

# Intercontinental Press

combined with **IMPREGOR**

Vol. 16, No. 6

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February 13, 1978

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## **Somoza at Bay as People Rise in Nicaragua**



SOMOZA: Says he won't resign.

## **Workers Upsurge in Tunisia**

### *Portugal*

**Capitalists Debate  
When to Swing Ax**

### *Upheaval in Horn of Africa*

**'Socialists in Uniform'  
Face Rising Opposition**

## The General Strike in Nicaragua

By Eduardo Medrano

For more than forty years, the Somoza family has ruled Nicaragua as a personal fiefdom. The present dictator, Anastasio Somoza Debayle, is the third Somoza to occupy the presidency.

But in recent weeks the Somozas' rule has been shaken. A general strike involving not only workers but businessmen and shopkeepers has paralyzed 90 percent of Nicaragua's commerce and industry.

Hospitals and clinics have been closed as doctors, nurses, and health workers have joined the strike.

Drivers of fuel and gasoline trucks have stopped work. Out of forty-seven filling stations in Managua, the capital, thirty-seven have been shut down.

Bank workers and government employees numbering 2,400 have also joined the strike.

Markets and grocery stores in Managua have begun to run out of goods as residents have emptied the shelves of food-stuffs.

On January 30, the National Guard surrounded the campus of the National University in Managua and fired tear-gas grenades against students holding an anti-government demonstration.

Thousands joined in protests in the cities of León and Masaya on February 1, building barricades, overturning automobiles, and burning tires.

The Managua daily *La Prensa* reported February 2 that six persons had been killed in a National Guard attack on a demonstration in Matagalpa, 150 kilometers north of Managua.

Hundreds of housewives marched through a residential neighborhood of Managua on February 2, beating pots and pans in support of the movement.

The upsurge began January 11, when more than 30,000 persons gathered in Managua to attend the funeral of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, who was murdered the morning of January 10.

Chamorro was the editor and publisher of *La Prensa*, the most prestigious bourgeois daily in Nicaragua. He was also the central leader of the Unión Democrática de Liberación (UDEL—Democratic Liberation Union).

Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, *La Prensa*, and UDEL are viewed in Nicaragua as the main political enemies of the Somoza regime, aside from the guerrillas organized in the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (FSLN—Sandinista National Liberation Front).

Chamorro's murder was seen as a politi-

cal act from the outset, both in Nicaragua and internationally. In its January 19 edition, the Mexico City daily *Excelsior* accused Anastasio Somoza Portocarrero (the dictator's son) of being the intellectual author of the murder—a desperate attempt to avoid a Chamorro candidacy in the 1981 presidential elections. *Excelsior* said:

"The main motive for this murder is that Chamorro would have challenged Somoza Portocarrero in the elections and been a serious threat. Somoza Portocarrero is in direct control of the family's huge fortune and many businesses."

The *Washington Post* estimated January 12 that 30,000 persons passed before Chamorro's coffin on the day of the funeral, following a procession of 50,000 stretching "eight miles from a hospital to his home in Managua."

The funeral rapidly became a defiant political act, as the masses shouted angry slogans charging the Somozas with the murder.

The funeral was followed by forty-eight hours of demonstrations, burning of automobiles, and sacking of various Somoza clan business enterprises. The *Washington Post* reported January 14 that an estimated \$7 million worth of property was destroyed during the protests.

When the inconclusive results of an "investigation" of the crime became known, more protests in the form of a general strike began January 23.

In an effort to divert suspicion from himself and his family, Somoza revealed the names of four men supposedly responsible for killing Chamorro. According to the January 12 *Washington Post*, Somoza told journalist Nick Timmesch in a telephone interview that an "isolated incident" such as Chamorro's death could not affect the stability of the Central American country. But events were rapidly to contradict him.

Silvio Peña Rivas, one of the presumed assassins, confessed that he had received almost 100,000 córdobas (about US \$15,000) from Pedro Ramos to kill Chamorro. Pedro Ramos lives in Miami. He is a Cuban with U.S. citizenship. Ramos operates a business in Managua that traffics in human blood for transfusions, bought from poor Nicaraguans. The Somoza family has been shown to be involved in this enterprise.

According to the Mexican press, Peña Rivas has close ties with Somoza Portocarrero. The two reportedly held a number of

meetings to discuss preparations for the crime.

The Nicaraguan government has declared a state of siege and has reimposed censorship of radio and television (although not on the press). The National Emergency Commission, which was originally created to deal with the 1972 earthquake, is being reconstituted.

On the other hand, the Consejo Supremo de Iniciativa Privada (COSIP—Supreme Council of Private Enterprise) has issued a manifesto declaring that "the general strike will continue." The statement says, in part:

We declare that the success of the national strike, which has reached proportions never before seen in the country, has been possible through the total support of the people of Nicaragua, who are showing in this way their repudiation and protest against the lack of justice and liberty.

Bourgeois sectors, excited at the prospect of bringing down the tyrant, have begun to plan their course. The January 16 *Excelsior* reported that the resignation of President Somoza and his replacement with a civilian-military junta was being intensively promoted by various business groups in Nicaragua, according to statements made in Caracas by one of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro's sons, Alejandro Cole Chamorro. He pointed out that "the civilian-military junta could be headed by General Guillermo Noguera, the present defense minister" in Somoza's regime.

Everything seems to indicate that the National Guard still remains loyal to Somoza. Nevertheless, something has kept this force of about 7,500 men from employing all its firepower. All press reports agree that while more than seven persons have been killed, the National Guard has mainly been using tear gas.

A fuel shortage may also be impending. Workers at the Esso refinery have gone on strike, and petroleum workers in Venezuela have declared a boycott on shipments to Nicaragua.

But Anastasio Somoza Debayle continues to say that he will not resign. "We will defend ourselves energetically. My government is strong," he said at a January 16 news conference for the Nicaraguan and international press, given under tight security at the Lomas de Iscapa military barracks in downtown Managua.

In reality, the situation is not encouraging for Somoza. The indications now are that he has lost all semblance of popular support, along with that of the majority of private business and the bourgeois parties (except for his own National Liberation Party). The Catholic Church has also abandoned him. Most recently, even the U.S. State Department has had second thoughts, announcing the blocking of \$2.5 million in credits "because of violations of human rights."

The American imperialists, understanding that a regime of the Somoza type will

sooner or later give rise to a social explosion that could call capitalist interests into question throughout the area, had been supporting a "dialogue" between Somoza and the opposition. Some steps in that direction had been taken, with the support of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro himself. But the murder of Chamorro eclipsed those moves.

Rafael Córdoba Rivas, Chamorro's successor at *La Prensa*, told a *New York Times* correspondent on January 15, "The United States is pressing for a dialogue, but the murder [of Chamorro] has ended the dialogue." He added: "Talking to Somoza won't turn Nicaragua into a democracy or resurrect Chamorro."

The popular mobilization seemed to be unfolding within the framework of UDEL's orientation. One businessman, pleased with the prospect that Somoza's capitalist adversaries would be the main beneficiaries of the present events, told Alan Riding of the *New York Times* January 31:

"Even if it ends soon, it will have been a great success. We've tried to overthrow the Somozas through violent means dozens of times and have always failed. This is the first time we've tried to do so peacefully, and look how well we've done. Never before have workers, businessmen, and politicians been so united against the regime." □

## Six 'Trotskyists' Face Trial in Chile

Trials are to be held in March for six persons accused by the Pinochet regime of being members of the Liga Comunista, a Chilean sympathizing group of the Fourth International.

The alleged "Trotskyists" have been held in jail since late November, when the Chilean police announced their arrests. The charges, as reported in the Santiago daily *El Mercurio*, involve holding "regular meetings of a subversive character" in violation of the "State Internal Security Act."

*El Mercurio* has also alleged that the Liga Comunista is a "powerful organization that appears to be receiving a financial subsidy from abroad."

The six known to have been arrested in November are: Arturo Altamirano Cordero, Héctor Víctor Gómez Orellana, José Gabriel Cea Muñoz, Mario Roberto Godoy Jara, Rosa Ester Fuentes Polanco, and Víctor Humberto Pizarro Vidal.

A seventh person, Alejandro Gabriel Rojas Figueroa, was also arrested in November but was later released. He could also be tried in March.

Letters and telegrams demanding the immediate release of these opponents of the Chilean military junta should be sent to Gen. Augusto Pinochet, Government House, Santiago, Chile. □

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Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 116, Varick Street Station, New York, N.Y. 10014. Published in New York each Monday except the first in January and the third and fourth in August.

Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y.

Editor: Joseph Hansen.

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Intercontinental Press specializes in political analysis and interpretation of events of particular interest to the labor, socialist, colonial independence, Black, and women's liberation movements.

Signed articles represent the views of the authors, which may not necessarily coincide with those of Intercontinental Press. Insofar as it reflects editorial opinion, unsigned material stands

on the program of the Fourth International.

**To Subscribe:** For one year send \$24 to Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 116, Varick Street Station, New York, N.Y. 10014. Write for rates on first class and airmail.

In Europe: For air-speeded subscriptions, write to Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 50, London N1 2XP, England. In Australia: Write to Pathfinder Press, P.O. Box 151, Glebe 2037. In New Zealand: Write to Socialist Books, P.O. Box 1663, Wellington.

Subscription correspondence should be addressed to Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 116, Varick Street Station, New York, N.Y. 10014.

Please allow five weeks for change of address. Include your old address as well as your new address, and, if possible, an address label from a recent issue.

Intercontinental Press is published by the 408 Printing and Publishing Corporation, 408 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Offices at 408 West Street, New York, N.Y.

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# The Workers Upsurge in Tunisia

By Ernest Harsch

Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba declared a state of emergency January 26, the same day the country was paralyzed by a twenty-four-hour general strike. Police and troops equipped with tanks, armored cars, and automatic weapons swept through the major cities and gunned down scores of striking workers and protesting youths.

The call for the general strike, which was issued a few days earlier by the Union Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens (UGTT—General Union of Tunisian Workers), capped more than three months of massive labor unrest that had crippled key sectors of the economy. Although the general strike was specifically called to protest government attacks against the unionists, it set off a broad social upheaval against the Bourguiba regime itself.

On January 24, the day the UGTT leadership announced strike plans, about 1,000 youths shouting antigovernment slogans demonstrated in the center of Tunis, the capital. Toward the end of the afternoon, they were attacked by police who tried to disperse the protest with tear gas. Clashes followed throughout the downtown district.

While sporadic unrest continued the next day, troops occupied strategic positions in Tunis and surrounded other major cities.

On January 26, the ferment spread to most of the largest cities, including Sousse, Kairouan, Kasserine, and Gabès.

In Tunis itself, according to a dispatch by Michel Deuré in the January 28 Paris daily *Le Monde*, the clashes between demonstrators and police began in the downtown area in the morning. "They quickly spread throughout the city, not sparing a single quarter, and reached the nearby suburbs, the site of a number of plants where workers had downed tools."

As the conflict mounted, troops were brought out to reinforce the police. They attacked the protesters, at first with tear gas and then increasingly with gunfire. In a massive display of anger, crowds of strikers, unemployed workers, and young people poured into the streets and attacked numerous symbols of authority. At least one office of the ruling Parti Socialiste Destourien (PSD—Destour Socialist Party) was burned down.

The upheaval was the most massive in the residential quarters around the outskirts of Tunis and in Médina, the old part of the city.

Charging that the strikes and demon-

strations had created an "insurrectional situation," the regime proclaimed a countrywide state of emergency, the first in Tunisia's history. All public gatherings of more than three persons were banned and a dusk-to-dawn curfew was imposed. Violators were warned that they could be shot, and many were. All of Tunis was sectioned off as police and troops moved in to crush the upsurge.

According to the regime itself, forty-two persons, the vast majority of them demonstrators, were killed during the unrest, and another 325 were wounded. But according to a report in the January 31 *Le Monde*, some sources put the death toll at 130. Other estimates range even higher.

In the course of the crackdown, eleven of the thirteen executive members of the UGTT, including General Secretary Habib Achour, were arrested. UGTT offices around the country were raided and a total of 400 persons, according to official figures, were detained.

### The Twilight of 'Bourguibism'?

The workers upsurge—and the accompanying bloodbath—have been the most massive in Bourguiba's twenty-two years in power. The wave of strikes that began in October and culminated in the January 26 general strike were the result of widespread disaffection with the ruling PSD, caused in part by the country's mounting economic problems and Bourguiba's authoritarian methods of rule.

Bourguiba, who was active in the Tunisian nationalist movement since the 1920s, came to power in 1956 when Tunisia gained formal independence from France. He was an avowed conservative, and under the label of "Bourguibism" advocated continued economic ties with the imperialist powers and expressed hostility toward revolutionary developments in other African countries.

Although Bourguiba's relations with Paris deteriorated during and after the Algerian war (including a break in diplomatic ties, military clashes, and the expropriation of French-owned land), they have improved considerably since then. The former colonial power is still Tunisia's main trading partner, and Bourguiba guaranteed French investments during his visit to France in 1972.

To keep the Tunisian population in check, he erected a repressive regime. Even before independence, the more militant nationalists within Bourguiba's old Neo-

Destour (New Constitution) Party were purged and some later sentenced to death. Opposition to his regime, from both inside and outside the party, was ruthlessly crushed. Following student demonstrations in 1968, for instance, 134 students and teachers were tried and most were sentenced to prison.

Seeking to give his regime a leftist cover, at least to an extent, Bourguiba proclaimed himself in favor of "Tunisian socialism" and in 1964 changed the name of the party to the PSD. The PSD is now the only legal party in the country, and in 1975 Bourguiba had himself named president-for-life.

The main method Bourguiba employed to keep the working class demobilized was to tie it directly to the PSD and the regime through the leadership of the UGTT. To cite just one example, UGTT General Secretary Habib Achour was a member of both the PSD Political Bureau and of its Central Committee.

The job of the union bureaucrats was to reconcile the rank and file with Bourguiba's economic policies. The subservience of the UGTT leaders was demonstrated in the signing of a "social pact" in January 1977, in which they agreed to accept a modified wage freeze for five years.

As a safeguard against the development of any major independent unions outside the UGTT, the UGTT itself organized a large number of Tunisian workers within it. Its membership today is about 650,000, out of a total population of 6 million.

However, once the ranks of the union began to struggle on their own, as they started to do in late 1977, the UGTT developed into a pole of opposition to Bourguiba's capitalist regime, despite the orientation of the union bureaucrats.

The labor discontent was spurred primarily by a sharply rising cost of living and by widespread unemployment, particularly among young workers. In some areas, such as around the phosphate mines of Gafsa, drought has greatly exacerbated the suffering of the population. As a result of the worsening conditions, the PSD became increasingly discredited.

At the same time, a struggle developed among ruling circles over the successor to Bourguiba, who is seventy-four years old and has been suffering from arteriosclerosis for several years.

Prime Minister Hedi Nouria was designated to succeed Bourguiba as president upon his death. But other aspirants have also been jockeying for position for the past few years. They include Mohammed Masmoudi, a former foreign minister who returned to Tunisia in December 1977 after spending three years in exile; Tahar Belkhouja, a minister of the interior who was dismissed in December 1977; and Ahmed Mestiri, a former minister who is now head of the Movement of Social Democrats.

Achour, the head of the UGTT, report-

edly has close ties with Masmoudi and Belkhodja.

### When the Workers Move

The prospect of Bourguiba's demise and the spectacle of several current and former cabinet members squabbling over his post may have been an added encouragement to workers to launch their own struggles for higher wages and better working conditions.

As early as 1974, about 240,000 hours were lost through labor disputes, and the following summer some fifty wildcat strikes broke out.

The first major dispute in the recent strike wave began at the coastal town of Ksar-Hellal on October 10, 1977, when 1,200 textile workers struck to protest the appointment of a new director. Some of the workers held sit-down strikes. Together with other inhabitants in the area, they staged demonstrations during the following days and clashed with police. The army was sent in to break the strikes and a number of persons were arrested. A few days later similar clashes erupted in Menzel-Bourguiba.

The UGTT leaders did not support these initial strikes, but were later compelled to add the UGTT's official backing to the workers' demands.

Following a threat against the life of Achour, a series of major strikes began throughout the country November 9, some of them lasting two to three days.

In Tunis, construction, textile, steel, petrochemical, hotel, transport, bank, water, and electricity workers walked off their jobs. Teachers joined the strike as well. A demonstration in the industrial quarter of Djebel-Jelloud was broken up by the security forces. Demonstrations and clashes were also reported in Sousse and Sfax, and strikes took place in Bizerte, Nabeul, Béja, Kairouan, Gafsa, Gabès, Jendouba, Kasserine, Madhia, Le Ker, and Siliana.

A few days later, schools and universities in Tunis were closed down and new protests took place in Sfax and Mateur, with most of the demonstrators in Mateur reported to have been very young.

On December 8, about 12,000 phosphate miners in Gafsa began a three-day strike to press demands for supplementary allowances, housing assistance, and other concessions. The regime rejected them on the grounds that they were in violation of the "social pact" signed earlier that year.

About two weeks later 7,000 railway workers held a one-day strike and refinery workers stayed away from their jobs for two days. Another strike by phosphate workers was averted December 29 when the regime agreed to meet some of their demands. The railway workers struck again, this time for three days, in early January. And on January 4, about 6,000 agricultural workers near Tunis stopped work for a day.

This rising combativity among the workers, combined with an influx of younger members into the UGTT, placed tremendous pressures on the union leadership. A few of the older bureaucrats, like



BOURGUIBA: Bans all public gatherings of more than three persons.

Achour, supported some of the rank-and-file demands so as to retain their positions.

The militant currents developing within the UGTT were evident during a meeting of the union's National Council January 8-10. According to a report in the February issue of the London monthly *Africa*, the regime's "economic policies, spiralling cost of living, failure to hold down prices, widening gap between rich and poor" were attacked by many delegates at the meeting. Some factions went "still further by demanding an end to the present regime, an end to foreign investment, the setting up of a proletarian state and concentration on the development of heavy industry."

A resolution adopted by the National Council condemned the regime's economic policies, which were "oriented toward the consolidation by all means of a capitalist class, to the detriment of the national interest, all the more so as the interests of that class are bound up with those of exploiting foreign capital."

Achour himself was forced to announce his resignation from the PSD Political Bureau and Central Committee, although he continued to remain a member of the party. While proclaiming himself an "old Destourian," Achour at the same time noted the existence of a sizable tendency within the UGTT that was "moving toward consideration of a break with the PSD and [that] might advocate the establishment of a labor party."

Throughout the labor unrest that built up toward the general strike, Achour sought to walk an increasingly shaky tightrope. He temporized and stressed the need for negotiations. He tried to convince

his bosses in the PSD that the "UGTT has no political views" and asserted that the unionists "do not want to depose Nourira from power."

### Bourguiba Chooses a Showdown

The regime, however, appeared to conclude that Achour was losing control over the union. Rather than making any significant concessions, Bourguiba and Nourira adopted a "hard" stance.

Speaking before the National Assembly December 10, Nourira affirmed, "The government will maintain order. . . ." He claimed that those responsible for the massive unrest were "backward supporters of class struggle, dictatorship of the proletariat, and permanent revolution." He charged that the UGTT had been infiltrated by "doctrinaire Marxists, leftists, or crypto-fascists" who were threatening the country with "a new fascism."

After Interior Minister Belkhodja publicly differed with Nourira, stating that it would be impossible in the current situation to "rule by the stick," he was dismissed from his post December 23. Five other ministers, some of whom had proposed negotiating with the strikers, resigned after Belkhodja's ouster.

The campaign of vilification against the UGTT escalated sharply in January. The government-controlled press charged the UGTT with having been infiltrated by an "anarchist tendency" that gave the union an "extreme communist and Baathist character." PSD Political Bureau members toured the country to condemn the UGTT leaders for their "deviationism" and "high treason." The solution they proposed was a purge of the UGTT.

On January 18, just a week before the general strike, Bourguiba roused himself to denounce "extremists" who were said to be lurking about with the aim of destroying the Tunisian state.

Meanwhile, PSD goon squads began to attack UGTT headquarters in various parts of the country. According to a report in the February 1 issue of the Paris weekly *Jeune Afrique*, union meetings in Tunis, Sousse, Tozeur, Zaghuan, and other cities were attacked and the union halls were sacked. Unionists reported that the thugs were "party mercenaries, under the protection of the police force."

In response to the regime's increasingly vicious assaults, sentiment for a general strike built up among the union membership. When the UGTT leaders first announced January 22 that they would call a general strike, they said that it was in response "to the demands of the ranks, who are beginning to lose patience in face of the repeated provocations. . . ."

