worker] measures and the December 1 marches. The CGT federation at EGF [the state-owned utility company], in which your members have a great deal of influence, recently ended a strike, despite the fact that this strike had raised hopes of finally making a dent in the government's austerity plan.

Instead of working with all their strength to bolster trade-union unity in action around the workers' demands, your members in the CGT pushed for their federation to support their party's positions on updating the Common Program, letting Edmond Maire [head of the CFDT] off the hook and enabling him to turn around and support the Socialist Party. And so inevitably, political divisions broke out in the course of struggles—at Dubigeon, at EGF, at Michelin.

Thus, instead of working on the social and political level to build a unified movement among the rank-and-file—which alone would be capable of pressuring the SP, as you yourselves say—you have seemed to be solely concerned with adding to the CP's numerical strength.

Of course, you will not agree with this harsh balance sheet. And you will be sure

to blame the class enemy for the weakness of the mass movement and the lack of any kind of progress toward unity. Whatever the case, now that we are on the verge of the election campaign, the issue is not whether 250, 500, or 729 subsidiaries will be nationalized. The burning issue for the workers is: Will Giscard, Barre, and Chirac triumph once again, or will the workers parties win a majority?

To be sure, each workers party will put forward its own program on the first round, and the workers will choose. The LCR candidates, unlike those of the SP and your party, will say that it is time to get rid not only of Barre, but also of Giscard and the state he represents. They will say that to put an end to the capitalist crisis, what we need is not advanced democracy that leaves 85 percent of the companies in the bosses' hands and the state apparatus intact, but a determined struggle for socialist goals. And they will make clear that to do this we need unity of the working class. In the elections this means that all working-class votes on the second round, without exception, must go to the workers party candidate who comes in first on the first round.

To reject this elementary rule, placing conditions on withdrawal, or using the pretext that the carry-over of Socialist votes is a much riskier proposition, simply means taking the risk of seeing the Giscard government stay in power.

You will reply that an austerity policy of the left, Soares-style, is no better than austerity of the right. That is true, and we hope that you will keep talking this way and not hesitate to publicly disavow the collaboration of the Spanish and Italian

Communist parties with their governments' austerity policies. But how can austerity be fought except by actively mobilizing the workers? And while a victory for the workers parties at the polls cannot substitute for such a mobilization, wouldn't it be a powerful spur to struggles?

No doubt about it—no argument can justify your not taking a clear position for withdrawal on the second round in favor of the workers candidate with the best chance of winning. If you do not make such a pledge, the workers can only conclude that you prefer to leave the right in power. Are you willing to assume such a crushing responsibility? □

Prefer 'No Risk' Profits

American chemical corporations are complaining about some new rules for regulating cancer-causing substances in the workplace. The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has proposed that exposure to known carcinogens be reduced to the "lowest feasible levels."

Speaking for the "American Industrial Health Council," Dow Chemical Corporation President Paul Oreffice asked January 13, "Why should we have a no-risk policy in the work place? We don't have a no-risk atmosphere in other places in our lives. We take a risk every day we get out of bed."

Oreffice claimed that "lifestyles"—such as eating habits—produce more cancer than do chemicals used in industry.

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The Rising Women's Liberation Movement in Spain

By Jacqueline Heinen

Spain is certainly one of the leading countries where an independent mass women's movement has arisen. What is most striking today is the process of self-organization undertaken by broad layers of women since the death of Franco. Women's commissions, organized by working women, have become widespread, particularly within the Workers Commissions—despite foot-dragging by the trade-union bureaucracy (see *Inprecor*, July 22, 1976).

In addition to a body of demands that are quite advanced compared to most other European countries—for instance, the demand that work schedules be adjusted to fit in with the hours of local child-care centers, and for a gynecological examination twice a year, paid for by social security—the women's commissions stress the importance of the fight to get men to take their share of household responsibilities, and of overcoming divisions in the trade unions, which are a particular source of discouragement for many working women.

Activists in these women's commissions, in alliance with the unified women's groups that have sprung up recently in a number of plants, often participate in local coordinating committees, thereby helping to strengthen the national actions undertaken by the independent women's movement.

Despite its uneven development and obvious difficulty in establishing truly democratic structures that can allow for full participation by delegates from working women's groups, the movement is active today in most of the cities in the Spanish state, and has acquired a mass character. Attesting to this were the recent "Women's Days" held in Valencia and in Euzkadi, where more than 1,000 and 2,000 women, respectively, met to discuss the main issues of the day, focusing their attention on unemployment and the double work-load of women.

Another indication is the campaign for "greater sexual freedom," launched throughout the country last fall by the national coordinating committee. Its goal is to expose all forms of discrimination in the area of sexuality, and particularly to fight for free access to contraception paid for by social security, and for amnesty for all women serving prison terms for abortions.

This campaign, in which groups of housewives and working women in several cities are participating, also seeks to ex-

pose the role of the pharmaceutical trusts, which use women as guinea pigs, and the inhumane working conditions imposed by the bosses, which are the source of so many miscarriages among working women.

Finally, there is the proposed amendment to the constitution put forward jointly a few weeks ago by delegates from most of the Madrid women's groups. Women activists in both the Spanish Communist Party and the MDM (Democratic Women's Movement, a group with close ties to the CP) were an integral part of most of these initiatives. This could not help but cause some turmoil within the CP.

Unresolvable Contradictions

If we study the content of the demands that have been raised for changes in the constitution (the text of which has been adopted by the MDM), we find that they run counter to the Spanish CP's whole class-collaborationist policy. The demands having to do with the right of each person (women especially) to control their bodies and their sexuality, with the right to divorce by mutual consent, with lowering the age of majority to sixteen, with abolishing all references to women's "virtue" by which the punishments imposed on women who "transgress" traditional morality are justified—all are negated by the very provisions of the section of the Moncloa Pact dealing with legal reforms. And what about demands like these—equal wages, socialization of household tasks with everything that implies (child-care centers), fully paid maternity leaves, the right to a job for all women who want to work, a forty-hour week, a single social-security system based on a progressive tax on wages and wealth, with an equal retirement system for all?

It is quite clear that some of these demands have a transitional character in the context of the present economic situation, and that they blatantly contradict the measures imposed by the pact signed by the CP. In holding down wage increases to 22 percent on the pretext of stabilizing the economic situation—even though they claim that this will make it possible to reduce the most glaring wage discrepancies—the bosses are leveling their attacks mainly at women and young people, in view of the lack of a guaranteed minimum wage. The anticipated rise in unemployment will again hit women the hardest, in the name of the "natural"

duties awaiting them at home! With the downgrading of social security provisions, we can be sure that resistance to the demand raised by feminists for free abortion and contraception on demand will be all the greater.

As for widows and all women who have never worked because they were essentially driven out of the labor market, they will continue to receive starvation stipends and to be dependent on their husbands. As far as child care is concerned, and the "abolition of the patriarchal economy based on the family as the unit of production and consumption" (referred to in the above-mentioned text), they will never be achieved with an austerity plan as drastic as that of the Moncloa Pact.

How is it possible, therefore, that women activists in the CP who participated in drawing up these demands could have listened to Carrillo without raising an eyebrow, when he declared on television: "I am convinced that the workers will support the implementation of the pacts, because the working class is much more responsible than many people think"?

These CP women, who want to be seen as members of an independent women's movement, who have committed themselves to a program whose logic runs counter to the entire day-to-day activity of their party—where do they come from, where are they headed?

The Policy of One Step at a Time

Back in October 1975, even before the death of Franco and in advance of most of the West European CPs, the Spanish Communist Party was already engaging in self-criticism with respect to the lack of initiative it had shown up to then in combatting the oppression of women, and in recognizing "the merit of the feminist movements, whose goal is to obtain equality between women and men." It defined the movement to be built as a broad front in which all currents would coexist (women with and without party affiliations), while avoiding all attempts at manipulation by political parties. This "concern" turns up both in a resolution of the "First Conference of the Spanish Communist Party on the Woman Question," held in October 1976, in which the "manipulation of the masses of women during the election period" is most vigorously condemned, and in a more recent preparatory text for the fifth conference of the Madrid

CP, held in October 1977.

However, a certain number of women activists in the CP and MDM left the party after the election campaign last spring, precisely because they could no longer put up with the role they were forced to play in the independent movement under the CP's manipulative practices. As a former leader of women's liberation work on the campuses told us in an interview not long ago, she had come to make the decision as much out of the impossibility of consistently defending feminist positions inside the CP, as out of discouragement and rebellion over the campaign the CP was carrying out. On the one hand the CP declared, "We are the party of women's liberation," while on the other hand the leadership ordered the women activists not to be too active in their groups, since as a result of actions and demands supported by the CP women, these groups might jeopardize the image greatly desired by the CP on the eve of the elections: that of a mature, rational party that would not frighten the voters.

The phrase "We are the party of women's liberation" goes back to an appendix to the 1975 platform, and turns up again, in a different form, in the 1976 conference resolution. Although the independent women's movement had grown considerably throughout the Spanish state at that time, the analysis made of it reduces it solely to the MDM, with the other groups described as minor and "lacking an implantation among women."

However, a year later, the Madrid branch of the CP admitted that "the 'vocalias' are beginning to play an important role in Madrid (in Barcelona, their role is of central importance), and they are mainly led by Trotskyist women." We should explain that the "vocalias" are neighborhood groups, often connected to organizations that include men (neighbors and relatives), which the CP carefully distinguishes from the housewives' groups (Amas de Casa) it has led for ten years, in which it has hegemony. In the beginning, the Amas de Casa were groups in solidarity with political prisoners. Later they were transformed into groups active in the neighborhoods around general social questions (the cost of living, housing, and so on). The rise of radicalization among women and the existence of an independent movement led them, while continuing to carry out activities around these same issues, to approach them from the angle of the special needs of women. In light of the goals they have set themselves, it can be said that nothing basically distinguishes them from the "vocalias" except their name and the political line they defend. Still and all, the Federation of Amas de Casa also signed the document on proposed amendments to the constitution mentioned earlier.

It seems clear, therefore, that the rela-

tionship of forces established by the existence of women's groups whose political orientation, while not the same as that of revolutionists, is still strongly influenced by organizations claiming to stand to the left of the CP, has compelled the CP to come a long way—at least in its documents!—in its positions on the struggle for women's liberation.

For example, the documents of two years ago were exceedingly vague as to the *class character of the movement*. In an interview with women leaders of the MDM—who were also leaders of the CP—the phrase "interclass movement" was used, and the emphasis was mainly on the need for alliances with "democratic forces" (meaning primarily bourgeois women's organizations). It was the same in 1976 at the time of the women's conference. However, in an October 1977 article in *Argumentos*, the Spanish CP's journal, the writer stressed the class differences in the types of oppression suffered by bourgeois and working-class women. This is axiomatic from our point of view, but it clearly reflects the influence of other groups in the movement on the MDM and CP.

With respect to *abortion*, the third conference of the Spanish CP, held in Madrid in early 1976, said that "a public discussion was essential to win a hearing on this subject and that it costs little to obtain a majority decision by the masses on this subject in the context of democracy." That same year, the pamphlets and leaflets put out by MDM in various cities were mostly silent on this question. So was the platform of demands put forward by the "First National Days of Action" sponsored by the Amas de Casa in 1977. However, the same issue of *Argumentos* contains an article that clearly outlines the need for women to make the decision, and urges that "all the feminist movements be consulted for once" before passage of the law. To be sure, the article is padded with cautious formulations ("a public discussion, avoiding moral implications," "taking into account the fact that in those countries with more liberal laws, the number of abortions has decreased"); but it refers without comment—thereby giving the impression that it is in favor of them—to the proposals of the Association of Women Lawyers concerning the right to abortion in the first three months of pregnancy. Knowing the opposition to abortion that exists within the Spanish state (which explains the caution of the CP, ever anxious to avoid offending anyone), we can conclude that there has been a real improvement in its positions, even if the demand for free abortion upon request by women is still not being raised.

