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## Angry Protests Over Oil Spill



PORTSALL, France, March 17: Fishermen, trade unionists, and Breton nationalists march to protest French government's failure to prevent world's largest oil spill.

Rouge

Reports on protests, economic consequences, and damage to marine environment brought on by wreck of supertanker *Amoco Cadiz* begin on p. 422.

# Statement of the Fourth International

## Israeli Troops Out of Lebanon!

[The following statement was issued March 22, 1978, by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

\* \* \*

The Zionist state has unleashed a new war of aggression against southern Lebanon. It has bombed Palestinian refugee camps and Lebanese cities and villages. It has used the most barbaric weapons employed by American imperialism in Vietnam. It has massacred hundreds of men, women, and children. It has caused a tragic exodus of people driven from their land and stripped of all means of support. It has launched a wave of repression in the territories already under occupation. Once again, it bears the responsibility for creating a situation with the potential to lead to a war that might have fearful consequences for the entire world.

Cloaking its move with false pretexts, Jerusalem hoped to inflict on the Palestinian resistance one of the heaviest blows it has ever taken. It seeks to establish control over southern Lebanon—which includes collaborating with Lebanese reactionaries—in order to ease the way for establishing a “peace” accord based on denying the Palestinian people their most elementary rights, and on preserving all the territorial conquests of Zionist expansionism.

At the urging of the U.S. government, which wants to enable the Arab ruling classes to save face, the United Nations has adopted a hypocritical resolution that avoids explicitly condemning the invasion of Lebanon in any way, and calls for a fresh dispatch of “blue helmets.” Their job can only be to protect the new status quo from the Palestinian movement, once the Zionist army has carried out its “mopping up” operation.

Once again, the Arab states have revealed their basic aims. The so-called steadfastness front remained immobile, thereby proving that its resounding declarations were nothing more than demagoguery.

The Egyptian government fears the outbreak of a crisis for its regime as a result of the pitiful bankruptcy of Sadat’s “peace” diplomacy. Syria, which oversees the “Arab peacekeeping force,” was hardly about to rush to the aid of the Palestinians. In fact, all of the Arab ruling classes proved by their attitude that they do not wish to take any risk in order to defend the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

They are looking forward with cynical complacency to the weakening of the Palestinian resistance, which is now tragically isolated.

The Zionist authorities seized on the terrorist action in Tel Aviv to try to justify the invasion of southern Lebanon, with the support of the world press.

The truth is that this military operation had been planned for some time. They were only waiting for an excuse. The disastrous action by the Fatah commandos unfortunately provided them with one.

Alone and desperate, the *fedayeen* put up a fierce resistance to the Israeli blitzkrieg. Abandoned by the Arab states, and driven into a blind alley by the strategic orientation of the Palestine Liberation Organization leadership, the courageous

fighters of the Palestinian resistance are more than ever in need of the broadest international solidarity.

Working-class organizations the world over must mobilize in opposition to the genocide committed by the Zionist government. They must demand immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon and condemn the deployment of UN troops, moving in behind the Israeli tanks. They must protest the closing down of PLO offices, which some governments are contemplating.

We should support the Palestinian movement in its heroic struggle for existence and for its legitimate rights.

Israel out of Lebanon!  
No to UN intervention!

## ‘Rehabilitate’ the Chinese Trotskyists, Too!

By Jon Britton

More than 10,000 persons victimized during the Cultural Revolution have been “rehabilitated” by the Shanghai Municipal Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, according to a March 14 dispatch of Hsinhua, the Chinese news agency.

Rehabilitation measures, Hsinhua reports, included “cancelling wrong verdicts, stopping unjust punishment and adjusting improper work assignments.” “Corrections” have also been made in cases of children of persecuted parents who met discrimination “when they applied to join the party, the Youth League or the army, or who had trouble entering universities or finding work for which they were suited.”

The acts committed by the frame-up victims, Hsinhua says, included putting up big-character posters and writing letters to Mao “exposing the gang [of four].” The dispatch does not reveal whether the letters reached Mao; or, if they did, why Mao didn’t respond to the writers’ appeals.

Information on these points would have raised even more awkward questions. By now everyone in China knows that the “gang of four” is simply another name for the Mao faction of the Chinese Communist Party, deposed after the Great Helmsman’s death, and that the expanding list of crimes attributed by the current leaders to the “gang” were actually perpetrated under Mao’s leadership and direction.

On the other hand, these same leaders helped to create the Mao cult (every bureaucratic regime must have its supreme arbiter). And they supported, and continue to support, the fundamental policies of the Mao regime, if not the extremes of know-nothingism that it promulgated. To survive in power they must deflect the simmering grievances of the long-suffering masses away from themselves. Hence the useful fiction that past abuses were entirely the doing of the nefarious “gang of four.”

Hsinhua claims that “the gang and their followers tried to place Shanghai under a fascist dictatorship but ran into distrust and opposition from the city’s people throughout the Cultural Revolution.”

It should be recalled that it was to Shanghai that Mao “retired” in late 1965 to launch the Cultural Revolution, with the stated aim of placing the revolutionary proletariat in power and deposing capitalist restorationists. (Shanghai was to remain the headquarters and main bastion for Mao’s faction throughout the Cultural Revolution.) What the present leaders are saying now is that the “Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution” was a mass purge and frame-up from the very beginning.

More than 3,000 persons accused of putting up posters against Chang Ch’un-Ch’iao, one of Mao’s top lieutenants, “were

forced to 'give an account of themselves,' made the targets of struggle sessions, placed under house arrest or held in detention," Hsinhua reports. One-sixth of the students and teachers at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music were similarly victimized, as were 270 workers and party cadres at Shanghai's industrial plant No. 5703.

"In addition," the dispatch continues, "the 'gang of four' and their followers in Shanghai framed charges against relatives, friends and associates of those leading comrades in the party Central Committee who upheld Chairman Mao's revolutionary line" (in other words opposed Mao's faction). "When the gang forbade people to mourn the loss of Premier Chou En-lai, they persecuted anyone who opposed or showed indignation at this."

Now all is forgiven, Hsinhua assures us, and "rehabilitated comrades are taking up the revolutionary cause with new ardour."

But there is one group of victimized dissidents Hua Kuo-feng and Company have said nothing about, in regard to either their possible rehabilitation or their fate. That group is the 200 or so Chinese Trotskyists who were arrested in the early years of the Mao regime and who have not been heard from since.

The persecution of these militants, many of whom were veterans of the resistance war against Japanese imperialism and the fight against Chiang Kai-shek's reactionary rule, is one of Mao's biggest crimes. The Trotskyists were conscious advocates of socialist democracy and opponents of bureaucratic privilege. They were silenced because their views represented a political threat to the rising bureaucratic caste headed by Mao.

It should not be surprising, then, that the present rulers in Peking, who represent the same caste, have not seen fit to rehabilitate these victims of Mao's rule. But in recognizing some of the grave injustices done to thousands of citizens under Mao, they have provided a new opportunity for the international workers movement to once again speak out for the release of the Chinese Trotskyists. □

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# American Coal Miners Block Employers' Offensive

By Matilde Zimmermann

The strike of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), which lasted from December 6 to March 27, succeeded in blocking the employers' drive to impose a major defeat on the coal miners and cripple their union.

American capitalists provoked a show-down with the UMWA in the expectation that the miners were too weak to put up an effective battle. This was to be the first round in a general assault on the rights and benefits won in the past by workers organized into the major trade unions.

Instead, the employers encountered massive resistance. The miners' strike will greatly strengthen the hand of the workers in coming class battles in the United States. In this sense, the strike represents an important turning point.

The miners returned to work March 27, having voted to ratify the third contract proposed to them. The new three-year contract does not satisfy the demands for which miners went on strike, and in all areas except wages its provisions are below those of the contract negotiated in 1974. A large number of miners—43 percent—voted to reject this contract as they had the previous two.

The miners did not return to work defeated, however. The outcome of the strike was accurately described by Jack Perry, president of UMWA District 17 in West Virginia. "Although the agreement falls short of our expectations," Perry said, "the rank and file can take a lot of credit for blocking management's efforts to destroy our union. To that extent, miners have won a major victory."

Other miners, while bitter about some of the provisions of the settlement, said that it was a contract they "could live with," that it was "the best they could get," that it "would not be a disgrace to vote for this contract."

Miners emerged from the strike proud of the way they had stood up to the operators and the government in rejecting two intolerable contracts. They felt that they were still in position to struggle, even while working under a contract that did not meet their specifications.

"We'll feel pretty safe going to the bargaining table next time," was the way Charles Fuller, president of UMWA District 20 in Alabama, put it. A similar idea was expressed by Larry Reynolds, president of District 11 in Indiana: "We'll be back in three years for a stronger contract, you can count on that."

But it will not be three years before the

miners have to fight the coal operators again. The contract leaves many questions unresolved: The operators have not given up their determination to drive through profitable and dangerous productivity increases; and the miners have not given up their right or their ability to fight back.

On the central question of the right to strike, the new contract is silent. The miners forced the operators to drop the cutthroat antistrike provisions in the first two contract proposals. But the new contract leaves in effect the complicated and ineffective grievance procedure that led to "wildcats" in the first place. When miners are not able to get safety violations and other illegal working conditions corrected through grievance procedures, their only recourse will still be "unauthorized" strikes.

The new contract dismantles the union-controlled, free health-care plan that the miners won in the 1940s. The substitute is commercial health insurance, under which miners must pay up to \$200 of their own medical costs. This threatens the existence of the fifty model health clinics set up throughout the coalfields on the basis of subsidies from the old health fund. An exodus of doctors from Appalachia is already underway.

Pensions are not equalized by the new contract. Older retirees will only receive \$275 a month, as opposed to the \$425 a miner gets on retiring today.

Two provisions increase the danger of miners being killed and injured under the new contract. An incentive plan will lead to speedup in those mines where it is applied, and the reduction of the training period for new miners will increase the risk of accidents.

On wages, which were not a central issue in the strike, the third contract is marginally better than the two rejected by the miners earlier. The 39 percent gain in wages and fringe benefits over the three-year life of the contract is reportedly the most sizable pay hike won by a major union since the UMWA achieved a 50 percent increase in their last contract.

On the surface, a comparison of the 1974 contract and the 1978 contract might seem to indicate that the miners suffered a big defeat. But in fact they had to wage a heroic struggle to win the contract they got. Miners are comparing their new contract not only with what they got in 1974, but—even more importantly—with what

the bosses originally tried to force down their throats in 1978.

### 'A Labor Relations Revolution'

The coal operators knew exactly what they wanted before the strike began December 6. They let the miners feel the pinch for two months and then on February 6 presented—with the approval of UMWA President Arnold Miller—their union-busting contract. The strategy was laid out by the operators as much as a year earlier. The aim was to secure bonanza profits in an expanding coal industry by whipping the miners into line. As Joseph P. Brennan, president of the Bituminous Coal Operators Association, put it last May, "The compelling imperatives of growth demand nothing less than a labor relations revolution. . . ."

On February 6 it became clear exactly what kind of "revolution" the mineowners had in mind. The proposed contract gave the operators the right to summarily fire or to impose daily fines on miners who participated in or honored picket lines. It eliminated the health fund and required miners to pay the first \$700 of their medical bills. It placed virtually no restraints on the operators' ability to increase productivity at the expense of miners' health and lives. The operators seemed to have calculated every angle in their sweeping attack on miners' rights: They instituted Sunday work for the first time in the eighty-eight year history of the UMWA, cut widows' death benefits, instituted measures to punish "absentees."

If the operators had been able to impose this "ball and chain contract" on the miners, it would have represented a major defeat for the coal miners, for their union, and for the rest of the industrial working class.

The overwhelming rejection of the proposed contract by the UMWA Bargaining Council showed the operators that they were not going to win easily. But they did not give up their battle plan. It was a campaign which the American ruling class as a whole, the Carter administration, and the communications media did their best to advance.

### Carter Plays His Hand

The Carter administration came more and more to the fore in the drive to break the strike. This was particularly true after a second proposed contract, no better than

the first, was turned down by rank-and-file miners by a margin of more than 2 to 1.

The miners stood up to the government with the same unanimity and discipline they showed in confronting the mine-owners. On March 6 Carter invoked the anti-strike provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act against the UMWA. His move met with total defiance. The miners' successful defiance called into question the government's ability to use Taft-Hartley to break future strikes in other industries.

The coal miners simply refused to acknowledge that Carter could make their strike an illegal action, converting them into lawbreakers.

They also gave the government no satisfaction in its attempts to provoke violent incidents in order to victimize individual miners and intimidate others. The *Washington Post* of March 14 summarized the situation in the coalfields from the Rockies to the Appalachians following the invocation of Taft-Hartley: "no confrontations, no turmoil, no coal production."

Carter was forced to retreat in the face of this defiance. He could not follow through on threats to fine or arrest strikers, bring contempt charges against union officials, or seize union treasuries. No attempt was made by his administration to enforce the injunction, and on March 17 a federal judge in Washington, D.C., lifted it, saying of the miners, "They're not paying attention to what I'm doing anyway."

#### How Did They Do It?

Among workers, particularly other trade unionists, there is widespread admiration for the coal miners' militant struggle. The employers, of course, want to minimize the impact on the rest of the American working class.

This is why the communications media is now claiming that the miners won nothing by striking, that they stayed out 111 days, lost an average of \$6,000 in pay, settled on little better terms than they could have gotten without striking, and, as the *Wall Street Journal* said March 27, only "demonstrated that UMW coal miners can't easily bring the nation to its knees any longer."