Despite the repercussions that massive repression could entail, Bourguiba and Nourira chose the occasion of the January 26-27 upheavals to try to crush the grow-

ing working class opposition with one sudden blow.

Besides the scores of strikers and demonstrators who were killed, several hundred persons were arrested. According to a dispatch from Tunis in the February 1 *Le Monde*, 140 protesters have already been tried, almost all of them being sentenced to prison terms ranging from one to two years.

The regime launched a witch-hunt against union militants, justifying it on the grounds that the upsurge was the result of a "premeditated plan." Arms caches were alleged to have been found in some UGTT offices.

Although Achour tried to dissociate himself from the mass demonstrations, he too was arrested, as were most of his colleagues in the UGTT leadership. He was suspended from his post as general secretary February 2. And to purge the UGTT of its more militant activists, a special congress has been called for February 25 to "exclude definitively the extremist and deviationist elements."

Whether the crackdown will be successful in stifling the unrest for the moment is still uncertain. In a dispatch from Tunis February 2, *New York Times* correspondent Paul Hofmann reported that "many here say there may be more trouble." □

## Interview With Ben Chavis

# Wilmington Ten Case Is 'No Different Than What Is Going on in South Africa'

[The following interview with the Reverend Ben Chavis, one of the chief defendants in the Wilmington Ten case, was conducted by David Frankel. It appeared in the February 10 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist newsweekly published in New York.]

\* \* \*

McCain, North Carolina—Outrage at the continued imprisonment of the Wilmington Ten is high here, and it reflects sentiment not just in the United States, but all over the world.

Discussing his case January 28 at the McCain Correctional Center, Rev. Ben Chavis expressed confidence that "the pressure is going to increase. There are a number of demonstrations planned—in Washington next weekend and on March 25, for example.

"I think that this publicity is probably the most important factor in the case at this point. International pressure has kept it alive, along with the antiracist movement here in the United States."

The *Militant* asked Chavis how he viewed Gov. James Hunt's January 23 action in his case. Hunt refused to pardon the defendants, saying that they had received "a fair trial." At the same time, he made them eligible for earlier parole, stressing that such action was not automatic. Chavis replied:

"I'm not disheartened about what Hunt did. I think it will backfire. North Carolina is in trouble—a lot has been exposed.

"I think we have to see this as a partial victory and use it as a stepping-stone to win a larger victory. At the same time, we

have to vehemently reject what Hunt put down. It was an attempt to appease the movement."

If Hunt had his way, the racist frame-up of the Wilmington Ten would now be swept under the rug. North Carolina officials are doing their best to accomplish just that by preventing the media from getting access to Chavis.

When the *Militant* tried to arrange an interview, state officials said that individual interviews were not being allowed as they would "interfere with prison routine."

Instead, they explained, a list of those wanting to interview Chavis was being kept, and when the department of corrections felt "enough" names were on the list, a news conference would be called.

Although the *Militant* did get to interview Chavis, it had to be done unofficially, without a tape recorder and in spite of the obstruction of the authorities. Chavis noted that the January 24 news conference where the Wilmington Ten replied to Hunt's statement "was my first opportunity to talk to the press in at least six months."

Asked what he felt the next step in the defense of the Wilmington Ten should be, Chavis said:

"To put pressure on the White House to come forth with some definitive statement on political prisoners. I think that international pressure can force Carter to admit that there are political prisoners in the United States.

"He just went around the world preaching about human rights. He talked about it in his State of the Union message. Now, the Wilmington Ten case is asking him, 'Jimmy Carter, are you for real?'"



Daily World

REVEREND BEN CHAVIS

"He's trying to run away from this question, but he can't run forever. The eyes of the world are on the United States.

"If Carter admits the Wilmington Ten are political prisoners, he has to admit that there are others. Will his administration investigate these cases and come out for justice?"

"I think people should start putting pressure by all means necessary on President Carter. We shouldn't let him off the hook. A violation of human rights is not a state issue."

What about the courts?

"The thing I have always emphasized," Chavis replied, "is that in our case, the judicial system worked as it was supposed to. The courts were never set up to give justice to poor people. They want it known that they don't want anybody out there organizing for social justice."

A representative of the United Church of Christ's Commission for Racial Justice, Chavis went to Wilmington, North Carolina, in 1971, to help community activists there in a struggle for school desegregation. In response to this struggle, Chavis explained, "Homes and schools were being attacked by racist vigilantes.

"Innocent people—women and children—would be walking down the street and carloads of racists would shoot at them. More than forty people were injured, and nobody was ever prosecuted."

Naturally, in the absence of any protec-

tion from the authorities, people in the Black community organized to defend themselves. But that is not all they did.

"We began to talk about running our own candidates, about setting up our own Black studies programs.

"We began developing models for other parts of the South," Chavis continued. "And that became very frightening to defenders of the status quo." So, in 1972, authorities arrested him on trumped-up arson and conspiracy charges, along with nine other civil rights activists—eight Black men and a white woman.

The real issue in the case, as Chavis sees it, "is the right of people to organize and protest. Do Blacks, other minorities, the poor, have the right to organize to bring about social change?"

Chavis argues that the case of the Wilmington Ten "is classic repression, no different than what is going on in South Africa."

Can anything different be expected from Carter?

Chavis replied: "I've written Carter several letters. No response."

No answer at all?

"None. He's found time to write to Sakharov, to meet with Soviet dissidents, but it appears that this whole human rights thing was a fraud. Carter talks about human rights, but he's still sending military supplies to Iran.

"All I give Jimmy Carter credit for is that his foreign policy has backfired. Carter attempted to use human rights as propaganda for U.S. foreign policy, but this has opened up a whole can of worms domestically. People may be poor, but they're not dumb."

Chavis emphasized that Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, Native Americans, and people in general are worse off in 1978 than in 1968. "Poor people can't afford to live in this country anymore," Chavis said.

He called 1977 "a year of disappointment and despair," saying of Carter's domestic program:

"There has been no substantive action on behalf of the poor and oppressed. I don't accept 6 percent unemployment—in fact, I don't accept any unemployment. I don't accept inadequate health care. A country like Cuba has better health care than the United States."

Turning back to his own case, Chavis said, "I do intend to write to UN General Secretary Kurt Waldheim and ask for a United Nations investigation of political prisoners in the United States.

"I plan to write to Andy Young, who is also a United Church of Christ minister, and I'm sure he's aware that it's time for Carter to move. I'm hoping—I'm praying—that Andy will come forward and speak out. He has a responsibility to Black America, and as a spokesman for the nation, to speak on this international issue."

Another point that Chavis discussed

was his treatment inside prison. He stressed the attempts to isolate him from other prisoners. "The very fact that I'm assigned to a prison hospital shows the attempt to isolate me," Chavis pointed out.

He recalled his transfer from Caledonia Prison in March 1976: "Because I was speaking to prisoners about their rights, they put me in chains and put me on back of a truck and took me here, 200 miles away."

Nor have the harassment and threats stopped. Chavis is in "gun clothes"—his clothes, unlike those of other inmates, are gray. This is supposed to alert guards—in case the color of his skin is not enough—that Chavis is to be shot if he attempts to escape.

"Everytime I step outside the prison," Chavis says, "I'm either in chains or else I have a 12-gauge shotgun aimed at me. I had to go to the Tuesday [January 24] press conference in chains—I could have been in South Africa.

"They've already told me if I try to escape I'll be shot. They would like to silence me, the way Steve Biko was silenced in South Africa. So, while I do have breath, and while I do have life, I will speak.

"I can understand what Joanne Little said, that she'd rather die than come back to the North Carolina prison system."<sup>1</sup>

Chavis is careful not to respond to the provocations of the racist prison guards. "I don't want to wind up like George Jackson,"<sup>2</sup> he said.

"They are trying to provoke me—I've been pushed from the back whenever I go anywhere under guard. The guards put handcuffs on too tight, and sometimes blood comes from my wrists. If I say anything, I'm hit with a nightstick. I have to keep myself under pretty firm control."

At first, prison authorities at McCain wouldn't allow Chavis to have direct contact with his family—he had to talk to his three small children through a grill and look at them through a glass partition. Chavis had to get a court order allowing him a right that is accorded routinely to other prisoners. (The *Militant* interview also took place through the glass and grill.)

Despite the harassment, Chavis was

1. The case of Joanne Little focused attention on racist injustice in North Carolina in 1975, when she was tried for murder in connection with the death of a white prison guard who had tried to rape her. Little was acquitted following an international defense campaign, but was returned to prison to complete a previous seven-to-ten year sentence. On October 15, 1977, she left without permission the North Carolina minimum-security prison where she was being detained.—*IP/I*

2. George Jackson, a militant Black nationalist imprisoned in California's notorious San Quentin prison, was gunned down by police in an alleged "escape attempt" in August 1971.—*IP/I*

optimistic about his case. "We're going to win—there's no question. Time is on our side."

Speaking of the mood in the country generally, Chavis said, "I sense an eagerness among people to get back out into the streets again."

He noted that during the Vietnam War, the government was saying one thing and doing another—the same policy that Carter is following today in regard to human rights and economic policy. "People in the streets—that's how the Vietnam War ended, and that's how we can win further victories."

Giving the *Bakke* case<sup>3</sup> as an example, Chavis said, "We're going to lose that case if we don't get out into the streets and put some peoples' pressure on the Supreme Court."

Asked what he would like to say the most to people reading this interview, Chavis replied, "My message is a general message to the people of America—the poor and minorities especially. We have got to learn to organize to bring about social change.

"We need a structural change in the American economy. As long as we have monopoly capitalism we are going to have an exploiting class. I think we have got a lot of struggling to do. Our conditions are getting worse every year.

"We cannot be obedient to racism or repression, we cannot accept it." □

3. Allan Bakke is a thirty-seven year old white engineer who won a California Supreme Court ruling that the University of California illegally discriminated against him when it set aside sixteen places for minority applicants to medical school. The case is currently before the U.S. Supreme Court.—*IP/I*

### Better Accommodations Ordered For Chilean Christian Democrats

A federal court in Chile ruled in late January that the military government had exceeded its authority in exiling twelve members of the Christian Democratic Party to remote villages in the Andes Mountains.

The court agreed that the government could transfer persons from one province to another under the state of siege, but could not deprive them of liberty unless they are convicted of a crime. So the Christian Democrats were moved from the villages, which have no modern housing or communications, to a hotel in the city of Arica.

Among the twelve are Guillermo Yunge, a youth leader who had helped to organize demonstrations before Pinochet's "plebiscite" in January; labor figures Juan Sepúlveda and Hernán Mery; Andres Aylwin, a former member of the Chamber of Deputies; and Belisario Velasco, who was the director of a radio station that was closed by the government.

## 3.5 Million Demonstrate in Support of Strike

### Walkout by Public Employees in Maharashtra

By Sharad Jhaveri

JAMNAGAR—"The indefinite strike of one million government and semi-government employees, including teaching staff, in Maharashtra has veritably caused social upheaval in the state's countryside," L. K. Mutatkar reported in the December 24 *Economic Times*.

More than 3.5 million persons, including 200,000 in Bombay, staged massive demonstrations in front of administrative headquarters throughout the Indian state of Maharashtra January 11. The protests were held in support of the demands of striking public employees, whose walkout was then entering its fifth week.

The basic demands are for a dearness allowance [cost-of-living payment] on a par with the central government pay revision plan and for revocation of the premature retirement scheme forced on them during Indira Gandhi's state of emergency.

Maharashtra, the most industrialised state in India, has been virtually paralysed by a massive wave of strikes and lockouts.

Kumar Ketkar reported in the January 11 *Economic Times* that almost every family had a striker or unemployed youth. In a number of families both the husband and wife are on strike. Ketkar reported that the participation of women is on an unprecedented scale and has added a new dimension to the unrest. The brewing discontent is throwing up new and young leaders.

Ketkar concluded, "It would not be an exaggeration to say that one is witnessing a unique social upheaval."

The strike has lasted for a month so far, despite the firm opposition of the central government and of the state's chief minister, who have used repressive measures, including employment of the army, in an effort to break the strike.

The strike embraces urban as well as rural workers, with rural persons in a majority. It is composed of both white- and blue-collar workers. Out of the one million strikers, only 110,000, about 11 percent, have administrative jobs. About 76.5 percent are engaged in technical and development fields. They are technical or construction workers employed in paramedical, veterinary, education, or public health services, as well as road and irrigation workers.

By distribution, about 200,000 strikers are in metropolitan urban areas, 200,000 in towns, 128,000 in semiurban areas, and 450,000 in rural areas.

The strike has cut across all caste,

religious, communal, and sectoral divisions. The so-called lower castes constitute 34 to 37 percent of the strikers and are mostly in the lowest income strata. About 50,000 workers in this category are scavengers [street cleaners]. Between 45 and 50 percent are marathas, who are slightly better off. The so-called upper castes account for 15 to 20 percent.

The overwhelming majority of the strikers are low-paid, with about 75 to 80 percent of them living just on the verge of the "poverty line." About 15 percent are of advanced age, with no prospects of looking forward to pensions or gratuities sufficient to meet their needs.

Over the past decade, the pay structure of the state employees in Maharashtra has been revised twice and their dearness allowances seven or eight times, but high inflation has wiped out the gains of almost all of the employees.

The striking employees have the support of the central trade unions, as well as college and university professors and non-teaching staff. Such unity is unusual.

According to Mutatkar, sociologists believe that the predominantly rural aspect of this movement and its impact on rural society will have far-reaching social, economic, and political repercussions.

On the industrial plane, about 125 indus-

trial units involving 50,000 workers are closed due to lockouts and strikes. Many of these disputes are more than a month old, with no settlement in sight. As a result, severe erosion of the workers' income has taken place.

The Larsen and Toubro lockout is two months old, affecting 3,000 other small units. Mukund Iron and Steel unilaterally lifted its lockout, but the workers refused to go back until their demands are met. Strikes have been going on for about six months at the Star Glass works, Wallace flour mills, Tempo Industrial Corporation, Wilson Electrical, and Fouress Engineering.

In his January 11 dispatch, Ketkar reported that some trade unionists believe that the employers have launched a "class offensive against the working class." They are reported to have said that the "strategy is to tire out the working class and crush the working class movement by the strong arm methods." According to the unionists, the attitude of the state and central government to the strikers provided clear evidence of a "blatant anti working class approach." One of them added that "we are heading for a new kind of emergency directed specifically against the working class."

Throughout 1977, there were 778 strikes, 148 lockouts, and 40 cases of retrenchment in Maharashtra. So far as industrial strife is concerned, Maharashtra is not unique. But what lends added importance to the workers unrest there is that Maharashtra occupies a key position in the industrial production of the country.

January 13, 1978

### Face Frame-up Charges in New Jersey

### Campaign Launched in Defense of Iranian Activists

The Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran has launched a nationwide campaign to demand that the Jersey City State College administration drop the charges against six CAIFI members arrested on that campus last month.

The CAIFI Six are: Kateh Vafadari Zahraie, CAIFI assistant national secretary; Fariborz Khasha, a CAIFI national field secretary; Faranak Colon, CAIFI chapter president at New York University; and Siamak Zahraie, Massoud Nayeri, and Kianoosh Mahdavi, all longtime CAIFI activists.

The six were arrested January 19 at the Jersey City, New Jersey, campus and face trial on charges that they "did disrupt the normal academic procedures of the college." The six had gone to the campus to

obtain a permit to set up a literature table.

The law they are charged with breaking carries a maximum penalty of three years' imprisonment and a \$1,000 fine. In addition, since all six are Iranian nationals, the U.S. government could use the charges as a pretext to try to deport them to Iran. There they would face imprisonment, torture, and possible death, since all six have been outspoken opponents of the brutal repression of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlevi.

The college administration is charging four of the activists with "being present on the premises without permission," and the other two with "being involved in a political dispute with several persons."

Kateh Vafadari Zahraie, speaking for the six, called the charges "outrageous."

She noted that the incident referred to by



the administration, in which the six were harassed and assaulted by Iranian students who disagreed with CAIFI's campaign for human rights in Iran, was being used as a pretext to victimize CAIFI.

The committee is asking that letters of protest be sent to William Maxwell, President, Jersey City State College, Jersey City, New Jersey 07305. The letters should demand that charges be dropped and that CAIFI's right to distribute literature on the campus be respected. Copies of these messages should be sent to CAIFI.\*

CAIFI has won wide recognition for the effective campaigns it has carried out to save the lives of political prisoners in the shah's torture chambers.

The committee recently announced important victories in two human-rights cases.

On January 21, the Iranian government lifted its two-year-old travel ban on Gholamhossein Sa'edi, a highly regarded playwright and anthropologist. Imprisoned eight times by SAVAK, Iran's secret police, Sa'edi had been forbidden to travel abroad since his last release from prison in March 1975.

In the second case, CAIFI announced that it has learned that Mahmoud Etemadzadeh (whose pen name is Behazin), a leading member of the Writers Association of Iran, has been released from prison on bail.

Behazin was arrested on November 24, 1977, after his scheduled lecture on "Freedom" at a university was broken up by police. He was reportedly released on high bail and still faces charges. □

\*853 Broadway, Suite 414, New York, N.Y. 10003.

### \$\$\$ for Pinochet—From Exxon

At ceremonies held in Santiago January 24, the Exxon Corporation announced its intention to buy the La Disputada copper mine from the Chilean government for \$107 million. Exxon plans to invest up to \$1.1 billion for expansion of production at the mine.

The purchase will be the largest investment by a U.S. corporation in Chile since the 1973 military coup.

Exxon officials pointed out that the corporation had consulted the State Department before making the commitment. Company spokesman James Morakis told the *Washington Post* that "company policy was to refuse to characterize any government. But he said stability in Chile was a strong consideration."

The La Disputada mine had belonged to French interests until 1971, when it was nationalized by the Allende government. At present it is considered a middle-sized mine, but the major expansion indicated by Exxon's projected investments would put it among Chile's largest.

## Carter 'Would Not Hesitate' to Send Troops

### Panama Pacts Advance in U.S. Senate

The Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate voted 14 to 1 January 30 to approve an amended version of the proposed Panama Canal treaties.

The committee's action on the treaties was complicated at the last minute by objections from the Panamanian government. An amendment adopted January 27 added a new article to the "neutrality treaty," incorporating the language of a statement issued by President Carter and Panamanian chief of state Torrijos last October. That document clarified the Pentagon's "right" to use troops to "defend the canal's neutrality."

Torrijos immediately received a copy of the amended treaty from the State Department. Panamanian officials then warned a Senate delegation that the additional article would force them to hold a second plebiscite on the pacts.

"Apparently," Robert Kaiser wrote in

the January 31 *Washington Post*, "Torrijos and his aides thought the inclusion of a new article in the main body of the treaty represented such an obvious alteration of the original document that they could not claim it was the same treaty the citizens of Panama approved on Oct. 23."

A State Department official explained Torrijos's problem to the Foreign Relations Committee on January 30. The committee obligingly wrote new amendments, this time weaving the provisions of the October communiqué into existing articles of the pact.

Carter plugged the treaties in a "fireside chat" on nationwide television February 1. He said he "would not hesitate to deploy whatever armed forces are necessary to defend the canal," but explained that the new pacts are "a much better way than sending our sons and grandsons to fight in the jungles of Panama." □

### Canadian Prime Minister's Diary Reveals

### Truman Weighed A-Bombing of USSR in 1947

America's rulers came close to using atomic weapons against the Soviet Union in 1947, according to former Canadian Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King.

King's 1947 diaries were released by the Canadian Public Archives at the beginning of 1978, in accord with a thirty-year release rule. King, who was head of the Liberal Party for almost three decades, died in 1950.

In November 1947, according to King, the Truman administration thought war might break out with the Soviet Union "within three weeks" over the question of access to Berlin. Washington had atomic weapons ready to fire at Soviet cities if that happened.

As reported in the Toronto daily *The Globe and Mail* of January 5, King found out about the threat of an American nuclear assault from Winston Churchill. Churchill told him he thought the Russians should be told bluntly to stop creating unrest in Western Europe or "their cities would be bombed within a certain number of days." King was surprised to find out from Churchill that the Americans were prepared to do just that:

"I know of course how America has continued to stockpile atomic bombs and that her supply is very great (and) that she has also planes for the purpose and men trained," King wrote.

"But from Churchill's words, it would seem as if his inside information was to the effect that America was expecting that she might have to act in a short time and had made her plans accordingly." □

### Desmond Trotter Defense Campaign

The Desmond Trotter Defence Committee on the island of Dominica in the West Indies has announced a campaign to win Trotter's freedom before the British government finalizes arrangements for granting political independence to the island.

Trotter has been in prison for more than three years on frame-up charges of murdering an American tourist. An international defense effort succeeded in getting the death sentence that was originally imposed commuted to life imprisonment.