On the question of *divorce*, two years ago the CP said that there had to be "a discussion." Later it said that "a law" was needed—without explaining what kind. At the same time, in 1977 the Amas de Casa

were saying that it was not yet possible to reach a conclusion. And then out of the blue, *Argumentos* presented a proposal for divorce by mutual consent with a few restrictions. And in the proposed amendment to the constitution, this same proposal was made without restrictions.

A Potentially Explosive Situation

This evolution in the CP's public positions has been accompanied by regular internal self-criticism. From 1975 on, the documents point to the delay in getting involved in struggles, with traces of "machismo" remaining in the relationships between men and women in the organization. From then on, there were proposals to organize special educational series for women to enable them to attain responsible positions. Today, these women are demanding that nurseries or child-care centers be set up in Madrid, to concretely enable them to be relieved of some responsibilities, and that the organization "manage to overcome entrenched habits" in the customary division of labor. Added to this is the demand for meetings of women only to enable them to discuss all these problems. Added to this as well are the various criticisms indicated by the articles in *Argumentos*—criticism of government policies in the Eastern European countries, that maintain the special oppression of women through the traditional roles reserved for them and the unchanging status of the family; criticism of the leaderships of the workers movement as a whole, who have failed to develop Marxist theory on the special oppression of women, despite its incompleteness on a certain number of points.

In view of all this, one might be tempted to say that Leninism is perfectly compatible with a reformist, class-collaborationist party like the Spanish CP. However, the truth is a bit more complex.

On the one hand, there is a big gap between the statements of principle and their application. The size of this gap is a function of the class-collaborationist policy of the CP, which has only been reinforced by the Moncloa Pact.

Between "egalitarian" laws and a real change in the situation facing those men and women who are now discriminated against by the system, there is an intermediate step. As a recent article in *El País* dealing with changes in the constitution pointed out: "Equality before the law will in no way be affected by the inequality that exists on the economic level." In face of this, the statements of principle made by Manuel Azcarate, a leader of the Spanish CP, in the same newspaper stressing the "increasingly profeminist positions of the party" with respect to women's liberation, ring false indeed!

What does any of this mean if it is not reflected in *practice* in tangible changes

for the masses of women, and for the CP women in particular? Furthermore, the party's capacity to change its internal way of functioning, to organize a discussion democratically, has been shown to be extremely limited, bearing in mind the diverging interests between the bureaucratic leadership's line of class collaboration on the one hand, and the aspirations for change expressed by the ranks on the other hand. These aspirations are not limited to minor reforms; they challenge the very logic of the profit system, as is the case with many of the demands put forward by feminist activists.

Significantly, it is precisely among these women that the first seeds of opposition are developing within the party. Led by CP women who have carried out work in the universities—and even though in the beginning there were weaknesses in its composition, from both the geographic standpoint and the sectors that it encompassed—the opposition seems to have gained a greater hearing in the last few months, especially since the failure of the sectarian campaign imposed by the leadership during the spring elections. The attempt to palm off the MDM as *the* women's liberation movement seems to have received but slight response. So little that at a recent internal conference on this question, Carrillo is said to have proposed a change in tactics, consisting of sending women CP members into all of the women's groups that had some following, including the Women's Liberation Front of Madrid, which the CP had totally avoided up until then.

But the leadership will not be able to stifle the protests of the women involved—or their determination to establish an open, democratic discussion leading to joint work with other currents in the movement—through 180-degree turns of this kind without any thoroughgoing self-criticism, and without changing its manipulative policies.

This is what was revealed by the following episode. The CP had set up a party commission to study a bill on divorce that is soon to be discussed by the Cortes. The women leaders of the CP and MDM who took part in this commission called on some of the women in the opposition caucus to work with them on it. The latter then demanded to consult with delegates from the coordinating committee of the independent movement in Madrid, in order to be able to present the most unified proposal possible. This was done.

The proposal now includes the demand for divorce by mutual consent, with the woman having the right to decide on custody of the children in case of a disagreement. It remains to be seen whether the CP deputies will defend the bill in these terms during the parliamentary debate. Another episode in the struggle against the practices of the leadership is even more significant. The women in the

opposition caucus forced the leadership to call a general assembly of women CP members in Madrid last December, to discuss the question of internal democracy and the party's orientation toward the independent women's movement. Criticisms were raised on all sides, there were plenty of accusations of manipulation, and despite the defensive attitude of the women leaders of the CP and of the MDM, it was

the critical resolution of the "minority oppositionists" that received a majority of votes.

The sole response to this by the leadership was to say that it would be necessary to discuss it at the next congress, six months from then. It can easily be predicted that the internal battle is not going to end there.

January 8, 1978

Demand Hands Off Marvin Wright

U.S. Dock Workers Protest Costa Rican Repression



MARVIN WRIGHT LINDO

[Costa Rican police broke up a demonstration by 500 residents of the Limoncito barrio in the city of Limón November 23 and arrested six community leaders and two leaders of the Organización Socialista de los Trabajadores (Socialist Workers Organization).

[Shoot-to-kill orders were then issued for Marvin Wright Lindo, a leader of the Black community in Limón province and one of Costa Rica's best-known trade unionists. Wright later turned himself in and all charges against him were dropped. The other eight persons are still facing trial on charges of "instigating a riot."

[In the United States, the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners has mounted a campaign against the Oduber government's repression. One result of that effort is the following letter by the president of the Interna-

tional Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union.

[For more information on the events in Costa Rica, see *Intercontinental Press*, December 12, 1977, p. 1356.]

* * *

December 30, 1977

President Daniel Oduber Quirós
San Jose, Costa Rica

Dear Mr. President:

It has been brought to our attention that Mr. Marvin Wright Lindo, a prominent figure in the Costa Rica trade union movement, and several of his colleagues and supporters are being detained and beaten, or threatened with detention for certain of their political activities in Costa Rica.

The ILWU, a union which has always charted its own course politically, is deeply committed to workers and their rights, and to the proposition that certain rights and civil liberties supercede any and all political questions.

We regard the treatment of Marvin Wright and his supporters as unwarranted and unprincipled, and urge that your government abandon its efforts to hound and persecute them for their political beliefs. Continued harassment on the part of your government would mark a sad departure from the democratic and libertarian traditions on which Costa Rica prides itself.

Respectfully and sincerely,
James R. Herman, President

Correction

The article on Pakistan in last week's issue (p. 69) inadvertently appeared under the headline intended for a forthcoming article on India. The title should have read "Pakistani Police Gun Down Strikers," as noted in the table of contents.

The article on India, "Janata Party Introduces 'Preventive Detention' Bill," appears elsewhere in this issue.

Argentina—the Specter of a Cordobazo

By Nahuel Moreno

[The following article appeared in the November 28, 1977, issue of *El Socialista*, a weekly publication of the Colombian Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores. It was reprinted in the December 1977 issue of *Revista de América*, a monthly magazine published in Bogotá. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

The specter of a Cordobazo is haunting Argentina—a specter of masses in the streets, building barricades and routing the police forces, as happened in 1969 under the previous military dictatorship. That is how the Videla government and the bourgeoisie felt during the heroic strikes by the railroad workers, the subway workers, the light and power workers in Rosario, the workers of Alpargatas, and other sectors of the Argentine workers movement that were launched during October and the first weeks of November in 1977.

There was no Cordobazo, but the military began to retreat from its plans, and all the sectors of the bourgeoisie reopened their discussions on how best to avoid another semi-insurrection such as that of 1969. In spite of everything, the resistance has made a leap forward that will help to create conditions for modifying the relationship of forces in favor of the workers—not only in Argentina but in the entire southern cone of Latin America.

Railroads and Subways—A Great Victory for the Workers

The struggles that began in October marked the highest point of resistance to the military junta since March 24, 1976 (the date of the military coup). Statistics cited in the bourgeois press showed a record number of production hours lost. It can be said that there is scarcely a single factory or union that has not raised one or another wage demand—through the presentation of petitions, partial strikes inside the plant, “failing to cooperate,” or working *a desgano* [without enthusiasm] and thus slowing down production.

There were struggles in such factories as Canale, Cristalux, Lozadur, Marshall, Camea, Banco Nación, Banco Canadá, Capa, Selsa, Cantábrica, Imsa, Támet, Centenera, Molinos—and the list could go on. The most important of these was the strike at the IKA-Renault plant in Córdoba dur-

ing the first weeks of October, which was harshly repressed by the army. In the majority of cases, the bosses were forced to grant wage increases.

But the highest “temperature” was shown by the rail and subway workers, who are government employees. The rail workers spontaneously launched a strike against the miserable 15 percent wage increase offered to state employees by [economics minister] Martínez de Hoz. The rail strike began in Buenos Aires and extended to the national level. Other sectors quickly joined the strike—first the subways, then partial strikes at the Hippodrome, in the airlines, among oil workers, Luz y Fuerza [light and power] in Rosario, some motor transport lines, and so on. And they all enjoyed popular support.

After more than a week of struggle, the government was forced to retreat, granting wage increases of between 30 and 40 percent. Although wage levels remain insufficient, the raises obtained represent a great victory for the workers movement, since the military had to recognize the workers’ demands and retreat a little.

There was also a leap forward in the forms of struggle: with the conflicts in the railroads and subways, the strike began to be the method employed, outside as well as inside the plants. Before October, working *a desgano* or “working by the rule book” predominated, and, to a lesser degree, the partial strike.

With the heroic strikes in the state enterprises, the Argentine working class secured the victory that had eluded it in March during the struggles of the power workers (Luz y Fuerza) and the telephone workers. The strengthening of the resistance was shown by the fact that, after the struggles in the state sector, workers in the Alpargatas textile plant and in the Banco de Crédito Argentino [Argentine Bank of Credit] went out on strike.

Why Was There No General Strike, Or Another Cordobazo?

During the October-November strikes, the objective conditions for a general strike were created. As never before in recent years, the transport strikes had the support of the whole population, which expressed in its solidarity the desire to put an end to the starvation wages and the situation the military government seeks to impose with its economic plan.

Practically the entire workers and popu-

lar movement was fighting for higher wages, but there was no one to bring these partial struggles together in a single battle against the government. The leadership to call a general strike was lacking. Had such a call been issued, the situation could have turned into an “Argentinazo,” a general strike, calling into question not only the hated figure Martínez de Hoz but the entire regime.

That this did not occur is the responsibility of the Peronist trade-union bureaucracy. Although it retains enormous influence, despite military tutelage over the unions and the CGT,¹ the bureaucracy was not inclined to go that far.

But it would be a mistake to conclude from this that the union leaders are not part of the workers resistance. The bureaucracy resists *with its own method*, which is not that of popular mobilization, but rather one of utilizing struggles to create better conditions for negotiating with the bourgeoisie. On the one hand, the bureaucracy pushes struggles forward, or lets them go on once they have begun. Thus a number of unions have made wage demands publicly—the Coordinadora de Gremios Estatales,² the oil workers, commercial employees, health workers, the Committee of the 25 (a committee of unions, some under government control and some not), and so on. But on the other hand the bureaucracy has not yet carried this to the point of calling a general strike, which would imply a head-on collision with the dictatorship.