Throughout the strike, the media have been talking about the uniqueness of the miners, trying to convince other workers that the resistance they were seeing was something that came only from the peculiar life style and traditions of coal miners.

Many workers will not be fooled by such attempts to keep them from asking, "How were the miners able to put up such a good fight? And if the miners can stand up like that, why can't my union?"

In fact, a number of the attitudes and traditions that determined the outcome of the strike are not at all peculiar to coal miners.

First was the stubborn belief that American workers have some basic rights, and

that these rights must be defended. *New York Times* reporter George Vecsey, in a report from West Virginia published March 2, explained why the miners were so adamant: "They contend that they are being forced to give up 'rights' they won a long time ago—health benefits, equitable pensions, and, most of all, the 'right' to leave the mine at once over safety issues."

Other workers are facing similar efforts to take away rights won in the past. Labor writers have invented the words "givebacks" and "takeaways" to describe management's determination to cancel out past gains. The right to free health care, which was crucial to the miners, will be an issue in the contract talks in the auto industry: The companies want to force auto workers to pay part of the cost of medical coverage they now receive free. Some New York City workers are being asked to sacrifice even their half-hour lunch break in the interests of productivity.

In some cases—as with the coal miners—the bosses are willing to trade wage hikes for "givebacks" that mean tremendous increases in profits. The miners' answer was simply that their rights were not for sale.

A second attitude that emerged clearly during the strike was the miners' sense of their own power. They forced everyone to recognize that coal is not mined by mine-owners, governors, the National Guard, labor mediators, or federal judges. It especially is not mined by presidents. Only coal miners mine coal.

"They try to say we're not important," said a West Virginia miner. "Or that we're dumb. But all we did was stop working and they all started screaming 'national emergency.'"

There are some important concepts that flow from understanding the decisive role played by workers in production. The striking miners began to raise the demand that the company books ought to be opened to see whether the bosses were lying in claiming they could not "afford" health fund payments.

The belief that the operators, who do not produce coal, have no right to grow rich off the work of those who do, was one of the factors behind the frequently expressed idea that the government ought to take over the mines.

The miners' strike reinforced the idea that the workers have a right to control the conditions under which they labor. But this is one of the ideas the employers are most determined to counter. They are out to take away whatever measure of control workers and their organizations have won, in order to drive through productivity increases and maximize profits. The *New York Times* of March 26 quotes Audrey Freedman of the Conference Board, a business group, as saying simply that "unions are going to have to give up those parts of the contract that reflect managing of the work force."

The changed composition of the United Mine Workers was another factor in determining the character and outcome of the strike—but again it is not something peculiar to coal miners.

With the growth of the coal industry in recent years and increase in its work force, the average age of the working UMWA miner dropped dramatically—from the mid-fifties a few years ago to the early thirties today. It was these young miners, many of them Vietnam veterans, who on a day-to-day basis led the strike on a local level.

The determination of these young miners to fight to improve the conditions under which they will be living and working for some time is shared by a whole generation of young industrial workers. Some other industrial unions, such as those in auto or steel, have a membership that is more Black or more female than the UMWA, but this only adds a further dimension to their struggles.

Not only do the young coal miners share the ideas of the rest of their generation; they have also shared many of the same work experiences. It is apparent from newspaper and television interviews that it is quite common for a miner—even if born in Appalachia into a mining family—to have spent a number of years working on other industrial jobs in neighboring states. Miners know there is no impenetrable curtain sealing Appalachia off from other industrial centers.

A young West Virginia miner named Steve Gwaltney angrily challenged one *New York Times* reporter: "You think of us as dumb coal miners. You think we can't go anywhere or do anything else."

The kind of union loyalty exhibited by the miners was another factor in enabling them to fight so militantly—which is just as true of other industrial workers. The miners' loyalty was not to the official union leadership, their politics or actions. Certainly it was not to UMWA President Miller, who became steadily more despised and mistrusted.

Many of the comments of miners during the strike showed fierce loyalty to the union, as the only institution capable of defending workers' interests, coupled with the realization that it is a constant struggle to force the union bureaucrats to defend those interests adequately.

One miner blasted the operators: "They're trying to grab for everything, and the union won't stand for it." Another said of retired miners: "They built this union. We've got to keep it strong, and if we're to do that, we've got to think of them."

A young local president accused by Miller of being out to "destroy the union," said: "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?"

"Solidarity Forever" and other union

songs not heard at labor gatherings for years were sung at coal-miner rallies.

### Union Democracy

The coal miners have had considerable recent experience in fighting to make their union more democratic and more responsive to their needs. They won some important victories through the Miners for Democracy movement in 1972, most importantly the democratic right of the membership to vote on a contract.

Additional steps towards union democracy were taken during the strike itself. It became clear that the ability of the rank and file to make their voices heard played a vital role in countering the attack of the bosses. Local and district UMWA leaders were forced to reflect the sentiments of rank-and-file miners if they wanted to be recognized as strike leaders.

When the terms of the first two contracts became known, miners voiced their reactions at rallies and demonstrations of up to 3,000 persons throughout the coalfields. Busloads of rank-and-file miners went to Washington, D.C., and demonstrated outside UMWA headquarters to put pressure on the Bargaining Council to vote down the "ball and chain" contract. Bargaining Council members who voted for the contract often had to face stormy meetings of miners demanding explanations when they went back to their districts.

The miners felt that they were being "sold a bill of goods" and denied the right to make up their own minds when the union hired a public relations firm to flood the mining towns with slick proratification ads. They resoundingly dumped that contract, and the ad men were gone when it came time to vote on the next contract.

In the March 21 *Washington Post*, a reporter summarized the fundamental problem the operators faced in getting their settlement terms accepted: "The bottom line of power in the union was 160,000 independent, free-thinking angry people: democracy in full cry."

Without these elements of union democracy the miners would have been defeated. To exercise even partial rank-and-file control, they had to take on not only the operators but also the national union leadership. Miller—who was elected president of the UMWA as a result of the Miners for Democracy movement—negotiated the contracts in secret, behind the backs of the miners, and he feared their reaction as much as the operators did.

Both the coal operators and the miners were out to transform the union to fit opposing concepts. This was not the least important of the confrontations the strike involved.

The operators, if unable to destroy the UMWA, wanted to force it into the mold of business unionism. They wanted the UMWA to play the role other unions have

played in curbing strikes and stepping up productivity. When contract talks began, the chief of the operators' association threatened the UMWA with "extinction" unless this change was made.

The miners wanted to make their union stronger and better able to fight, which they could only do by exercising fully every democratic right they had within the union.

The operators—although undoubtedly more conscious of what they were trying to do to the union than were the rank-and-file miners—had less success.

Workers in other major industries such as steel and rail do not have the right to vote on their contract at all, and have already raised this issue within their unions.

The right of coal miners to read the exact text of their contract, discuss it in open meetings, mull it over for forty-eight hours, and then vote it up or down, is a right that workers in no other major industry have won. The miners showed in this strike how decisive an acquisition this is.

### Labor Solidarity

Expressions of support from other working people—particularly in the last few weeks of the strike—were an important factor in the miners' struggle. The divide-and-rule strategy of the ruling class, which has been used with devastating effectiveness to weaken unions and blunt struggles in the past, was not so successful this time.

The employers tried to isolate the miners by pitting them against other industrial workers and against the public as a whole. They cut back electric power and blamed the miners. They warned that 2.5 million workers would lose their jobs if the strike continued until mid-March.

The international leadership of the UMWA made no special effort to reach out and find allies for the miners' struggle; and the bureaucrats who run the other major trade unions ignored the mine strike as long as they could.

The working farmers were the first sector to rally in defense of the miners. In mid-February, at the height of the campaign to portray the miners as pursuing their own selfish aims at the expense of the general welfare, farmers organized caravans to bring donations of food to the coalfields. There had been student activities in defense of the miners before, but they did not have the national impact of the farmers' solidarity actions.

Other caravans were organized to bring food from major industrial cities surrounding the mining areas like Baltimore, Detroit, and Chicago. Unions like the United Auto Workers and United Steelworkers made contributions that were different in scale from the token strike support usually awarded. A total of \$4.5 million was contributed by half a dozen big unions during the last two weeks of the strike.

The reason the campaign to isolate the miners did not succeed was that other workers simply did not accept the idea that they were victims of the coal miners' "selfishness." The miners were defending rights that other workers recognized as their own. They recognized the importance of struggling against cutbacks in benefits in the context of rising inflation; fighting for health and safety protection and for control over working conditions; and rallying to turn back a union-busting drive.

The labor solidarity actions that took place were not huge, and the amount of material aid received by the miners was not decisive. But there was considerable evidence toward the end of the strike that the miners' struggle was beginning to become a social "cause" in wider circles. Many miners themselves already understood this aspect of their struggle.

As West Virginia miner Gene Dunn told reporters: "I'm doing this for everybody. Most miners feel that way. If they break our union, the companies will do the same to others. If they get us down, they'll bust those people working in factories next."

### No Political Voice

The weaknesses of the coal miners' strike did not come from any lack of willingness to struggle. The problems certainly did not—as the media likes to assert—come from too much democracy in the union. Nor did they come from any shortage of economic power.

The weaknesses arose from the fact that the UMWA could not quickly enough develop an alternative national leadership able to mount an effective political campaign to complement the militant strike action.

Thomas Bethell, former research director of the UMWA, summarized in the April 1 *New Republic* what this meant in terms of the contract negotiations:

... the miners, confronting an array of obnoxious new provisions, could only raise a general hue and cry of protest. They had no leadership to shape the protest into an effective counter-attack. . . .

But the key to winning such a war is to be able to attack as well as to defend. . . . But the miners could only defend; they could say no to the mine owners, but they could not say it with a single voice. And they could not reverse again their previous reverses at the bargaining table, for the simple reason that not a single one of their negotiators had the skill and stamina to carry the battle back to the territory the union had won in previous years.

The presence of a conscious political leadership would have affected much more than the give-and-take around the bargaining table. It would have changed every aspect of the strike and its impact on the country as a whole.

All the demands around which miners were striking were political issues: the right to decent health care, to a fair pension, to protection against inflation, to safe



Nancy Cole/Militant

Scores of solidarity rallies, like this one in Pittsburgh in February, showed depth of support for miners.

working conditions; the right to be treated like human beings; the right to control over the conditions under which they work. They are issues that affect other working people all over the country.

But the miners had no voice in the political arena, no elected representatives to place the issues squarely before the public as life-and-death issues for all working people, no one to articulate the stake other workers had in defending the miners.

The miners were able to stay the hands of the operators, but to go beyond this and make new gains in the contract they would have had to organize on the political front. That would have mobilized to the fullest extend the existing sentiment for labor solidarity actions.

Every measure of union democracy put into effect by the miners during the strike strengthened the UMWA. But the fight for rank-and-file control of a union is not just a struggle to forge an organization that can lead a better strike and win a better contract. It also helps to build forces that can act independently in the political arena—breaking the grip of a leadership subservient to capitalist politicians.

The miners defied the governors of their

various states and they defied the president of the United States. By doing so they again exposed the government's strike-breaking role as they have on previous occasions. They showed their contempt for Carter in both words and actions. But they had no alternative to propose to Democratic and Republican party rule.

What if, on the other hand, the UMWA had fielded independent candidates for Congress in the 1978 elections? Such an act would have made a difference during the strike itself. Now that the strike is over, Congressional representation would give the union a voice for explaining the lessons of the strike and for mobilizing support in the inevitable battles with the operators over issues left in dispute in the new contract.

The coal strike provided fresh proof of the need for a labor party. Every Democratic and Republican politician lined up with the operators, covered for Carter, or avoided the issue. The miners, together with other workers, could form a party that would challenge the strikebreakers' right to run the federal and state governments just as the miners challenged Carter's right to run their working lives.

The capitalists are anxious to put the coal miners' strike behind them, minimize the impact, and get on with the business of their attacks on other workers. They underestimated the resistance they would encounter from the coal miners. Now they are trying to gauge the impact the miners' struggle will have on the confidence and expectations of other workers.

What the capitalists fear is that other workers faced with cutbacks and "give-back" demands are going to find themselves thinking: "What would the coal miners have done in this situation?" □

#### Troops Sent to Crush El Salvador Peasants

Heavily armed troops were sent into Cuscutlán province, El Salvador, on March 30, in an effort to crush peasant protests that had been continuing for several weeks.

Reporters were turned away from the area by military roadblocks. A government spokesman said twenty-nine persons had been killed and fifty wounded in earlier clashes.

The peasants are demanding their own land and protesting high rents.

## Mounting Dissent in Israel Over Invasion of Lebanon

By Michael Baumann

As the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon neared the close of its third week April 1, more than 265,000 refugees remained homeless, and villages from the Mediterranean coast to the slopes of Mount Hermon lay in rubble.

The plight of the refugees is so desperate, Lebanese Minister of Labor and Social Affairs Assad Rizk has warned, that if aid does not arrive soon the country may face the "worst social catastrophe" in its modern history.

Despite mounting international and domestic pressure, the invading troops remain in place, supposedly until United Nations forces are fully deployed. Meanwhile, Israeli Defense Minister Ezer Weizman said March 27 that the Begin government might launch fresh "retaliatory" strikes if the Palestine Liberation Organization did not call a halt to military resistance within forty-eight hours.

His threat, backed by a show of Israeli military force, had an electric effect. A Reuters dispatch in the March 29 *New York Trib* reported:

... scores of civilians who had returned to their homes over the past few days were fleeing north again because of the Israeli warning.