Trotter was a central leader of the Black Power movement that developed in Dominica in the late 1960s. The government of Prime Minister Patrick John brought the murder charges as part of a wave of repression against the Movement for a New Dominica, which Trotter led, and other groups fighting British domination of the island.

For more information about activities in Trotter's defense, contact the Desmond Trotter Defence Committee, P.O. Box 231, Roseau, Dominica, Windward Islands.

## The New Government in Portugal

By Francisco Louçá

LISBON—Sixteen months after its formation, Mário Soares's First Constitutional Government [i.e., the first one responsible to an elected parliament under a constitution] fell. It was defeated December 8 on a confidence motion it itself put before the Assembly of the Republic.

On January 19 Soares, who had been renamed premier by President Eanes, announced that the Socialist Party and the Centro Democrático Social [CDS—Social Democratic Center] had reached an agreement calling for the formation of a government "based on the SP and including independents participating with the approval of their party."

These verbal contortions only thinly veil the distasteful reality: The "Soares line," so often and so highly touted by the European Social Democracy, has led to the formation of an SP-CDS coalition government.

Soares fell because he could not meet the demands of the Portuguese bourgeoisie and had become discredited among the workers. He has returned to office side by side with [CDS Chairman] Freitas do Amaral, former counselor of the dictator Marcelo Caetano (Salazar's successor). And the new government takes office in the context of an unabated economic crisis and of political tension aggravated by this very maneuver. This merry-go-round has created a new political situation, which has to be carefully examined.

### Orders From Gen. Eanes

As soon as the First Constitutional Government fell, General Eanes, using his presidential powers, initiated discussions with all the parties represented in parliament. The aim of these talks was to arrive at a government "whose composition would reflect a political commitment by programmatically responsible forces."

In demanding a government with a solid parliamentary majority not including the Communist Party, the president was clearly notifying the SP, in the terms of the Portuguese political crisis, that it had to start associating itself with a right-wing party.

Socialist Party General Secretary Soares was designated premier to put together such a combination, receiving virtually unanimous approval from the big political formations. After his selection was strongly recommended by the Council of the Revolution [the highest body of the Armed Forces Movement], it was ap-

plauded by the CDS and the Communist Party. Soares modestly savored his revenge:

"My nomination makes no sense, since I



DO AMARAL: Former adviser to Caetano joins "coalition" government with SP.

have just been ousted. It is a bit ridiculous to bring down a government, and then install it again right away."

Soares was toppled because his policy failed. He was entrusted with forming a new cabinet because he and his party are still needed in the government to smooth the way for the reconsolidation of capitalism without a need for calling new elections. In the present state of affairs, a new vote would probably produce a parliamentary majority for the workers parties once again.

However, Soares will not preside over the same type of government nor conduct the same policy. The International Monetary Fund, the imperialists, Eanes and the army, as well as the bourgeoisie and its parties are demanding a change.

In reporting on the progress of the negotiations among the parties, after they had proceeded for three weeks under his aegis, Eanes said at the end of December: "There are no insurmountable obstacles to reaching a political agreement that will have the support of a stable and coherent majority in the Assembly of the Republic." However, it remained to define "the framework of this political agreement as regards the division of responsibilities among the parties in the governmental formula."

Nonetheless, the difficulties encountered in the discussions on the common platform "of political parties and social partners" were to quickly cast a shadow over the president's optimism.

To start with, the Partido Democrático Social [PSD—Social Democratic Party], the main Portuguese bourgeois party, would not hear of any common platform before a firm agreement was reached on the composition of the governmental team.

The CDS, which had initially demanded the dissolution of parliament and the calling of legislative elections within a maximum of three months, followed the same line as the PSD, rejecting any perspective of a four-party compromise including the Communist Party.

The negotiations had thus reached an impasse. But the deadline set by the president was nearing and the threat loomed that he might use his powers to form a government himself, cutting through all the parliamentary wheeling and dealing among Mário Soares, Freitas do Amaral, and [PSD Chairman] Sá Carneiro.

In his November 15 memorandum of agreement proposed for the signature of the parties, the general secretary of the SP was already saying cynically:

"In the present circumstances the immediate alternative we face comes down to the following: Either we get international financial support by means of one or several loans, or we are going to lose all the gold reserves we have left."

It was urgent to set up a new government to tackle the problems Soares failed to solve.

However, what kind of solution was possible? Holding early elections was rejected by Soares ("They would represent a terrible risk for the country because they would involve paralyzing the life of the nation for several weeks"). This option was also rejected by Eanes, by the CP, and in the last analysis, after some beating around the bush, by the PSD and the CDS. So, it was necessary at any price to form a coalition. That was Eanes's conclusion. He made this known to the principal parties involved.

In the second half of December, positions began to change. Weighing the advantages of participating in the government against the dangers represented by the social crisis, the CDS declared itself willing to form a government with the SP, to be presided over by Soares. The PSD immediately issued a communiqué announcing the breakdown of its "mutual consultation agreement" with the CDS (a pact which they called "Democratic Convergence").

The PSD accused Freitas do Amaral's party of preferring to "be in the government for one day rather than spend a length of time in the opposition."

Once again, the two big bourgeois parties have taken separate roads, pirouetting away from their former tactic. The CDS,

the only party that voted against the constitution, which was largely written by the SP leadership, will join in the government with the SP, after being the spearhead of its reactionary foes. The PSD, whose deputies supported the SP's proposals on economic and financial policy, will be in the opposition.

#### Role of Washington and Bonn

Why has the SP, which still has considerable influence among the workers and poor masses, allied itself with a party whose history, leaders, and clientele so much represent nostalgia for the dictatorship overthrown on April 25, 1974?

Such a "unity of opposites" is the result, first of all, of the pressure brought to bear by the imperialists. Since the OECD\* report in 1975, which suggested the formation of a government of the SP and PPD (as the PSD was formerly called), the consistent policy of the imperialists has been to give minimal support to the SP government, giving it enough economic aid just to keep its head above water and no more.

The American and West German imperialists in particular have demanded that the SP accept their conditions. And primary among these conditions was the demand that the SP ally itself with the bourgeois parties in order to draw the line decisively against working class militancy, which, although diminished since November 25, 1975, has by no means been broken. As in the past, the economic survival of the government still hinges on credits doled out month by month and drop by drop from Washington and Bonn.

Just before Soares left by the front door to return by the rear, his minister of finance, Medina Carreira, said that without major credits, the government would have to resign in less than three months. That was in October.

The conditions posed by the imperialists were clear. Since Soares had been unable to use his influence among the toiling masses to get them to accept a brutal austerity policy, only the bourgeois parties—or, if need be, one of them—could offer a guarantee of how imperialist credits would be utilized politically and economically.

Soares got the message. In July, August, and September 1977, he desperately sought an accord with the PSD. Sá Carneiro upset his apple cart at the last minute. In a theatrical stroke, the PSD chairman overturned the majority of the leadership of his party, which had shown itself inclined to such collaboration. There was no place else for Soares to turn except to the CDS.

To carry out this maneuver, the SP had

to accept the demands of both the international and the Portuguese bourgeoisie. Vasco de Mello, a member of the CDS and one of the biggest employers in the country, took it on himself to make these



MARIO SOARES: Out by the front door and back by the rear.

explicit. In the name of the Confederation of Portuguese Industry, he demanded the abrogation of all the decrees by the former governments granting concessions to the workers. He insisted that there be full freedom for bosses to fire workers individually and collectively.

Abandoning for the moment its call for a government evenly divided between the SP, the PSD, and itself, the CDS demanded four key ministries, including Foreign Affairs and Industry.

#### CP Offers Its 'Good Will'

The negotiations for the formation of this coalition government proceeded in the context of relative social calm. The CP took care of keeping the trade-union movement quiet, since it largely dominates the unions. In the meantime, it waited for the conclusion of the discussions in which it also was involved.

"We have no demands; we have only our good will," the CP general secretary, Alvaro Cunhal, said. His party began by pleading for inclusion in the new government in a camouflaged form, through an "independent" of its choice. Its "good will" was rapidly to lead it to agree to give up the idea of being formally part of the new governmental team, while remaining bound to the government by a programmatic accord with the SP.

In November 1977, the CP had already been the only other party to give its agreement (as a "basis for discussion") to the memorandum presented by Soares. Following the logic of this orientation, the

Stalinist leaders have not hesitated to demonstrate their "flexibility."

"It is as dangerous not to be in the government as it is to be in it," Cunhal said. Carlos Costa, chairman of the CP parliamentary group, said: "If the new Soares government represents an alliance with the right, we will be against it. But if it proves to be the expression of one or several platforms, we will consider it as a formula that could help resolve the situation."

In the last analysis, the CP leadership showed all along its inclination to accept the new governmental formula cooked up by Soares. The party of Alvaro Cunhal asked for one thing only: That the SP agree to sign together with the CP a written platform sufficiently vague and general to enable the Stalinist party to cover up its capitulation from its members and the workers who still place their confidence in it.

Under the pressure of the CDS and of the stipulations of those who represent its new ally, the SP did not even choose to set down on paper a few empty phrases about "defending the gains of April." In mid-January, the negotiations between the SP and CP leaders were broken off. But the CP leadership had demonstrated its "good faith" up to the end. On January 14, at the time of a big rally called by the CP in Lisbon, Alvaro Cunhal explained:

"We were well along the way to an agreement with the SP. On the general discussions and those under debate, we had already reached an accord. There were only two or three small points left to be settled, and the agreement would have been concluded."

The most immediate consequence of the negotiations and the conclusion of the alliance between the SP and the CDS was blowing up the "Democratic Convergence" pact established last May by the CDS and the PSD. For Sá Carneiro's party, this break was only the culmination of an evolution beginning this summer.

In July 1977, at the time of the debate on the bill on—or rather against—agrarian reform introduced by Minister of Agriculture António Barreto, the leadership of the PSD divided. The majority took a position in favor of the Barreto bill, while a minority, headed by the party chairman, Sá Carneiro, advocated abstaining.

Subsequently, Sá Carneiro was to provoke an open crisis in the PSD by resigning his position. In November, he resumed control of the party leadership through one of his stooges, Sousa Franco.

#### A Question of Timing

The cleavage in the PSD clearly reflected the debate on strategy that has divided the politicians representing the bourgeoisie. Some favor maintaining the class-collaborationist line. This calls for supporting or participating in the Soares govern-

\*Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, comprising the twenty-four major industrialized capitalist countries.—IP/I

ment. The objective is to wear out the combativity of the workers by applying a social pact.

Other bourgeois politicians favor a more immediate confrontation with the workers and poor masses. In line with this, they are for brutally clamping down an austerity policy without any "ifs," "ands," or "buts." Such a policy would be conducted directly by the bourgeois parties backed up by the imperialists.

The PSD's base of support, which comes essentially from the local strongmen who launched the anti-Communist attacks in the summer and fall of 1975, tipped the balance in the debate in favor of Sá Carneiro.

The PSD chairman, however, made the error of taking his distance from Eanes, who he considered too much of a maneuverer to resolutely carry out the hard line he favors. The leading personalities in the PSD, incited by Sá Carneiro, even arranged the promotion of the then commander of the Northern military region, Colonel Pires Veloso, known for his sympathy for the extreme right. Shortly after this, he was removed from his post by Eanes. The affair turned out badly because, despite all his weaknesses, Eanes for the moment still plays an essential role for the bourgeoisie, owing to his presidential and military functions.

However, the two options continue to be discussed within the bourgeoisie. And on the basis of this debate, a complex realignment of the Portuguese right is taking place. The most reactionary sections of the right are now raising their heads again and trying to take the streets by provocative demonstrations. The CDS's decision to participate in a coalition government with the SP also fits into this context. Outflanked to the right by the PSD, the CDS is trying to find a political space for itself.

In fact, the electoral clientele of the two Portuguese bourgeois parties is not fundamentally different. Their support comes from the small landowners north of the Tejo river, who are organized in the Confederação dos Agricultores Portugueses [CAP—Portuguese Farmers Confederation]. It was this group that in August 1975, in Rio Maior, tried to exorcise their fear of agrarian reform by breaking heads.

The support of these parties comes from the mass of functionaries and former dignitaries who lived high on the hog for forty-five years in the shadow of Salazar and Caetano's "new state." They have good reason now to regret the loss of their juicy privileges in the African colonies, and are enraged as a result.

The support for these parties also comes from the backward masses of the North, who are still illiterate and brutalized by their poverty. They are still infected by the most obscurantist form of Catholicism and have been whipped up by the fanatical preaching of the bishop of Braga, who sent them out to attack the headquarters of the PCP and the far-left organizations in the

hot summer of 1975.

All these forces are given cohesion by manifold networks of former agents of the PIDE [Policia Internacional de Defesa do Estado—International State Security Police], the dictatorship's murderous political police, along with the local notables and the rural small-town bosses. These networks are carried into the cities by a petty bourgeoisie that has been disoriented by the revolution.

The PSD has chosen to base itself openly on these reactionary social layers in order to precipitate a test of strength and have done with compromise solutions. It is no longer interested in an SP-PSD or SP-PSD-CDS government.

The party of Freitas do Amaral differs from that of Sá Carneiro by its close relationship with the most dynamic sectors of finance capital, which are assembled in the Confederation of Portuguese Industry. It is trying to present itself as the bourgeois party that will make Soares yield and bring him down.

But this is a risky undertaking. Together the PSD and the CDS have never been able to get over 40% of the vote. Their present separation delays any solution of the bourgeoisie's crisis of political leadership. Correspondingly, it weakens the CDS's chances of being able to play the role of astute steward of the interests of the Portuguese capitalists and the imperialists in a government that already has all the attributes of impotence and instability.

#### SP Loses Influence in Unions

The Socialist Party had regained a little ground by taking its antifascist rhetoric out of storage at the time of the parliamentary debate over the motion of confidence in the Soares government. This, however, was insufficient to enable it to regain its base in the union movement. The credibility of the Soares cabinet has been undermined by its disregard of the interests of the working people, the corruption prevailing in the higher echelons of the state and the SP, and by the resignations of eight ministers in a row. Finally, the split by the left wing of the SP led by Lopes Cardoso has fundamentally weakened the organized strength of the SP in the working class.

The SP has lost control of virtually all the union leaderships that had been under its influence. Either the SP slate has been defeated in the union elections, or the union leaderships are now made up of activists who left the SP to join Lopes Cardoso's "Workers Brotherhood."

However, the SP still has considerable influence among the workers. And the combativity of the workers continues to find a reflection in the SP, as attested by the recent appearance of a new current critical of the leadership, the government's latest antilabor decrees, and the austerity measures the cabinet adopted before it lost

the motion of confidence in the Assembly of the Republic.

This current comprises union leaders and activists who have come out for working in the Confederação Geral dos Trabalhadores Portugueses [CGTP—General Confederation of Portuguese Workers], which is by far the largest union federation. They also oppose any attempt to divide the labor movement.

The more right-wing members of the Social Democratic apparatus still favor a split in organized labor. Former minister of labor Maldonado Gonelha, the promoter of the idea of building a rival union federation to compete with the CGTP, has just mounted his old hobbyhorse again, launching the idea of a national federation of service workers. This is just another name for the same old objective, and doubtless will meet with the same lack of success.

The left breakaway from the SP, organized in the "Workers Brotherhood" association, has issued a call for a "Convention of the Democratic and Socialist Left." Spearheaded by nineteen former members of the SP National Committee, eight former deputies in the Constituent Assembly, and three deputies in the Assembly of the Republic, this "political movement," as it calls itself, has not experienced significant growth in the recent period. Its leaders expect a thousand to two thousand activists to participate in their upcoming convention. This figure is not very large by comparison with the 25 percent of the vote won by the left at the last SP congress.

The gap between the strength of the "Workers Brotherhood" in the SP and what it has been able to muster outside is no doubt the reflection of the hesitant left-reformist policy its leaders have been following since their break with the party of Soares. In the union field in particular, it has done little to differentiate itself from the line followed by the CP fraction in the CGTP.

For example, in his initiatives and proposals, Kalidas Barreto, a leader of "Workers Brotherhood" and a secretary of the CGTP, has hardly distinguished himself from the Stalinist bureaucrats and their version of "democratic" austerity.

The SP left has taken no concrete step toward forming a current in the unions to fight for the establishment of democratic functioning in the mass organizations of the working class and for a solution to the crisis of Portuguese capitalism that would be in the interests of the working class. It has remained notably silent during the recent weeks of intense political debate in the country.

In aligning itself more or less with the policy of the CP, "Workers Brotherhood" or the future "Union of the Democratic and Socialist Left," is seriously in danger of throwing away important opportunities to provide an outlet for the now chronic crisis of the SP.

However, the decisive role in holding

back the combativity of the workers is being played by the CP.

In the hope of reaching an agreement with the SP, the CP leadership did everything possible to maintain social calm after the giant demonstrations last November 18-19 against the Soares government's antilabor measures. Through the efforts of Cunhal's associates, most of the struggles have been isolated, dampened, and demoralized. As a demonstration of their "good will," they even went a step further.

The events took place at the Setenave naval yards, one of the biggest enterprises in the country. (The administration of the yards was returned, thanks to Soares, to its former capitalist owners, the Mello family.) A general assembly of the workers was convened. The leadership of the CP branch in Setenave proposed adopting a resolution calling for the abolition of bonuses and a general wage reduction. All this was supposed to be "to save the enterprise."

This concrete illustration of the kind of class collaborationism advocated by the Stalinists provoked an explosion of anger on the part of the workers. The premises became so littered with torn-up CP party cards that the bureaucrats thought that the wiser course was to make a self-criticism in order to try to regain some influence.

This affair indicates the contradiction in which the PCP leadership finds itself. The fact that it has not succeeded in signing a common platform with the SP puts it in a still more delicate position.

With the CDS participating in it, the new coalition government cannot even claim to be "the only possible left government," as Soares liked to tout the SP cabinet. Even before it took office, the new government faced the just hatred of broad sections of the proletariat in the cities and in the countryside, including those influenced by the SP.

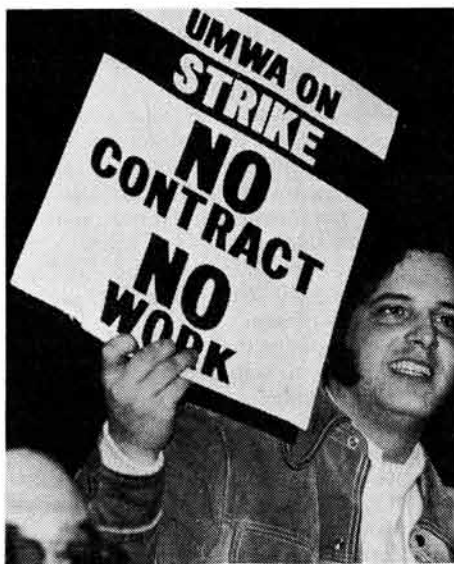
The workers can no longer be held back from struggling against the present government by the illusions created by the fine words of the SP cabinet and the fear that fighting against it would be playing into the hands of the right. Moreover, the CP can no longer exploit these illusions and fears to keep up its refrain about how you have to be careful to know how far you can go and not to overstep the limit.

Many unions have already taken up the call for a one-day national general strike to support the demands of the workers and defend their gains. The call for an SP-CP government to offer a solution to the present crisis in accordance with the interests of the working class is having an obvious impact in the ranks of the two workers parties. These signs testify to the determination of the workers to fight against this new government, against those whom it serves, and those it would like to serve. □

## Utilities Begin to Admit Dwindling Supplies

# Longest Coal Strike in U.S. History

By Matilde Zimmermann



Nancy Cole/Militant

Striking miner at solidarity rally of 1,200 in Pittsburgh January 29.

The longest coal strike in United States history is beginning to put the squeeze on major coal users, just as the miners are starting to receive encouraging demonstrations of solidarity from other unionists.

Members of the United Mine Workers walked out December 6, demanding restoration of their health and pension benefits and recognition of the right to strike over safety violations.

At that time, the coal operators seemed to be holding all the cards. Utilities and other big coal users boasted of four-month supplies on hand. The miners had no strike fund. They lost their health insurance as soon as they went on strike; and retired miners later lost their pension checks.

By the first of February, however, officials in Ohio and New Jersey were warning that coal was running low, causing a "dangerous situation, if not worse than that." Apparently the wet coal dust at the bottom of the much-vaunted stockpiles is barely burnable. "We're seeing fuel that has been there 25 years," complained the head of the Ohio Public Utilities Commission.

Contract talks between the union leadership and the operators have been conducted in top secret. Once a settlement is reached, it must be submitted to the 188,000 union members for ratification.

This process takes about ten days, and its outcome is not at all certain.