Today the bureaucracy is resisting, in its own way, along with the workers movement as a whole, because the military government must also strike blows at the bureaucracy to apply its starvation plan. The CGT and the main unions, such as the Unión Obrera Metalúrgica [Metalworkers Union], SMATA³ (in the auto industry), and others have been put under military supervision. The millions in social security funds once monopolized by the bureaucracy are now controlled by the military; the regime holds hundreds of union leaders in prison, among them Lorenzo Miguel of the metalworkers—the top figure in the bureaucracy. Others, such as Oscar Smith, general secretary of the light and power workers union, have “disappeared.”

Something similar happened in Spain with the Communist Party [PCE]. As long as Francoism denied them a piece of the pie, the PCE bureaucrats played a relatively positive role, organizing resistance

1. Confederación General del Trabajo (General Confederation of Labor).

2. Coordinating Committee of Unions in State Enterprises.

3. Sindicato de Mecánicos y Afines del Transporte Automotor (Union of Automotive Machinists and Allied Trades).

to the dictatorship through the Workers Commissions, which accelerated the decay of the regime. But once the liquidation of Francoism began, and especially with the opening of the Suárez stage, things took a different turn. The regime threw some scraps to the PCE: Suárez legalized it, recognized the Workers Commissions as trade unions, and threw open the doors of the Cortes to Carrillo and company. From then on, the Spanish workers were confronted with a situation where Camacho, the legendary leader of the Workers Commissions, no longer called strikes but broke them (as happened in Euzkadi); abandoned the Republican banner and hoisted the red and gold of Francoism; and, finally, accepted the Moncloa Pact, which imposes a wage freeze and represses workers' struggles.

The Argentine union bureaucracy is probably going through a similar process. Martínez de Hoz's plan demands the destruction of the big national unions. The dictatorship wants to replace them with small unions at the plant or local level, thus atomizing the workers movement. For the bureaucracy, that is synonymous with liquidation of their big apparatuses. As long as this situation does not change, the bureaucracy will remain in opposition to the dictatorship and play a relatively positive role. Once it can enter into fruitful negotiations, it will again betray the workers, just as the PCE has. But revolutionists must not confuse this historical perspective with the present stage. It would be infantile sectarianism not to understand that what is needed now is to bring about unity of action among all sectors of the workers movement—including the union bureaucracy—around wage demands, freedom for the prisoners, and restoration of the workers organizations.

The United Front of the Bourgeois Parties and the Government

Another reason the union bureaucracy was not inclined to call a general strike was that it found no united front in opposition to the government among the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois parties, as had been the case before May 1969 under Onganía and in 1975 when the CGT declared a general strike to bring down the famous López Rega and his counterrevolutionary plan (this went down in history as the "Rodrigazo"). In the latter case there was almost a solid front stretching from the armed forces to a sector of Peronism itself (including the union bureaucracy and the workers movement), and encompassing the church, parliament, and the majority of the bourgeois parties. This time, such a thing did not happen.

The bourgeoisie and its parties fear the Argentine workers movement; they do not want to risk new "Cordobazos" or "Rodri-

gazos." They prefer to resolve at the negotiating table the differences they may have among themselves and with the military. Thus in the midst of the rail strike and the other struggles, "prudence" predominated among the bourgeois politicians. Even the most "aperturista" figures, such as Lanusse and Balbín, took care that the tone of their statements did not go against the dictatorship.

When journalists asked Lanusse about the strikes, he declared: "I do not have enough information. I think the present circumstances are so complex and delicate that anyone lacking the facts should be prudent enough not to make statements that could upset the proper authorities."

Noting the existence of this front of the military and the bourgeoisie against the workers movement should not lead to the conclusion that friction and disputes do not exist, but rather that the situation is more contradictory. The present advance of the resistance, brought on primarily by low wages, gives rise to further opposition to Martínez de Hoz by most of the political parties and by the national bourgeoisie, with the goal of displacing him and his plan. This plan damages the sectors of the national bourgeoisie that depend on the internal market, which constitutes 80 percent of the country's economic structure. Low wages have caused a big drop in consumption, particularly in the categories of food, beverages, tobacco, textiles, household goods, furniture, and so on. In addition, the national bourgeoisie (industrial and agricultural) finds itself affected by high taxes, by the high interest rates the banks have imposed on commercial credit, by the suspension of import tariffs, and so on. The present policies of Martínez de Hoz favor only the financial sectors, the big national and international banking interests, the big exporters and the monopolies.

But while the offensive against the minister will probably grow (as much to scrap his plan entirely as to modify it), the number one problem for the bourgeoisie is the political one: how to make preparations for a political solution to avoid or derail the rise in workers struggles now taking place. Thus pressures are also mounting for carrying out a preventive relaxation of the dictatorship. Agreement on the necessity for such a move is shared by the bourgeois parties, the imperialists, and a portion of the government.

The Government and Preventive Relaxation

The other factor, although more secondary, that contributed to lessening the possibility of a general strike was the

opening—in a very halfhearted way—of a policy of preventive relaxation; the military junta was very careful not to repress the strikes. On the contrary, it recognized that wages were low and that the strikes were not "subversive." One can imagine what might have occurred if the government had launched repression against the rail workers and the other workers involved in struggles. This could have brought about a situation in which the bureaucracy would have been obliged to call a general strike. It should be recalled that the Third Army Corps' repression at bayonet point in the Renault plant provoked a strike that spread throughout the factory, uniting all sections.

Thanks to the fact that there was no semi-insurrection, the military government was able to stay on its feet. Nevertheless, its instability will continue, since it is faced with a combination of pressures running from the workers' resistance all the way to the imperialists' policy of relaxation on a world scale, including the bourgeois political parties and the capitalists who want to shore up the internal market. The pressure of the workers' offensive did not reach the point of upsetting the government's equilibrium, or inflicting a major political defeat, as would have happened had Martínez de Hoz or other ministers resigned (something that did occur after the Cordobazo in 1969). The dictatorship did, however, add to its unpopularity among the masses and was weakened further.

In any case, the development of preventive relaxation is still in its early stages, and political indecision predominates inside the armed forces. The present offensive by the workers will help along the offensive that is growing inside the government. This was already becoming obvious as the conflicts unfolded—a sector of the armed forces began to fight Martínez de Hoz on the wage problem, thus encouraging the workers' demands. First was the minister of labor, General Liendo, and then the Marines through their official organ *Gaceta Marinera* [Marine Gazette], which criticized the wage policy and recognized the "justice" of the demands for an increase.

Once the directly counterrevolutionary policy is defeated inside the armed forces, and before a rise in the workers movement really gets under way, rifts and clashes among the ranks of the government will probably increase, while it searches for a political definition, a plan (with restricted elections, a plebiscite, or other variants) that will permit channeling the process toward the so-called "military-civilian convergence." In these conflicts, Massera (the top officer of the Navy and its representative in the military junta), with the support of the *desarrollista*⁵ sectors and others, will have his own political plan. For his part, Videla will try to convince the divided top staff of the Army of the necessity

4. Refers to those sectors of the bourgeoisie favoring an *apertura*, or political liberalization.

of preparing an "aperturista" plan for 1979 at the latest.

Perspectives—A "Spanish" Outcome?

What did the October-November strikes lead to? Are we at the threshold of a prerevolutionary situation? If the most probable variant for the future is certainly that relations between the classes will be altered in the mass movement's favor, it is also evident that the heroic strikes of the rail workers and others in the state sector have not yet brought a leap toward a new stage, for the reasons noted above.

The accord between the armed forces and the bourgeois parties, and the pressure of Carter's policy (to hold back the masses with bourgeois-democratic methods and not exclusively with the hangman's rope) will make the process unfold more slowly. The scare brought on by the state employees' strikes has confirmed that differences among the bourgeoisie's cast of characters are best resolved through negotiations. That the process will go more slowly does not mean that continued resistance cannot provoke social explosions in one or another local area or trade union. But today, could Carter's dream, the dream of Videla and the political parties (including the Argentine CP), be to carry out a "Spanish" solution?

The minister of the interior, General Harguindeguy, seemed to indicate this when he said that the Argentine process should "go down the center of a road that has both a right and a left side." In Spain itself, after meeting with Suárez, Admiral Massera—apparently repeating the minister of the interior's concept—declared that in Argentina there is a place in politics for everyone, "except for the extreme right and the crazy left."

But the military and the bourgeois parties face a problem without solution: who is the Argentine Suárez? Candidates, of course, are not lacking. Admiral Massera seems to be working earnestly to appear "presidential," seeking the support of politicians and trade unionists. Agribusiness leader Jorge Aguado has launched a "Movement of Opinion" that defines itself as "liberal" and supports the principles of March 24, 1976. Perhaps Videla, with his plan for "civilian-military convergence," will be another candidate. The one who has gone furthest is Lanusse (the former military president who called the 1973 elections): he will try to concretize his old project of being the candidate of "national unity," obtaining the support of the two biggest bourgeois electoral forces—Peronism and the UCR [Radical Civic Union].

These are the plans of the bourgeoisie;

things could turn out differently in the class struggle. Repeating the process Suárez carried out in Spain will not be easy for the Argentine bourgeoisie. The Spanish regime had margins for applying bourgeois parliamentarism after the proletariat had lived through forty years of Francoism; besides that, in all its history the Spanish working class had known only five years of bourgeois democracy. At the same time, the Spanish experience occurs when European parliamentarism has not yet entered its final crisis.

In Argentina, as in the rest of Latin America, there is less leeway. Argentina has passed through the most varied experiences in the last forty years: populist governments, military coups, bourgeois-democratic governments. The semicolonial character of our country prevents the national bourgeoisie from granting big concessions that would enable them to enjoy relative stability in the style of the metropolitan countries. In the case of Argentina, this structural problem, characteristic of all Latin American countries, is combined with a subjective factor—the lack of a bourgeois leader who could be utilized for a change in the bourgeoisie's policies, someone like Perón. His death in 1974 accelerated what is now a full-blown crisis inside the largest bourgeois-nationalist mass movement in Latin America—Peronism.

Complicating the bourgeoisie's situation even further is that, besides lacking a "Suárez," it also lacks the Argentine "Carrillos" and the Argentine "Felipe González." The only possible candidates right now are the Peronist union bureaucrats, but the present crisis of Peronism will make it more difficult for them to play the role of "wet blankets" and traitors in the pattern set by the CP and SP in Spain. For thirty years, the Argentine working class has been Peronist. The disastrous experiences with the last government of Perón and with Isabel's regime provoked great disillusionment among the workers. Nevertheless, this does not mean that Peronism is totally liquidated; what *has* disappeared, especially with Perón gone, is the possibility that Peronism will again be the mass movement that it was until 1973, when it had organizational hegemony over the whole of the working class. The crisis of Peronism, combined with a situation of mass upsurge, can bring on an important turn to the left among the workers.

Neither must one dismiss other possibilities, as Irene Rodríguez, a national leader of the PST,⁶ pointed out in an article last March:⁷

6. Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Socialist Workers Party), Argentine sympathizing group of the Fourth International.

7. "Argentina—One Year After the Coup," *Inprecor*, March 17, 1977, p. 3; March 31, 1977, p. 18.

"But in the context of the rise of the masses, the crisis of Peronism may give rise to a new phenomenon. It is not excluded that the trade-union bureaucracy, which, as the union component of Peronism has constituted virtually a party within the party, could decide to organize itself as such, initiating the building of a labor party. Should this process occur, it would have a positive aspect, since it would mean a step toward the political independence of the working class. For this reason the party [the PST] would have to have a policy of fully participating in it.