Fears of another round of shelling and bombing ... made the people abandon their homes for a second time within two weeks.

The renewed exodus was accelerated by Israeli planes flying over the south throughout the day.

Of the 265,000 refugees displaced by the Israeli military operation, 65,000 were Palestinians, according to figures released by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in Beirut March 27. Thirty-four thousand fled to Sidon, the largest city in southern Lebanon, where the UNRWA has established a food-distribution center.

The agency issued an urgent appeal for funds to assure that sufficient food can be provided. "No one can at present predict how many weeks or months this aid will be necessary," it said.

For many, such aid will be their only means of subsistence for many weeks to come. "Most of the towns and larger villages of the south have been severely battered," the London *Economist* reported March 25, "and many of the water reservoirs destroyed. So many of the refugees now have no homes to return to."

### The Specter of Vietnam

At home, the Begin government is coming under increasing fire from a war-weary population. The most visible sign of this

came April 1, when 45,000 persons, mostly of military age, rallied outside City Hall in Tel Aviv to demand that Begin return the territories occupied in 1967. A dispatch in the April 2 *New York Times* reported:

They turned out in response to a call by 300 military reservists and university students who sent a letter last month to Prime Minister Menachem Begin criticizing the Government's conduct of peace negotiations.

The keynote of the protest was expressed in a huge placard, "Better Peace in Israel Than a Greater Israel." The reference was to the Begin Government's refusal to commit itself to relinquish any of the West Bank of the Jordan or the Gaza Strip. . . .

During speeches and entertainment, people queued up at tables to sign a "Peace Now!" petition. . . .

In public, as at this demonstration, antiwar sentiment is usually couched in terms of disagreement over Begin's policy of humiliating Sadat and sponsoring new settlements. But it is clear that behind this criticism lie deep misgivings over the massive destruction inflicted on Lebanon. The specter of Vietnam is frequently evoked.

"Everyone here expected reprisal action," *New York Times* correspondent William E. Farrell reported from Jerusalem March 29, "but few Israelis expected one of such dimensions." He added:

Some of the questions being asked in the aftermath of the invasion . . . include:

- Was the scale of the invasion warranted?
- Has Israel become enmeshed in a situation in southern Lebanon not unlike the morass in which the United States found itself in Vietnam?
- Has the extent of the retaliation served to rally the P.L.O. because so much—men, artillery and airpower—was used by Israel against so few?

Ominous for a garrison state like Israel is the fact that disaffection is growing among the military. "Soldiers are returning embittered over what the Lebanese underwent as a by-product of the Israeli operation, which caused more suffering to civilians than to the intended target," correspondent Teddy Preuss wrote in the Labor Party daily *Davar* at the end of March.

Even Begin's resignation might not be enough to "preclude a major disaster," Preuss warned, particularly if the invasion leads to a "Vietnam-like problem for us: angry and divided public opinion, a heavier security burden, greater hostility internationally."

Another Israeli commentator, quoted in

the March 30 *Washington Post*, warned of "the effect of saturation bombing on Israeli troops' unaccustomed to such massive destruction caused by naval, artillery and air bombardment."

The dissent reaches well into the ranks of the officer corps. A dispatch from the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, published in the March 30 *New York Trib*, reported:

A group of reserve officers opposed to Premier Menachem Begin's territorial policies said that they have about 10,000 signatures on a petition supporting their demands that the government adopt a policy that puts peace ahead of the "greater Israel notion" [i.e., expanding Israel to its "biblical" borders].

The officers of the army, navy and air force, many of whom won decorations in battle, said at a press conference in Jerusalem that they hoped to create a popular movement which will force the government to change its course, which they believe is leading away from peace.

According to spokesmen for the group, pledges of support have been received from members of the Democratic Movement for Change (DMC), the second largest party in Begin's governing coalition, and even from within Likud's Liberal party wing. They said their petition includes the signatures of 950 reserve officers and that similar petitions are being circulated by artists and academicians.

Speculation about Begin's future was further fueled by the latest public opinion poll, released in Jerusalem March 28. The poll, published in the daily *Haaretz*, showed a drop of nearly 20% in support for Begin, from 78.3% in December to 59.4% at present.

### Grave Doubts Among American Jews

Support for Israel among the American people, which is vital to assure a continuing flow of arms, has also eroded sharply. A Gallup poll taken after Sadat's visit to Washington in February showed that the percentage of Americans who said that their sympathies were "basically with Israel" had dropped from 48% to 33%. The figure would undoubtedly stand even lower today.

For example, leaders of major American Jewish organizations—traditionally considered by Begin and his predecessors as Israel's "second line of defense"—have begun to voice grave concern about the Begin governments' course.

The editors of the *Jewish Post and Opinion*, for example, expressed regret at not having spoken out sooner:

If what the polls show is true, that a drastic drop in Israel's position in public opinion has



occurred, then we are reaping the harvest of the role adopted by the American Jewish leadership which considers opposition to any Israeli actions as treason. Had U.S. Jewish leaders spoken up on the question of the new settlements in the occupied territories and had they reflected what we believe are the feelings of the average American Jew, Israel might not be in danger of losing the confidence of American public opinion. [Quoted in the April 1 *Nation*.]

Rabbi Balfour Brickner, codirector of the Social Action Commission of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, condemned both Begin's "suicidal position" and pressure on American Jews to remain silent:

Why is it that Israeli schoolchildren can write an open letter to Begin, saying that his policy raises doubts in their minds as to Israel's sincerity for peace; and why is it that 300 veteran officers can publish an advertisement in the Israeli press, saying that if Begin persists on the settlements issue they will have to draw conclusions as to the justness of Israel's cause; and Defense Minister Ezer Weizman can threaten to resign if work on the settlements is not terminated immediately—why, in that case, do I get called a traitor if I say the same thing? [Quoted in the April 1 *Nation*.]

Irving Howe, the author of a best-selling history of American Jewish immigrant life, *World of Our Fathers*, and a longtime defender of Israel, has stated publicly that he believes the "Israeli position on the settlements is absolutely indefensible."

Even one of the most prominent American Jewish leaders, who in public has backed the Begin government to the hilt, has expressed concern about Israel's "image." Arthur H. Samuelson reported in the April 1 *Nation*:

Rabbi Alexander Schindler, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, an umbrella group embodying thirty-two Jewish organizations, has also told the Israelis he is disturbed by the state of Israel's image in the United States. Addressing the political committee of the World Zionist Congress in Jerusalem in late February, he reported that Israel had suffered a major setback in the battle for public support in the United States. Israel's image has become "untruthful, conniving" Schindler said, opening a "credibility gap" in the United States.

#### 'The Occupying Forces Treat Us Like Animals'

Far from giving any indication of "moderating" his course, Begin intensified Israeli pressure on another front—brutally crushing Palestinian protests in occupied territories.

Demonstrations against the invasion of Lebanon began March 15 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and continued for five days despite massive repression that included two deaths, at least 300 arrests in the Gaza Strip alone, and fines totalling one million Israeli lira (US\$62,000). The killings occurred in Nablus, where according to Palestinian leaders an Israeli army

driver deliberately ran down two boys aged eight and sixteen.

*Christian Science Monitor* correspondent



BEGIN: Sharp drop in popularity.

Trudy Rubin reported March 28 the way in which Israeli occupation forces attacked schoolchildren in one West Bank town:

In the town of Beit Jalla, next to Bethlehem, Israeli soldiers mounted to the second-floor outdoor balcony of a government elementary school, shouted inside for the children to close the windows, and tossed tear-gas canisters (CS gas

made in Pennsylvania) inside. Several of the students panicked and jumped out of windows on the opposite side of the building, an 18-foot drop. Ten children wound up in the hospital with bone fractures, according to orthopedic surgeon Dr. Shehadeh Shedah. Shehadeh.

I interviewed three youngsters, ages 13, 14, 15, who described the lessons they were studying at the time of the incident and insisted there were no disturbances at their school. Mrs. Wadia Mansour—who lives just opposite the school and whose son suffered a leg fracture—said she was hanging wash on her line and the area was quiet at the time the soldiers arrived. She said that when she screamed, a soldier threw a tear-gas canister at her. It hit her on the knee.

The Reverend Audeh G. Rantisi, an Anglican minister in the West Bank town of Ramallah, described an assault on children demonstrating at the Ahlieh Roman Catholic School:

In minutes, the school area was surrounded by Israeli troops and the military governor of the whole West Bank arrived to direct operations.

They beat up students, arrested 40 of them, shaved their heads and brought them before the military court. The court has been issuing fines of 10,000 Israeli liras [US\$620] and giving the parents of the children 24 hours to raise the money. The soldiers have also gone into grammar schools and to girls' schools like the one nearby run by Quakers. [Quoted in the March 30 *New York Times*.]

Rantisi said that such brutal treatment had been stepped up since the invasion of Lebanon.

"The occupying forces treat us like animals," he said. "They abuse and humiliate us at every opportunity. A number of us know Hebrew and we hear the way they talk about us—exactly the way racists talk about blacks in America." □

## 'No Swedish UN Troops to Lebanon!'

[The following statement was issued on March 22 by the Secretariat of the Communist Workers League (Swedish section of the Fourth International). The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

Some thirty thousand Israeli troops have occupied southern Lebanon. The refugee camps have been subjected to terror bombing. A hundred thousand people have been driven into flight by invading tank columns. The Zionist state recognizes no rights for the Palestinian people. There can be no peaceful settlement between them.

The invasion of Lebanon has been launched against a weakened and isolated liberation movement. The Arab regimes have left the Palestinians on their own, facing the Israeli war machine. Egypt's President Anwar el-Sadat paved the way for Israel's massive attack by his treacherous "peace talks" and his attack on the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The job given the United Nations forces

in Lebanon is to guarantee the security of the Zionist state. But the state of Israel, in turn, acts as the watchdog for imperialism in the Middle East.

The role of the United Nations forces therefore will be to keep watch to prevent the Palestinian guerrillas from fighting for their people.

The government of Prime Minister Fälldin has decided to send Swedish UN forces into Lebanon. Sweden's ambassador to the UN, Anders Thunborg, has asked for approval of this from the "parties concerned." It could not have been made more clear that the Swedish imperialist government does not consider the Palestinians and the PLO as "parties concerned" in a war whose objective is to liquidate the Palestinian guerrillas.

This decision by the Swedish government must be opposed by a powerful mobilization in solidarity with the Palestinian people. Support the struggle of the Palestinian people! Defend the PLO!

*No Swedish UN Troops to Lebanon!  
Break With the Zionist State!*

## Icelandic Trotskyists to Run in Parliamentary Elections

[The following article appeared in the February 26 issue of *Neisti* (Spark), the monthly paper of the Fylking Byltingarsinnadhra Komunista (Revolutionary Communist League). The Fylking originated as the youth group of the Althyhubandalag (People's Alliance), a party of Stalinist origins that absorbed several layers of left Social Democrats in fusions and finally broke altogether with Moscow after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. The translation from the Icelandic is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

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Two years ago, the Fylking held its Thirtieth Congress. At that time, it was decided to apply for membership in the Fourth International. This was the first time that any substantial group of Icelandic socialists declared themselves to be anti-Stalinist revolutionary Marxists and took the consequences of this decision by settling accounts with the reformist workers movement here.

Those who previously identified with the left opposition to Stalinism, and these did so mainly in the historical sense, were quite isolated. One of them was Gísli Gunnarsson, who was mentioned in a recent article. Along with him, we should mention Skúla Thordharon. His book *Stjórnmalasaga síðustu 20 ára* [The Political History of the Last Twenty Years] and his broadcast about Trotsky and Stalin won him harsh condemnation from "his comrades" (like Halldór Laxness).<sup>1</sup>

Now the representatives of the Althyhubandalag seldom put pen to paper without considering it their special duty to denounce Stalinism (always putting the blame on Stalin). But this has not led to a general reconsideration of the orientation and activity of the Althyhubandalag, which indicate that it amounts to being a Social Democratic party, although it also bears a strong imprint of its origin.

The procedures in the Althyhubandalag continue to be marked in many respects by cliquism (cf., the Kjartan clique, the Thrastar clique, and so on), fear of any open discussion among socialists, as well as by the lack of statutory guarantees of the rights of minorities. And no "ordinary party members" can change any of the personnel.

This party's orientation is marked by populism and a special kind of class-

collaborationist approach. The Althyhubandalag's brand of class collaboration, for example, is unlike the orientation of the Social Democratic parties in the Scandinavian countries in that it does not offer a strategy useful to the bourgeoisie, except insofar as it does nothing to lead the working class forward.

So, the Thirtieth Congress of the Fylking was distinguished mainly by a settling of accounts of the working-class parties here. Social Democracy, Stalinism, and nationalism were rejected, and we started out to establish revolutionary Marxism here, to create the long desired "alternative." For this, we had no lack of theoretical tools.

The past two years have been active ones. We strove, with considerable success, to break out of the isolation into which the Althyhubandalag and the Maoists tried to force the Fylking. This was done in two ways. One way was a campaign in support of the united front, as the means by which different groups on the left could cooperate on the basis of equal rights.

The other way was the steady, diligent (and even plodding) work of various Fylking comrades in the workers organizations, the Raudhsokkahreyfing [Red Stockings Movement, the leading feminist organization], the student association, and the Samtaka Herstödhvaandstaedhinga [Association of Opponents of Military Bases, the movement for withdrawal of the U.S. bases]. Cells were formed that concentrated on these specific areas of struggle. That succeeded in increasing the audience for our politics, but recruitment, the strengthening of the organization as such, was badly neglected.