Ohio Governor James Rhodes, among others, has called on President Carter to intervene to reopen the mines. But Carter undoubtedly remembers what happened another time an American president tried that. In 1943 striking miners convinced Roosevelt that "you can't dig coal with bayonets."

The UMW is the oldest industrial union in the United States and has a history of militant strikes. Twelve hundred miners and supporters at a labor solidarity rally in Pittsburgh January 29 heard a Teamsters official say, "There isn't anybody in western Pennsylvania who would be organized today in other labor organizations if it weren't for the United Mine Workers of America."

One of the important messages at the Pittsburgh rally was signed by fifteen United Steelworkers local presidents from the Mesabi Iron Range. The telegram read: "18,000 iron ore miners in Minnesota and Michigan are behind you in your strike against the coal operators. We have just completed a 141 day strike and we know what it is like. We urge the coal miners to stay out until they get what they want in a new contract. Don't let the operators break you apart. Stay solid and you will win."

There is some evidence that the miners are planning to do just that. On January 29, *New York Times* reporter Ben A. Franklin interviewed two West Virginia miners, father and son. Franklin was hunting—unsuccessfully—for "generational differences" on the strike and the union.

The younger miner was a twenty-nine-year-old Vietnam veteran, the president of a militant UMW local. He has been criticized by UMW President Arnold Miller as a "radical" bent on "destroying the union." He told Franklin: "80 percent of us 30-year-old people are going to work in these mines and stay in this union for 35 years, until we are 65. What would I want to destroy this union for?"

But it was the father who explained what the strike is all about: "They sit back, the operators, and say, 'We're going to starve you out.' They say they are going to make us suffer—you take what's given you or you don't work. But I'll tell you, the mines are going to stay shut longer than they want, the way things are going. You know? A coal miner, he's been a slave as much as the black man used to be. It's been true all my time." □

## A Head-on Confrontation With the Carter Administration

By Matilde Zimmermann

The women's liberation movement of the 1970s is sometimes called the second wave of feminism in the United States. The first wave was the movement that won women the right to vote in 1920. After half a century of relative quiet, the feminist movement seemed suddenly to burst upon the scene with street demonstrations of tens of thousands of women on August 26, 1970.

The new movement had its roots in the changing social and economic role of women, and in the impact of other movements for social change.

### End of a Stereotype

The entry of American women into the work force has been called a "revolution in the role of women." It has helped to change the face of the American working class. Today for the first time the "typical" American worker is not a white male over twenty. Rather the majority of the work force are females, members of oppressed minorities, and teen-agers.

Nor is the "typical" American woman a housewife who stays at home and takes care of her children. The percentage of adult women who are employed rose steadily from 34% in 1950 to 37% in 1960 and 43% in 1970, and then shot up to over 55% by the end of 1976. A slightly larger percentage of Black women are in the work force than white women. The number of working women with children under six years of age has increased nearly threefold since 1950, from 13.6% to 39% of all working mothers.

By the end of the 1960s, more American women were working outside the home than at any previous time. Women were also better educated than ever before, and advances in birth control had given them a new possibility of control over their reproductive lives.

All these developments helped raise women's expectations and produced growing anger at the way in which the female majority continued to be denied genuine equality of opportunity.

This was reinforced by the experience of the 1960s when other sectors of society took to the streets to fight for their rights. Particularly influential was the Black movement with its civil rights campaigns for equality under the law and its advocacy of Black pride and independence. In addition, the initial leaders of the women's movement usually came from radical stu-

dent groups and had been active in the movement to end the Vietnam war.

The National Organization for Women, the first feminist organization of nationwide scope, initiated the call for marches and rallies around the country on August 26, 1970, the fiftieth anniversary of the female suffrage victory. The three central demands put forward by the demonstrations were: equal pay for equal work, twenty-four-hour child care, and the right to abortion. The New York City action drew 30,000 persons.

Women's groups then began to spring up on campuses, in communities, and in offices and workplaces around the country. Soon almost everywhere you found women you could find some evidence of feminist activity. As the movement spread, it began to produce deepgoing changes in customs and attitudes. Within a few years it would transform the way in which millions of Americans approached questions like female sexuality, sex roles in the family and at work, and the part played by women in history.

### The Fight for Legal Abortion

The groups that proliferated in 1970 and 1971 were organized around particular local questions as well as a variety of broader issues. But if there was one demand that more than any other united the new movement, it was the need to overturn the reactionary legislation outlawing abortion.

Each of the fifty states had its own law on abortion, ranging from restrictive to prohibitive. These laws forced tens of thousands of women every year to undergo dangerous and humiliating back-alley abortions. In Florida a young woman was convicted of manslaughter in 1971 for having had an abortion.

Efforts to reform abortion laws before the rise of the women's movement tended to be exclusively lobbying campaigns to convince legislators to increase the number of circumstances under which abortions could be performed legally. Some of the early reformers were supporters of population control, who made racist arguments about limiting the number of welfare babies through abortion.

In the early 1970s, for the first time, the potential existed for an assault on the antiabortion laws based on the strongest possible argument: a woman's democratic right to choose whether or not to bear a child.

The American Trotskyists of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance played an important role in helping to turn this potential into a reality. They worked together with other feminists to build the Women's National Abortion Action Coalition (WONAAC), the first national organization formed specifically to fight for repeal of the antiabortion laws by insisting on a woman's right to choose.

Demonstrations, teach-ins, news conferences, and speak-outs organized by WONAAC in coordination with other groups helped bring the abortion issue into the spotlight of national politics. This type of activity was instrumental in winning the Supreme Court decision of January 1973, which legalized abortion.

The first few years of the second wave of feminism also brought other victories. Under the pressure of a combative women's movement, Congress in 1972 passed the Equal Rights Amendment—which had been gathering dust since it was first introduced half a century earlier. It seemed at the time that the necessary two-thirds of the states would quickly ratify the amendment into law.

Women also won affirmative-action programs similar to those Blacks had fought for in the late 1960s. This enabled them to break into some of the higher paying skilled jobs from which they had traditionally been excluded.

But these gains were based on the relative "boom" years of the 1960s. The capitalists still had a few concessions to pass around, and would disperse them to whatever group of workers was most obstreperous at the time. In the early 1970s that often meant women.

### Hard Times Hit

Then came the economic crisis of 1974-75. The capitalists found that women were not a very well-behaved reserve army of labor. Hired when times were good, they were supposed to walk quietly out of the work force when times got bad. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, for example, female employment dropped precipitously.

But women workers did not voluntarily return to the home in 1974 and 1975. In fact, when the layoffs hit, women along with Blacks fought against the old "last-hired, first-fired" seniority systems that forced them to bear a disproportionate share of the job cuts. The inflation that kept climbing right along with unemploy-

ment meant continued pressure on working-class families to come up with a second paycheck.

This led government statisticians to complain that the unemployment rate was being kept "artificially" high by the large numbers of women looking for work. Their assumption is that every woman is actually a housewife who only pretends to be an unemployed worker.

The determination of women to defend their jobs and working conditions was illustrated by the formation of the Coalition of Labor Union Women in March of 1974. More than 3,000 female unionists, one-fifth of them Black, attended the founding convention of CLUW. The size and potential of the organization dwindled in subsequent years, however, as the leadership became more closely tied to the bureaucrats who run the country's major trade-union federation, the AFL-CIO.

### Stepped-up Drive Against Women's Rights

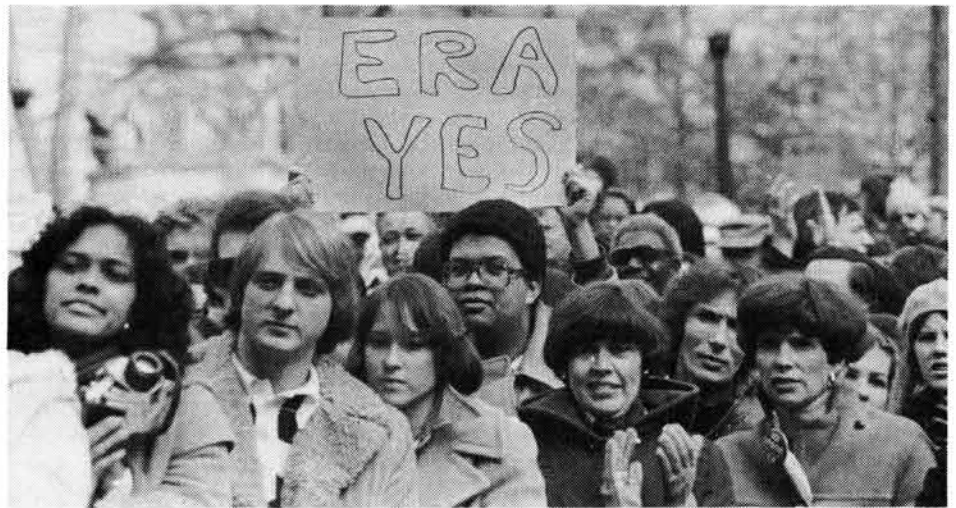
An important component of the current attack on workers' standard of living lies in convincing women that they are homemakers first and foremost and workers only episodically and reluctantly. The bosses hope thereby to drive some women back into the home and—even more important—convince women who work that they must accept low pay and lack of job security.

The employers did not like it when women workers started believing they had a right to equal pay, upgraded training programs, decent working conditions, and even some respect as human beings. In their view, such ideas have a very bad effect on the work force as a whole.

One small example is what happened in Detroit auto plants when women workers got to use forklifts for heavy jobs. "The men resisted the women until they saw it was helping their lot," a United Automobile Workers Union representative explained. "Now they say, 'Hey, why should I break my back? Give me a forklift, too.'" (Quoted in the *New York Times*, November 29, 1977.)

Part of the antiwoman campaign is a glorification of home and family, as official government policy. A Labor Department internal policy memorandum, issued in March 1977, spells out how programs should be designed to bolster the nuclear family with a working father and stay-at-home mother:

"The incentives should be arranged so that individuals prefer the two-parent arrangement. The earnings at work should be sufficiently greater than the dole on welfare to encourage families to stay together or to encourage women who are single parents to remarry. . . . It is important to provide the male head of the family with the opportunity to work." The slashing of child-care funds is defended as being



Greta Hill/Militant

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, January 22: Part of labor-sponsored march of 3,000 for passage of Equal Rights Amendment to U.S. Constitution.

in the interest of children who need a mother's care.

Feminist ideas have had a deep impact on American society, however. There will be no neat duplication of the post-World War II period when women were lured back into the home by the "feminine mystique."

So the government is on a concerted campaign to strip away the legal rights—and the much more limited economic gains—women won in the early 1970s.

The most serious step thus far has been the attack on legal abortion. In June 1977, the Hyde Amendment, passed by Congress the previous year, cut off federal funds for most abortions. This has already caused great hardship for poor women, and particularly women of the oppressed nationalities.

Child-care funds have been drastically cut, forcing many mothers of young children either to stay at home or to leave their children without adequate care. At present, there are child-care centers for only 2 percent of the more than six million children under six years old whose mothers work.

The U.S. Supreme Court—which has spearheaded the drive against women's rights—has ruled that pregnant workers are not entitled to disability benefits.

Affirmative action programs are being gutted. The entire legal basis for affirmative action is being challenged by the "reverse discrimination" case of Allan Bakke,<sup>1</sup> now before the U.S. Supreme Court.

These setbacks have caused widespread concern, but have not yet met with an

adequate response from defenders of women's rights.

The potential clearly exists for building such a response. There is mass sentiment in favor of the Equal Rights Amendment and a woman's right to abortion. According to a poll taken by Associated Press and NBC News at the end of November 1977, the majority of the population agrees with the statement, "Every woman who wants an abortion should be able to have one." The right to abortion has become very widely accepted in the United States—and not only by the one million women a year who have been obtaining legal abortions. It will not be easy for the rulers to outlaw abortion again, even after having passed the Hyde Amendment.

But the leadership of the National Organization for Women has put forward a strategy that compromises on the needs of all women and betrays those of the most oppressed.

NOW is the largest and most authoritative feminist organization in the United States. Women are joining NOW in large numbers, hoping to find there a strategy and some forces for fighting back. In October and November 1977, NOW signed up 20,000 new members. At the beginning of December, 1977, the organization reported having 770 local chapters, with three to four new ones being chartered every day.

One of the most attractive and powerful things about the women's liberation movement as it developed in the 1970s was that there was no established reformist leadership able to curb mass struggles. In this it was totally unlike the Black movement and the labor movement. The current leadership of NOW is attempting to close the gap. They preach a strategy of reliance on "friendly" capitalist politicians, so as to channel unrest into the graveyard of protest movements—the Democratic Party.

This means being as polite and inoffen-

1. Allan Bakke is a thirty-seven-year-old white engineer who won a California Supreme Court ruling that the University of California illegally discriminated against him when it set aside sixteen places for minority applicants to medical school.

sive as possible, to avoid antagonizing or embarrassing capitalist politicians.

It means that issues like abortion—the most offensive of all for capitalist politicians—get put on the back burner. Former president of NOW Karen DeCrow argued that abortion was a nonissue in the 1976 elections. NOW leaders think that the ERA can be won if women agree to postpone or soft-pedal the abortion issue. As the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives haggled for five months over the precise wording of their ban on Medicaid abortions, NOW leaders fell into the trap of organizing support for the more “liberal” Senate version of the antiabortion bill.

NOW's ERA strategy has been to organize women to support and elect supposedly pro-ERA state legislators—who as often as not turn around and vote against the amendment. Recently they have not been organizing large numbers of women, even for lobbying. Instead, a high-powered task force of a few women “experts” jets around the country convincing corporation executives and the heads of other organizations not to hold conventions in unratified states. The task force is also lobbying Congress to extend the ERA ratification deadline by another seven-year period. The existing deadline is March 1979, and the amendment has been stalled three states short of passage for a year.

One of the biggest failures of the NOW leadership has been its refusal to give high priority to defending the rights of the most oppressed women: Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Chicanas and other national minorities. No serious campaign was organized against the Hyde Amendment because it did not immediately jeopardize the ability of white middle-class women to obtain abortions. (This was short-sighted as well as racist, since the Hyde Amendment is a big step toward doing away with legal abortion itself.)

NOW has equivocated on affirmative action and has not thrown itself into the campaign to overturn the *Bakke* decision. One NOW chapter, in Minneapolis, published a racist report contending that affirmative action for Blacks was the main obstacle to job advancement for women, and the April 1977 national NOW convention refused to repudiate the report.

NOW has been hostile to the fight of Chicana, Black, and Native American women against sterilization abuse, especially to the demand for a longer mandatory waiting period between consent and sterilization. Looking at the question from the point of view of privileged white women, NOW leaders give more weight to the inconvenience caused by a thirty-day waiting period than to minority women's desperate search for some kind of protection from increased incidences of forced sterilization.

NOW leaders want to prettify the image of the women's movement—not in order to

make it more appealing to the masses of women in the United States but in order to make it more acceptable to those in power. Eleanor Smeal, president of NOW, boasts that she is a housewife who never worked a day for pay in her entire adult life.

“Our opponents,” Smeal complains, “try to give the impression that the women's movement is a bunch of lesbians, Communists and career women who are out to destroy the American family.” Over her dead body.

At the International Women's Year national conference in Houston in November, some NOW members carried this flag-waving approach to extremes, trying to be more patriotic and “profamily” than the right-wingers.

#### An Alternative Strategy for NOW

NOW, however, is something more than just a group of leaders with a reformist program. It is the organization that large numbers of American women hope will take the lead in fighting back against the blows they have been dealt.

Members of NOW want to discuss how women can turn back the attacks they are suffering—although they encounter stiff resistance from the leadership in trying to open up such a discussion.

Leading up to the 1977 NOW national conference, a group of NOW members began to circulate a strategy proposal entitled “Defending Women's Rights.” They urged NOW to turn toward women from the oppressed nationalities. They proposed a strategy of independence and mass action to respond to the attacks, which hit poor and minority women first and hardest but ultimately threaten the rights of all women. Members of the SWP and YSA supported this proposal and helped circulate it within NOW.

The Defending Women's Rights statement succeeded in beginning to open up a discussion within NOW and in helping to clarify for many members the real perspectives of the NOW leaders. The response of the leadership was to rebait supporters of the proposal and ram through the convention a witch-hunting motion that called into question the right of members of the SWP and YSA to belong to NOW.

The strategy discussion continued after the convention, with the publication of the *Defending Women's Rights Newsletter* by a number of NOW members.

#### Missed Opportunities in 1977

There have been important developments in the women's movement over the last year, and supporters of the *Defending Women's Rights Newsletter* have campaigned for NOW to take the lead in the struggles that have broken out.

In the ERA campaign, the most promising development has been the organization of Labor for Equal Rights Now by trade unionists—in particular Black women

trade unionists—in Virginia. (Virginia is one of the states that has not yet ratified the ERA.) LERN called for a demonstration at the state capitol January 21 that drew over 3,000 ERA supporters. Women will find powerful backing for their equal rights drive in the trade unions and civil rights organizations, if they concentrate more on reaching out to these allies and less on courting businessmen and politicians.

The International Women's Year conferences throughout 1977 provided the most dramatic evidence of the spread of feminist ideas. The state conferences were attended by 130,000 women, most of whom had never attended a women's conference before. They overwhelmingly supported abortion rights, the ERA, gay rights, child-care funding, and the rights of pregnant workers. Motions to these effects were passed at the national IWY conference in Houston November 18-21, but conference organizers covered up the fact that the Carter administration is bent on pushing through exactly the opposite program.

NOW could have mobilized women for Houston, not only to outnumber the right-wing mobilization but also to confront head-on the antiwomen drive of the government that sponsored the convention.

Supporters of the *Defending Women's Rights Newsletter* urge NOW to fight to preserve and extend affirmative action. Millions of women have not yet had a chance to benefit from affirmative action, as shown by the fact that female workers are still overwhelmingly segregated into the lowest-paid clerical and service jobs, the so-called “pink-collar jobs.” The gap between men's and women's wages is actually increasing. In 1956 full-time female workers earned 63 percent of what their male counterparts earned; this dropped to 59 percent in 1970 and 57 percent in 1974.

The only way to turn this situation around is through affirmative-action programs and quotas that force the bosses to hire, train, and promote women. Right now that means above all mobilizing women for the fight to overturn the *Bakke* ruling against affirmative action.

Black, Puerto Rican, and Chicana women must play a leading role in women's liberation struggles; they stand to suffer the most from every setback and gain the most from every victory. If NOW does not recognize this and turn toward these women and their struggles, it cannot play a role in winning women's liberation. Some important campaigns of the women's movement—for example, defending child-care programs and fighting against sterilization abuse—have from the beginning been led by women from the oppressed nationalities.

Revolutionary socialists have played an important role in the feminist movement, from the first Congress to Unite Women in



1969 to the abortion and ERA demonstrations of early 1978.

While the Communist Party tried to defend its opposition to the ERA, sectarian left groups dismissed the feminist movement as capitalist-inspired, and some organizations were torn apart by feminist and anti-feminist caucuses, the SWP made the struggle for women's rights one of its top priorities.

Feminists came to respect American Trotskyists for their consistent defense of the independence of the women's movement and their intransigent opposition to any attempts to sell women short. Some of them joined the SWP or YSA as a result. Many of the women in the SWP and YSA today first met Trotskyists in their campus women's liberation groups, abortion rights coalitions, union women's committees,

ERA groups, or NOW chapters.

The SWP hailed the upsurge in women's liberation activity in the resolution "Toward a Mass Feminist Movement,"<sup>2</sup> adopted in 1971.

"In carrying out the struggle for liberation," the American Trotskyists said, "women are doing something they have been systematically educated to believe themselves incapable of: women are becoming fighters, leaders, organizers, and clear political thinkers, capable of mobilizing the power of the masses of women in the decisive struggles against the capitalist system." □

2. Reprinted in *Feminism and Socialism* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1972).

## 'Le Monde' Interviews an American Trotskyist

[The following interview, conducted by Dominique Dhombres, appeared in the January 22-23 issue of the Paris daily *Le Monde*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

\* \* \*

She was the head of the Student Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam. On April 24, 1971, she addressed half a million demonstrators in Washington, D.C. She was prominently mentioned in the "enemies list" secretly drawn up by the White House.

Now she is thirty years old, but nothing appears to have cut into her convictions, her militancy, or her optimism.

Debby Tarnopol is a leader of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP).<sup>\*</sup> She is also, sometimes—when she has a job, that is—an office worker. With short dark hair and somewhat severe eyeglasses on her attentive face, dressed in dark clothes, she calmly describes her activities: "Our task is above all an educational one. It is to make our party known. For some people in the United States, this is the only time they ever hear anyone talk about socialism in something besides a joking or hostile way."