"We also believe that the reality of the country could come to pose another possibility. The political rise of the world working class, now occurring fundamentally in Europe, expressed in the resurgence and tremendous weight of the Communist and Socialist parties, will, we believe, begin to have an influence. The influence of these mobilizations and processes and the direct action of the world apparatuses of the Social Democracy and the Communist parties will have effects on the Argentine situation." Irene Rodríguez also noted that "the emergence of a strong Socialist party—that is, a workers party—would be an enormous step, for in addition to being a step forward in relation to independence of the employers' parties, it would have the advantage over a labor party of fostering a clearly political outlet, even if in a reformist form, and would introduce discussion on the need for socialism among the broad masses."

In view of all these possibilities, and in face of the political traps that the bourgeoisie is preparing with the military and imperialism, revolutionists must prepare themselves to struggle for the political independence of the workers, pushing toward the formation of a socialist, working-class party with mass weight.

The victories of the rail strike, of the subway workers, of the Rosario Luz y Fuerza workers, and of the wave of earlier struggles have strengthened the morale of the Argentine working class—it will face its new battles with increased strength. The workers' triumph and the rise of resistance open the way toward liquidating the attempts at an undemocratic, limited political relaxation. The advances achieved will strengthen and favor the struggle for wages that have not yet undergone sufficient modifications, and for the recovery of the workers organizations (the CGT, the unions, and the internal commissions in the plants). It will favor the struggle for freedom for the political prisoners and the appearance of those kidnapped—a struggle that was initiated by the Committee of Families with a march on Congress October 14. And it will accelerate the crisis and defeat of the military dictatorship, leading to the calling of truly free elections without any restrictions and the convoking of a constituent assembly. □

5. *Desarrollar* means development—those bourgeois sectors that want to intensify industrial development, especially in heavy industry, are called *desarrollistas*.

OUT NOW!

Chapter 26

The Invasion of Cambodia and May 1970

By Fred Halstead

[Continued from last week]

The Geneva Accords of 1954 resulted in the division of the former French colony of Indochina into four parts: the two zones of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Theoretically, both Laos and Cambodia were neutral, but by the late 1960s a civil war was raging in Laos between the left-wing Pathet Lao, supported by North Vietnam, and the right-wing Royal Laotian Army, supported by the United States.

Some of the mountain paths over which supplies were carried from North Vietnam to the NLF in the South—the so-called Ho Chi Minh Trail—passed through Laotian territory and these areas were steadily bombed by American planes. In addition, the U.S. had been covertly involved in the Laotian civil war from the beginning.

In early 1970 Washington sharply escalated its military involvement in Laos, mounting some of the heaviest bombing in human history over central Laos far from the border trails, using B-52s as well as fighter bombers from U.S. bases in Thailand. The purpose was to stave off a military victory by the Pathet Lao, which had gained control of two-thirds of the country.

Until 1970 the situation had been different in Cambodia, where the head of state, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, walked a shaky tightrope maintaining a “neutralist” policy. The South Vietnamese NLF used certain Cambodian border areas—where there

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was a large ethnic Vietnamese population—for supply and regroupment. Sihanouk tolerated this presence for fear that if he tried to force the NLF out, they in turn would be forced to back Cambodian revolutionaries in taking over at least the border areas, and Cambodia would become another zone of war and revolution.

In mid-March, 1970, Sihanouk was ousted by a coup. Rightist General Lon Nol took over and was quickly backed by the U.S. The Cambodian army began cooperating with the U.S. and Saigon forces in border area raids on the NLF. Lon Nol's forces were soon in deep trouble, however, from previously isolated Cambodian guerrillas called the Khmer Rouge, now backed by North Vietnam, the NLF, and even Sihanouk, who was preparing to set up a government in exile in Peking.

On April 3, the *Wall Street Journal* carried the following ominous report from Washington:

arguing for U.S. involvement in Cambodia, a senior American general with much Vietnam experience, insists the communists couldn't keep up their warfare around Saigon and the Mekong Delta, without these sanctuaries.

Through the month the tension around the Cambodian situation continued to mount.

On April 19, Sam Brown announced the disbanding of the

national Vietnam Moratorium Committee. The group's activists, it was suggested, could devote themselves to electoral campaigns of liberal candidates. Marge Sklencar declared that mass demonstrations were “a political fad that has worn off.”¹³

The next day the SMC national office issued a statement declaring:

The Student Mobilization Committee finds it regrettable that such steps were taken in face of the clear expansion of the war into Laos, Cambodia and the rest of Southeast Asia by the United States government. . . . We are urging all antiwar organizations and leaders in the antiwar movement to jointly call a national conference where the entire antiwar movement can discuss and project further nationally coordinated actions against the war.¹⁴

On April 29, the coordinating committee of the New Mobe met at Cora Weiss's house in New York City. Several members of the steering committee, including Carol Lipman and me, were also present by invitation. The idea of a national conference was raised and once again rejected.

But early in the meeting, news came that caused all of us to set aside our differences for the moment. Major U.S. military forces from South Vietnam were invading Cambodia. We did not know from those early reports how extensive the escalation was or what the reaction of the American people would be, but it was clear we had to do something.

The meeting unanimously agreed to issue a call in the name of the New Mobilization Committee for a mass demonstration at the White House for Saturday, May 9, a little more than a week away. A number of us agreed to put aside other commitments and go to Washington to begin preparations. Brad Lytle and I were once again put in charge of logistics, including marshals.

* * *

The next day, the SMC issued a statement addressed to “Antiwar coalitions, SMC chapters and other opponents of the war.” It declared in part:

Clearly, the movement is obligated to organize a massive public outcry of protest against this new move, one loud enough to force the administration to reverse itself. . . . If we begin work immediately we can turn the Cambodian escalation into a major political defeat for the administration and a massive new upsurge for the antiwar movement.¹⁵

That evening, Thursday, April 30, President Nixon appeared on television to acknowledge that he had ordered the invasion of Cambodia. Its purpose, he said, was to destroy what he described as the central military headquarters of the communist forces in South Vietnam, which he claimed was hidden in Cambodian territory. The move was couched in terms of shortening the war, but the American people had been told the same on the occasion of every previous escalation. It became clear to millions who had hoped the administration was backing out of the war that in truth

13. *New York Times*, April 20, 1970.

14. *Militant*, May 1, 1970.

15. Student Mobilization Committee statement, April 30, 1970. (Copy in author's files.)

it was widening it in quest of quicker military victory. The angry mass reaction began before Nixon finished his speech.

The biggest of these first spontaneous outbursts occurred at Princeton, New Jersey, where some 2,500 students and faculty (out of a university community of 6,000) met immediately and voted to strike the college. By morning the strike was virtually solid.

Throughout that day, May 1, wherever young people gathered, there was angry discussion of Nixon's speech. Mass meetings and rallies took place on hundreds of campuses and the strike idea spread. At Yale in New Haven, Connecticut, a partial strike was already in progress in protest against the New Haven Black Panther trial, and a defense rally had previously been scheduled for the weekend of May 1. It had been publicized beforehand and supported by the New York Parade Committee and other groups. As a result, there were people in attendance from many places in the eastern part of the country.

The Cambodian invasion prompted the New Haven gathering to call for a nationwide student strike around three demands: immediate withdrawal from Southeast Asia, freedom for political prisoners, and an end to campus complicity with the war.

In addition, a strike information center was hastily set up at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts, over the weekend, and the SMC as well as the National Student Association also spread the strike call. But in truth, no national group initiated, controlled, or directed the strike. It simply exploded with unprecedented force across the country, organized on each campus by whatever local activists there were. By Monday, the SMC national office had contacted groups at over a hundred universities and virtually all these campuses were on strike or making plans to take a strike vote.

* * *

The national spotlight was turned on one of the most unlikely places to become famous in a national student upsurge. That was Kent State University in northern Ohio. The nonstudent population of the immediate area tended to be conservative, even right-wing. The bulk of the 20,000 students at Kent, while generally opposed to the war, were not noted for their radical activism. In addition, events during the spring 1969 semester had dealt a severe blow to student political rights at Kent State.

In April 1969, the local SDS chapter carried out a series of small actions isolated from the mass of the student body by ultraleft rhetoric. Using a combination of police, right-wing civilian ruffians, red-baiting, and spurious felony charges against the students, the school administration broke up the SDS demonstrations, revoked the SDS charter, and derailed an attempt by several thousand non-SDS students to defend the civil liberties of the victims. This attempt ended in disarray partly because the SDS leadership demanded that concerned students and faculty participate in the defense on the basis of a "revolutionary" program or not at all. An atmosphere of fear and intimidation established by the school administration was still in evidence a year later.

Nevertheless, at noon on the day following Nixon's speech, some 2,000 Kent State students rallied in protest. In the afternoon the Black United Students held another rally. That night, Friday, the National Guard was called to the campus. A pent-up anger soon became apparent. On Saturday night, May 2, several thousand students marched on the ROTC building and some of them set it afire. While it burned, the guardsmen were given orders to shoot anyone cutting fire hoses. There was no shooting then, but a tone had been set.

On Monday, May 4, at noontime, students gathered around a bell mounted in the Commons, an open field in the center of the campus. A speaker mounted the base of the bell and called for a strike. A state trooper with a bullhorn pronounced the gathering illegal and told the crowd to leave. A few of the more than a thousand students in the area threw rocks. Guardsmen arrived and gassed the crowd, which retreated, but did not fully disperse.

Gas canisters were lobbed; some students lobbed them back; the students retreated again, toward a parking lot. Some students were throwing small rocks at a group of guardsmen on a hill. A line of the soldiers got to their knees and aimed their rifles. Two students, Mike York and Fred Kirsch, who were present, later recalled:

At first no one was sure what was happening. There was a steady, loud rattle, like machine guns. Someone yelled, "Those are only blanks." Then we heard bullets whistling past our heads. Dirt flew up in our faces, where bullets were hitting the ground, landing only a few feet from us. There was a tree about fifteen yards behind us. There were repeated sounds of thuds and splintering noise as bullets hit the tree. More bullets hit the cars in the lot, smashing the windshields, hitting the fenders and the sides of the cars. . . .

A girl was screaming. "They're not using blanks. They're not using blanks." Another student fell over, dead. A student collapsed to the ground, hit. Suddenly, after about 30 seconds, the shooting stopped. We got up and looked around. One girl was lying on the ground, holding her stomach. Her face was white. There were others, lying on the ground. Some moved. Some didn't.

The whole area was one of panic. We heard a girl crying hysterically. "Get an ambulance, get an ambulance," others were shouting. A guy picked up one girl and held her in his arms. The front of her was covered with blood. "She's dead," he was shouting. "She's dead. I know she's dead."¹⁶

* * *

Four students were killed and many wounded, some crippled for life, in that fraction of a minute. The guardsmen claimed they had been fired upon, but this was later proven false. Some of the students who were shot had not even been in the demonstration but were simply passing through the parking lot. The dead were Allison Krause, 19; Jeffrey Glenn Miller, 20; Sandra Lee Scheuer, 20; and William K. Schroeder, 19. Schroeder had been attending Kent on an ROTC scholarship, though like many such students, he was critical of the war.

That evening, tens of millions watched television interviews with some of the dead students' anguished parents. The bereaved parents were not hostile toward the student demonstrators and bitterly denounced the government.

The news of the Kent State massacre gave further impetus to the already spreading student revolt. Within a few days some 350 universities across the country were on strike.