The Thirty-First Congress of the Fylking, which was held on February 17-19, sought to find answers to these organizational problems. It was decided to reorient toward recruitment and that this had to go hand in hand with improving *Neisti*.

Our paper carries the line of the organization, and is our link with our supporters. In the past two years, a substantial number of new readers have been won. But it has not been possible to organize the distribution of the paper, and it has very seldom been systematically utilized in the various sectors of struggle (an exception to this was the special issue published for the strike,<sup>2</sup> which produced good results).

However, in order to keep this focus on recruitment from making us into an isolated grouplet, it was decided to open up

the life of the organization as much as possible to our supporters and other radical left groups. They will be able to write in our paper and familiarize themselves with the internal discussions in the FBK, and work together with us in certain areas.

A step in this direction was taken in fact by inviting some of these people to the Thirty-First Congress and giving them the discussion material. Some of them accepted the invitation and observed the congress. It should be noted that representatives of other left groups were invited to the congress, although they were asked to give a little notice, but only the KFImI accepted the invitation.

There was a lot of discussion at the congress about the government's wage-control measures and the way in which it has been possible to unite all the workers organizations to oppose them. The question is, what is going to be done after May 1. It must be said that the main debate in the congress revolved precisely around this question: How should we evaluate the mobilization that is under way and how can the Fylking best strengthen it and link up with it.

There were also differences over the FBK's policy in the coming elections. To begin with, it should be pointed out that everyone agreed that we should give critical support to the Althyhubandalag in the city, town, and county elections, as well as in those Althing [national parliament] districts where the Fylking is not running its own candidates. Likewise, everyone agreed that we have to begin to prepare to run our own candidates right away.

Some argued that a strike offensive in the spring would lead to moving up the date of the elections, and that there would be a trend among the workers toward the traditional workers parties, which in their distorted way would wage the election campaign on the issue of defending the living standard. They thought that the Fylking could best intervene in such a situation by giving critical support to the Althyhubandalag.

Other comrades considered such a development unlikely (although they could see responding to such a situation with the tactic of critical support). They thought that, other things being equal, the Fylking should participate in the coming elections as an independent political force, as an organization of revolutionists. They thought that candidates should be run at least in Reykjavik. This second view was held by a large majority (about seven-eighths of those comrades attending the

1. Halldór Laxness, the nobel-prize-winning novelist, was heavily influenced by Stalinism.—IP/I

2. The general strike of government workers in mid-October 1977.—IP/I

congress). The proviso was accepted that the leadership should make the final decision on this matter when the time came.

So the "line" of the congress was to run Fylking candidates in the coming elections to the Althing, and to give critical support to the Althydhubandalag in the municipal elections and in those Althing constituencies where the Fylking is unable to run its own campaign. The FBK's main tasks in the immediate period ahead will be campaigning around the struggle of the unions, working for the May 1 demonstrations, and participating in the elections.

Considerable time was devoted to discussing how to carry out the propaganda and agitational tasks involved in this work. A proposal was adopted to build an agitational campaign demanding a referendum on the army and NATO. Likewise, a resolution was passed defining our demand for a workers government. It said, among other things:

The most important criterion is agitation for a workers government and systematic struggle for this demand. A workers government is a government of unspecified workers parties that bases its rule on the organizations of the working class itself and is independent of the bourgeois state. It not only bases itself on the organizations of the working class but takes its mandate directly from them and is defended by them, and is subject to recall at any time.

We have carried out and must continue to carry out our tasks in the day-to-day struggle based on three fundamental criteria, which are the starting points for any effective working-class policy. The struggle for a workers government can be waged in accordance with the same criteria and in pursuing the tasks and objectives that flow from them. These criteria are the following:

1. Assume no responsibility for the economic crisis and the anarchy of capitalism.

2. Maintain the absolute class political independence of working-class movements from the capitalists, their parties, and their state.

3. Rely on class struggle rather than on any self-appointed liberators, such as the union bureaucracy, the parliamentary delegations of the reformist parties, or any other "representatives" of the working class.

These criteria and the tasks that flow from them have the aim of solving the problems of the working class. They can be finally achieved only by a workers government with full power over economic matters and planning and which will seek to create a type of state different from that of the bourgeoisie.

On the basis of these criteria, we can explain the need for building a workers movement that can become a real political force, that can take political power. The form of such political power is a workers government.

We will take up this question in detail soon in *Neisti*.

The congress adopted a substantially new political resolution. This was the most important of the documents, and will be published separately, along with the political resolution of the Twenty-Ninth Congress. It should be an important guide for revolutionists, especially in discussing economic questions, which are now the sub-

ject of much argument. To give an idea of its contents, we might cite the titles of some sections—"The International Crisis of Capitalism," "The Crisis of Icelandic Capitalism," "The Wage Fight," "The Workers Parties," "Bourgeois Profit," and "The Immediate Tasks."

In its conclusion, the political resolution says:

In the work ahead, the FBK must focus on explaining what is at stake for the working-class movement as a whole in the government's anti-labor law and demand that the leadership of the workers movement call a general strike to combat it.

Along with this, the FBK will point out that victory can be won in such a general strike if the workers organizations function as effective and democratic fighting movements. The victorious strike waged last year by the BSRB [Bandalag Starfsmanna Ríkis og Baeja—Union of National and Municipal Government Workers] and in 1970 by the ASI [Althydhúsamband Islands—Iceland General Union, the national federation of labor] show that only an active and effective mobilization of the workers can repel the bourgeoisie's attacks.

At the same time, the FBK criticizes the aberrant orientation proposed by the leadership of the big workers parties and points out that these gentlemen are inseparably bound to the bourgeoisie and fear the kind of mobilization that can arise out of a general strike. Likewise, we call for unity of the workers parties against the bourgeois parties both inside and outside the unions.

The FBK warns in particular that the bourgeois workers parties will always try to sacrifice the interests of struggles for the sake of parliamentary politics. The problems of the working class require political solutions. But only a class-conscious independent workers movement free from any ties to the bourgeoisie's state can fight for such a solution. In this respect, the FBK is laying the basis in the working class today of an understanding of the need for a real workers movement.

In our propaganda, we must put the

main stress on the following fundamental points:

- The workers can take no responsibility for the crisis of capitalism.
- Defend the right of collective bargaining.
- Oppose all wage cuts.
- Oppose all laws that cut the cost-of-living allowances.
- Unity of the working class against the capitalists and its state.
- No participation by the workers parties in bourgeois governments; work in parliament must be in support of the mass movements.
- Unity against the agents of conservatism in the workers movement.

The Thirty-First Congress of the Fylking showed that we have advanced considerably in our understanding of Icelandic capitalist society. Likewise, it showed that we have offered correct answers for the problems faced by the working-class movement in the political and trade-union fields, answers in accordance with the spirit of Marxism and the traditions of the Bolsheviks. At the same time, it showed that the organization has not established firm roots in the working class. But it is going to orient to the working class.

The Fylking is still in many respects a student organization, small and financially weak. But it is strange that some left socialists criticize the Fylking primarily for its small size. It should be pointed out, in this organization people have come together who are working steadily (although unevenly, to be sure) to build a revolutionary communist party here in Iceland. And thus, this organization represents a challenge for all those who consider themselves revolutionary socialists. They have to decide whether they want to take part in this work, with all the daily tasks it involves, or be content to sit on the sidelines and wait. □

## 8,000 Demand: Free Wilmington 10

"Human Rights Begin at Home. Free the Wilmington Ten."

That was the chant of more than 8,000 demonstrators outside the White House March 18, demanding that Carter intervene to free the North Carolina frame-up victims known as the Wilmington Ten.

The Wilmington Ten were convicted of arson and conspiracy charges related to the 1971 burning of a grocery store during a white racist vigilante attack on the Wilmington, North Carolina, Black community. All except one are Black men who remain in prison with sentences of up to twenty-one years. Anne Sheppard Turner, who is white, was paroled in 1977 after spending two years in prison and has been touring the country in support of the defense effort.

The three witnesses whose testimony

convicted the Wilmington Ten all recanted in 1977, relating how the prosecution had used threats and bribes to force them to lie in court. Since that time international pressure to free the ten has been mounting. They have been adopted by Amnesty International as "prisoners of conscience."

North Carolina governor James B. Hunt refused last January to pardon the prisoners, granting them instead token reductions in their jail sentences. The target of defense efforts then shifted to the federal government, with special emphasis on "Mr. Human Rights" Carter.

At a news conference March 16, U.S. Representative John Conyers announced that he and others were requesting a congressional investigation to determine whether the FBI and CIA participated in the frame-up. □

## Peru Hunger Strikers Win Partial Victory

By Fred Murphy

A fifty-one-day hunger strike by trade unionists in Peru ended March 20 when the Morales Bermúdez government decided to grant what had by then become the striker's minimum demand—reinstatement of their jobs.

The hunger strike was initiated January 28 by eight union militants fired from their jobs after the July 19, 1977, general strike. They had been without work or unemployment benefits for five months. The movement spread during February and at its height involved more than 200 persons in at least six different cities.

The initial demands of the hunger strike were for the reinstatement of all 5,000 workers the regime had ordered dismissed for their role in the July work stoppage, amnesty for political prisoners and for trade unionists jailed after the July strike, and the return of all political and trade-union leaders forcibly exiled from the country.

The government dealt harshly with the hunger strikers. Beginning February 7, police were sent into the churches and convents where the strikers had gathered. Many were arrested, taken to government hospitals, and threatened with force-feeding. But a large number continued to refuse to eat.

One of the demands was granted March 15, when the regime announced that exiles would be allowed to return. Seventy-eight workers remained on hunger strike and in police custody until March 20. They had just decided to refuse all liquids as well as food when the government gave in and said they would be reinstated in their old jobs. All charges and police proceedings against them were dropped.

Both of these victories against the military regime—return of the exiles and reinstatement of the hunger strikers—should inspire the Peruvian workers and their allies to continue pressing the other demands that have been raised in the upsurge of struggles in recent months: rehiring of all 5,000 fired workers, release of political and trade-union prisoners, and an end to the austerity policies imposed by the International Monetary Fund.

### Hard Line of the IMF

While the rising mass pressure has forced Morales to grant some political concessions, the regime is also facing harsher economic demands from its creditors abroad.

Peru's international debt stands at more

than \$4 billion, much of it incurred in the early 1970s to finance ambitious development projects that have since failed to generate the expected export income. Almost \$1 billion of the debt—including interest—falls due this year.

In an effort to secure postponement of some of its obligations, the regime sent a high-powered delegation of economic officials on a tour of imperialist banking centers in February. After a series of meetings, a consortium of U.S., Japanese, European, and Canadian banks\* assured the Peruvians on February 24 that \$260 million of the \$306 million due them in 1978 could be "restructured" into longer-term obligations. This would be done once the IMF had put its seal of approval on the regime's most recent austerity measures.

An IMF team headed by U.S. economist Linda Koenig visited Peru in late February. An inside report on what they found was given in the March 18 issue of the London financial weekly the *Economist*:

... the central bank had been cooking most of the figures. International reserves were propped up over the new year by a \$40m [million] four-day loan from a Dresdner Bank subsidiary. The budget deficit, planned as \$125m, had been overspent in the first two months of the year.

The upshot of this was a terse telex message from Koenig to the regime on March 1: "Our legal department cannot accept the accounting methods you have used to calculate your figures." The IMF refused to extend the second part of a \$106 million credit granted last year on condition that the austerity policies would be adhered to.

The big private banks met again March 10 for more discussions in light of the IMF's hard line. "The American banks came down against proceeding with the loan," the *Economist* reported. Although the European and Japanese bankers reportedly feared that refusal "would be tantamount to pushing Peru over the edge," the \$260 million extension was not forthcoming.

The IMF team (minus Koenig, whom Morales had declared *persona non grata*) went back to Peru in mid-March. They

\*The consortium involves some fifty banks, including the U.S. banks Morgan Guaranty Trust, Manufacturers Hanover Trust, Citibank, and Wells Fargo; the Dresdnerbank of West Germany; the Bank of Tokyo; and the Bank of Nova Scotia, which is the fourth largest bank in Canada.

reportedly demanded further devaluation of the country's currency, the sol; a series of new taxes on telephone and electric service, vehicles, and rents; price increases on diesel fuel, and other petroleum products, and possibly gasoline; and more cuts in public spending to bring down the current year's budget deficit from 70 billion soles to around 25 billion soles (130 soles=US\$1).

Even if the regime is able to force such measures on the masses, which seems doubtful in light of past experience, they are not expected to have any impact for several months. But without immediate credit relief, the possibility of bankruptcy is real.

Under the headline "Peru Appears on the Verge of Defaulting on Foreign Loans," Karen DeYoung reported in the March 14 *Washington Post* that "highly placed financial sources" in Lima were predicting that Peru's Central Bank would run out of money by June 1. She also reported the opinion of an "informed banking source" in New York that Morales "may be trying to pressure the banks by publicly putting the ominous specter of default and subsequent chaos on their shoulders."

A similar tactic preserved Peru's international credit in 1976 and 1977. But during that period the imperialist bankers still had confidence in Morales's ability to keep the masses in check and to force through the austerity measures. DeYoung quoted another New York banker as saying that the "main reason" extensions were granted on Peru's debts in 1976 was "to perpetuate Morales Bermudez in power."

"What did we perpetuate?" the banker then asked. "The whole damn place has gone to hell."

### An 'Argentine' Solution?

While Morales has clearly done much to put the weight of the crisis on the workers and peasants, he has been unable so far to smash their resistance. None of the austerity moves have actually been rolled back, but workers in a number of industries have been able to win wage gains to soften their impact. And in January the government granted a general, if inadequate, increase in wages.