She sometimes gets involved in election campaigns. She herself was a candidate for mayor of Atlanta, Georgia, and very recently for mayor of Louisville, Kentucky. She was unsuccessful both times, but then she never had any illusions about win-



Richard Graef/Militant

DEBBY TARNOPOL

ning. She understands that the struggle is elsewhere: "You don't elect socialism; you build it."

The SWP was founded in 1928 (it took its present name in 1938) from a split in the young American Communist Party. Several party leaders, on their return from a trip to Moscow, declared their support for Trotsky's ideas on the bureaucratism of the new socialist state and were promptly expelled. Despised by the "Stalinists," who were much larger, the Trotskyists managed to keep themselves together somehow during the period between the wars and to put out their weekly, *The Militant*, more or less regularly.

The "witch-hunt" and McCarthyism of

the 1950s paradoxically worked to the SWP's advantage, by weakening the more "orthodox" Communist Party. The CP, whose members were committed but relatively old and obsessed with fear of FBI "infiltration," was not able to attract the new left that developed around radical opposition to the war in Vietnam. The SWP, on the other hand, was able to win a section of this young generation, especially on the campuses. The American Trotskyists today seem to be in better shape than the old Communist Party, in spite of the fact that the CP has attracted celebrities like Angela Davis.

### Feminism

Debby Tarnopol believes in "Marxism-Leninism" and says that her organization is governed by "democratic centralism." When she speaks, however, new concepts and new terms crop up alongside "class struggle" and the "falling profit rate of capitalism": in particular, the environment, the women's liberation movement, and defense of sexual minorities. She herself is a member of the National Organization for Women (NOW), one of the most important American feminist organizations. Debby Tarnopol denies any contradiction between Marxism and these "innovations."

"Women begin to rebel," she explains, "when they as workers suffer the most from the crisis capitalism is in." Similarly, she says that the demands of the environmental movement—and particularly those of the antinuclear campaign—have gotten a national response because the "system," always in search of higher profits, cannot avoid upsetting the environment in an increasingly dangerous way.

Debby Tarnopol is not a mystic. She does not think revolution is around the corner, but she calmly insists that the future of the United States lies in socialism. Her belief is based above all on the recent emergence of more combative attitudes among certain industrial workers, especially the steelworkers and the coal miners. "Wildcat" strikes have multiplied, showing a certain independence in relation to the traditional trade unions. Even within these unions, certain figures have emerged who challenge the capitalist system itself, breaking the American unions' long tradition of being as pragmatic and nonideological as possible.

Debby Tarnopol occasionally stretches her optimism a bit, or perhaps she has the very American ability to make a virtue out of necessity. Isn't there some contradiction in thinking—as she does—that Marxism is more likely to come to the United States than to Europe, because the absence of a social democratic party in the New World may mean that the United States will not be "infected with opportunism"? □

<sup>\*</sup>The SWP is associated with the Trotskyist Fourth International but is not officially a member. The Voorhis Act of 1940—still in force although little publicized—prohibits American organizations from joining international bodies that are deemed subversive.—*Le Monde*

# 1. 'Socialists in Uniform' Face Rising Opposition

By Ernest Harsch

[First of two parts]

On November 14, 1977, the official Ethiopian news agency announced that Lt. Col. Atnafu Abate had been subjected the day before to "a revolutionary measure"—a euphemism for execution. He had been vice-chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council—known as the Dergue—and until then had been considered the most important figure in the junta after its chairman, Lt. Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam.

The announcement charged that Atnafu had been guilty of "twelve specific antirevolutionary crimes" and "five specific arch-reactionary stands." He was accused of displaying "feudal arrogance" and of consorting after working hours with aristocrats and capitalists, as well as with "extremely dangerous imperialist agents—especially C.I.A. agents."

Given the extreme secretiveness of the Dergue, and its practice of labeling all its opponents as "counterrevolutionary," the real reasons for Atnafu's purge and execution may never be known. He will simply join the growing list of top military figures, such as Gen. Aman Michael Andom and Gen. Tafari Banti (the first two chairmen of the Dergue), who have been eliminated during the numerous power struggles within the junta.

These purges, and the accompanying bloodletting, are a powerful testimony to the completely undemocratic nature of the regime. In the absence of even the most elementary bourgeois democratic rights, political differences, personal rivalries, and so on, can only be resolved in such brutal ways.

To a certain extent, the instability within the Dergue is a reflection of the tremendous strains bearing down on it. The months immediately preceding Atnafu's death provided ample indications of the mounting opposition to the regime, especially in Eritrea and the Somali-populated Ogaden, and its inability to bring the massive unrest under control. This has begun to undermine the morale of the Ethiopian troops, a particularly ominous development for a military regime.

When Somali nationalist forces advanced on the town of Jijiga in September, the troops of the Ethiopian Third Division put up little resistance, abandoning Jijiga and the strategic Gara-Marda Pass near it. According to a report in the November issue of the London Monthly *Africa*, "... they made it clear to the government in Addis Ababa that they were not going to

go on fighting." The troops reportedly presented a list of demands to the Dergue, including a call for the resignations of both Mengistu and Atnafu. The mutiny was put down within a few days and some of those involved in it were shot.

A month later, during a visit to the battlefronts in Eritrea, Atnafu was briefly detained by one garrison and told that Addis Ababa must immediately negotiate an end to the war there.

About the same time, opposition to the Dergue resurfaced in Addis Ababa itself. A series of demonstrations were staged in the capital, with demands being raised for the release of political prisoners and the establishment of a civilian regime. Lt. Gebevan Temesgen, one of the top fifteen members of the Dergue, was assassinated in November, as was Gutta Sernesh, a leading municipal official.

The Dergue responded with more reprisal killings against alleged supporters of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party, an underground group influenced by Maoist conceptions that is opposed to military rule. According to the December *Africa*, "Some Diplomatic sources said as many as 350 anti-government activists were killed in the first two weeks of October."

On November 12, just one day before Atnafu's execution, the Dergue announced a new process for controlling the population. Those deemed to be "trustworthy and genuine revolutionaries" would be issued identity cards. Everyone else would be subjected to further restrictions on their freedom of movement.

The Dergue is clearly a regime in crisis. No matter how much it claims to be "Marxist-Leninist," it has been unable to garner enough support to retain firm control over the urban masses of Addis Ababa and other cities or to prevent large sections of Ethiopia from being liberated by the oppressed nationalities fighting for their self-determination.

The Dergue's difficulties are partly the result of its repressive and procapitalist policies. But they are also a legacy inherited from the former regime of Emperor Haile Selassie. When the Dergue seized power in September 1974, significant social forces, including the urban working class and the landless peasantry, were already in motion. And Selassie's feudal empire, based on Amharic domination over a number of oppressed nationalities, was beginning to come apart at the seams.

The size of the mass mobilizations that burst into the open in 1974 marked the release of powerful social tensions that had been building up over the years under Selassie's long reign.

In the countryside, where 90 percent of the population lived, feudal property relations continued to play a significant role. About 0.01 percent of the population owned 70 percent of all arable land. The biggest landlords were from the Amharic, and to a lesser extent the Tigrean, nationalities. They owned enormous estates, especially in the southern parts of the country. Some were as large as two million acres.

About half of all peasants were tenants or sharecroppers on these estates and had to give the landowners between one-half and three-quarters of their crops as rent. Since the peasants were in constant debt, many of them were in effect tied to the land. Peasants in some parts even had to provide labor or other services to the landlords.

In the central and northern highland region, most peasants cultivated their own plots of land, generally under communal ownership systems. But they were usually so small that the peasants were barely able to scratch out a subsistence living.

As a result of this backward system, average per capita income was less than \$70 a year. Infant mortality was extremely high, disease widespread, and average life expectancy only about thirty-five years.

To the overwhelming majority of the population, agrarian reform was clearly the most immediate and pressing issue.

The landlord class controlled the state and generally resisted industrial development. Its wealth was based on the extraction of surplus product through rent or tribute.

Ethiopia was not totally isolated from the world capitalist market, however. In the last decades of Selassie's reign, there was the beginning of some capitalist development, mostly in agriculture. Coffee, cotton, sugar, and fruit were grown for the international market and a small layer of the landlord class became capitalist farmers.<sup>1</sup> Petty-bourgeois elements in the cities, who aspired to become capitalists, also arose.

These bourgeois forces were still too weak to push through reforms or advance their particular political interests on their own. One sign of this was the failure of the 1960 coup attempt against Selassie. A group of young intellectuals in the mil-

itary, who considered themselves "modernists," tried to overthrow the aristocracy. They promised to institute land reform, spur economic growth, and, as they saw it, usher Ethiopia into the twentieth century. But most of the military was still loyal to the emperor and the coup was quickly crushed.

Besides their social weakness, one other factor inhibiting the efforts of the procapitalist forces from removing the parasitic Selassie regime was their fear of the masses. Though they chafed at the numerous constraints on capitalist economic growth, they were unwilling to mobilize the workers and peasants, the only classes with the power to take on the landlords. But the hesitancy on the part of the bourgeois elements did not prevent the masses from eventually moving against Selassie in their own interests.

The latent tensions within Ethiopian society were brought to the breaking point by the disastrous famine of 1973. The estimates of the number of people who died in it range from 100,000 to 250,000. Besides keeping millions of peasants at a subsistence level, the landlords profited directly from the famine, hoarding grain stocks until scarcity forced prices upward. They then sold the grain—to those who could afford it. Selassie tried to cover up the very existence of the famine for months.

The deaths spurred widespread anger and resentment over the responsibility of Selassie and the rest of the aristocracy for the country's extreme poverty and economic backwardness.

### The 1974 Upsurge

It was in Addis Ababa, the largest city in Ethiopia, that the revolution against Selassie began.

In early February 1974, taxi drivers, teachers, and students staged strikes and demonstrations, resulting in clashes with the police. Within a few days, about 10,000 troops, supported by most of the lower ranks and junior officers, seized Asmara, the capital of Eritrea, to press their demands for higher pay.

Although Selassie made some concessions, the upsurge continued to spread, eventually involving every major sector of the Ethiopian population that was opposed to the aristocracy and the landlord class. In one of the earliest protests, students raised the slogan "We want democracy!"

In early March, the young Ethiopian working class joined the upsurge, almost in its entirety. The Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Unions had originally been set up by the regime a number of years earlier. But it came under pressure from its members and was forced to call a general



Jeune Afrique

ADDIS ABABA: Thousands of students and young workers march through the streets April 29, 1977, in protest against military dictatorship.

strike. It demanded a minimum wage, the right to strike, and other concessions. For four days about 100,000 workers stayed away from their jobs, paralyzing all airports and harbors, most factories, and all other unionized sectors of the economy.

Selassie again conceded some of their demands, but not the one for a minimum wage. The conservative union leaders called off the strike anyway. But in the weeks that followed, other strikes broke out as more militant unionists began to take the lead. The strike wave spread to most of the larger cities and towns in the country, as well as to those in Eritrea.

In addition, women workers protested to demand equal rights and equal pay for equal work. About 100,000 Muslims marched through Addis Ababa to demand an end to religious discrimination against Muslims.

One of the most important developments in the upsurge was its extension to the countryside. Peasants in the southern provinces began to revolt, seizing crops and land and burning down the homes of landlords. The upheaval spread throughout a 250-mile stretch of the fertile Rift Valley. Despite their relative lack of organization, the peasants began to implement a radical land reform program on their own, under the popular slogan of "Land to the Tiller!"

Most of the demands raised during the early stages of the upheaval were of a democratic character: for freedom of speech, the press, assembly; for the right of workers to organize and strike; for agrar-

ian reform; for equality for women; for an end to religious discrimination; for an elected government. They directly threatened the monarchy and the economic position of the landlords.

The antifeudalist but procapitalist elements in the military were not necessarily opposed to some of these demands, but they were terrified by the manner in which they were being raised—independently by the masses themselves.

There were already signs that the upsurge was passing beyond the stage of spontaneous rebellion and was beginning to throw up new forms of mass organization. Reporters described the formation of what they called "revolutionary committees" and "people's tribunals" in some of the provincial towns. In some cases these popular bodies tried to substitute themselves for the local authorities, who had fled toward Addis Ababa as a result of the peasant revolts.

This process went the furthest in Jimma, the capital of Kefa Province, which is southwest of Addis Ababa. Describing the upsurge there Addis Hiwet wrote:

Towards the end of March there was a popular uprising by the townsmen of Jimma: a mammoth demonstration that embraced almost the entire population of the town confronted the police force, expelled the governor, and elected, by popular will, a 34-man committee that would administer the town in place of the deposed provincial administration. This committee, composed mainly of teachers and students and merchants, and accountable to the people, remained in power for weeks. Jimma was the only

1. See "From Absolute Monarchy to Bonapartism?" by Tabor and Hanna in *Inprecor*, March 31, 1977, p. 24.

place where popular insurrection developed into a popularly elected urban administration.<sup>2</sup>

In fact, a similar process started within the military itself. In unit after unit troops and junior officers arrested the top officers and elected various committees. They issued leaflets demanding democratic rights, land reforms, and the ouster of aristocratic officials. In Eritrea, some leaflets went so far as to call for legalization of the Eritrean independence groups, an especially significant development among troops fighting a colonial war.

### The Dergue

Under these circumstances, a number of junior officers came together and formed an Armed Forces Coordinating Committee in April. It was the predecessor of the Dergue. From its earliest days, one of the dominant figures in it was Maj. Mengistu Haile Mariam, now a lieutenant colonel and the dictator of the country.

In its early days, the committee may have included various contending interests and political approaches, but its overall aim was to bring the upsurge under its exclusive control, dampening the mobilizations and breaking strikes when they got out of hand. But to bring that off, the committee members had to cultivate some political credibility. They were forced to champion many of the demands raised against the Selassie regime.

The concern of the committee over the upsurge was publicly expressed shortly after it was formed. It accused the regime of being unable to halt the strikes and demonstrations. It also despaired at Selassie's failure to suppress the Eritrean independence struggle. The committee decided to act on its own. As a *Le Monde* correspondent reported April 30, 1974, the committee began "to take the initiative in putting the brake on the development of anarchy."

They were partially successful, but still far from bringing the mass protests under control. Sensing the threat the independent mobilizations posed—not only to the aristocracy, but to their own reformist schemes—the young nationalist officers desperately negotiated with Selassie for months. They tried to get him to make enough concessions to defuse the unrest. When that failed, they were finally forced to depose him in September. But the monarchy itself was not abolished until later.

Col. Tessema Aba Derash, a member of the Dergue, later explained why they had to dethrone Selassie. He said, "We had offered the Emperor to place himself at the head of our movement—he refused. We

reminded him of the Shah of Iran, who made a revolution from above, as his throne and land were endangered by a revolution from below—the old man didn't listen to reason."<sup>3</sup>

Among the Dergue's first actions after seizing power was to ban protests and strikes. Barely a week after Selassie's ouster, the new ruling junta was confronted with a demonstration of 4,000 university and high-school students, who chanted, "We want democracy" and "No military rule." The Dergue responded by launching the so-called *zemecha* campaign, in which tens of thousands of students and teachers were sent into the rural areas. Supposedly, they were to teach peasants to read and write. The real aim was to remove the militant students from the cities and disperse them throughout the countryside.

A general assembly of the Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Unions passed resolutions calling for an end to military rule, the lifting of the ban on strikes and protests, and the establishment of what they called a "people's provisional government." The Dergue cracked down and arrested the three top leaders of the union federation.

### 'Socialism in Uniform'?

Within a few months of coming to power, the young nationalist military officers began to institute reforms, arbitrarily, from the top down, with the intention of "modernizing" Selassie's old empire and providing the basis for the growth of capitalist industries.

They did not explicitly state that they favored bourgeois policies, of course. Because of the continuing unrest and their own political weakness, the members of the Dergue were forced to masquerade as something else. At first they were confused about what kind of rhetoric would serve their purpose. For instance, an early Dergue statement declared its intention to form a regime that was "anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, and anti-communist." But by December 1974 they hit on a more attractive label. They called it "Ethiopian socialism."

In the first two months of 1975, the junta nationalized all banks, credit institutions, and insurance companies, as well as many imperialist and some local concerns. Many of the local companies had already been state-owned under Selassie, however, and not all imperialist holdings were touched.

In March, the Dergue decreed its most radical measure so far—a broad agrarian-reform program that nationalized all rural land and abolished, at least in name, the private ownership of land. All debts and obligations by tenant farmers and share-

croppers were canceled. A limit of 25 acres was placed on the size of farms cultivated by individual farmers. The formation of village cooperatives was urged. The few large commercial farms in the country were nationalized.

The heaviest blows of the land reform fell on the large absentee landowners in the southern provinces.

However, the Dergue's land-reform program was enacted largely in response to the ongoing peasant revolts. It tried to institutionalize a process that was already under way, so as to bring it under government control. To neutralize some of the independent peasant associations that had been formed during the revolts, a new system of peasant associations was set up, based on a pyramid structure from the top down. The new formations were designed to serve as transmission belts for the implementation of government policy.

Essentially, the Dergue tried to stifle all independent initiatives. As a result, the land reform itself has only been partially completed.

The last fundamental reform enacted by the regime was the nationalization of urban land and housing in July 1975. There has been little else since then.

Despite the Dergue's "socialist" rhetoric, none of these measures went beyond a capitalist framework. Nationalizations, even extensive ones like those in Ethiopia, are insufficient in and of themselves to break the grip of imperialist domination. Limited state planning is not capable of doing so either. Many other neocolonial regimes have adopted similar measures. They may gain a greater degree of bargaining power with the imperialists, but they still face foreign economic domination.

What is needed to end the imperialist stranglehold is a revolutionary mobilization of the masses. But by its actions, the Dergue clearly showed that it was opposed to such a course.

Basically, what the economic reforms amount to are an effort to foster capitalist economic growth through the apparatus of the state. Like similar regimes elsewhere, it is characterized by a strong strain of nationalism. The regime seeks to encourage the growth of an *indigenous* capitalist class, protecting it as much as possible from the more powerful imperialist concerns—as well as from its own workers.

The Dergue's efforts to encourage the growth of local Ethiopian industries is evident from its own policy statements. At the same time that it decreed the nationalizations, it also explicitly provided a role for private companies. And to reassure Washington and the other imperialist powers that it is not against imperialism as such, the Dergue's Declaration of Economic Policy stated that "foreign private investment will be given ample opportunities in many areas of economic activity

2. Addis Hiwet. *Ethiopia: From Autocracy to Revolution* (London: Review of African Political Economy, Occasional Publication No. 1, 1975), p. 107.

3. *Revolution in Eritrea* (Eritreans for Liberation in North America, 1975), p. 11.

and will be assured fair and adequate returns."

At the end of 1975, the junta lifted some of the restrictions it had placed on foreign and domestic companies. A few months later it promised incentives to Ethiopian businessmen and traders. The September 10, 1977, issue of the government-controlled *Ethiopian Herald* declared that "local businessmen and industrialists are also encouraged to continue their functions in serving the interests of the broad masses. . . ."

In order to protect the fledgling capitalists from these very same "broad masses" and to stifle "excessive" wage demands, the Dergue set out to control the labor movement and tie it directly to the state. Besides banning unauthorized strikes, the Dergue abolished the Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Unions, which opposed the military regime. The last chairman of the federation was killed. The Dergue replaced it with a more subservient body, whose officials are appointed by the government.

In addition, a new labor code prohibits workers from quitting their jobs without permission.

#### Opposition From the Right and the Left

The Dergue's moves against the landed aristocracy, as well as the masses, has generated opposition to the regime from both the right and the left.

The Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU) is a rightist army founded by former aristocrats. It has recently been joined by some bourgeois figures, civil servants, and even a few lower-ranking members of the regime who defected. It no longer openly calls for the restoration of the monarchy and appears to be trying to present itself as a "democratic" alternative to the Dergue, or at least one more capable of restoring "stability." It is openly supported by the Sudanese government and is said to get some backing from some of the imperialist powers.

The EDU had a base in some of the northern and western provinces for a while, but the Dergue has claimed to have routed it in Gondar, where its forces had been most active.

Like Selassie, the junta is having considerable problems in governing Addis Ababa itself. The mass upsurge of 1974 spurred a radicalization among the urban population, especially among workers and students.

During the upsurge and shortly after Selassie's downfall, some of the political tendencies within the student movement began to crystalize into political parties and organizations. Almost all of them, to one degree or another, were influenced by Maoist politics.