* * *

At Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, the student government reserved a hall with a capacity of 1,000 for a meeting to take a strike vote on Monday night, May 4. Some 4,000 showed up, 80 percent of the campus community, and the meeting was moved outside to the Quad, where sound equipment was hastily rigged. Brown SMC activist, Toby Emmerich, recalled:

There was a lot of discussion and debate over whether to strike. This was not going to be a one-day affair. People were worried about what we were going to do about the end of the semester, finals, classes, credits, grades, and so on. When it finally got to the point where people thought we were ready to vote, we suddenly realized we had no way to do it, no ballots or boxes, and it was too dark to see hands in the crowd. At last we decided people should leave through two different arches, one for strike, one against. Thousands waited to walk through the strike arch while only a few walked through the other one. The next morning we met again, taking over the hockey rink, the only place big enough for mass meetings.¹⁷

The first hockey rink meeting took over some sacred prerogatives of the university administration. The strikers decided to keep the university open but there was to be no complicity with the war. Professors who so desired could continue teaching and students could attend classes, but there were to be no credits lost

16. *May 1970: Birth of the Antiwar University* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1971), p. 13.

17. Taped interview by the author with Toby Emmerich, November 18, 1974.

and no reprisals against students or faculty devoting part or full time to antiwar activity. The faculty was asked to give grades for the entire semester according to work done as of the beginning of the strike. The faculty meeting later that day agreed, and the administrators had to go along. Similar arrangements were being made elsewhere across the country.

* * *

At the Berkeley campus of the University of California, the Academic Senate—the official body of the faculty with over 1,200 members, and normally a moderate group—met Monday, May 1, and voted to call for a Wednesday convocation to “discuss appropriate responses of the campus community to the grave consequences of the recent widening of the war.”¹⁸

The next day a noon rally of over 5,000 was held on Sproul Plaza. The student body president, Dan Siegel, who spoke on the need for the whole campus to become a massive antiwar center, received a standing ovation. The six-member faculty steering committee was enlarged to include Siegel, Jean Savage of the SMC, and Matthew Ross of the People’s Coalition, a group that in recent weeks had led several anti-ROTC confrontations.

Fifteen thousand attended the Wednesday convocation May 6 in the Greek Theatre. The high point came when faculty member Sheldon Wolin summarized the student-faculty demands in a seven-point motion, which was adopted by a wildly enthusiastic crowd. It said:

1. This campus is on strike to reconstitute the university as a center for organizing against the war in Southeast Asia. We are curtailing normal activities for the remainder of the quarter. We pledge our time, energy, and commitment to stopping this war. We will open the campus to mobilize our resources—our knowledge and skills, our manpower and facilities. We will organize not only against the war, but against the structures in society that facilitate that war. And we will organize to end our university’s complicity with that war.

2. We will immediately press to end our university’s relationship with ROTC, the Livermore and Los Alamos [nuclear weapons] laboratories, and the Thailand Counterinsurgency Project. [The SMC had published a sensational exposé of this project in the April 2, 1970, *Student Mobilizer*.]

3. We will organize and cooperate with antiwar activity in the community and across the nation, and use the summer to prepare for a national strike, in which colleges and high schools in particular would refuse to resume their normal activities in the fall if the war has not stopped by that time.

4. We will resist with all our resources the repression of antiwar and other dissenting activity on the campus and off.

5. We will protect ourselves by taking steps to minimize our risks and to aid each other when we engage in necessary risks. We will make every effort to protect the jobs and wages of university staff and to enable the faculty to discharge the minimum responsibilities required to protect the present and future academic status of students.

6. While our antiwar actions will be disruptive of normal activities, it is not our intention to encourage destructive action.

7. We strongly urge the faculty and students of other institutions to organize for the end of accomplishing the above objectives.¹⁹

Thus a different sort of strike strategy—of great potential importance for revolutionary student movements generally—emerged in the midst of the May 1970 upsurge: not to shut down the universities but to take over their facilities and use them to spread the antiwar activism to other sectors of the population.

18. *May 1970*, p. 20.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 22-23.

20. This general approach appeared earlier in France in the near-revolution of May-June 1968 and in the Japanese student strikes of the same year, particularly at Tokyo University. There attempts were made to institute student-faculty control of the universities in order to transform them into educational catalysts of social change and place their facilities and talents at the service of the oppressed, rather than of privilege. The idea of the “red university” originated with the student occupation of Belgrade University in Yugoslavia in June 1968 and the phrase “antiwar university” was derived from this precedent.

Once it began to appear, this concept was most vigorously pressed and publicized by the SMC, which proclaimed it “the antiwar university.”²⁰

In an obvious move to head off this development, California Governor Ronald Reagan—an all-out hawk on the war—announced after the Berkeley convocation that the entire state-owned university system, including the Berkeley campus, would be closed until Monday, May 11. That night the Berkeley Strike Coordinating Committee session turned into a mass meeting of 3,000, which voted to continue antiwar activities at the campus.

* * *

In Chicago, a city-wide strike council meeting of 1,500 students, representing some forty colleges and twenty high schools, met Tuesday night, May 5, and voted to strike. Campuses throughout the city held mass meetings of three, four, and five thousand people on May 6. The strike was solid at the University of Illinois Circle Campus near the center of Chicago, where the SMC implemented the antiwar university strategy. Decisions were made and forces mobilized at daily mass meetings on campus. The students demanded—and got—telephone lines, printing facilities, and ample space to organize strike activities. The Art and Architecture Institute on campus voted unlimited use of facilities and was open twenty-four hours a day producing a variety of artistic antiwar posters that were placed all over Chicago.

Students were dispatched throughout the area with different special leaflets to distribute to GIs at nearby bases, workers at factory gates, high school students, and the general public. The students also held a mass memorial service for the Kent State dead; rallies in the Black, Chicano, and Puerto Rican communities; and, in cooperation with the Chicago Peace Council, a city-wide mass demonstration in the Chicago Loop May 9.

* * *

On Thursday, May 7, the SMC held a press conference in Washington for a number of strike leaders from Berkeley, Wayne State, Case-Western Reserve, and Tufts universities. They issued a statement which said in part:

On a growing number of campuses, the strike has advanced from “shut it down” to “open it up” as the antiwar university. Campus facilities have begun passing into the hands of the campus community—students, faculty members and campus workers. They are using these facilities as centers from which to organize and mobilize in effective action this daily mounting antiwar sentiment of the population as a whole. This is a revitalization of the colleges and the beginning of their reconstruction in accordance with the proclaimed humanistic goals of higher education.

The established ruling authorities of some campuses now on strike have declared “their” campuses “closed.” They hope thereby to split the campus community into a “responsible” part that will meekly do their bidding and go home, and the “bums” [President Nixon had used this term to refer to student demonstrators] whom they hope to turn into targets of government violence. This attempt to divide the campus community must be defeated. . . .

We call on the campus communities that have not yet taken control of their campus facilities to do so and join with their sisters and brothers across the country in utilizing the facilities to mobilize noncampus communities against the war.

We call on the united campus communities to reach out into all communities—into the neighborhoods, the labor unions, the Afro-American and other Third World organizations, the churches and synagogues, the women’s groups, the political associations, the military installations—and organize the new, united antiwar movement that will have the power to actually compel an end to the killing abroad as well as at home.²¹

In New York City, where the major universities were all on strike, the high schools and even junior highs were also in turmoil in early May. Laura Garza, then twelve years old and a student at IS 70, a junior high school in the Chelsea district of Manhattan, described part of the scene:

When I arrived in front of the school there was another student a few

21. *Militant*, May 19, 1970.

years older, maybe from a nearby high school, with a bullhorn talking about the bombing in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and urging everyone to stay outside and follow along to see some demonstration. About two-thirds of the student body hung around listening until he started the march, and we all followed along. The local police seemed exasperated by the whole situation and could think of nothing to do but follow us through the streets in their cars, shouting that we would get in trouble and upset our parents if we didn't go back to school. Mostly we ignored them, and as we got further along and more exhilarated you could hear shouts of "Get lost, pigs." I didn't know the streets outside my neighborhood and didn't know where we were going. I recognized one place though, Washington Irving [an all-girls high] where my sister went. We stood chanting outside until they closed it down, and the students came out to join us. By that time our group, which started out on the sidewalks, had fused into a march that filled the street for blocks. Eventually, we ended up near city hall where there was a rally, and a woman spoke. I think it was Jane Fonda.

On Friday, May 8, one of these marches going through the city hall district was attacked by a gang of about 500 men from construction sites nearby. The attackers injured some seventy persons, and the police made no arrests. The officers of the building-trades unions did not denounce the attack. On the contrary they encouraged additional "patriotic" forays into the street by construction workers, arranging that the men would lose no pay for the time off the job for this purpose.

In the background of these incidents was the fact that the construction sites involved had been the scene of organizing by ultraright, racist groups opposed to demands by Blacks and Puerto Ricans for jobs in certain virtually all-white skilled construction trades.

Shortly after the May 8 attack, Peter Brennan, president of the New York Building Trades Council, called a mass demonstration for later in the month, essentially in support of President Nixon and also to embarrass Mayor John Lindsay. The mayor was not only a dove on the war, but under pressure to apply the law requiring integrated city hiring on city construction jobs.

While Brennan's support of Nixon during the crisis over the Cambodian invasion was in accord with the AFL-CIO executive council's hawk position, it obviously likewise involved some rather crude political dealing. Brennan was later rewarded with an appointment to Nixon's cabinet as secretary of labor.

The Building Trades demonstration took place May 20 and was large, drawing some 50,000. Many of the construction workers were required by their unions to attend and received pay for time off the job. Right-wing organizations such as the John Birch Society and New York's Conservative Party also mobilized. The event was not billed as prowar, but as a display of "love for the only flag we have." Its thrust was clearly blind support to government foreign policy, but the war itself was so unpopular that even Brennan was constrained to remark in his speech: "We are all against the war and we want to see it ended."²²

In a countermove, a dozen other New York unions organized a demonstration against the war and the repression of dissent. These included District 65; the Drug and Hospital Workers; District 37 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); District 3 of the International Union of Electrical Workers; the Amalgamated Clothing Workers; and the Jewelry Workers (all AFL-CIO affiliates).

This demonstration, for which workers were not paid, drew about half as many as the Building Trades affair, but in one sense it was more significant. It was the first antiwar demonstration organized formally and officially by unions since the war began.

In fact, the Cambodian invasion and the student reaction to it at last broke the solid front of the official labor movement's support to the war. Until that time, with minor exceptions, American unions had at best maintained official silence and at worst echoed the prowar position of AFL-CIO President George Meany. Even the Labor Leadership Assembly for Peace—which

had operated only briefly anyway—spoke officially only for the individual officers involved, not in the name of their unions.

That began to change in May 1970. For example: At its national convention in Denver, May 7, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, one of the larger unions in the country and then the fastest-growing, adopted a resolution calling for the "immediate and total withdrawal of all United States armed forces from Southeast Asia consistent with the safety of our armed forces and without regard to the willingness or ability of the Thieu government to carry on the war."²⁴

In San Francisco, 452 elected labor leaders signed their names to a full-page ad in the May 18 *San Francisco Examiner* demanding immediate withdrawal from Southeast Asia.

Jacob S. Potofsky, president of the 417,000-member Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, condemned the war in Indochina and the Nixon administration in his keynote address to the union's national convention in Atlantic City May 25. Potofsky was a member of the AFL-CIO executive council.