The banks may now be taking their intransigent stance in hopes of encouraging the more reactionary sectors of the Peruvian officer corps to dump Morales and attempt a Chilean- or Argentine-type solution.

The editors of the *Economist* seem to think that is what is called for. As an afterword to their March 18 article on Peru's difficulties, they noted that Argentina's foreign-exchange reserves now stand at more than \$5 billion. They credited this achievement to the "competent, if harshly restrictive, economic policy" of the Argentine junta's "widely respected [*sic*] minister

of finance" José Martínez de Hoz.

During the past ten months the workers and peasants of Peru have carried out two nationwide general strikes; several local or provincial general strikes; any number of local work stoppages; numerous street demonstrations and rallies; and a hunger

strike that enjoyed widespread sympathy. They have forced the regime to call a constituent assembly election—however undemocratic—for June 4, to promise to restore civilian rule, and to allow their exiled leaders to return to the country.

At the same time, the Peruvian masses

have not been through the kind of disillusionment and exhaustion that their Chilean and Argentine brothers and sisters experienced under Allende and the Peróns. They will undoubtedly have something to say if anyone attempts to bring Martínez de Hoz's starvation policies to Peru. □



Militant/Arnold Weissberg

Supporters urge right to asylum at news conference March 21 (from left): Eldridge Spearman, representing Héctor Marroquín; Walter Fauntroy; Rosario Ibarra de Piedra; Roger Rudenstein; Héctor Marroquín; Margaret Winter.

## Héctor Marroquín Confronts U.S. Immigration Chief

Héctor Marroquín, a Mexican socialist seeking political asylum in the United States, has won growing support. National pressure and publicity about the case forced Immigration and Naturalization Service Commissioner Leonel Castillo to agree to meet personally with Marroquín and some of his supporters in Washington, D.C., March 21.

Marroquín was a student activist at the University of Nuevo León in the early 1970s. The American government is trying to deport him back to Mexico, from which he fled in 1974 after being falsely branded a "terrorist."

Speaking to a rally of his supporters in New York City March 19, Marroquín explained why both the Mexican and U.S. governments want to silence him: "Despite the Mexican government's charges," Marroquín said, "I am not and I never was a terrorist or guerrilla. The charges are a crude fabrication to justify political repression against me, just as the Mexican government has tortured, murdered, 'disappeared,' or imprisoned hundreds of other activists on similar pretexts. They totally disregard the most elemental human and democratic rights of political dissidents."

"For many years," Marroquín continued, "I have been a socialist. One and a half years ago I joined the Socialist Workers Party and later the Young Socialist Alliance in this country. It is *this*—my views and activities—not any involvement with terrorism that is . . . behind the attempts of the U.S. government to deport me back to Mexico."

The delegation that visited INS chief Castillo to argue Marroquín's right to asylum reflected the breadth of support the defense effort has won around the country. It included representatives of Congressmen Walter Fauntroy and Ron Dellums; Frank Shaffer-Corona, a member of the Washington, D.C., School Board; Frank Viggiano, president of the National Student Association; and Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, head of the Mexican Committee to Defend Political Prisoners, the Politically Persecuted, "Disappeared," and Exiled.

Ibarra de Piedra is speaking across the United States on behalf of the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee. She has a special relationship to the case because her son Jesús Piedra Ibarra was, along with Marroquín, falsely accused of terrorism. He was arrested and tortured in April 1975 and has not been heard from since.

Realizing that the same fate could await Héctor Marroquín, Ibarra de Piedra urged Castillo to consider the history of Mexican police kidnappings and torture of political students, workers, and peasants. Among other documentary material, she presented to him the names and photographs of 347 political prisoners who have "disappeared" in Mexico in recent years.

The Mexican government is a close political ally of Washington, and Castillo simply dismissed this evidence of repression and persecution of political activists in Mexico. "I lived in Monterrey," he said, "and I have different perceptions."

But the Monterrey experiences of Leonel Castillo, who is not a fighter for social justice, are much less relevant to Héctor

Marroquín than the experiences of the three young students together with whom Marroquín was falsely accused of murdering a university librarian. Two were simply gunned down by police; the third was arrested and subsequently "disappeared."

Marroquín has been on a national speaking tour since mid-February.

At rallies of several hundred persons in Texas, California, and New York, Chicano and Latino leaders, prominent civil libertarians, and individuals who are themselves victims of government repression have spoken out vigorously in support of Marroquín.

A New York City rally of 250 persons March 19, for example, was addressed by Grace Paley, Soviet dissidents Natalya Sadomskaya and Boris Shragin, State Assemblyman Edward Sullivan, longtime civil-libertarian Annette Rubenstein, and Chicano student leader Andrés Mares.

A special labor appeal for support to Marroquín's case is being circulated by members and officials of trade unions. Marroquín is himself a trade unionist. He actively participated in a successful Teamsters organizing drive at the plant where he worked in Houston, Texas, even though, like millions of other undocumented workers, he faced the constant threat of discovery by *la migra* and deportation.

Additional information about the case is available from the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee, 853 Broadway, Suite 414, New York, New York 10003. □

# Capitalism Fouls Things Up

## World's Biggest Oil Spill—A 'Predictable Catastrophe'

[The following interview with Yves Le Gall, assistant director of the Concarneau Laboratory of Marine Biology and president of the Brittany Society for the Study and Protection of Nature, appeared in the March 25 issue of the Paris weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur*. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press/Interconcor*.]

\* \* \*

**Question.** With the wreck of the *Amoco Cadiz*, the catastrophic record set by the *Torrey Canyon*<sup>1</sup> has been surpassed. Is this an irreparable disaster?

**Answer.** Last year, following the pollution caused by the wreck of the *Böhlen*,<sup>2</sup> the seals disappeared from the Île d'Ouessant. That was an irreparable loss. Ouessant was a borderline habitat for the seals, at the extreme southern limit of their range. This accounts for the fragility of that population, which was not strong enough to survive the "black tide."

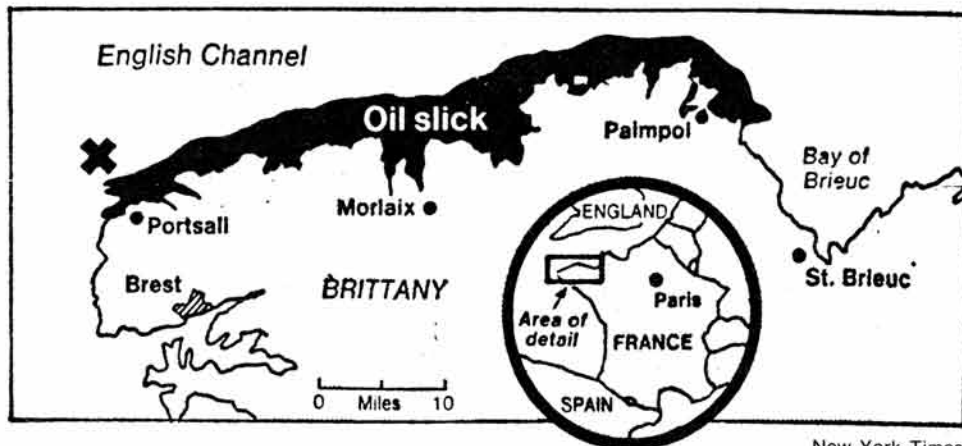
1. The supertanker *Torrey Canyon* dumped 29 million gallons of heavy crude oil on the coasts of Britain and France in March 1967. Until the *Amoco Cadiz* wreck, this had been the largest oil spill on record.

2. An East German tanker that sank off the Brittany coast in 1977. Hot water was pumped into the *Böhlen's* tanks in an effort to force the residue of its 10,000-ton cargo to the surface, where it was burned.

With the *Amoco Cadiz*, I see at least similarly irreparable consequences for the seaweed harvest. The area affected is the source of three-quarters of the total European production of seaweed, from which freezing agents are extracted. It is a brand-new industry. The seaweed will grow back after a number of years, but that will be too late. The market will have disappeared, the customers having found new sources elsewhere.

**Q.** And is there nothing that can be done?

**A.** Experience shows that in any case the authorities do not know how to go about it. They are completely disarmed in face of this kind of catastrophe. Despite the multitude of inventors proposing innumerable gadgets—siphonators, skimmers, and all kinds of other sophisticated scooping devices—they do not know how to rid the sea of oil slicks. By using detergents? They are very effective for eliminating visual pollution, but extremely toxic to the flora and fauna, so poisonous that their use has been openly renounced. In fact, it seems to me that only biological cleansing techniques using microorganisms capable of digesting hydrocarbons allow any hope or justify extensive research. This is being done on a small scale in the laboratory, but is in no way far enough along to envisage practical utilization.



New York Times



**Q.** But ultimately the oil will disappear. Biodegradation goes on naturally, and some researchers have even said that in the long run such an "enrichment" of the sea is excellent for the flora and fauna.

**A.** To the extent that biodegradation transforms hydrocarbons into food, the "black tide" certainly contributes to nourishing the sea. One isolated catastrophe will not have dramatic effects in the long run. But the problem is that such catastrophes, for Brittany at least, are becoming a common occurrence.

Bacteria cannot consume hydrocarbons at such a rate; the plankton is swamped and oxygen cannot get to it. There is a risk of eutrophication—some species will disappear completely while other—undesirable—species proliferate. Also, the nearly permanent presence of a film of oil on the surface blocks photosynthesis and sterilizes the essential biochemical processes that go on in the top millimeter of water.

Finally, about 1 percent of the components of crude oil are carcinogenic substances that resist biodegradation. This presents a grave danger about which so little is understood that it cannot be measured—a radical overturn of the genetic equilibrium of the flora and fauna, the consequences of which are unknown.

**Q.** Are the waters off Brittany nearing a situation of chronic pollution?

**A.** We're getting there. The area around the Pointe du Raz was hit by one blow after another—first from the *Böhlen* wreck and then from the *Amoco Cadiz*—with only a year in between. One "black tide" every year is absolutely intolerable.

**Q.** It is a question of accidents that are, by definition, unforeseeable. One cannot imagine banning tanker navigation for the entire length of Brittany, so it is hard to see how to go about providing assurances against this intolerable rate.

**A.** It is not at all a question of accidents but one of predictable catastrophes. The *Amoco Cadiz* had never been returned to dry dock after it was built. If the ship had been properly maintained, the risks of damage would have been less. This raises



Le Nouvel Observateur

Angry oil-spill victims confront French Prime Minister Raymond Barre in Landéda, March 18.

the problem of flags of convenience and the deplorable qualifications of the crews recruited at low wages under such flags. I would say moreover that tankers flying the French flag are themselves subject to only one inspection every twenty-seven months. Several years ago, the regulations demanded yearly inspections. I am at a loss as to the reason for this slackening.

What is more, international conventions exist for hailing, stopping, and inspecting foreign ships; we are still waiting for France to ratify them. The government would do better to sign such documents instead of assuring the fishermen of its platonic sympathy when catastrophes strike, or of subsidizing the cleansing of oil-covered birds—which is ineffective anyway—in order to soothe the “bleeding hearts.”

*Q. So is it a problem of will, of political courage?*

A. Absolutely. In a similar situation, the British did not hesitate to halt and inspect faulty vessels, or even to seize ships belonging to the same owner in order to get compensation. In France, on the other hand, they dissuade the victims of the “black tide” from filing civil actions against the shipowners. They hurry to

hand out rock-bottom damage payments and tell the victims, “Take this and shut up. Don’t get yourselves involved in a long, drawn-out court case.” Practically the only ones they dare to attack are the little Spanish trawlers. It is completely incomprehensible. Who are they afraid of disturbing? The damage done by a “black tide” is enormous, and it is not just a question of losing some stocks of fish. It cannot be taken care of by one hasty compensation payment. Think about the reintroduction of a bird population—gannet, for example: It would cost 35 million old francs per bird! [US\$70,000]

What should be done is to calculate the loss in productivity of the sea, and then bill the shipowner responsible. That means a huge job of research—we call it economic/ecologic—which must be carried out in order eventually to find out how much to demand in compensation. Meanwhile, the groups of victims, the fishermen’s committees, the associations for the protection of nature, the general councils, and so on, must attack the shipowners and not let their silence be bought through the allocation of credits here and there by the government.

*Q. Does your organization engage in such actions?*

A. The Brittany Society for the Study and Protection of Nature is officially certified as a public-interest group, and can thereby file suit against the shipowners. We are not going to deprive ourselves of that recourse. The actions we took after earlier shipwrecks—the *Olympic Bravery*<sup>3</sup> and the *Böhlen*—are still in the courts. And we have already lodged a complaint against the owners of the *Amoco Cadiz*.

*Q. What are you expecting out of these court cases?*

A. We hope to encourage all the other groups to follow our example. When the shipowners have to pay the true price for the damage they cause, they will have to secure more insurance coverage, which will cost them plenty, and they will have to take more precautions. They will stop cutting their itineraries to the bone to gain a few kilometers at the risk of running onto coastal reefs. They will have to hire experienced pilots for navigating difficult

3. A supertanker wrecked in 1976 near the same place that the *Amoco Cadiz* broke up. Its oil tanks were empty but its engine fuel caused major damage.

## Angry Protest Across Brittany

Protests against the ecological and economic disaster that the *Amoco Cadiz* brought to Brittany began the day after the shipwreck and continued for at least ten days.