One of these tendencies, which supported the junta for a period, became the Mela Ethiopia Socialist Nekenake

(Me'ison—All-Ethiopia Socialist Movement). It adheres to the classical Stalinist theory of a two-stage revolution. Since Me'ison characterized the current stage of the revolution as antifeudalist, it extended its support—or "critical support" as it said—to the Dergue, at least until mid-1977. In that period, it worked within the government-established neighborhood committees and trade unions.<sup>4</sup>

There are several other groups. But the most important is the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP). The EPRP released its program in April 1975. In it the party states that its ultimate goal is the establishment of a "Proletarian Dictatorship," but that its immediate aim is a "New Democratic Revolution." It thus has its own version of the two-stage revolution theory. It calls the Dergue "fascist" and pledges to overthrow it. It demands the establishment of a civilian "people's provisional government." And, significantly, it supports the Eritrean demands for independence.

Since the EPRP functions underground, it is difficult to accurately gauge how much support it has. From the few signs available, it seems to have a significant base, at least in Addis Ababa and maybe a few other cities. In January 1977 it called a student strike in the capital and managed to bring out 90 percent of all students in the university and high schools.

At the same time, the EPRP has adopted an adventurist course. It has set up an armed wing, which carries out urban guer-

4. For a brief description of Me'ison's positions, see "Upheaval in Ethiopia: Toward Civil War?" by Tabor and Hana in *Inprecor*, May 26, 1977, p. 16.

rilla warfare and terrorist actions in the capital. It has assassinated dozens of lower-ranking government officials and supporters. However, there are some signs that the EPRP's ultraleft approach has begun to isolate it politically from the population.

The Dergue responded to the EPRP campaigns with massive repression, gunning down hundreds of suspected EPRP supporters on the streets, in the schools, or in their homes. Over the May Day weekend in 1977, when the EPRP staged a series of four simultaneous demonstrations in different parts of the city, hundreds of them were rounded up and summarily shot. Up to 600 or more youths may have been killed in that one massacre alone.

Clearly, the regime is using its drive against the EPRP and other activists in an effort to terrorize the population as a whole.

Since mid-1977, however, the Dergue also moved against its former allies in Me'ison. The Dergue charges the group with having plotted to seize power. Many Me'ison supporters have been purged from their positions in the regime's civilian apparatus. According to a report by correspondent David Ottaway in the October 8, 1977, *Washington Post*, "the All-Ethiopian Socialist Movement, has joined the ranks of the opposition now and 200 of its top officials have either gone underground, fled the country, been killed or captured in the past six weeks."

Foreign journalists in Addis Ababa have reported that gunfire can be frequently heard in the capital as opponents and supporters of the regime engage in continual street battles.

[To be continued]

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# AROUND THE WORLD



## Carter OKs U.S. Arms to 'Pacify' Sahara

The Carter administration has begun to intervene directly against the Polisario freedom fighters in Western Sahara.

At the end of January the White House informed Congress that it intends to provide King Hassan of Morocco with \$100 million worth of armed aircraft originally designed for use in the Vietnam War.

A previous agreement barring the Moroccan government from using American arms beyond its borders is to be rewritten, enabling it to use the aircraft in counterinsurgency operations against the Polisario guerrillas.

Sahara, a phosphate-rich former Spanish colony, was divided up between Morocco and Mauritania in 1975 without consulting the wishes of its population. Despite intensive military operations since that time, neither government has succeeded in crushing the freedom struggle.

The latest White House move, if approved by Congress, will give the Hassan regime twenty-four Bronco armed reconnaissance aircraft and twenty-four Cobra helicopter gunships. In addition, it will permit their use both in the part of Western Sahara claimed by Morocco and in support of the 5,000 Moroccan troops recently dispatched to aid the Mauritanian government in holding on to the portion of Western Sahara it seized.

The move represents a major public shift in Washington's policy, amounting to de facto recognition of Moroccan and Mauritanian sovereignty over the seized territory. Previously the White House had declined to recognize the claims of the two governments, voting in December 1975 for a United Nations resolution that urged "respect for the freely expressed aspirations of the Saharan populations."

Moscow has given verbal support to the freedom fighters. However it made clear where it really stands by signing with Morocco in mid-1977 a long-term contract to purchase five million tons of phosphates.

### Dissidents Score Polish Elections

The opposition grouping Committee for Social Self-Defense is circulating leaflets

in Poland calling attention to the undemocratic character of municipal elections to the "People's Councils," scheduled for February 5.

According to a report in the January 27 issue of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*, the leaflets note that procedures for the election do not conform to the Polish constitution, which guarantees each citizen "the right to run for office" as well as the right to vote.

The municipal elections are "not democratic," the committee said, "because the voter can choose only among candidates who enjoy the confidence of the authorities."

### French CP Joins Defense of Anatoly Shcharansky

The case of Anatoly Shcharansky, a prominent Soviet dissident, who has been imprisoned for nearly a year on a charge of "treason," has been taken up by the French Communist Party.

A lengthy article in the January 24 issue of the French CP daily *L'Humanité* criticized Moscow's denial of Shcharansky's rights.

"We consider it unacceptable . . . for any country whatsoever—and all the more so for a Communist country—to fail to recognize the rights of a defendant."

This applies in particular to the "engineer Shcharansky," the CP daily said, "even if he hold views that we do not share; even if he carries on activities that go beyond the boundaries of legitimate defense of the right to emigration and of legitimate propaganda for the application of the Helsinki accords; and even if the acts of which he is accused are considered criminal under Soviet law."

*L'Humanité* noted that a day of solidarity with Shcharansky was scheduled for January 29, and that French CP leader Jean Elleinstein would be taking part in it.

### Storm of Protest Over Ruling Absolving British Torturers

The European Court of Human Rights voted, 13 to 4, January 18 to clear the British government of charges that its security forces had tortured political prisoners in Northern Ireland.

Although the court acknowledged that

British troops had used "inhuman and degrading" methods of interrogation in fourteen cases in 1971, it declined to term these practices "torture."

In Dublin, government officials called the ruling "amazing."

The human rights organization Amnesty International condemned the court decision January 19, announcing that it would "continue to denounce as 'torture' the use of any government anywhere of the interrogation practices used by the United Kingdom in Northern Ireland in 1971."

Citing a report it had issued in March 1972 after an on-the-spot investigation in Belfast, Amnesty International said it is clearly "a form of torture to force a man to stand at the wall in the posture described for many hours in succession, in some cases for days on end, progressively exhausted and driven literally out of his mind by being subjected to continuing noise, and being deprived of food, sleep and even light."

In London, a news conference was held January 24 to announce the launching of the International Tribunal on Britain's Presence in Ireland. Sponsors of the independent inquiry, which is to investigate violations of human and civil rights in Northern Ireland, include British Member of Parliament Joan Maynard, the National Executive Committee of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, and several British trade-union organizations.

### Frame-up of Filipina Nurses Abandoned by U.S. Prosecutor

All charges have been dropped against Leonora Perez and Filipina Narciso, two Filipina nurses convicted in July 1977 of poisoning patients at a Michigan Veterans Administration hospital.

In December 1977 Judge Philip Pratt overturned the conviction and granted the nurses a new trial, citing "persistent misconduct" by the prosecution.

The U.S. Attorney's office released a twenty-page memorandum on the case February 1, admitting that it was very unlikely they could obtain guilty verdicts if they went ahead with a second trial.

The nurses had won broad support for their defense campaign, particularly from feminist organizations and from the Filipino community.

# Selections From the Left

## HAYTH

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

*Avge* has published thirteen chapters from the memoirs of Veliko Mikunovic, Yugoslav ambassador to Moscow at the time of the Hungarian revolution. In Chapter 9, published in the January 18 issue, Mikunovic describes the discussions between the Soviet CP leaders and representatives of the other Stalinist regimes in preparation for the Soviet military occupation of Hungary. He writes:

"The Soviets were interested in hearing the opinion of the Chinese because they were far removed from the events (in Hungary and Poland) and were not involved and so were able to see the problem in a better perspective. The Chinese agreed with everything. They also had a telephone discussion with Mao Tse-tung. He also agreed to the invasion of Hungary. . . .

"During the discussions [in Brioni November 2-3, 1956] Janos Kadar's statement on the tragic evolution of the events in Hungary was taken up. Kadar feared that socialism would collapse, along with workers power in Hungary. Khrushchev said that Kadar was a 'hero.'

"The discussion turned to the terror that reigned under Rakosi and the arrest of Kadar. There was special mention of the torture of Kadar and his son Farkas. Malenkov and Khrushchev were both obviously embarrassed. . . .

"Gerö said that although the Hungarian Communist Party had 900,000 members, nothing was left. The party had disintegrated.

"The Yugoslavs asked what the positions of the various members of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union were on these problems. The question startled the Soviets. There was a brief silence.

"Khrushchev said that there was complete unanimity. Malenkov [purged shortly afterward] added that there had been total unanimity at every phase of the events."

## INFORMATIONS OUVRIERES

"*Workers News*," open forum for the class struggle. Published weekly in Paris.

The December 21-January 4 and January 4-11 issues feature a two-part interview with Ed Sadlowski. Sadlowski was the main leader of the militant Steelworkers Fight Back slate that challenged the bureaucratic leadership of the Steelworkers union in the United States in the 1977

union elections.

In the first part of the interview, Sadlowski denounced the bosses' effort to blame foreign imports for the sharp increase in layoffs in the American steel industry.

"When you talk about the crisis in the American steel industry today, there are some people who make a lot of fuss about imports, especially from the Common Market countries. Personally, I'm convinced that it's the American steel industry that's rattling this scarecrow to try and convince American public opinion, and the American steelworkers, that if jobs are eliminated, it's because of underhanded competition from the Belgian, Dutch, or Japanese steelworker.

"This is the biggest falsehood there is. . . .

"We have to wake up and say, look, it's the American steel industry that created this steel crisis, and to a great extent, it's the worldwide steel industry. Because if you look at Luxembourg, Germany, and England, it's the same steel barons who are saying the same thing."

## gauche

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

Belgian women's groups have called a national demonstration for the right to abortion to mark International Women's Day this year, Marie-Anne Marais reports in the January 19 issue.

The demonstration is scheduled for March 4 in Gent. It will focus on five central demands:

- "1. Decriminalize abortion.
- "2. Abortion on demand—no compulsory counseling procedures that make the decision for the woman.
- "3. Abortion should be reimbursed by Social Security just like any other medical procedure.
- "4. For a program of sex education and information on contraception.
- "5. Establish a large number of regional centers where abortions could be performed under good conditions. These centers should be ready to open as soon as possible."

To build the demonstration, Marais reports, "the committees sent a letter to all political organizations, groups, and parties, asking them to sign the platform of demands, and inviting them to join the March 4 Committee, which has been set up to involve the largest possible number of organizations in planning the demonstration. Posters, stickers, petitions, and debates are planned in every region. A special effort will be made to involve organizations in the workers movement, which will be more fruitful than in 1977,

we hope, because of the participation by many women shop delegates in the actions held November 11."

## Rahva H'AL

"*People's Voice*," organ of the Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party, the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic, and the Council of Ministers of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic. Published daily in Tallinn.

*Rahva Hääl*, like the other organs of the supposedly independent Communist parties of the Baltic republics, consists largely of features supplied by the official Soviet news agency TASS.

Since the paper has no independent local political or cultural life to report, it needs a lot of wire-service dispatches to fill each four-page issue, and sometimes it carries reports that do not make it into the central Soviet organs, *Pravda* and *Izvestia*.

In the January 20 issue, the following dispatch catches a reader's eye. The headline is "Chinese Spies in Indonesia." It is datelined Jakarta, January 19:

"Despite the repeated statements of the Chinese leaders that they want to live in peace and friendship with their neighbors, Peking is continuing its subversive activity in the countries of Southeast Asia.

"Thus, the Jakarta paper *Berita Buana* reports that the Indonesian armed forces have discovered a major underground organization on the island of Java, which carried on espionage on behalf of the People's Republic of China. The investigation revealed that the organization had about a hundred members, including officers of the Chinese armed forces, who entered the country with false documents. The organization helped Chinese 'immigrants' settle in Indonesia and provided them with passports, identity papers, and other documents. Through these channels, Peking regularly sent special instructions for its splitting work, the Indonesian investigation report continued.

"The newspaper *Merdeka* appealed to the government of Indonesia to exercise closer supervision of activity by Chinese and to ban Chinese citizens from entering the country, since they had 'immigrated' to Indonesia to accomplish certain tasks."

Apparently in its factional warfare with the Peking leadership, Moscow thinks that any stick is good enough to beat a Chinese with. This report amounts to a total endorsement of witch-hunt propaganda by a savagely repressive regime that murdered hundreds of thousands of Communist Party members at its inception and has scarcely mellowed since. This regime has also carried out repeated pogroms against the large Chinese minority in the Indonesian archipelago. The language of this dispatch was hardly distinguishable, if at all, from the reactionary newspapers on which it was based.

Speech by Fidel Castro

## 2. Blockade of Cuba Is 'Supreme Test' of Carter's Sincerity

[Continued from last week]

How are our relations with the United States coming along? Well, they're progressing somewhat. Naturally, first of all, imperialism has been dealt a great number of blows of all kinds, such as Vietnam, Watergate and others. Its economic blockade and its attacks against us have been discredited and are untenable before the eyes of the world. The imperialists have no moral basis from which to defend that kind of policy against us.

Truthfully speaking, we've emerged victorious from this struggle.

Soon, very soon, the Revolution will be 19, and we could well say that it is still attending kindergarten—kindergarten! (APPLAUSE) It is still of kindergarten age. All the imperialists' efforts to destroy the Revolution crashed ignominiously against the firm resolve of our people, the revolutionary spirit of our people, the dignity of our people, the heroism of our people. They underestimated the Cuban people and thought they could easily toy with, threaten, destroy and demoralize them. All the Yankee might—to put it bluntly—wasn't enough to achieve their aims. Five administrations maneuvered against us: Eisenhower's, Kennedy's, Johnson's, Nixon's\* and Ford's. Five presidents came and went, but the Revolution kept standing! (APPLAUSE)

There's a new administration in power. As we've said before, there've been some positive gestures. It was not characterized by a hostile policy toward our country, it didn't commit itself during the electoral campaign to follow an aggressive policy against Cuba. It has made some gestures, and we, on our part, have made some small gestures as well. Ours have been small gestures, for what other kind can we make?

For instance, we've made it possible for some criminals, U.S. marijuana traffickers jailed here, to go back to the United States, plus one or two of the few others we held here for counterrevolutionary activities.

They extended their territorial waters to 200 miles, so we had no choice but to extend ours also to 200 miles. So we then had to talk about the question of the 200 miles. Since traditionally we fished in waters that were included in the 200 miles claimed by them, we had to talk, and some agreements were reached.

They authorized U.S. citizens to visit Cuba. Very good, we praised the reestablishment of U.S. citizens' right to travel because that's one of their rights. They were allowed to make use of their right once again. As a gesture, we didn't raise any objections. If they want to come to visit Cuba they can come.

They proposed to set up an interests office. After some analysis we agreed with them: they have an interests office here and we have one in Washington.

This is part of the progress that has been made.

But let's look at the essentials: what's the essential thing? The blockade. The blockade is still on. What's immoral about this United States policy is that they're trying to use the blockade as a weapon for negotiation to deal with us.

And speaking of gestures, we have levelled no blockade on the United States, so we can't reciprocate by lifting a blockade against the United States that is nonexistent, and we hope that

this National Assembly will not level an economic blockade on the United States. There's none. They're the ones who must make the gesture of lifting the blockade!

We can't make the gesture of giving back a piece of the territory of Florida because no piece of Florida is occupied by our soldiers. However, there's a piece of our territory occupied by their soldiers. (APPLAUSE) What gesture is there for us to make? A few old CIA agents are still in jail here. Well, they'll remain in jail as long as necessary. We've made all the gestures possible.

I was telling you that what's immoral about the United States' policy is that they want to use the blockade as a weapon for negotiation: I hold you in a stranglehold and we talk; one of us in a stranglehold and the two of us talking. That's profoundly immoral on the part of the United States Government.

The blockade even extends to medicines; no medicines, absolutely none, and no medical equipment can be acquired in the United States.

They talk about compensation. The corporations that exploited this country claim that their properties were worth 2,000 million and with the interest, 4,000 million. We've told them that all their crimes, acts of sabotage, mercenary invasions, subversion and blockade against our nation have come to 4,000 million and with interest, they come to 6,000 million, (APPLAUSE) that we are ready to acknowledge the losses sustained by their corporations if they acknowledge the damages to Cuba, that they should pay us compensation and we'll pay compensation to the U.S. corporations affected by the revolutionary laws.

Now then, there'd be a lot of things to talk about, but what has happened now? What has happened? They used to talk about Latin America being subverted, but they no longer talk about that. Now they're talking about other things, for instance, the problem of Puerto Rico and the independence of Puerto Rico, a right which we have always defended. And while they elaborate their own theories, we elaborate ours. But above all, we've said that what is involved here is a question of principles. We're not promoting violence in Puerto Rico. Yet when the Cuban Revolutionary Party was founded it sought Cuban and Puerto Rican independence. (APPLAUSE) We have sacred historical, moral and spiritual bonds with Puerto Rico. And we've told them that as long as there's one Puerto Rican who defends the idea of independence, as long as there's even one, we have the moral and political duty of defending the idea of Puerto Rico's independence. (APPLAUSE) We will honor our moral and political duty. There's no need for three or three million Puerto Ricans to be defending their independence, one is enough for us, and we've made this very clear to them, that this is a matter of principle, and, to us, principles are not to be negotiated! (APPLAUSE)

Now a new question about Cuban troops in Angola and in other parts of Africa has come up, that is, Cuba's solidarity with the African peoples. We have made it very clear to them that Cuba's solidarity with the African peoples is not negotiable! (APPLAUSE)

This doesn't mean at all that we reject the possibility of improving the relations between Cuba and the United States; for us this is also based on a matter of principle as we sincerely believe that the efforts of everybody are required to bring about international détente and peace. We believe that war is not the answer for the world since it would mean the virtual extermination of mankind. We talked about this at the Congress of the

\*In the transcript as it appeared in *Granma*, the name Nixon is spelled with a swastika in place of the "x," a procedure we are unable to duplicate with our typesetting equipment.—IP/I



Party, it is on record in the theses of the Congress, and it is our growing deep-rooted conviction that the struggle for international détente and peace is the duty of all peoples and aware persons in the world.

So our first reason, the fundamental one, for being willing to try to improve relations with the United States is on account of that principle. We know about the world, we're familiar with world problems, we're familiar with the problems of the underdeveloped world. We anticipate the terrible problems to be faced by mankind in the future, by the generation made up by our junior high school students and that now attending our day-care centers. We know what problems are in store for these generations in future years as part of mankind. We know about the problems to be faced by the world of the future: food, uncontrolled population growth, pollution, power shortages, lack of natural resources, development problems. We believe that in the absence of a true atmosphere of peace in the world we couldn't even start to solve any of these problems.

This means that whenever there's a possibility for improvement we're simply following a principle when we think we should go to work on that connection. But, apparently, the United States Government doesn't understand that. Perhaps they think we're impatient or feeling anxious. It could be they have an illusion that somehow we need them; it could be they have the illusion that we can't live without such relations.

It could be that they believe we want to improve relations on account of economic and material interests. Naturally, economically speaking, it would be good for the country; materially speaking, it would be good for the country; good in a relative way, not in a decisive way—let this be well understood—not in a decisive way. Decisive are our relations with the socialist community and with the USSR, these are indeed decisive! (APPLAUSE) And these relations could never be replaced by relations with the United States because the nature of imperialism prevents it.

What are they doing now with sugar? They've levied enormous import tariffs on sugar now tremendously undervalued; and a tariff of three or four cents is levied by them on sugar that is sold for seven or eight cents a pound on the world market in order to protect their own sugar production thus affecting over 60 countries, some of which, to be honest, more than deserve it.

We're watching from the sidelines how events are unfolding. Many of those that, like voracious wild beasts, went after the sugar quotas that Cuba used to have in the U.S. market, who sold their souls to imperialism to get a share of our quotas and who cooperated with the maneuvering and crimes against Cuba to get a share of our quota, who mercilessly and selfishly went after our quotas, are now getting what they had coming. There are no longer any U.S. quotas but very high customs tariffs instead. It boils down to selfishness under capitalism, protectionist laws to save themselves even if it means the sinking of the rest of the world. That's what they're doing to sugar. Will they do like the USSR does, pay excellent prices for sugar, increase the sugar price proportionally to the price rises on their products exported to us, buy practically all the sugar that we can produce and on which we have set up magnificent trade relations?

The most important thing in life and, above all, in revolutionary life, is to be clear about things, and it must be made absolutely clear to the United States Government that no improvement in relations between Cuba and the United States can ever alter in the least the close ties of our people and our Revolution with the Soviet Union. (APPLAUSE) The United States Government must not fool itself about this; no strategy to counter this will ever succeed. Ours is not one of those governments that can be bought or sold.