Patrick Gorman, secretary-treasurer of the half-million-member Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America, accused AFL-CIO President Meany of being "out of step" with the thinking of workers on the war. In an editorial in the union's newspaper Gorman declared: "No rational segment in the makeup of America puts the stamp of approval on our war involvements."²⁵

United Auto Workers President Walter Reuther broke his union's official silence on May 7—two days before he was killed in an air crash—with a telegram to President Nixon endorsed by the union's top officers. It declared:

On behalf of the UAW I wish to convey to you our deep concern and distress. . . . Your decision to invade the territory of Cambodia can only increase the enormity of the tragedy in which our nation is already deeply and unfortunately involved in that region. . . . Many Senators are understandably aroused. . . . However this dangerous adventure turns out militarily, America has already suffered a moral defeat beyond measure among the people of the world. . . . At no time in the history of our free society have so many troops been sent to so many campuses to suppress the voice of protest by so many young Americans. . . .²⁶

* * *

Meanwhile in Washington, D.C., the New Mobe was making preparations for the May 9 action. A coordinating committee met, usually at Barbara Bick's apartment, almost continuously from Sunday, May 3, until the Saturday, May 9, demonstration itself. People had to drop out from time to time for other tasks or an hour's sleep, and this may have contributed to the confusion that was to develop. The meetings were in almost constant crisis because different perspectives for the demonstration couldn't be resolved.

In these discussions, Rennie Davis and I were probably the most sharply opposed. Davis was convinced the country was on the verge of explosion. He had earlier come closer to predicting the upsurge over the Cambodian invasion than any of the rest of us. Immediately after Kent State, he predicted such clashes would be so widespread that martial law would be declared in the capital by the time of our demonstration. (As it turned out, serious clashes between students and police or troops occurred at twenty-six universities during the upsurge and the National Guard was sent to twenty-one.) He had his heart set on May 9 in Washington being a repeat of Chicago, 1968, in a more pregnant situation, and thought such a confrontation might impel the movement beyond "symbolism" and electrify the country.

24. *Labor Voice for Peace*, May 28, 1970. This was the newsletter of the Madison, Wisconsin, Labor Against the War group. (Copy in author's files.)

25. *The Butcherworkman*, June-July 1970. The editorial was written in May.

26. "UAW President Walter Reuther's Last Public Statement." Reprinted by the UAW International Affairs Department. (Copy in author's files.)

22. Letter from Laura Garza to the author, April 20, 1976.

23. *Militant*, June 5, 1970.

My view was that nothing we artificially set up in Washington May 9 was going to have that effect. May 9 was just another mass demonstration, primarily educational. The bigger and the less costly in victims, the better. The ultraleft confrontations—violent or otherwise—were also essentially “symbolic,” just much smaller and more costly.

Where the movement had finally moved beyond “symbolism” was where the student strikes developed the scope and the organization to take over universities, to deny them to the war-makers, to force longer-term concessions from the university administrations, and to transform the universities into antiwar organizing centers aimed at the rest of the population. That directly affected the war effort. It was also a step toward independent power. If that pattern should spread to other strata of the population, we would be involved in a new ball game.

But even if that should come about, it would be a complicated and drawn-out process in which masses broke from following the political leadership of the Democratic and Republican parties. It could not be some sort of immediate, generalized, spontaneous uprising.

I viewed both the ultraleft adventures and the usual pacifist nonviolent civil disobedience as proceeding from similar fallacies. They both tried to substitute the actions of a comparative handful for the actions of immense masses. However, there was an important difference between the two. Nonviolent civil disobedience did not make it easy for the war-makers to put the onus for violence on the antiwar movement. What is more, its manifestation required discipline, not anarchy. For these reasons I was willing to go along with nonviolent civil disobedience as part of a mass demonstration. If the civil disobedience could be massive, so much the better.

But I was adamant against “do-your-own-thing” confrontational activity, which was wide open to provocation, tended to take the government off the hook as far as the responsibility for violence was concerned, and could involuntarily catch up other demonstrators.

Dellinger, of course, was insistent on nonviolence. But in his quest to prove its effectiveness to Davis and similar youth, and in sympathy with their anarchist tendencies, he tended to bend in their direction. In the proposals of Davis and Dellinger, the line between nonviolent civil disobedience and “do-your-own-thing” confrontation once again became exceedingly thin and readily crossed.

The original call for the demonstration implied at least the possibility of civil disobedience. There was a regulation requiring fifteen days notice for the use of federal park land, including Lafayette Park, just across Pennsylvania Avenue from the White House. Since President Nixon hadn't given us fifteen days notice of the Cambodian invasion, we called the demonstration at the White House anyway.

The first leaflet mentioned the fifteen-day rule and declared:

Public outrage at the invasion of Cambodia is so great we will go to the White House in spite of these regulations. . . . The police may block us. If they also decide to arrest us, we will maintain a militant nonviolent discipline, and options will be provided for those not prepared for arrest.²⁷

This formula was unanimously agreed to.

Bray Lyttle and I were the co-chief marshals. It was agreed that in addition to regular marshals we would organize a group of several hundred prepared for arrest who would lead the civil disobedience part of the demonstration. The idea was for people to step across the police line and face arrest.

At first we expected a crowd of ten thousand. This would fit into Lafayette Park, or if that were denied, into H Street on the north, with plenty of room to evacuate the crowd in the event of a police charge or gas attack.

Later it was clear we would have a much bigger crowd. We

27. New Mobilization Committee leaflet announcing May 9, 1970, demonstration in Washington. (Copy in author's files.)

decided to ask for the Ellipse, a field just south of the White House, where there was room for 100,000 or more. This was done over Dellinger's objections, made on the grounds that if we got the Ellipse there would be no built-in confrontation and less opportunity to draw a large part of the crowd into civil disobedience.

The government adamantly refused both the Ellipse and Lafayette Park, saying it would keep us out of both areas, but not out of H Street, just north of the park, or the Washington Monument area, south of the Ellipse. The Monument area was too far from the White House, so we proceeded with arrangements on the H Street plan, though Brad and I were not pleased with it.

A crowd of 100,000 would jam not only the H Street area adjacent to the park but the streets leading into it for several blocks back. According to Lyttle,

most of the crowd would be hidden by buildings from any speakers' platform on H Street. Communications between the speakers' stand and remote parts of the crowd, or from the north to the south edge of the crowd, would have been unreliable or impossible.²⁷

We also knew, from officials in the mayor's office and other sources, what the government planned to do. They would trap the crowd between a double horseshoe of police and troops. The inner shoe would be around the White House area including Lafayette Park. The outer one would be hidden inside buildings at first and appear after the crowd gathered. It would be placed west, north, and east of the crowd. If trouble began, the government intended to apply pressure, by gas or otherwise from the north, hold fast on the east and west, and the crowd would have to escape south on Fifteenth and Seventeenth streets all the way to what was called a “home free” area on the Washington Monument grounds. The rationale for this was that trouble was expected and the government didn't want an angry crowd dispersing into the city.

All this entered into the crisis in the coordinating committee. The experience of the Mexican students at Tlatelolco in 1968—where a demonstration was trapped and hundreds killed—was mentioned. At one point the New Mobe's attorney, Phil Hirschkop, brought Norman Mailer, who happened to be in town, to the meeting. Mailer said there was something he felt he had to tell us. We should not underestimate the perfidy of President Nixon, he said, who was perfectly capable of ordering a military attack on the demonstration, and might even view it as a political opportunity to cripple the movement and polarize the country to the right. Mailer suggested we call the whole thing off. We couldn't have done that if we had wanted to, but this is an example of the crosscurrents in which the discussions were taking place.

[To be continued]

Dutch Government Deports Chilean Exile

Alberto Torres Caldero, a twenty-three-year-old Chilean, was put on a plane bound for Santiago by authorities of the Netherlands ministry of justice on January 2.

Torres protested his deportation so vigorously that the pilot had to return to the Netherlands after half an hour. Two police officers were then put aboard, and they turned Torres over to Chilean authorities upon arrival in Santiago.

Dutch officials said Torres had been living in the Netherlands illegally for four months after losing his passport in France.

The foreign affairs secretary of the opposition Dutch Socialist Party, Win Bogaard, happened to be on the plane when Torres was being deported, on his way to meet with families of political prisoners in Chile. Bogaard said he would be posing some questions for the Dutch government about the expulsion. (*Rouge*, January 6.)

Worker Dissidents Hold Press Conference in Moscow

By Marilyn Vogt

Vladimir Klebanov, a forty-five-year-old coal miner, held a news conference with foreign correspondents in Moscow January 10. With him were several other workers who sought to publicize the persecution of those who complain to Soviet authorities about corruption and poor safety conditions on the job.

This is the second such news conference Klebanov has organized, to the evident displeasure of the Kremlin bureaucracy. After the first, held December 1, 1977, and attended by at least half a dozen workers with similar grievances, he was seized by police and placed in a mental institution for several weeks.

At these news conferences the workers described their own experiences and made available case histories they had compiled of other such instances.

A waitress, a bookkeeper, and a factory worker told reporters January 10 how they lost their jobs for exposing outright theft or corruption by their administrators.

A metalworker, injured on the job, told of how he was fired because he protested that the factory administration denied him workman's compensation so as not to spoil its accident-free record that insured year-end bonuses.

Klebanov was a shift foreman in a coal mine in the Donets Basin, where he worked for sixteen years. He explained how he became concerned over the hazardous working conditions at his mine and began to file complaints.

The mine's production plan was "unrealistically high," he said. To meet production quotas, miners often had to work a twelve-hour day instead of the normal six. As a result, they were tired and less careful, and the accident rate increased.

Twelve to fifteen miners were killed in his mine every year and 600 to 700 injured, he said. Yet the authorities kept this information secret and refused to investigate the causes of the accidents or to take action to improve mine safety.

Klebanov persisted in his protests. He was subsequently dismissed from his job and sent to a psychiatric hospital, where he was confined for four and a half years.

After being released, he appealed his case to the highest party and government official in Moscow. In the reception rooms of these officials he encountered hundreds of other workers who had been persecuted in a similar fashion.

A number of them decided to issue an

open letter, having exhausted every possible avenue of help from their trade unions, the party, or the government.

In it, they denounced the "groundless repression" used to "frighten honest citizens" who protest corruption or job hazards. They are not only fired but in effect blacklisted, as the notation that they are "troublemakers" is added to the work booklet they must show when applying for a new job.

By the end of November 1977 Klebanov had collected the signatures of thirty-eight workers from twenty-four cities. He then turned to Andrei Sakharov, one of the

most prominent Soviet dissidents, for assistance in publicizing the letter.

Sakharov is said to have declined to help. Although he has not been quoted directly on his views of the letter, *New York Times* correspondent David K. Shipler reported December 20 that "Dr. Sakharov told some reporters he had refused to get involved because he feared that some of the workers who had signed protests did not understand the risks of open dissent."

The workers persisted, finally turning to foreign correspondents to win a hearing for their grievances. □

More Restrictions on Right to Strike

Nigerian Unionists Condemn Antilabor Decree

As part of its ongoing effort to hamstring the Nigerian trade-union movement, the military junta of Lt. Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo has enacted another repressive industrial law.

The Trade Disputes (Essential Services) Decree 1977 provides fines of up to 10,000 naira (about US\$14,500) for anyone found guilty of "disrupting" the economy or impeding the functioning of "essential services." Formally, the decree applies to both workers and employers, but in the context of the regime's overall antilabor policy it is obviously directed primarily at the workers' right to strike.