On March 17, a demonstration was held in Portsall, the fishing village hardest hit by the spill. The same day, 2,000 fishermen, seaweed workers, trade unionists, and environmentalists marched in Brest, the largest city in the region.

When Prime Minister Raymond Barre arrived in the town of Landéda on March 18, he was met by 500 persons protesting the repeated failure of the French government to take effective measures against oil-tanker pollution of the Brittany coast. Three thousand persons marched in Brest the same day; that action was called by a number of trade unions and workers parties.

About 1,000 fishermen demonstrated in Brest on March 22 at the call of the second-largest French union federation,

the CFDT. Among the chants were: "The polluters must pay," "Shipowners—murderers," and "Work, not oil." The fishermen demanded an end to "flag-of-convenience" shipping, limits on tanker tonnage, and the extension of a coastal ban on ship traffic.

On March 22, 1,000 high-school students marched in Morlaix, and a protest action was also held in Lannion. On March 23, general assemblies of university and high-school students in Brest voted to go on strike. In the afternoon, 5,000 students marched through the center of Brest to the marine prefecture building. At the main door of the prefecture, the students piled mounds of sea birds and fish killed by the oil spill.

A département-wide demonstration was to be held in Brest March 27, called by twelve organizations, including the Communist and Socialist parties, the union federations CGT and CFDT, and the Trotskyists of the Revolutionary Communist League.

channels. We have a national navy at our disposal, whose mission, if I am not mistaken, is to protect the national territory. Why shouldn't it maintain surveillance over tanker navigation, and prevent them from approaching the coasts?

The only remedy is prevention. The total impotence of the measures taken under the Polmar plan<sup>4</sup> clearly demonstrates that

they do not know how to take care of these disasters. This failure, by the way, does not augur well for the Orsec-Rad plans that apply to nuclear catastrophes. Let us hope it never becomes necessary to learn if they are more effective. . . . □

4. The French government's oil-pollution disaster plan.

## 'The Sea Off Brittany Is a Foul Mess'

[The following article, by Pierre-Marie Doutrelant, appeared in the March 25 issue of *Le Nouvel Observateur*, a weekly magazine published in Paris. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

\* \* \*

"Breigned eo ar mor." The sign is planted in the dunes of Portsall, facing the menacing wreck of the *Amoco Cadiz*. The Breton protester translated it himself: "The sea is a foul mess." It's a cry of impotent rage, a cry that is being heard everywhere these days, from Brest to Saint-Malo. Brittany's fist is raised against the biggest "black tide" it has ever faced. There is nothing but anger here. "A freak accident? Bullshit!" says Henri Didou, spokesman for the fishermen of Brest's seafaring community. "We predicted a catastrophe like this hundreds of

times. Now the government will have to pay through the nose."

Last Sunday [March 19], in Portsall, a young sailor tried to commit suicide. His name is Yvon, and he is twenty-two. He had just gone up to his ears in debt to buy a boat. The wreck of the *Amoco Cadiz* will leave him destitute. Where can he fish from now on? Eighty thousand tons of oil have fouled the area around Portsall. It will be impossible to work for weeks, if not months.

Yet the good season was about to return, after a hard winter during which the boats were able to go out only five times. The fishermen were eagerly waiting for the three good months of April, May, and June, when the catch is often wondrous. The boats were finally ready, repainted like new, when on Friday, March 17, at 6:00 a.m., the fishermen found them black

with oil from the *Amoco Cadiz*.

"We had gone to bed feeling carefree," says one of them. "Around three o'clock, in the night, a stinking smell woke us up. At daybreak, we found the oil tanker shipwrecked a few fathoms off the coast, with its prow pointing toward Portsall. They wouldn't have been able to get it so close if they'd done it on purpose. Now the wreck is there for all eternity, we're the ones who are stuck with the god-damned boat."

Is Brittany the dump for the world's oil? Before the *Amoco Cadiz*, there were the *Torrey Canyon*, the *Olympic Bravery*, and the *Böhlen*. Each year, 2,000 tankers graze the tip of Finistère. Henri Didou, the sailors' representative, takes an armload of papers out of his briefcase.

"Here are the warnings we sent to the authorities. They've known ever since the *Olympic Bravery* accident that this kind of supertanker is not immune to serious damage—fortunately, that one was practically empty. We told the authorities: watch out! Sooner or later, a huge tanker will break up on the coast. They didn't believe us; in any event, they did nothing to prevent this type of accident. What's worse, eleven years after the *Torrey Canyon*, they've still got nothing better than the same old gimmicks to fight the black tide."

"Fight" is a strong word. A week after the catastrophe, the authorities still gave the impression that they did not know what to do. "It's an absolute mess," a national administrator of Civil Security confided. "It's even worse than in Guadelupe at the time of the Soufrière."

Three to four hundred infantrymen, the same number of fire fighters—such were the meager forces mobilized by the civil authorities. Portsall made a sorry sight, with the tanker in the background, spewing thousands of liters of black slime per minute, on a sea tossed by gusts of wind. Not a ship or rowboat near it. But in the foreground, on the beach, armed with sewage pumps, a squad of hapless men, compelled to wait for the tide to come in so as to sweep up a few slicks of oil here and there.

More effective help was on the way, of course. Marvelous pumps straight from the United States (are there none in France?), capable of siphoning the contents of the *Amoco Cadiz*'s hold into small ships. Like Sister Anne, every hour the sailors of Portsall watched for the arrival of this aid. To their dismay, all that was approaching was the strong spring squalls. "They'll split the *Amoco Cadiz* in two before it can be drained," the sailors predicted. "There will be 150,000 tons of oil in the ocean."

Is the worst perhaps still to come? In the seaside bistros, gathered around a glass of wine, the sailors mutter that we "haven't yet seen the end of it." It's impossible to coax an estimate of their losses out of



them. The catastrophe is so immense, and its consequences so uncertain, that they have given up analyzing them. Everything will be decided during the spring squalls. Will *Amoco Cadiz* break apart? Everything depends, too, on whether or not the government uses detergents to combat the oil. In face of these uncertainties, the sailors feel impotent. All they can do is run from the bistro to the beach, sniffing the wing, one eye on the gigantic wreck, the other on the clouds, in search of their future.

What kind of future? They themselves have doubts about their chances of one day resuming fishing. "The maritime industry of North Finistère was on the way to being restored," Henri Didou complains. "That's what makes the catastrophe an even harsher blow."

For the last several years, the fishermen of the area have been carrying out a silent revolution. They have taken up fish breeding. They have mechanized the harvesting of scallop beds. They have modernized their fishing fleet. The seaweed

collectors have mechanized the harvesting of algae. Little by little, young people have been rediscovering a trade that has grown less unrewarding. At Conquet, for example, the average age of the fishermen is less than thirty-six.

"It was off to a fine start," Henri Didou repeats. "But the momentum will be lost unless the government compensates the damage at 100%."

Compensation, to be sure—but also prevention of future catastrophes. Which

means curbing the multinational companies, the owners or renters of oil tankers, who don't care if they are jeopardizing the future of the entire coastal population.

The *Amoco Cadiz* had barely run aground when another tanker became dramatically noticeable in the Bay of Audierne. An unidentified tanker. Taking advantage of the general confusion, it had calmly flushed out its tanks. No doubt about it, the sign was right: "The sea of Brittany—a foul mess." □

## And on France's Other Coast . . .

"... the Mediterranean has the worst oil pollution of any major sea in the world for which data are available; 108 milligrams of spilled oil per square meter per year as compared to 17.45 milligrams in the North Atlantic. Of all the world's oil pollution, an estimated one-eighth to one-fourth occurs in the Mediterranean Sea. And the Mediterranean contains a mere 1

percent of the global ocean surface.

"The problem is made infinitely worse by the 430 billion tons of pollutants that enter the sea from land-based sources every year (mostly via rivers), [including] the sewage from 120 Mediterranean cities, 90 percent of which is dumped into the sea untreated. . . ." (Don Hinrichsen, in the March 29 *Christian Science Monitor*.)

## 'A New Layer of Feminist Activists Emerges'

# 8,000 in English Canada Celebrate International Women's Day

By Andrea Goth and Frank Rooney

TORONTO—From the kitchens and the schools, from the offices and the factories, women and male supporters totaling over 8,000 united for International Women's Day activities in English Canada, March 5-11. They came together in meetings, information days, symposiums, rallies, and demonstrations in ten cities.

For the first time since the beginning of the decade, their actions renewed the process of drawing together different struggles and activities into a single, strong chorus against growing attacks on women.

"We've done it," said Jannit Rabinovitch, an activist in the Vancouver women's day organizing committee. "The next time the women's movement . . . calls people to action, the idea of unity within the movement will have a lot more credibility."

### Cross-country Actions

Québécois women have celebrated March 8 for several years now, and this year 3,000 marched in Montréal. But what was new was the extension of celebrations across English Canada.

Organizing for the actions began last year in Vancouver, when the British Columbia Federation of Women called "on

women's organizations . . . on women in labor and political organizations as well as organizations of the oppressed, such as Native and immigrant organizations" to "organize on a national level" for protests on International Women's Day.

The BCFW call was taken up across the country. In Toronto, an appeal outlining the themes of the protest was issued by a group of women from women's service organizations, the abortion movement, the trade unions, the lesbian community, and revolutionary socialist women.

The themes, which formed the basis for the Toronto International Women's Day Coalition, included: women's control of their own bodies, with special mention of the serious attack on abortion rights by the government and the right wing; child care; against cutbacks in social services and education; full employment rights and an end to all discrimination in the work force; rights for lesbians, Native, immigrant, and Black women; and an end to violence against women.

The same themes ran through protests and celebrations across the country: "We're here to take action," coalition spokeswoman Carolyn Egan told the Toronto rally March 11, "to defend the rights

of the majority of women and of the most oppressed."

### Broad Support

Broad support gathered for the actions in almost every city testifies to the importance of these issues.

Actual organizing for International Women's Day activities involved nearly every important women's liberation organization in each city, and many others besides: rape crisis centers, child-care activists, women's bookstores, cultural collectives, lesbian organizations, NDP women's committees, groups of union women, and left groups.

Endorsements came from labor councils; locals of several different unions; local and provincial bodies of the New Democratic Party (Canadian Social Democracy); gay organizations; immigrant and exile groups (notably from the Chilean exile community); and from such individuals as Grace Hartman, president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE—the country's largest union), Ontario Federation of Labor President Cliff Pilkey, former federal NDP leader David Lewis, and former Ontario NDP leader Stephen Lewis.

Of the far-left organizations, however,

only the Revolutionary Workers League/Ligue Ouvrière Révolutionnaire (section of the Fourth International in the Canadian state) actively built the protests across the country. The RWL/LOR's activity has helped to spark the beginning of a new discussion among feminists on the relation between the autonomous women's movement and the struggle for socialism.

### Working Women Join Protests

The focus of demands against the economic and social injustices women suffer daily was highlighted across the country by another new and vitally important feature of the women's day actions—active involvement of working women in organizing the protests, and in the protests themselves.

- In Vancouver, a March 5 information day centering on the theme of women and work attracted 600 persons. Presentations and discussions were held on organizing the unorganized, the concept of the double day of work at home and on the job, women in the trade unions, and women and unemployment. More than a dozen unions either endorsed the actions or were represented by participants in various workshops given by female steelworkers, postal workers, government employees, office workers, and bus drivers.

- A symposium of 250 and a demonstration of 100 in Edmonton were marked by the solidarity expressed with striking women workers at the Parkland Nursing Home. The year-long Parkland strike for union recognition and decent wages has become an important political issue in the province. "Our victory," Parkland workers' leader Haddie Jahner told women's day protesters, "will be a victory for all women as well as trade unionists."

- A turnout of 300 women and men exceeded all expectations at an evening of displays, speeches, and music organized by members of the Steelworkers Local 1650 Women's Committee in Sudbury, Ontario. Building on this success, the committee is planning an April 6 meeting on women in the work force.

- Organized Working Women, a cross-union women's group which helped stimulate the Sudbury action, also helped organize the Toronto protest and celebration, working with women from teachers federations, CUPE, the Public Service Alliance, and other unions to gather support from union locals and bring a large number of women to the rally and demonstration of over 1,200.

- And in Toronto, Regina, Saskatoon, and Vancouver the actions highlighted the struggle of the Service, Office, and Retail Workers Union of Canada, the union that is taking on Canada's big banking monopolies—and winning. SORWUC representatives spoke at events in each of these cities. Their message was simple. As

SORWUC organizer Heather McNeill told the Toronto rally: "Women need unions need women."

Strong participation of lesbian activists in almost every city was also significant, as was the contingent of immigrant women on the Toronto march. The Committee Against the Deportation of Immigrant Women, which organized the contingent, is protesting Canadian government attempts to deport Jamaican mothers for allegedly falsifying entry documents.

### More Bread, More Roses

The March 5-11 actions represent a real potential for the reemergence of the women's liberation movement in English Canada. "This is a springtime of the women's movement," commented an edi-

torial in the March 20 *Socialist Voice*, a biweekly paper reflecting the views of the RWL/LOR. "Our actions saw the emergence of a new layer of feminist activists, mostly young people and mostly workers. Rallies and marches marked the flowering of a new unity among participants in different struggles of the women's movement. . . ."

"More than ever before the women's movement was speaking to the majority of women, to the most oppressed and exploited—working women, lesbians, immigrants. . . ."