As you all know—I don't want to mention names although I could perhaps mention several—imperialism has toyed with some of those governments, imperialism has toyed with some phony revolutions and their leaders and has forced them to move away from the socialist camp, has driven them into treason and has bought them. But there's one government of this underdeveloped

world, of this hemisphere, that the imperialists will never be able to buy or manipulate and that is the Government of Cuba! (PROLONGED APPLAUSE)

And what's the point of the United States talking about the Cuban troops in Angola and Cuba's solidarity with Africa? What has that got to do with relations between Cuba and the United States? What's this about the United States talking about troops being in another country and turning the presence of our troops in Angola or in any other country of Africa into an obstacle for such relations? That's why I say that apparently the United States has failed to understand our principled policy; they don't understand it nor do they understand principles. And it seems to us like an act of bad faith that the president of the United States was dragged into by some of his advisers, the fact that the U.S. press recently launched a noisy campaign concerning the presence of Cuban advisers in several African countries. Their information was false at that since advisers were reported to be in places where there weren't any, others were reported in places where there were some but the figures given were exaggerated. They did this, in our opinion, with a clear intent to blackmail.

What moral basis can the United States have to speak about Cuban troops in Africa? What moral basis can a country have whose troops are on every continent, that has, for instance, over 20 military bases in the Philippines, dozens of bases in Okinawa, in Japan, in Asia, in Turkey, in Greece, in the FRG [Federal Republic of Germany—IP], in Europe, in Spain, in Italy and everywhere else? What moral basis can the United States have to use the argument of our troops being in Africa when their own troops are stationed by force on Panamanian territory, occupying a portion of that country? What moral basis can the United States have to speak about our troops in Africa when their own troops are stationed right here on our own national territory, at the Guantánamo naval base? (APPLAUSE)

If we're going to talk about troops stationed where they shouldn't be, and that indeed has a lot to do with the bilateral relations between Cuba and the United States, the only troops that should be talked about are those now stationed at the Guantánamo naval base. It's the only point regarding troops stationed in other countries that we can talk about.

It would be ridiculous for us to tell the United States Government that, in order for relations between Cuba and the United States to be resumed or improved, it would have to withdraw its troops from the Philippines, or Turkey, or Greece, or Okinawa, or South Korea. Whenever they feel like withdrawing their troops from those countries, let them do it; but it'd be ridiculous for us to tell them now, you must first withdraw your troops from the FRG for otherwise there can't be relations between us, or else say to them, we're disgusted at your having troops stationed in the FRG, so there can't be any relations between us. They then would say, those guys are crazy. Therefore, how come they have the right to say it? Because they don't start out from a logical premise, one of equity, of equality. It's a case of imperial arrogance. Imperial arrogance! It's all right for the imperialists to have troops and advisers everywhere in the world, but we can't have them anywhere. That's a fine concept the United States Government has of logic, equity and equality!

We're supporting African governments that have requested our cooperation; they are duly constituted governments, and revolutionary and progressive governments at that. Our military advisers are not lending their services to any fascist government anywhere in the world, our advisers are not lending their services to any reactionary government anywhere in the world. Our military advisers are assisting governments that help their own peoples, support their own peoples and are either revolutionary or progressive governments. (APPLAUSE).

We have no military advisers in countries like Chile—to give one example—in fascist countries. Apart from all its bases all over the world, the United States has military instructors and advisers in dozens of countries and, in some places, thousands of them, like in Iran, Saudi Arabia and countries like that. The United States

has military advisers in nearly all the Latin-American countries; the United States has sent military advisers to and has trained the armies of the most repressive, reactionary and bloodthirsty governments of this hemisphere.

The fundamental difference between the advice given by the United States and Cuba is that the United States will never advise a revolutionary or progressive people and it will, generally speaking, always advise reactionary and fascist governments. Revolutionary Cuba advises revolutionary and progressive governments.

What right has the United States got to oppose such advice given by our people? What's more, what are they complaining about? They tried to isolate our Revolution and destroy it. The Revolution developed its ties with the Third World; these are solid ties and we'll be firm and loyal to such ties. We will not forsake such ties for a smile from the United States, we will not exchange such ties for any concession that the United States might make. Such ties are not negotiable!

Our Revolution has many soldiers and very good soldiers at that. There are tens of thousands of officers among the regular and reserve troops and hundreds of thousands of fighters among the regular and reserve troops. The Yankee imperialists are to blame for that, the blame falls on them for they forced us, with their attacks and their blockade, to adopt these elementary measures to survive.

We don't deny it: we support and have sent military advisers to many countries in Africa, that's clear, very clear, and on this we do not negotiate. (APPLAUSE) This has nothing to do with the new U.S. administration; this is the traditional policy of our Revolution. We're now helping and we'll go on helping Angola! (APPLAUSE) We're now helping and we'll go on helping Mozambique! (APPLAUSE) We're now helping and we'll go on helping the Ethiopian Revolution! If that's why the United States is blockading us, let them go on blockading us.

Why doesn't the United States blockade South Africa, a racist, fascist country whose troops are committing crimes in Africa and whose minority is oppressing 20 million blacks? Why doesn't it blockade Rhodesia, where 300,000 white fascists are oppressing six million Africans, a country whose troops are perpetrating indescribable massacres of men, women and children in Mozambique? We've seen photos showing the bodies of children, women and old people murdered and thrown in a heap like Hitler's fascists used to do. Why don't they blockade them? Why don't the Yankee imperialists blockade Pinochet? They blockade Cuba instead. What is understood by the peoples, what is understood by the African peoples is that while the Yankee imperialists have sided with South Africa, Rhodesia, the repressive and reactionary African governments, we've sided with the revolutionary and progressive peoples of Africa. We're fighting against fascism in Africa, we're fighting against racism in Africa.

Historically, it'll always be on record that while our role is a highly honorable role, the role played by imperialism is a shameful one. Since the African peoples trust us, they have requested our cooperation. And not only are we helping the Governments of Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia and other governments in Africa, but we're also helping the liberation movements in Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. (APPLAUSE) We're helping them now and we'll go on helping them! (APPLAUSE) And no matter what they do, the imperialists have already lost the battle in southern Africa.

Ours is transparent, clear policy, we do not negotiate principles, we can't be intimidated by any campaigns or any pressure whatsoever.

For the reasons stated this evening, we're sincere advocates of peace, and to us struggling to improve relations among all countries on a just basis is a principle. No material benefit, regardless of its nature or magnitude, would make us betray the trust placed in us by Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia or the heroic peoples struggling against fascism and racism in Africa. And all these things must be very clear to the United States.

Every positive gesture made by the present administration has

been met by positive gestures by us, according to the best of our ability. Yet if the U.S. Government were to embark on a policy of blackmail and pressure against us, on immoral policy and conduct against our nation, maintaining its blockade as an ignoble and criminal weapon against our people; if the U.S. Government believes that in order for relations to improve our people must give up their principles, then in the same manner that in the past we fought against five presidents of the United States, we will now fight against the sixth. (APPLAUSE) If they persist in blockading us, it'll be worse for them. For the longer their blockade is on, the greater the number of soldiers trained by us will be! (APPLAUSE) The more attacks that are launched against our country, the larger the number of brave and experienced soldiers our country will be able to count on!

The confidence that revolutionaries all over the world have in our people constitutes an immense honor for Cuba. It's not for nothing that our country will be the site of the 11th Festival next year and that it will be the site of the Conference of Nonaligned Countries in 1979. (APPLAUSE) Revolutionary life assigned these tasks to our country and we, in turn, will abide by our principles and our obligations. If the blockade lasts, it doesn't matter. If the U.S. Government discards the possibility of improving relations with us, that's its own responsibility.

At times they even enjoy meddling in the internal affairs of other countries. They talk about counterrevolutionary prisoners in Cuba. Naturally, they are responsible for such prisoners existing since they encouraged them just as they encouraged hijackings and terrorist acts, just as they encouraged and made plans to murder leaders of the Cuban Revolution. After all the crimes the United States has committed against our country, it has no moral basis to look our country in the face.

Later on, the piracy turned against them, terrorism turned against them, and there you are: now, U.S. trained counterrevolutionary terrorists of Cuban origin want to govern the United States, they want to plant bombs in U.S. companies that might have relations with Cuba or in airlines companies that might want to fly to Cuba. They bred ravens and now the ravens are plucking their eyes out!

In the same way, they promoted banditry and counterrevolution in our country. The counterrevolutionary *gusanos*, the counterrevolutionary delinquents believed that some day the imperialists would get them out of jail, but the imperialists did not get them out of jail. We were the ones who, through rehabilitation programs of a voluntary nature and through remunerated work, through the really humane methods of the Revolution, released thousands and thousands of counterrevolutionaries. Let's point out that of the counterrevolutionaries in prison twelve years ago, not even 20 percent remain! And there was a time when there were over 15,000. We admit it, yes.

Our Revolution has always been very transparent and very clean. In our Revolution, torture was never allowed; our Revolution never committed crimes; in our Revolution no one ever disappeared; in our country there never was a state of emergency, etc., etc. No battalion was ever moved into the street here to battle against workers, peasants or students. The people were always on the streets, yes, they were always on the streets, but with the Revolution! (APPLAUSE)

U.S. allied governments in this hemisphere have made thousands of persons vanish, they torture and murder but that doesn't deter the United States from trading with them, giving them credits, selling them arms and sending military advisers to them.

We had revolutionary laws and they were rigorous, but in this country no man has ever been punished without appearing before a court and in accordance with the dictates of revolutionary laws. In its methods and procedures, the conduct of our Revolution has been irreproachable.

From time to time, U.S. politicians like to remember notorious counterrevolutionary prisoners. They're concerned about Cuban counterrevolutionary prisoners. However, they don't say a word about Puerto Ricans like Lolita Lebrón and others who have been imprisoned for more than 25 years in filthy U.S. jails. (AP-

PLAUSE) They talk about counterrevolutionary prisoners who, instigated by the imperialists, committed crimes against our country, but they don't talk about the tens upon tens of thousands of blacks who, plagued by unemployment and hunger, have landed in U.S. jails. They like to tell us that we must release Cuban counterrevolutionary prisoners. Our answer is this: all right, you free an equal number of U.S. blacks who had to go to jail because of the regime of exploitation, the hunger, the poverty, the discrimination and the unemployment that the United States reserves for a large part of the black population, and we'll release all the counterrevolutionary prisoners who are left in Cuba. (APPLAUSE)

What do they mean by imposing conditions on anybody, by telling a country what to do or what not to do, they whose system of government has nothing to teach anyone? The curious thing is that many of those who are so concerned about those counterrevolutionaries were responsible for the war in Vietnam and for the murder of millions of Vietnamese, and that they were the accomplices of dozens of repressive and reactionary governments in the world that have murdered hundreds of thousands of revolutionaries. On what moral basis can they talk about counterrevolutionary prisoners in Cuba? On what moral basis can they talk about human rights?

We are aware, educated revolutionaries, and therefore, we don't let ourselves be duped by ridiculous watchwords and empty words.

Carter talks about human rights. The supreme test of a minimum of sincerity of his words is the question of the blockade of Cuba. Can any government that maintains a criminal blockade, that attempts to starve millions of human beings to death, speak of human rights? Let him prove his assertions with facts. I repeat, the question of the blockade of Cuba is the test of a minimum of sincerity of his statements. Subjectively speaking, there may be a minimum of sincerity but, objectively speaking, there can't be in a political and social system like that of the United States.

How can a capitalist society par excellence, an exploiting society par excellence, a society where millions and millions of persons of Mexican descent are discriminated against, where Puerto Ricans—who also number millions in the United States—are discriminated against and held in contempt, where Latin people are scorned, where the Indians were exterminated, where millions and millions of blacks are discriminated against, talk about human rights? How can anyone in that country raise that flag on an objective footing?

Absolutely no one will confuse us with that kind of talk. The

imperialists have nothing left, not even a message they can spread to the peoples of the world. The only thing they have left is empty words to see what gullible persons in the world they can deceive. Let's not talk nonsense.

If we speak to one another, we know that we have very different social regimes, that we are very different. If we are ever going to have relations, these relations must be based on mutual respect and equality, and we are ready to have them knowing full well that we have and will continue to have two radically different regimes.

Aside from this, we learned what human rights are when we eradicated crimes and economic and social injustice committed every hour, minute and second; when we eradicated gambling, prostitution, discrimination, begging and unemployment; when we created the people's power, the true power of the people; when we laid the foundations of this beautiful Revolution in which there has been complete identification between the masses, the Party and its leadership. This, indeed, is democracy; this Assembly, indeed, represents democracy; these discussions, indeed, are democratic. (APPLAUSE) What they have in the United States is a government of the oligarchy, by the oligarchy and for the oligarchy, whereas our government is a government of the people, by the people and for the people, the government Lincoln spoke of. In the United States they have a government of the bourgeoisie, by the bourgeoisie and for the bourgeoisie, whereas in our country we have a government of the workers, by the workers and for the workers. (APPLAUSE)

Regarding political matters, the United States would have much to learn from us. We, however, have nothing to learn, politically, from the United States. They belong to a class society, to the political prehistory of humanity and we to the new history of mankind, for, as Marx stated, when the regime of exploitation of man by man disappears, the real history of human society will begin. (APPLAUSE)

We are, socially and politically, a century ahead of them. That is the truth. Late in the 18th century they began to secure their independence, when we still were a Spanish colony. They began before we did, but we have advanced more quickly. Capitalist trash cannot be compared with the really human and really fraternal essence of socialism. (APPLAUSE) Imperialism is ideologically very weak and economically it is undergoing an insurmountable crisis.

A while ago I referred to what should be, in our opinion, our country's economic policy, the policy we should follow in the next

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seven or eight years. It should be a policy of development, of changing our structures and not a policy for consumption. That's how we shall be building a secure future.

If the blockade goes on for ten more years, it doesn't matter. If the blockade continues for 50 years, it doesn't matter; it just doesn't matter. (APPLAUSE) The U.S. Government should understand this very clearly, and when these things are sufficiently clear to the U.S. Government and to its advisers, then we will have real and objective bases on which to discuss, negotiate, trade and have diplomatic relations.

From the international viewpoint, these are the basic issues I wanted to put before you today.

Very soon our Revolution will be 19 years old. We have not been much inclined to solemn celebrations of great dates, we would have too many to commemorate. The triumph of the Revolution

was an extraordinary event, but we are in the habit of celebrating it without ceremony and in the innermost part of our conscience. On the eve of the 19th anniversary, we can feel proud and satisfied with the work of our Revolution. (APPLAUSE) I have never contemplated the future with such clarity and optimism as on this eve of the 19th anniversary.

I wanted to share with you these feelings of satisfaction, pride and optimism today, and I'm sure that we will continue to march ahead on the road we have determined, struggling bravely, with integrity, with heroism; consolidating what we have done and enhancing our revolutionary work so that future generations may be proud of us.

Patria o muerte!

Venceremos!

(OVATION) □

## Sadat's Search for a 'Peaceful Settlement'

[The following resolution was issued December 8 by the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Group, Lebanese section of the Fourth International.]

\* \* \*

1. Now that the first impulsive reactions have subsided to the visit by American imperialism's lackey, Anwar el-Sadat, to the Zionist state, it is necessary to assess this move soberly. It must be placed in its proper context, away from the realm of sentiments anchored in the petty-bourgeois nationalist tradition, which is forever concerned with the appearance of things, while ignoring—intentionally or not—their true essence.

The first realization we are forced to make, where Sadat's move is concerned, is that it falls naturally and totally into line with the search for a peaceful settlement with United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, adopted November 22, 1967, and ratified by the three Arab states that had been defeated in June 1967. The last state to ratify it was Syria, and it did so by way of Resolution 338, adopted during the October 1973 war.

It should be recalled that Resolution 242 includes a pledge by the parties involved to recognize the sovereignty of all states in the Middle East, including the Zionist state, as well as their right to live in peace within secure, recognized, and inviolable borders, to be guaranteed by setting up demilitarized zones.

It should also be recalled that the Egyptian and Jordanian governments' ratification of Resolution 242 came only three months after the Arab summit conference in Khartoum in late August 1967. This conference became known for its three "noes": no to recognition, no to negotiation, no to peace. Egypt's abandonment of this emphatic resolution thus confirmed that bourgeois nationalism had reached the limit of its potential, and that since its defeat, it had become incapable of sticking to the first point of the nationalist plat-

form it had adopted prior to 1967—the liberation of Palestine.

The other major steps in the process of reaching a capitulationist settlement were the Rogers plan in the summer of 1970; the Arab summit in Algiers in November 1973, which agreed in principle to the Geneva conference that met later that year; and the Sinai agreement in September 1975.

Sadat's latest move, which constitutes open recognition of the Zionist state and the beginning of direct negotiations with it, is one more step in the process of betrayal, and in no way departs from this general context. If anything distinguishes this move, it is its impudence, made possible by the relative success of the Sadat regime's efforts over the last few years to fool the Egyptian masses about its claims to patriotism. These efforts were based on the myth of the October 1973 war, prior to the capitulation, and also on the stamp of approval awarded to Sadat by the rightist leadership of the Palestinian resistance.

Sadat's move was also made possible by the inactivity of the Egyptian masses, who are bending under their burden of poverty. Although the government is trying to convince them that relief from their misery depends on peace-capitulation, what is really at stake is capitalist expansion and the success of economic overtures to American imperialism, which in no way involves raising the standard of living for the masses.

The immediate motive for Sadat's initiative is his fear of being dragged into a new war by the Zionist state, at a time when he is betting all he has on a peaceful settlement, and has even stripped his army of fighting ability by breaking with the Soviet Union.

To avoid a new war, Sadat decided to make the only concession capable of inducing the Zionist state to agree to Arab peace terms—opening up the Arab market, especially the Egyptian market, to Israel, and establishing "normal" relations with it. With this gesture, Sadat has completely

departed from the realm of confrontation with Zionism. Overturning his rule has become a pressing task for the Arab revolution.

2. It is necessary to stress once again that what distinguishes the Syrian Baathist regime from Sadat's regime is not its degree of "patriotism," but its ability to capitulate. What separates the two regimes is not a disagreement, but a dissimilarity. The former generally fades with the disappearance of the latter.

The objective political conditions in Syria—such as the size of the Palestinian population and the patriotic opposition, as well as the nationalist consciousness of the Syrian masses, the proximity of Lebanon with its patriotic mass movement, and the proximity of Iraq, with the constant one-upmanship of the Baghdad government—all impede the Damascus leadership's capitulationist course and prevent it from climbing onto the front of the train like Sadat (although when necessary it settles for one of the cars of this train).

For example, less than two months after having refused to participate in the Geneva conference at the end of 1973, the Syrian leadership fulfilled the conditions for participation (turning over a list of Israeli prisoners of war to Kissinger), and subsequently became staunch supporters of the conference.

Less than six months after having dissociated themselves from the January 1974 Egyptian-Israeli disengagement treaty at kilometer 101, the Syrian leadership signed a similar agreement at the end of May, under the auspices of the Geneva conference.

After having castigated the September 1975 Sinai agreement, the Damascus leadership signed a disguised nonaggression pact with the Zionist state a few months later, allowing Israel to intervene in Lebanon, and doing it a big favor by trying to crush the Palestinian resistance as a preliminary to peace.

As proof of the sincerity of their opposi-

tion to the Sinai agreement, the Syrian leadership forgot about it eighteen months later (although the accord lasts for three years), and were reconciled with Sadat, whom they had called a traitor shortly before.

Willful blindness to the real attitude of the Damascus leadership is the main danger looming over the two frontline battalions of the Arab masses today—the Palestinians and the Lebanese, whose fate largely depends on Syrian policy.

The resumption of an alliance with the Baath Party in power in Damascus, and the renewed praise for it in recent months by the right wing of the Palestinian resistance and the right wing of the Lebanese Patriotic Movement,<sup>1</sup> as well as the general reconciliation of the Damascus leadership with the Palestinian rejection front in Tripoli,<sup>2</sup> and of their Lebanese agents with the main components of the Lebanese Patriotic Movement in Beirut, all stem from an opportunist line.

This approach reflects neither the interests of the laboring masses nor tactical skill—as its practitioners claim—but in fact results from the shortsightedness of the bureaucratic leaderships. These leaderships are motivated either by a naive desire to win over the Syrian regime, or by an inability to rely on the masses and on themselves, and to do without Libyan financial support, which has strings attached.

However, it is necessary to make a distinction between those who have resorted to maneuvers to solve their financial problems, without deluding themselves as to the real intentions of the Syrian regime, and those who have become reconciled with it in the hope of an actual alliance. The near future will show which forces have maintained their independence and distrust with regard to the Syrian government.