Frank Ovie Kokori, the deputy general secretary of the National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers, described the new decree as an attempt to deprive workers of their democratic and trade-union rights. He said that strikes should not be banned, since they were the "last weapon left to the oppressed and aggrieved workers."

The right to strike had already been seriously curtailed the year before, when Obasanjo banned virtually all strikes in what were described as "essential services," meaning government departments, communications, transportation, airports and harbors, electricity, water, fuel, and hospitals.

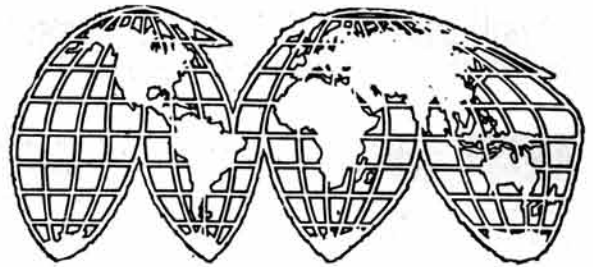
In addition, the whole trade-union movement is being restructured under government dominance. The 1,870 previously existing unions are being reorganized into seventy authorized unions, with the regime having the power to appoint their general secretaries. By the beginning of 1978, sixty-four of these new unions had been established, and hundreds that did not qualify were outlawed.

But the Obasanjo regime is running into opposition. In early January, a coordinating committee of elected officers of industrial unions held a news conference in which they said they would not accept appointed general secretaries over their unions.

The unionists also criticized the manner in which the military regime is preparing the way for its much-touted transfer to civilian rule by 1979. "Most of us today," they said, "are highly apprehensive of the kind and character of the civilian government we may have in 1979 as there are indications of the existence of certain forces that are trying to cow all organs of public opinion, namely the press, trade union bodies and students."

Federal Commissioner for Labour Maj. Gen. Henry Adefope warned workers that the regime would not remain passive in face of opposition to the new "guidelines."

AROUND THE WORLD



Beirut Paper Hits Censorship

The January 10 edition of *Ike* (Dawn), the only English-language newspaper in Lebanon, carried a sixty-line editorial that repeated "All is well" 144 times.

An editor said it was a protest against government censorship of the press, which was imposed one year ago.

Ecuador Referendum

Ecuadoreans voted for the first time in more than seven years on January 15, in a referendum to select one of two proposed constitutions drawn up by commissions appointed by the country's ruling military junta.

According to results reported by Ecuador's National Secretariat of Public Information, 42% of those voting chose a wholly new constitution that grants illiterates the right to vote, provides a five-year presidential term, a unicameral congress, and the right to association.

About 33% favored an amended version of the 1945 constitution, which would have denied voting rights to Ecuador's 1.5 million illiterate citizens.

More than 20% cast null ballots in response to a campaign by several bourgeois nationalist parties for a rejection of the military's plans for gradually restoring civilian rule.

The junta, headed by Vice Admiral Alfredo Poveda, has said it will turn the government over to a new civilian president to be chosen in a July 16 election.

Odinga and Thiong'o Arrested

In less than a month, two prominent critics of the Kenyatta regime in Kenya have been arrested.

In mid-December, Odinga Odinga was detained after giving a speech critical of the regime's agrarian policy. Odinga was a former vice-president of Kenya who broke with Kenyatta and formed the opposition Kenya People's Union. In 1969, the KPU was banned and Odinga was arrested. Although he was later released, he was prohibited from participating in any political activities for several years.

On December 30, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Kenya's best-known novelist, was also seized. According to his wife, eleven police arrested him at their home and seized

about 100 books. They told his wife that he would be held for questioning.

Thiong'o is chairman of the literature department at the University of Nairobi. He is the author of *Petals of Blood*, an internationally acclaimed novel that describes the class conflict in Kenya. A recent Kikuyu-language play that he coauthored, *Ngahika Ndenda*, was banned after its first performance.

Continued High Inflation in Israel

The Begin government is predicting that prices will jump only 30 percent in 1978—down from a 40 percent inflation rate in recent years.

Finance Minister Simha Ehrlich presented the 1978 budget to the Israeli parliament January 9 and warned that Israeli workers would have to tighten their belts and accept cuts in social services.

And what if workers seek pay hikes to cover some of this galloping inflation? "I wish to warn from this platform," Ehrlich threatened, "that if there are demands for wage increases in the public sector, there will be no alternative to dismissing workers from places of employment."

Military expenditures are the largest single item in Israel's \$13 billion budget. For fiscal 1977-78, war spending accounts for about one-third of the entire budget.

Mass Arrests of Chileans in Argentina

At least 2,000 Chileans living in the southern Argentine province of Chubut were arrested January 12 and imprisoned at the Trelew municipal gymnasium or at the Trelew air force base, according to an Agence France-Presse report of news items appearing in Buenos Aires newspapers.

Many Chileans have lived for a long time under poor conditions on the outskirts of the larger cities in Chubut Province. According to AFP, the Argentine authorities said the immigration papers of those arrested were not in order.

On January 19, the Argentine army announced that 400 Chileans had been expelled from Argentina.

Christian Democrats Arrested in Chile

Twelve members of the Chilean Christian Democratic Party were arrested January 13 in Santiago and exiled to remote villages in the Andes Mountains.

The Pinochet regime alleged that the eleven men and one woman had been participating in a "clandestine political meeting." All political activity is banned under various junta decrees.

The arrests were reportedly the first direct reprisals against Christian Democratic politicians, although the party itself was declared illegal in March 1977.

Among those deported were Tomas Reyes, former president of the Chilean senate; two former members of the chamber of deputies; and Guillermo Yunge, a university student who was, according to a report in the January 17 *Washington Post*, "one of the leaders of the first public street protests . . . against the Pinochet regime in the days prior to the Jan. 4 referendum."

Geisel Picks Top Spy as Successor

Brazil's military dictator Gen. Ernesto Geisel announced January 5 that he will be succeeded in 1979 by Gen. João Baptista Figueiredo, who for the past four years has been in charge of the National Intelligence Service.

Figueiredo must still be nominated as a candidate for president by the official government party, AERNA, and then voted upon by an electoral college in which ARENA has the majority. These steps will be mere formalities, however.

According to news reports, little information about Geisel's hand-picked successor has been available to the Brazilian people, although there has been some speculation in the country's press that Figueiredo "inherited constitutionalist ideas from his father," who helped lead an unsuccessful attempt in 1932 to overthrow the dictator Getulio Vargas.

The British magazine *Economist* reported January 14 that "Brazilians half-joke: 'He knows all about us, but we don't know anything about him. . . .'"

Record Jobless Rate in Canada

The Trudeau government reported January 10 that more Canadians were out of work in December 1977 than at any time since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The official jobless rate was reported as 8.5 percent. According to seasonally adjusted figures, 911,000 people were recorded as looking for work.

Selections From the Left

rouge

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

In a letter to the editor in the January 16 issue, the Vietnamese Internationalist Communist Group of Paris comments on the border clashes between Hanoi and Pnompenh.

"The conflict between Cambodia and Vietnam greatly saddens those of us who, like the Vietnamese in France, supported both countries to the final victory. How can two peoples who have fought together so long against the imperialists find themselves thrown against one another by their respective leaderships, who have failed to resolve their problems in a spirit of proletarian internationalism?

"Relying solely on traditional nationalist themes to mobilize energy is no way to prepare the masses to raise their level of understanding of the vital problems of the future. Nor is it any way to prepare them to develop the class initiative and consciousness necessary to carry out the tasks of socialism.

"In the name of effectiveness in the struggle against foreign occupation, the Cambodian and Vietnamese Communist parties have for a long time encouraged the most extreme nationalist sentiments. This included hailing the feats of the armies of kings, queens, and warlords who drove out 'foreigners' during the epoch of feudalism. Furthermore, each country calls for 'building socialism in one country,' and that at the expense of its neighbors.

"The Indochinese revolution, which inspired the admiration and hopes of the oppressed masses of all continents, now risks being discredited by this unjustifiable fratricide. At the same time, the ideal of socialism risks being tarnished.

"There is also rising uneasiness over a possible worsening of tension that could lead to armed conflicts between the two big 'socialist' rivals. In addition to its historical roots, the conflict between Vietnam and Cambodia also reflects the antagonism between the Soviet Union and China. The latter would like to exert a determining influence in Southeast Asia at the expense of, and over, the Republic of Vietnam, which has the prestige of having defeated the American giant.

"The Indochinese revolutionary front, built under the pressure of events, was restricted to a military alliance instead of developing toward a perspective of a socialist federation between Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam.

"Bureaucratic regimes are ill equipped to resolve the problems of nationalities. Only in the framework of direct democracy,

exercised by the masses, can the national minorities find assurance of equality. Only under such conditions can the indispensable Indochinese Socialist Federation emerge. Only under such conditions, and not under a bureaucratic system, can we move forward to socialism.

"The pressure of the opinion of the international workers movement should impose an immediate halt to the hostilities and call for the opening of negotiations toward a peaceful settlement."

Granma

Official organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba. Published in Havana.

A statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, printed on the front page of the January 15 issue of the weekly English-language edition, gives the Cuban government's view on the border clashes between Vietnam and Cambodia. The following is the full text:

"The Government of Cuba is deeply concerned over the news of the incidents that have occurred on the border between the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and Kampuchea [Cambodia] and considers that the long tradition of friendship, born and developed through the long and difficult years of the common struggle against the foreign occupiers, a struggle that made the peoples of Vietnam and Kampuchea invincible and enabled them to defeat the French colonialists and their U.S. successors, should be the main reason for a peaceful solution of these problems through negotiation.

"The Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam has informed the Government of Cuba of its willingness to take whatever steps are necessary to reach a peaceful solution to the border differences between Vietnam and Kampuchea through negotiation.

"Cuba hereby expresses its confidence that these difficulties will be solved for the benefit of the future progress of the peoples of Vietnam and Kampuchea and in the permanent interests of all those who are struggling against colonialism, neocolonialism and imperialism for peace and socialism."

TYÖVÄENVALTA

"Workers Power," journal of the Revolutionary Communists. Published in Tampere, Finland.

The second issue of *Työväenvalta*, the

successor of *Neuvostovalta* ("Soviet Power"), the former journal of the Finnish Trotskyists, has appeared. Its contents include an article on the issue of nuclear power in Finland, introduced by the following editorial note:

"The question of the relationship between nuclear power and the principles of the workers movement has taken on a greater and greater importance in recent years both internationally and in our country, since the ominous towers of nuclear power plants have begun to rise near the population centers in southern Finland.

"In various West European countries, the struggle against nuclear power and the danger it represents has promoted the growth of stronger and stronger movements, which have mobilized hundreds of thousands of persons. . . .

"Despite this, the attitude of the Finnish left toward nuclear energy has been at best confused passivity, or at worst pure reactionary opportunism. The Social Democrats have accepted it almost uncritically as an advance in capitalist technology. . . . The Communist Party looks at the whole thing through the eyes of specialists in advertising the advantages of business dealings with the Soviet Union [from which Finland is buying its reactors].

"As a result of this reactionary policy on the part of the left, the task of opposing nuclear power has been left in the hands of various populist bourgeois currents, who, of course, have no overall answer to the crisis of capitalism and its energy policy. In this issue, *Työväenvalta* is beginning a discussion of this question by publishing Antero's theses on nuclear power. The editors in general agree with his positions, although because of their brevity they cannot provide a complete Marxist answer to this question."