"International Women's Day actions demonstrated a new kind of unity. The links created through these protests can help to forge unity for a truly massive women's movement—a movement that reaches into every kitchen, office, and factory in the country." □

## 3,000 March in Montréal

By Claire Chamberland

MONTREAL—This year, March 8 undoubtedly acquired greater importance than ever before. In Montréal, various women's groups, trade unions, political and student organizations, and civic associations celebrated International Women's Day from February 20 to March 11. Far and wide, March 8 took the shape of debates and political festivals.

All of these activities in general attracted a good number of persons. One example is the "Ten days of reflection on ten years of women's struggles" at the University of Montréal, in which an average of 600 persons participated each evening. At the Sainte-Justine hospital in Montréal, eighty women and men workers attended a film showing at the workplace.

The largest activity in Québec was the March 8 demonstration in Montréal, organized by the Québec Federation of Labor, Confederation of National Trade Unions, and the Québec Teachers Union, in which some 3,000 persons participated. The main demand of the demonstration was for paid maternity leaves.

The march included contingents from unions, student groups, independent women's groups, the National Abortion Rights Coordinating Committee, gay rights groups, a number of cities, and political organizations, including the Communist League (Marxist-Leninist) of Canada, En Lutte (In Struggle), and the Ligue Ouvrière Révolutionnaire-Revolutionary Workers League, the section of the Fourth International in the Canadian state.

Unfortunately, the joint trade-union committee organizing the demonstration refused to allow women's groups and others to participate in planning the action, and denied feminist organizations the

right to speak at the evening rally. Nevertheless, in contrast to the innumerable competing activities of previous years, this year's March 8 was unified. This was especially true for the various women's groups in Montréal, which assembled to form a single contingent for the demonstration, and to plan a day of workshops on March 11 which drew more than 250 women.

In some other cities in Québec, the trade unions joined with other organizations to plan for March 8.

In Québec City, for example, the Confederation of National Trade Unions and the Québec Teachers Union, together with women's groups and some political organizations, including the LOR, organized an evening rally that drew between 150 and 200 persons. In Sherbrooke, 150 persons attended a debate on the status of women organized by the Federative Association of University Students. En Lutte, the LOR, and a representative of a women's group were invited to present their views on the struggle of women.

In the Laurentides, fifteen unions organized a speakout on the issue of maternity leaves. In several other cities, such as Baie Comeau, Drummondville, Trois-Rivières, and Cowansville, International Women's Day was celebrated as well.

However, while union women participated in greater numbers than previously, there is still a long way to go. The unions as a whole did not really take charge of organizing a turnout, and in several areas actions did not take place because of a considerable delay in publicizing them.

In addition, however important the question of maternity leaves may be, broader issues of women's oppression, such as the right to abortion, child care,

and equal pay for equal work would have attracted a larger number of women.

Above all, next year's March 8 activities must be organized more democratically, and must be open to participation by all organizations interested in planning activities. A way must be found to involve members of women's groups in making decisions.

In regard to the women's groups, it was apparent that the women's movement has taken a qualitative leap since last year. This could be seen in the discussions on the various aspects of women's oppression, as well as on what demands to raise and how best to organize so as to reach women still isolated in their homes, and how to make for more consistent exchanges

among the various women's groups.

This last consideration led the women participating in the March 11 action in Montréal to propose that a similar activity be held a few months from now. In addition the National Abortion Rights Coordinating Committee is planning a week of activities in April to renew the struggle for these elementary rights. □

## Several Clinics in U.S. Hit by Terrorist Violence

# New Wave of Attacks on Right to Abortion

By Matilde Zimmermann

When the U.S. Congress ended federal funding for most abortions in mid-1977, the immediate victims were poor women, particularly Blacks and other oppressed minorities.

This attack on the rights of poor women demanded a united, powerful response from the entire women's movement—the type of reaction that unfortunately did not occur.

It is now clear that passage of the Hyde Amendment by Congress was only the opening round of a challenge to every woman's right to abortion.

During the first few months of 1978, antiabortionists in and out of government pressed ahead on a number of fronts.

On February 28, the city of Akron, Ohio, passed the harshest antiabortion law in the country. The campaign to pass this ordinance received national attention, and opponents of women's rights in other cities are already planning to follow the Akron City Council's lead.

The new law requires that a woman desiring an abortion be told that a fetus is "an unborn human life from the moment of conception," and that the various stages of fetal development be explained to her in such a way as to reinforce this idea.

Further, she must be warned of the "potentially grave physical and psychological complications which can result," among them "depression, guilt, or suicide." An abortion clinic is required to notify the husband or, in the case of a minor, the parents of a woman requesting an abortion.

Three of the four abortion clinics in Akron said before the ordinance was passed that its enactment would force them to close down.

Accompanying the legal offensive has been a wave of terrorist attacks on abortion clinics around the country. In at least thirteen cities, clinics have been hit by firebombings and other violent attacks. Some of these have done as much as \$250,000 damage. Clinics in Columbus,

Ohio, and Burlington, Vermont, had to vacate their premises because the damage was so extensive.

The president of March for Life, a national antiabortion group, disclaimed responsibility for the attacks and suggested the perpetrators might have been "distraught abortees and friends or clinic employees."

The truth is that ultimate responsibility rests with the government that is driving through the attack on women's right to abortion.

President Carter took the opportunity just two days after the most serious act of violence—the firebombing of a Columbus, Ohio, clinic that was full and in operation—to restate his belief that "abortions are the taking of a human life."

He said nothing about the violence in Columbus, instead threatening to "tighten up" if it appeared that women were "abusing" the provisions of the law allowing federal payment for abortions under very restricted circumstances.

There has also been an escalation of disruptive pickets and sit-ins at abortion clinics. Antiabortion picketers in Fairfax, Virginia, were acquitted of trespass charged in October 1977, because the judge said "they had a good-faith belief that their actions were necessary to save lives." Attorneys for the antiabortionists had compared their clients to antiwar and civil-rights protesters.

Among other things, the "picketers" took over the clinic's telephones and told women needing abortions the facility was closed. On February 10 the Fairfax protesters won a ruling from Judge Mason Grove that the Virginia state law permitting abortions was unconstitutional.

New laws on both the state and federal level will limit the ability of various categories of women to obtain abortions. An Illinois law went into effect January 1 requiring the written consent of both parents or the formal intercession of a judge in order for a woman under eighteen to

obtain an abortion. A Congressional committee has recommended passage of a bill allowing employers to deny female workers medical coverage and sick-leave benefits for abortions.

The Supreme Court is looking for ways to chip away at its own 1973 decision legalizing abortion. On March 6 it agreed to review a Pennsylvania antiabortion statute previously struck down as violating the January 22, 1973, Supreme Court ruling. The Pennsylvania law requires a doctor who performs abortions to maintain life-support machinery and attempt to keep the fetus alive if possible.

The broadening attacks on abortion rights have one clear purpose: to place ever-increasing numbers of women in the situation already facing poor women. For them—with public funds for abortion cut off in some thirty-five states, abortion has been all but made illegal. They are forced to make extreme sacrifices to raise between \$250 and \$500—a process that can take months, thereby making their abortions more expensive and more complicated. Their alternatives are grim: illegal or self-induced abortions or being forced to bear children against their will. □

### Fresh Protests in Nicaragua

One thousand persons marched through the streets of the Monimbo barrio in the city of Masaya, Nicaragua, on March 27. The march marked a renewal of protests against the dictatorship of President Anastasio Somoza Debayle.

The people of Monimbo are mostly Nahuatl Indians who have emigrated from Mexico. The barrio was the scene of an anti-Somoza uprising in late February that was brutally put down by the National Guard. As many as 200 residents were killed at that time.

Another street demonstration against Somoza was also held March 27 in the Santa Rosa barrio of Masaya. Masaya is about twenty miles east of the capital city of Managua.

## The More Food There Is, the More People Go Hungry

By Ernest Mandel



"Wouldn't it be better to move toward an immediate solution to hunger and malnutrition through a more rational form of social organization . . . ?"

[The following article appeared in the February 11-17 issue of *Cuadernos Para el Dialogo*, a Spanish weekly magazine. The introductory note is by *Cuadernos Para el Dialogo*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

The third world war has already begun. It is a war for world control of the production, distribution, dumping, and price-fixing of basic foodstuffs. It is a struggle by the chemical industry for control over phosphate deposits and other elements used as fertilizers to increase the productivity of the land. (This is what is behind the Sahara conflict.) The third world war is already being fought. It is a full-scale, total war, even though the fighting is silent. Silent because the screams of the millions of human beings who die every year from starvation, malnutrition, and plain hunger do not reach the little oases of the advanced world.

Ernest Mandel, a fifty-four-year-old economist and the most representative theoretician of the Fourth International, describes below, in an article written for *Cuadernos*, the "way the population of the Third World has been condemned to death by starvation in the name of the sacred market economy."

\* \* \*

The famine of 1974 has already been forgotten. Last year's harvest in the Northern Hemisphere—except for the Soviet Union—was excellent. From 1972-73 to 1976-77, world production of all types of cereal grains grew from 1,270 to 1,477 million tons; in other words, it increased by more than 16 percent. The production of wheat increased by 23 percent, going from 337 to 416 million tons.

You might think that, in face of the bad world economic situation, there is at least some cause for rejoicing in this one bright spot of the international economy. But that would not take into account the perverse logic of the market economy. Because for the market economy, "overproduction"—even of foodstuffs and even in a world where half the people do not get enough to eat—is bad news, not good news. It is a disaster for food producers, both large-scale and small-scale. It causes a drop in prices. In fact, the price of wheat on the world market dropped within two years to less than half its record 1974-75 level.

So the "logical" thing happens: produc-

tion is curtailed in order to "protect" prices. On August 12, 1977, the deputy director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture told a White House news conference that the Carter administration had decided to require American wheat producers to leave 20 percent of their usable land untilled, if they wanted to take advantage of administration measures to keep prices up. There was to be a 10 percent reduction in land devoted to fodder and grain for livestock.

Just as similar policies in the late 1960s and early 1970s caused famines in the Third World during the period 1972-74, so the measures being taken today to restrict production artificially in order to force up grain prices will cause new famines by the end of this decade. It is an insane merry-go-round. And our great economic and political experts still stubbornly insist that it is better to condemn millions of farmers to uncertain, fluctuating, and generally inadequate incomes, to condemn millions of inhabitants of the Third World to living permanently under the shadow of hunger, than to sacrifice the principle of the sacrosanct "market economy."

The world prices of cereals are determined by the fluctuations in supply and demand of the agricultural *surpluses* produced in the big exporting countries (the United States, Canada, Argentina, Australia, and to a lesser degree France). These world prices in turn determine the cyclical expansion and contraction of the amount of land surface that is sown and the size of the harvest. Obviously you would have to be a perverse and totally utopian "subversive" to suggest that it would be better for everybody if farmers were guaranteed incomes equal to the national average (or the average industrial wage), on the condition that they increase their production in order to maintain stable, low food prices and assure a surplus to be distributed free to the poor of the Third World and the imperialist countries. The strangest thing of all is that, in the long run, this "subversive" and "utopian" solution would be less costly from a "purely" economic point of view. But can we as human beings ever approach things on a "purely" economic basis when the ability to eat—that is, the *survival*—of millions and millions of people is in question?

It simply is not true that hunger is caused by some Malthusian inevitability, according to which population increases more rapidly than food production. In the course of the fifteen years since 1962, world production of cereals has increased more than 50 percent, much more rapidly than the population of our planet. The annual rate of increase of the population has averaged 1.9 percent; the rate of increase of cereal production, on the other hand, has averaged 2.9 percent.

The fact that hunger continues to exist, casting its shadow over entire nations, is ascribable basically to three things: sharp

annual fluctuations in production, caused by sharp shifts in world market prices, that is to say, in the profits to be made; the growing shortage of grains in the Southern Hemisphere, which is caused basically by the increasing penetration of capitalism into the countryside and the commercialization of primitive agriculture; the problems of buying power and profits, which mean that malnutrition, lack of food, and outright hunger can increase even in face of overproduction.

In other words, if hunger continues to increase, it is not because too many babies are born. It is because of capitalism, with its chain of irrational and inhuman consequences.

"Capitalism has nothing to do with it," some people will say on the basis of the simple thesis that grain shortages in Third World countries are essentially the result of the backwardness of agricultural technology, that is to say, the very low return per unit of land. Antiquated technology, tools, and methods of work: that's the source of the problem.

Obviously there is a grain of truth in this. A large-scale modernization of agricultural production in the Southern Hemisphere would undoubtedly double or triple production, and thus make it possible to feed two or three times more people than live there now (with ecological consequences still to be studied).

But modernization of agricultural techniques and procedures *under capitalism* would lead to results not foreseen by the so-called "experts" in technology and economics, results that are unfavorable from the point of view of the average nutritional level of the local population. Among "backward" populations, almost all agricultural production is subsistence farming, basically of foodstuffs. The introduction of modern techniques, combined with private ownership and private enterprises, replaces the criterion of nutrition (how many human beings can be fed?) with the criterion of private profit (how much money can be made?). And therefore commercial products, almost entirely for export, replace foodstuffs.

The logic of production for private enrichment is inevitable. When you can make more money growing cattle feed to be sent to Europe (eventually producing a surplus of milk and butter in the Common Market countries) than in growing food for the local population, then that is the direction agriculture will go. In Mali, for example, while tens of thousands of children were slowly starving during the great famine that swept the Sahel in 1974, the export of peanuts and peanut oil increased.

The "green revolution" produces much less positive results in terms of nutritional levels than might be supposed. In addition to the disastrous ecological consequences of the massive use of chemical fertilizers on irrigated land, there are even more terrible social effects.