Whatever the case, revolutionists must condemn all attempts to absolve the Damascus leadership of blame or to relax suspicion of it. There can be no doubt that,

1. A coalition of the Lebanese left that includes the reformist bourgeois party of Jumblatt, Stalinists, and various bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist organizations.

2. The Tripoli summit conference, held December 2-5, 1977, followed Sadat's visit to Israel. It was attended by Syrian President Hafez al-Assad; Taha Yassin Jezrawi, a member of Iraq's ruling Revolutionary Council; President Houari Boumédiène of Algeria; President Salem Rubayi Ali of South Yemen; Col. Muammar el-Quaddafi of Libya; Yassir Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization; and George Habash, head of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

The conference issued a declaration that called for setting up an Arab "front for resistance and confrontation" to oppose the "high treason" of Sadat's peace initiatives, but did not reject outright the concept of a negotiated settlement.

sooner or later, these leaders will once again take part in the search for a peaceful settlement, as indicated by their recent behavior and the text of the resolution they rammed through at the Tripoli conference. The Syrian leadership will then come into conflict again with anyone who tries to impede their course, and will try to accomplish the task before them, that is, choking off anyone who opposes the settlement in its final form.

3. None of the Arab regimes that have opposed Sadat's move are in a position to provide a base of support for an effective and protracted struggle against Arab capitulation. As a matter of fact, neither the Algerian nor Southern Yemen regimes (despite the important differences in their social systems) follows a revolutionary Arab policy. Their position on the Palestinian question goes no further than that of the Soviet Union, which seeks to establish a "just and lasting peace" between the Arab states and Israel, enabling it to preserve its influence and friendly relations with bourgeois regimes in the Middle East.

As for the Iraqi government, its seeming intransigence does not go far beyond rhetoric, and actually enables it to avoid a real confrontation. It is afraid of really hampering the policy of American imperialism and its partners in the region, and thus exposing itself to pressure, particularly from Iran. The best illustration of its policy is the invitation that the Baghdad leadership gave to the shah of Iran at the very moment when its representative was taking a hard line at the Tripoli summit conference. Besides, the Arab masses know for a fact how great a distance separates the Iraqi government's claims from its actions, after the experiences of Jordan, Shatt-al-Arab, and the Lebanese war.<sup>3</sup>

As for the Libyan leadership, its policy in the Arab world is based primarily on its opposition to Sadat. Consequently, it supports or allies with anyone who opposes Sadat, as shown by its kid-glove treatment of the Syrian regime during the war in Lebanon. In fact, it is counting on its alliance with this regime, and putting pressure on its other allies, particularly the Palestinians, to collaborate with the Syrian leadership and make its job easier.

Finally, it goes without saying that the vague, hesitant reservations shown by the Saudi lackeys of U.S. imperialism toward Sadat's moves are nothing but a smoke screen. They are a way of dissociating the Saudi leaders from Sadat in case his suicide mission falls through, or he fails to

3. A reference to the "neutrality" of the Iraqi army, stationed in Jordan during the crushing of the Palestinian resistance in September 1970, to the 1975 Iraqi-Iranian agreement, and to the vacillating attitude of the Iraqi government during the first months of the Lebanese civil war, as well as its subsequent inaction.

consolidate his venture by eventually getting the Syrian government to back its "positive" results—that is, reactivating the peaceful settlement and removing the obstacles that have blocked it for two years.

4. The foregoing does not imply that all tactical approaches toward the regimes that took part in the Tripoli summit conference are worthless. Tactics must in any case be subordinated to the strategy they are intended to serve. In most cases, tactics toward the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois regimes must consist of exposing them and putting them on the spot.

It is impossible to rely on such regimes; besides, they will not form an alliance with representatives of the working masses unless they are forced into it. Revolutionists rely only on the masses, and judge all positions by how well they help raise the level of consciousness of the masses and advance their struggle.

With this in mind, revolutionists have no choice but to reject the resolution adopted by the Tripoli summit conference, and to condemn any force within the mass movement that accepts it.

This resolution, apart from the provincialism it displays, which reveals the nature of its signers ("Egypt is neither the beginning nor the end"; "freezing" of relations; moving the headquarters of the Arab League outside Egypt), leaves open the possibility of a reconciliation with Sadat. It calls only for overturning the "results" of his visit, divorcing it from the nature of the Egyptian regime.

Furthermore, the resolution assigns a central role to the Syrian regime in the struggle against Israel, ignoring its real attitude. It calls for unconditional support to the Syrian regime, adding to the illusions surrounding it by announcing the creation of a "nationalist front," with its nucleus consisting of the Damascus leadership and the PLO.

Revolutionists reject the Tripoli front, and call for the formation of a front of struggle against Zionism, American imperialism, and its Arab underlings, based on the following program:

(1) Rejection of Resolutions 242 and 338. Rejection of all conditions on the withdrawal of the Zionist army from the territories occupied in 1967. No to recognition, no to negotiation, no to peace with Zionism!

(2) Support to the struggle of the Palestinian people, including armed struggle. Open the borders of all Arab states, to carry on this struggle without hindrance.

(3) Concentration of the Arab armies along the lines of confrontation with the Zionist army. Concentrate the Syrian troops in Lebanon along its southern border, or withdraw these troops toward the Golan Heights.

(4) Restore democratic freedoms to enable mass struggles to develop. Release all the anti-imperialist prisoners held in all the Arab countries.

(5) Support the anti-imperialist forces in Egypt fighting to overturn the traitorous regime.

These are the five points of principle without which there can be no effective and thoroughgoing struggle against Zionism and American imperialism; they can serve as the basis for ongoing activity throughout the Arab region at the present time.

5. The resolution on the basis of which all the organizations belonging to the Palestinian resistance have joined the PLO does not stand in contradiction with our program. This resolution, while incomplete, is entirely compatible with genuine opposition to Zionism, American imperialism, and its Arab underlings.

It includes rejection of Resolution 242 and 338, and makes the setting up of a Palestinian state conditional upon its including any portion of Palestinian territory that may be liberated—without a peaceful settlement, without negotiation, and without recognition of Israel.

This condition dovetails completely with a demand that has been part of all our programs for several years, the demand for a total and unconditional withdrawal of the Zionist army from the territories occupied in 1967, in opposition to the partial withdrawal provided for by Resolution 242.

However, the context in which the organizations adopted this resolution bars us from viewing it as a positive turn, or at least from overestimating it as a turn. In a subsequent telegram, the signers of the resolution called for the formation of a front of resistance and confrontation, to be made up of all of the participants in the Tripoli summit conference, including the Syrian regime. No conditions were placed on the formation of such a front. In particular, no conditions were placed on the participation of the Syrian government, despite the role that it has played and is still playing in Lebanon.

It is to be feared that this resolution is the price paid by the Palestinian supporters of a peaceful settlement—a low enough price, since it involves nothing more than signing a piece of paper—in exchange for bringing the rejectionist organizations back into the fold, with respect to both the internal life of the Palestinian movement and to its alliances with the Arab regimes. It is also aimed at preventing these organizations from taking advantage of their favorable position relative to the political bankruptcy of the Fateh leadership, which had been betting on Sadat.

By rejecting Resolutions 242 and 338, as well as peace, negotiations, and recognition of Israel, the Palestinian organizations' resolution takes a stand on behalf of the PLO, without demanding of the Arab governments that they do the same. This amounts to eliminating the criterion the Palestinian rejection front had used in its dealings with the various forces in the Arab region—that is, what attitude a gov-

ernment takes toward a peaceful settlement.

For its part, the Fateh leadership has no difficulty at present in rejecting what the resolution rejects—inasmuch as it appears that the Zionist regime, the real "rejectionist" on this question, is not going to change its position concerning participation by the PLO as such in any negotiations that take place.

So that the resolution does not become a step forward followed by two steps back, and so that it does not go the way of the reconciliation between Habash and Arafat that took place in Beirut at the time of the Syrian intervention, and was promptly forgotten soon after, revolutionists active in the Palestinian struggle must adopt a program of thoroughgoing struggle against Zionism, imperialism and its Arab underlings as outlined above.

They must stress the need to be mistrustful of the Syrian regime in particular, so as not to fall into its trap. And they must struggle for democratic representation of the Palestinian masses, in the form of a Palestinian national council made up of representatives elected by the inhabitants of the refugee camps, instead of the bureaucratic apportionment of seats among the various organizations. This council can then put forward a new program for the Palestinian struggle, based on the resolution adopted by the Palestinian organizations at Tripoli, and elect a new central council of the PLO.

It is also the duty of revolutionary communists in the Palestinian movement to declare that their attitude toward any kind of Palestinian state is to work for the establishment of a revolutionary nationalist workers and farmers government, just as they are part of the struggle to establish such governments in all of the countries where they live.

6. In Lebanon, the duty of revolutionary communists is to expose the real face of the Syrian government and of its local agents, to condemn the policy of reconciliation with them, and to warn the activists of the Patriotic Movement about the dangers of such a policy. Revolutionary communists also reject the program put forward by the leadership of the Patriotic Movement and reiterated at the Tripoli conference, a program that calls for establishing "national unity" around the president of the republic. This is a bourgeois demand, all the more so since it is accompanied by a commitment on the part of the leadership of the Patriotic Movement to subordinate all other demands to it.

The minimum program, which must not be abandoned, for all activity in nationalist and democratic fronts in Lebanon should be the following:

(1) Solidarity with the Palestinian resistance and defense of its right to total freedom of action.

(2) The demand that the Syrian troops now in Lebanon be concentrated along the

southern border to confront the Zionist enemy.

(3) Defense of democratic freedoms and struggle against whoever tries to repress them.

(4) Total secularization.

(5) Rejection of "unity" at the expense of the masses, and the struggle to establish the election of a constituent assembly, with representatives selected on the basis of a nationwide election and of a proportional vote not based on religion.

Revolutionary communists call on the rank-and-file members of the components of the Patriotic Movement to adopt this program and fight to have it adopted by their leadership. They warn against all attempts to use recent developments in Lebanon and throughout the Arab region to justify accepting Israeli terms in the south of Lebanon.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, they affirm their support to the positions taken up to now by the Patriotic Movement in the south, considering that the present relationship of forces, barring a change in the Syrian position, makes any kind of "upping the ante" impossible to follow through on, adventurist, and irresponsible.

Nevertheless, there is no contradiction between a partial withdrawal as a tactical consideration imposed by the relationship of forces, and the position of revolutionary communists, one of unbending principle, that rejects all hindrances on the freedom of action of the Palestinian resistance of Lebanon, and urges the continuation of the armed struggle against Zionism. □

4. The Lebanese left demands the withdrawal of the combatants in the south of Lebanon, where Christian rightists are fighting Palestinian and progressive forces.

### Royal Canadian Mounted Plumbers

The Mounties, Canada's political police, "don't always have a pleasant or even an exciting time," the *Vancouver Province* reported December 16.

As a case in point, the British Columbia daily cited the following little-publicized exploit on the part of Canada's guardians of public order:

"President Tito is 86 and, with no recognizable successor in view, the foreign affairs desks in Washington and Moscow are concerned about the marshal's health. The marshal and his staff, of course, could not be asked. So the RCMP boys became real plumbers. When Tito visited Ottawa recently and stayed at the Chateau Laurier, the pipe of his toilet was diverted from its normal channels. Samples, let us say, were obtained, analyzed, and our allies in Washington given the good news that Tito was ticking over nicely, thank you."

# Capitalism Fouls Things Up



## Delay Ordered in Atlantic Oil Drilling

A federal district court in Boston issued an injunction January 28 delaying Washington's sale of offshore oil and gas exploration leases on the Georges Bank, a rich fishing ground off the coast of Massachusetts.

In his ruling, Judge W. Arthur Garrity cited "the possibility that this area is more valuable . . . as a breeding ground for fish . . . than it is as a source of oil and gas."

According to some estimates, the Georges Bank grounds have supplied one-fifth of the world's animal protein since the sixteenth century. Some of the tracts to which exploratory drilling rights are to be sold lie directly on a number of the most active fishing areas.

Garrity's decision was upheld by an appeals court January 30.

The courts' rulings were made in response to lawsuits by the state of Massachusetts and several groups of environmentalists and fishermen represented by the Conservation Law Foundation. The suits ask that sale of the leases be delayed until three conditions are met:

- An "oil spill liability fund" to compensate fishermen in the event of damage to the fishing grounds.
- A fund for compensating the loss of fishing gear damaged by oil exploration equipment left on the sea bottom.
- The empowering of the Interior Department to order suspension of operations and repossession of the leases in the event of "an environmental disaster."

The "Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act Amendments" now before Congress could require such measures. A watered-down version of this bill was adopted by the House of Representatives on February 2.

Oil drilling in the Baltimore Canyon, an area south of the Georges Bank off the New Jersey coast, has also been delayed while the Supreme Court considers a 1976 lawsuit filed by the Natural Resources Defense Council. A district judge ruled last year in that case that the government's environmental impact statement on offshore drilling had been "a charade."

## Kepone Persists in Virginia

An estimated 100,000 pounds of the highly toxic pesticide ingredient Kepone

remains in the James River in eastern Virginia—almost three years after the chemical plant that caused the pollution ceased operation.

The Allied Chemical Corporation and later the Life Sciences Products Company produced Kepone at a plant in Hopewell, Virginia, from 1968 to 1975. Runoff from the plant was channeled through the Hopewell sewer system into the river.

On January 19 it was announced that a fourteen-month scientific study had found no means of removing the Kepone from the James. And concern was expressed that a major storm could wash large quantities of the pesticide into Chesapeake Bay.

"I'm scared to death," Robert Hughes of the Virginia Institute of Marine Studies said. He explained that there was enough Kepone in the James River to infect every organism in the bay.

Virginia Governor Mills Goodwin recently extended until 1979 a ban on fishing, oystering, and crabbing in the James and lower Chesapeake Bay. The ban was imposed in 1975.

Kepone causes uncontrollable nervous tremors, erratic eye movements, loss of memory, slurred speech, loss of weight, liver damage, and stillbirths in women and sterility in men. It has recently been found to cause cancer as well.

## Copper Mine Fouls Malaysian Villages

Fine silt runoff from a Japanese-owned copper mine is threatening the livelihoods of more than 50,000 villagers in the Malaysian province of Sabah on the island of Borneo.

Silt flowing down the Sugut River is said

to be destroying fish and prawns that are virtually the sole source of protein for persons living by the river. Silt-polluted irrigation waters have also caused reductions of 70 to 80 percent in rice yields since the mine began operating three years ago.

Villagers can no longer use the river for drinking and washing, and must now walk several miles to alternative water sources.

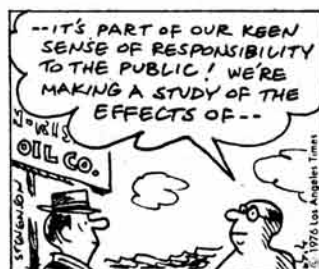
The provincial government is reportedly reluctant to take any action against the Japanese Overseas Mineral Resources Development group, which operates the mine, since the export of 120,000 tons of copper ore a year is a lucrative source of revenue. The government has also indicated that it considers the cost of pollution control prohibitive, although it is weighing compensation to the villagers. (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, January 6.)

## U.S. Acts on Benzene

Acting on scientific findings that "exposure to benzene presents a cancer danger, specifically the hazard of developing leukemia," the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration announced new regulations February 2 that will sharply reduce exposure of workers to the chemical.

An estimated 600,000 workers will be covered by the new rules, which limit air concentrations of benzene in the workplace to one part per million beginning March 3.

Eleven billion pounds of benzene were produced in the United States in 1976. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that 260 million pounds of the chemical are released into the air each year, primarily at gasoline storage areas and by refineries, coke ovens, and automobiles.



Stevenson/Los Angeles Times

# FROM OUR READERS

When we announced the merger of the newsgathering resources of Intercontinental Press and Inprecor a few issues back, we asked for comments and if possible for a dollar or two to help meet the increased costs. The response has been gratifying.

J.C. of San Antonio, Texas, helped kick things off with a six-month gift subscription for a friend. He added the following note:

"By the way, I think you are all doing a fantastic job on Intercontinental Press/Inprecor. The improvement in the magazine is already apparent. Jon Britton's and Ernest Mandel's articles on the economy have been exceptional. Keep up the great work!"

J.A. in Gaspé, Québec, sent a donation of \$25, along with this note:

"I was pleased to read your editorial on page 1266 of the November 21st issue of I.P. It is a big step forward. . . .

"Please accept my thanks and convey to your staff my appreciation for the high level of content and selection in I.P. The enclosed is my vote of support for the merged journal."

"I already have a sub," G.C. in Washington, D.C., writes, but "here is a donation of \$25 to help this big step forward."

A contribution of \$30 was received from E.D. in St. Clair Shores, Michigan, and one of \$3 from H.J. in Minneapolis.

R.A. in Regina, Saskatchewan, who wrote to tell us that he had just moved, asked that his new address be entered immediately.

"We're all looking forward to the new joint Intercontinental Press/Inprecor," he said, "and I would hate to miss any or even have to wait longer than necessary. "Good luck with the new publication."

"Send me six months of I.P./Inprecor," M.L. writes from Knoxville, Tennessee.

"Please begin the sub with the January 18th issue as it contains materials on the French elections in which I am extremely interested."

D.L. in Ann Arbor, Michigan, must have just closed his checkbook when he added the following note to his renewal for another year:

"Perhaps the most expensive subscription on the left, but without doubt the very best. IP is, in my mind, the best news-weekly available, both for class analysis and for simple, straightforward world and

national news. Keep up the excellent work."

Owing to a mix-up on the part of the Post Office, which claimed his subscription was "undeliverable," J.C. in Philadelphia did not receive a copy of IP for more than a month, with the following disastrous results:

"Every week I wait anxiously for my IP to come via alleged 'first class' mail. Then in short order I proceed to devour the contents.

"Unfortunately, I've been waiting since November 14, 1977, for an IP and am now near starvation (you see, I can't even write or spell!). At first I thought it was just the usual U.S. Post-all Serve-less delay, but I don't know what's happening now. Has my IP been nabbed by 'Newsweek,' filched by 'Fortune,' trussed up by 'Time,' ambushed by 'Atlantic' . . . ?

"Please send me my missing Intercontinental Press for some proletarian perspective before alliteration kills me. I want our side of the story from the magazine with real class."

"I have been glad with the value for money of Intercontinental Press," R. H. writes from St. Catharines, Ontario.

"It has been the source of information I have relied on most heavily for news of the world and has become indispensable to me in my efforts to try to understand what's going on. . . .

"Intercontinental Press has been a real pleasure for me to read over the past few years in which I've subscribed. The only question it's raised for me that I haven't been as yet able to answer satisfactorily is what I can do about all the injustice and oppression in the world.

"Knowledge is power, however, and knowing about the wretched state of human affairs in the world is the first step. With media supporting capitalism even the facts about what exists are not accurately reported, if reported at all.

"Intercontinental Press lays out the facts and then it's up to each reader to join the Trotskyist movement or other movements which fight for a decent future for humanity that function in the area in which the reader lives.

"I've started out on this process here. I have found the analyses and program I've learned from Intercontinental Press has served me well, and I think will become even more valuable as I become more active."

A periodicals librarian in Michigan who is a regular reader of "Selections From the Left" writes:

"Could you please supply us with the addresses for the following publications: *Combate*, Spain, Revolutionary Communist League; *Combate*, Spain, Communist League; *Vanguard*, Eritrea, Eritrean People's Liberation Front.

"Thanks for the help."

The addresses are on the way.

S.G. in the state of Washington reports that his back files of IP were "enormously important" in preparing a talk on the Panama Canal.

"I have issues dating back to 1973," he writes. "After I looked up Panama in the year-end indexes and found all the issues, I had a stack of I.P.s about 12 inches high.

"The excellent series by Judy White and the News Analysis articles in August and October were of course the most important.

"Using these articles and their research as my home base I went to the library and looked up all the New York Times, Washington Post, Christian Science Monitor and other bourgeois media articles that were cited in the I.P. articles. What a timesaver!

"Using the political ideas of the writers in the I.P. and taking full advantage of their methods of *scientific journalism* I was able to survey, research, analyze and then write a good speech about an important international class struggle issue while it is unfolding.

"I could not have done it without guidance from Intercontinental Press. . . . I.P. is indispensable. One really learns to appreciate Marxist journalism when you need not only to know the answers, but you also need to learn the right questions!"

We're always glad to hear of experiences like S.G.'s. Readers who would like to supplement their own subscription files with earlier years of IP, all completely indexed, are invited to take advantage of the offer below. □

## Still Available Complete Back Files (Unbound) Intercontinental Press

1967	42 issues (1,072 pages)	\$25
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