The conclusion of Antero's article is as follows:

"The struggle against nuclear power has an enormous revolutionary potential, a potential that the Finnish left has not even begun to tap. The only opposition to nuclear power that has appeared in Finland is limited, with the exception of occasional leftist elements, to the youth groups of the center movements, and these groups are quite incapable of giving the struggle any revolutionary content. They can offer only adjustments of capitalism along the most decentralized lines, which in fact are not viable and would never be able to change things decisively.

"What is needed today is by no means some stupid and short-sighted glorification of Soviet nuclear power by the Finnish left, or of West European nuclear power. A real

solution can be offered only by the workers movement, for which the fight against nuclear power is a natural part of its struggle for the kind of society in which power sources will be utilized in accordance with human needs as well as the needs of maintaining the ecological balance."

صوت العامل
NEWS

"Kol Ha'Poel" (Voice of the Worker).
Newspaper of the Workers League (Vanguard). Published monthly in Tel Aviv.

In a special supplement to the November issue, the Workers League states its view on Sadat's visit to Israel:

"Behind the heavy fog, the smoke-screen surrounding the 'historic moment' when Sadat visited Jerusalem . . . a new tragedy is being prepared for the Palestinian masses. . . . Behind the screen of lies and hypocrisy, the touching word of 'peace,' an 'arrangement' inspired and initiated by the U.S.A. emerges on the horizon. . . .

"Why did Sadat come to Jerusalem? He came because he realizes that the diplomatic efforts organized by the Americans leading toward an 'arrangement' in the region are coming up against immense difficulties. He wishes to advance these efforts. He needs an 'arrangement' to stabilize his regime, to assure the prosperity of the rich in his country, against the millions of workers who threaten him and refuse to accept his economic decrees.

"In order to advance this new arrangement he went to war in October 1973; in order to advance this arrangement he came to Jerusalem this week. Politically, the wind from Washington is blowing at his back. Militarily, he is unable to bear a war today; and he knows that the state of Israel, isolated internationally and up against a wall on the diplomatic front, is seeking a new war. By means of this visit Sadat wants to attain a clear objective—to prevent any possibility of Israel starting a war.

"For this reason he announces loud and clear his recognition of the state of Israel, his readiness to guarantee its existence. . . . In the center of his plan is the establishment of a mini Palestinian puppet state on the West Bank and in Gaza, which will be neither independent nor sovereign but only one big refugee camp. . . .

"Begin and Peres responded to Sadat in the Knesset [parliament]. Both made it perfectly clear that they have no intention to pull back, that both of them want to perpetuate the occupation. Both explained that they are prepared for 'peace' with Sadat, and with him they are prepared for fruitful collaboration—against the Palestinian people.

"Let no one delude themselves. The

dangers of war in the Middle East have in no way decreased. The danger of a new holocaust against the Palestinian people has only increased. Peace, real peace, will be reached only by the workers and peasants, among themselves and solely for their benefit.

"Such a peace will be a democratic peace, based on complete equality. Such a peace will be reached only with the achievement of the complete national liberation of the Palestinian people, when the refugees will be able to return, when an end will be put to the robbery of the lands and to the expulsion.

"Such a peace will be reached only against the lying bandits who conduct their business behind our backs and in secret deals prepare for us only wars and endless suffering."

rotfront

"Red Front," the monthly newspaper of the Revolutionary Marxist Group, Austrian section of the Fourth International.

The January issue reports:

"This is the kind of freedom of expression we have in Austria. A Turkish worker who lived in this country for thirteen years dared to participate in a demonstration criticizing the law on supervision of aliens. Overnight, he was arrested and ordered out of the country. The demonstration in question had been against the deportation of another Turkish worker a year ago.

"On December 5, the Turkish worker Erol Sever was arrested by the immigration police. Without a search warrant, they tore his home to pieces, while one of them kept a pistol trained on him.

"Without giving him any explanation, or any chance to get in touch with his friends, they told him abruptly that he was being deported."

REPUBLICAN NEWS

Weekly paper reflecting the views of the Provisional republican movement. Published in Belfast.

The January 14 issue comments on the recent statements by the new premier in Dublin, Jack Lynch, in which he once again raised the demand for uniting Ireland under an independent government.

Lynch's declarations were representative of a general turn by the Irish bourgeois-nationalist parties under the pressure of reviving anti-imperialist feeling among the masses. After collaborating closely with the British for the last few years, they have been shifting toward criticizing London's role in Ireland, as well as the repression of the oppressed population in the North.

This turn has posed a political problem

for the Provisionals. They have maintained that the bourgeois nationalist parties are already exposed in the eyes of the masses. The Provisionals claim that the oppressed Irish people no longer have any illusions in the "moderate" nationalist parties and support their guerrilla campaign instead. As a result, they view the shift by the bourgeois-nationalists as simply a trick to try to win support.

At the same time, the Provisionals are deeply committed to a guerrilla campaign that has not produced positive results and is visibly waning. In the past few months, their press has been filled with articles explaining that, all appearances to the contrary, the military struggle is going forward.

Republican News writes:

" . . . the effect of Lynch's remark, in a sheer 'nationalist sense,' was a tendency to outflank the Republican People, who have fought so hard and made many sacrifices.

"Nationalistically we have sprung out of and base ourselves in the oppressed Irish people; in the north oppressed by Loyalism and the British presence, but in the south oppressed by political economic exploitation, not so much open to the appeals of patriotism. Our support, where it is strong in the 26-counties [of formally independent Ireland], is often based on appeals to patriotism *only*, where it should be based also on our answers to combat economic exploitation. That is why calls from Fianna Fail [Lynch's party] for Irish Unity will always tend to outflank us, unless we also carry the sympathy of the Labouring People.

"Painted on the walls of Republican areas throughout Ireland is the slogan: 'Out of the ashes of '69 arose the Provisionals.'

"Their tasks, never, never let it be forgotten, or compromised on, is to give all the People of Ireland a *peace with justice* in the only way possible—the Democratic Socialist Republic.

"Only the present courageous armed struggle, of IRA Volunteers planting bombs against the British presence, of People in the six-counties [of Northern Ireland] resisting repression, of the Republican People in the 26-counties providing support and the propaganda back-up, can force the British out of Ireland. . . .

"This activity which forces all of us to be conscious of our power when we act as one, can create the necessary confidence in the oppressed Irish People to throw off *all* their shackles and govern themselves as the working-class.

"The Brits, the Loyalists, the SDLP [the northern bourgeois nationalists] and Sticks ["Official" republicans], the Clergy and Fianna Fail attempt to wear down the courageous people with the slogan: 'Seven Years is Enough. Where is Your Victory?'

Victory is fighting on! We will never lie down!"

Capitalism Fouls Things Up



Payoff Scandal Hits Philippines Nuclear Plant

Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos said January 13 that he is considering cancelling a \$1.1 billion contract with the Westinghouse Electric Corporation for construction of a nuclear power plant in Bataan Province.

Marcos was moving quickly in an effort to head off a major scandal over the financial operations of Herminio Disini. Disini is a regular golf partner of Marcos and a close relative of the president's wife, Imelda. He is one of a number of Marcos's associates who have grown quite prosperous in recent years through their close relationship to Marcos's martial-law regime.

So far the scandal has unfolded mainly in the pages of the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*. In the Philippines, Marcos keeps a tight rein on the press.

One day before Marcos's statement on the Westinghouse project, the *Wall Street Journal* carried a front-page story alleging that Disini might have received "improper payments" totaling as much as \$35 million from Westinghouse in exchange for his assistance in landing the nuclear contract. The newspaper cited an "informal" report to that effect by the U.S. State Department.

Disini heads a multinational conglomerate called the Herdis Management and Investment Corporation, which has grown from a three-man operation in 1970 to a thirty-five-company outfit worth almost \$200 million today. Disini's empire has benefited from huge loans guaranteed by Marcos's government, special presidential decrees on customs duties, and lucrative government contracts and concessions.

"Mr. Disini's involvement in the nuclear project reportedly began early in 1974 when Westinghouse discovered it had fallen behind its archrival, General Electric, in its effort to get the contract," Fox Butterfield wrote in the January 14 *New York Times*.

"According to several business associates and friends, Jesus Vergara, president of Asia Industries, Westinghouse's agent in the Philippines, evidently feared this to be true and approached Mr. Disini to ask him to use his influence with the President to swing the deal."

By June 1974 Westinghouse had the

contract, although it had submitted nothing but standard advertising brochures. In contrast, GE had conducted a high-powered campaign complete with seminars on nuclear power and trips to California for Manila officials, and four thick volumes of specifications prepared especially for the Philippines plant.

Westinghouse quoted a price of \$500 million for two reactors, as against GE's estimate of \$700 million. But when Westinghouse finally made a formal presentation on the project—in March 1975, after it had the contract—the price had gone to \$1.2 billion. Then in late 1975 the price suddenly jumped again—to \$1.1 billion for only one reactor.

Meanwhile Marcos's in-law Disini had acquired ownership of Asia Industries—Westinghouse's Philippines agent—and had obtained the civil construction contract for the nuclear plant without competitive bidding. Disini's Summa Insurance Corporation had provided a \$688 million insurance policy for the project, and two other Disini companies were involved in communications and other work involving the reactor.

Westinghouse claims its dealings with Disini have all been above board, and that the fees paid were simply commissions for its "sales representatives."

"This is not unique to the Philippines," a Westinghouse representative told the *New York Times*. "We do it throughout the world."

Nevertheless, Marcos has ordered his energy department to investigate the Disini-Westinghouse transactions.

It appears unlikely that Marcos will be able to cancel the Westinghouse contract—if indeed he really wants to. The project is already more than 20 percent complete. Also, the U.S. Export-Import Bank had provided bank loans and guarantees in excess of \$640 million; these specifically cover the Westinghouse equipment and would have to be renegotiated.

Even if the contract is cancelled and some other contractor—perhaps General Electric—is brought in to finish the job, the impact of the nuclear plant on the environment and livelihoods of the fishermen and farmers of Bataan Province will remain.

The 620-megawatt reactor is the first of four planned for construction near the villages of Bagac and Morong, forty-five miles west of Manila. Earth-moving operations for the plant have already caused a 95 percent loss of *bangus* (milkfish) fingerlings, which 80 percent of the people of Morong depend upon for their income. Twenty farmers and their families have lost their land to the nuclear project, and cattle-grazing areas and ricefields have been destroyed.

A potentially graver problem has been noted by Dr. Morris Rosen of the International Atomic Energy Agency, who warns that reactors sold to the Philippines, South Korea, and Egypt have "not undergone a rigorous regulatory review" since 1972. Thus changes in design and safety standards in the past five years have not been built into those plants.

In general, according to Rosen, semicolonial countries get "less safe" nuclear reactors because sellers avoid giving data and making reviews of reactors sold. Rosen's views were reported in a November 5 dispatch by the Balita ng Malayang Pilipinas (Free Philippines News Service).

Mediterranean—Sewer for 120 Cities

The British magazine *New Scientist* published some facts and figures in its January 5 issue on the extent of pollution in the Mediterranean:

- About 90 percent of the sewage from 120 coastal cities flows into the sea without being treated.
- Concentrations of mercury in tuna average three times higher than in the Atlantic and are above the "safe" limit.
- Of all the world's oil pollution, one-eighth to one-fourth occurs in the Mediterranean; oil spilled per unit area per year is more than six times the amount spilled in the North Atlantic.
- 430 billion tons of pollutants enters the sea from land-based sources each year.

New Scientist also reported that scientists in charge of monitoring the Mediterranean for the United Nations Environment Program say that things are getting worse and that the sea's capacity for self-renewal is severely strained.