The "green revolution" has above all meant the introduction of *capitalist* agriculture into areas previously overwhelmingly dominated by subsistence farming. The transformation of this type of farming into capitalist agriculture means an inevitable social polarization among the population, a constant increase in the number of landless peasants, a growing cutting off of poor peasants from access to the land, a massive exodus from the countryside, and the progressive replacement of human labor power by farming machinery.

And since there is no parallel expansion of industry and of employment in industry, this whole process means that a growing proportion of the former peasantry is pushed to the fringes of society, either in the countryside or in the slums of the big cities. And the more this impoverished population is cut off from direct access to the land, the more seriously it suffers from malnutrition, even if its cash income rises a little (primarily through occasional work in the service sector, a hidden form of unemployment).

Finally, there is the problem of the distribution of foodstuffs. Food consumption and nutritional level are not direct functions of the production of foodstuffs—at least not under capitalism. It is also a function of the distribution of wealth. Hence the fundamental paradox of capitalism that you can have increasing undernourishment of entire layers of the population while at the same time there are growing, unsalable "stockpiles" of food. This has happened repeatedly in the past, most recently during the 1930s. It is happening again today.

At the end of 1977 there was an unsold "surplus" of 300,000 tons of butter, 400,000 tons of beef, millions of liters of wine, and a million tons of milk in the Common Market countries. But at the same time, as a result of massive unemployment, there were millions of families in Western Europe—without mentioning the innumerable old people on social security—eating less and less butter and meat because they could not afford them.

In Britain, formerly the "ideal" welfare state, 15 percent of the population now live under the poverty level, which is characterized above all by chronic undernourishment. And do we need to point out that a few dozen kilometers from the "tourists' paradise" of the southern coast of Spain, there are 300,000 Andalusian agricultural workers who make do with a diet of bread and tomatoes for the better part of the year because of underemployment?

Wouldn't it be better to move toward an immediate solution to the problem that exists today of hunger and malnutrition through a more rational form of social and economic organization, rather than concentrating on some imaginary population explosion that is supposed to cause terrible shortages . . . in a century or so? □

## Geisel Offers a New Disguise for Military Rule

[The following appeared as an editorial in the December 1977 issue of *Marcha Operaria*, a bulletin published by revolutionary Marxists in Brazil. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

\* \* \*

The general line of ruling-class policy for the period that is unfolding now seems clearly confirmed. Unless—to quote the bourgeois press—"unforeseen or extraordinary" events occur, everything should follow the path laid out by the Geisel and "Castelist" grouping [named after the former head of the military regime in 1964-67, General Castelo Branco].

The government is sparing no effort to prevent the rise of "extremists." On one hand, it has struck quickly at the bourgeois opposition whenever the latter has made a stab at more consistent democratic positions. On the other, it quashed the bid for the presidency by Frota [the recently dismissed minister of war and leader of the "hardliners"], which was an almost irreversible setback for the "hardliners."

In this way, the government has been able to stabilize its position, rejecting as ineffective a further hardening of the regime, while at the same time avoiding a course that might create openings for a strong, organized mass movement to develop.

The solution offered by Geisel—which will have to be put to the test by his successor—is to "institutionalize" the regime, defusing the criticisms of "emergency rule" made by the MDB [Brazilian Democratic Movement, the tolerated opposition party] and by sections of the ruling class, while at the same time preserving the dictatorship through the regime's notorious "guarantees" and "defense mechanisms." In fact, they are striving to consolidate the dictatorial regime once and for all, by making a rule out of what was originally passed off as an exception.

Reality turned out to be in stark contradiction to the illusions of those who had believed that the regime was undergoing a process of democratization by the Geisel government, or who had thought that the dictatorship was on its last legs.

As a matter of fact, the dominant currents within the ruling bloc are setting up a gradual process of institutionalization, confined, moreover, to what is seen as the necessary minimum. This dominant current is not inclined to run the risk of a democratic opening, such as might be created by convening some type of constituent assembly, narrow as it might be.



FIGUEIREDO: Geisel's successor.

Above all, the current that favors institutionalization is still strong enough to impose its views both on the masses and on the various sections of the ruling class. The removal of Frota, and the exclusion of the most advanced elements in the MDB from all participation in transforming the regime, offer the most convincing proof of the predominance of the Geisel line.

To carry out its plans, the dominant current does not rule out the possibility of dealing with sections of the MDB. That is what Portela's call for a "dialogue" with the top layers of the bourgeois opposition is meant to accomplish.

Such a "dialogue" is limited to whether or not the MDB will support the long-range plans of the present government and its future successor. The aim is to try to broaden the ruling bloc's base of support, and isolate the more radical elements who call for opening up a process of democratization through convening a freely elected constituent assembly.

In this respect, what Geisel and his successors are really seeking to do is to sidestep the path of democratization, even with the limitations proposed by various bourgeois or petty-bourgeois sectors (Order of Brazilian Attorneys, MDB, intellectuals, liberals).

More to the point, both Geisel and his successor want to maintain the dictatorial regime with new forms and disguises, making it better equipped to defend itself against international criticism and internal differences.

The "dialogue" is important for the elections as well. By dividing the MDB and demoralizing some of its elements, the likelihood of a defeat for ARENA [Alliance for National Renewal, the official party of the dictatorship] could be considerably lessened, and Geisel's plan would win greater support within his own faction and within the ruling bloc.

The plans and pretensions of the dictatorship also include winning greater sympathy from the exploited masses. We need only look at the new projects that are being drawn up for the future dictator [probably General Figueiredo, the present chief of military intelligence and the candidate officially in line of succession] to "upgrade the conditions of the lower layers."

Whether or not this plan will be fully carried out is an open question at the moment, for the following reasons:

First, because given the existing relationship of forces, the possibility of a temporary retreat by the regime on its institutionalization plan cannot be ruled out (this has already happened several times under Geisel).

Second, because a change in the situation brought about by an upsurge of social struggles could completely upset the current plans, and force the government to come up with a new proposal for stabilizing the situation.

However, what seems to us to be beyond all doubt is that the proposed reforms drawn up by the dominant current within the regime will be incapable of stabilizing the political and social situation in the country.

The minor breakthroughs (such as institutionalization) included in the proposals will not satisfy the growing demands of the broadest and most significant social layers (workers, students, intellectuals). Despite their narrowness, these demands can spark broader struggles.

The attempt at institutionalization, even if it demonstrates that the currents favoring the maintenance of the dictatorship are still largely dominant, also shows that the bourgeoisie can no longer act merely according to whim, and feels compelled to accept formulas that in principle may aid in the regeneration of the mass movement.

The current advocating institutionalization is trying to contain this danger as much as possible, but cannot prevent it outright. It also wants to make sure that a budding mass movement does not latch onto these few concessions. In an attempt to derail social struggles, the government may even allow the formation of new political parties oriented toward winning the support of the masses.

To meet the present and future situations, the revolutionary vanguard must take a clear position. It is necessary to expose the plans of the ruling class, to avoid creating illusions among the masses; in other words, to avoid confusing the positive side of the measures the government has been forced to take with the genuine interests of the masses and their struggles.

Moreover, it is essential to understand that the ruling class is in a situation in which it cannot simply refuse to grant concessions, and that this creates opportunities for the development of mass struggles with tighter organization. Accordingly, we must be able to take advantage of the fissures that are widening bit by bit in the rigid structure of the military dictatorship.

To be sure, the masses cannot struggle directly for power today. But this does not mean that their struggles should be limited to purely economic and trade-union issues. The situation shows that the masses cannot win political freedom (freedom to organize and struggle) except by fighting to obtain it and forcing the bourgeoisie to back down. It also shows that the masses can wrest concessions from the ruling class right now.

Precisely because they cannot yet struggle directly for power, the masses (the working class above all) still have a long struggle ahead of them to force the ruling class to make concessions while the bourgeois regime remains in power.

Consequently, the basic struggles of the masses in the economic sphere will center around the fight for higher wages and better working conditions. In the political sphere, they will focus on the struggle for democratic rights (freedom of speech and association; an end to censorship, political incarceration and torture), culminating in the fight for a constituent assembly, in which the masses can express and fight for their demands and interests, have a say over national decisions, and win their basic demands.

Failing to grasp that the struggles of the masses, now and in the future, must take on a political character, means forfeiting the political arena to the various ruling-class factions and falling into the most shortsighted and dangerous type of economism.

Democratic freedoms and a constituent assembly, viewed from the standpoint of the objective needs and demands of the exploited and oppressed masses, have no-

thing in common with the interests of the bourgeoisie.

On the contrary, what characterizes our situation as a backward country is precisely the bourgeoisie's incapacity to carry out such a program, which can only be fulfilled through mass struggle, and can only be fully guaranteed by the working class taking power.

Struggles for democratic rights must therefore be seen as part of the proletariat's revolutionary struggle for power, supported by the social layers that are also fighting for this program (peasants, urban petty bourgeoisie).

On the other hand, what must be fought is the reformist strategy that separates these struggles from the struggle of the masses for power. With such a strategy, the reformists try to convert the struggles of the masses for freedom into mere support to the fight for "democracy" of the bourgeoisie or petty-bourgeois sectors.

The reformists call for a class alliance with the "democratic bourgeoisie," and try to forestall independent struggles of the masses. In the name of such an alliance, they say it is necessary to limit the program, demands, and methods of struggle of the exploited.

## Foes of Apartheid Protest Davis Cup Match

More than 4,000 anti-apartheid demonstrators marched and rallied in Nashville, Tennessee, March 18, outside the U.S.-South Africa Davis Cup tennis matches. For several months national pressure had been building against Nashville's Vanderbilt University for playing host to the South African team.

The march, sponsored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), was the culmination of a week of protest activities. The largest of the preliminary actions took place March 17, when nearly 3,000 students from local Black colleges marched to the Vanderbilt gymnasium.

The Davis Cup protests have from the beginning involved the entire question of U.S. complicity with the racist regime in South Africa. As Benjamin Hooks, executive director of the NAACP, said to the March 18 rally: "We've come here to protest the brutal murder of Steve Biko; we've come here to protest the jailing of thousands of Blacks in South Africa; we've come here to say we support economic sanctions against South Africa; we've come here to urge U.S. banks to withdraw their loans from South Africa; we've come here to protest the Davis Cup and Vanderbilt University's complicity with apartheid; and we've come here to tell this nation to stop inviting snakes to the dinner table."

One of the organizers of the March 18

In this respect, the strategy of the reformists is what gives democratic struggles a reformist content. What must be combated in the reformists is their policy of inter-class alliances, the subordination of the mass movement to bourgeois sectors, and ultimately, their theory of stages as a whole, as well as the tactics that derive from it.

To us, the program, demands, and methods of struggle and organization of the masses are limited only by their ability to put them into practice. Our role is to promote development of this ability.

Democratic demands must be combined with *transitional* ones (such as a sliding scale of wages and hours). The fight must be waged with independent organizational methods (through organizing plant committees, action committees, and so on), and methods of struggle (demonstrations and strikes) that are made urgent by the mass movement.

Revolutionary activity in the period ahead must be carried out with such perspectives and orientation. To ensure success, it is essential to build the nucleus of a party capable of carrying out a revolutionary working-class policy. □

protest commented that "there are more demonstrators outside than spectators inside." In fact, there were only 1,260 persons in the 9,654-seat arena for the final singles matches, and throughout the tournament paid admissions fell far short of what Vanderbilt University needed to break even.

The demonstrations proceeded in a peaceful and orderly fashion despite the provocation of a massive show of force by local authorities. Nashville police were mobilized, helicopters circled overhead, and players were escorted by armed guards in riot gear. □

## Chilean Christian Democrats Released

Twelve leaders of the Chilean Christian Democratic Party have been released from their internal exile in the city of Arica, Latin-Reuters reported March 3.

The twelve were banished from Santiago in January and sent to remote villages in the Andes Mountains. A court later ruled that the government could not confine them in the villages without convicting them of a crime, so they were moved to a hotel in Arica.

Among the twelve were a former senator, several attorneys, two trade unionists, and student leader Guillermo Yunge Bustamante. Yunge helped organize street protests against Pinochet's January plebiscite.

# After the Defeats in Latin America

By Livio Maitan

The following article is a very limited attempt to draw a balance sheet of fifteen years of struggle in Latin America and to identify the economic, social, and political tendencies that are operating in the present period. Its objective is to pose questions rather than give answers. Even where answers are attempted, these are only hypotheses that I hope can stimulate the discussion, since this is already lagging behind the needs of the organizations involved in the struggle.

### Fifteen Years of Rising Mass Struggle

In the period following the second world war, the Cuban revolution represented a major turning point. It was not in itself the cause of the continent-wide crisis that has gripped Latin America. The crisis was the result of the end of the economic conditions engendered first by the world war and then by the Korean boom, coupled with the explosion of the contradictions of the national-populist movements after they had held hegemony over the broad masses in many countries for two decades.

But the Cuban revolution had considerable consequences. By establishing a workers state, it introduced a qualitatively new element of imbalance in the system, and it stimulated manifold advances in political consciousness. And so, it is right to put it at the center of an analysis of the period as a whole.

Let us briefly review the most important events in chronological order. In 1959-60, there was the victory of the revolution and the establishment of a workers state in Cuba. In 1961-63, there was a resurgence of the peasant movement and a wave of workers struggles in Peru.

In 1963-64, the struggles of the workers, peasants, and petty-bourgeois layers assumed more radical forms in Brazil, with repercussions in the armed forces. In 1964, there was a new upsurge in Bolivia, with the overthrow of the Paz Estenssoro regime. In 1965, there was the uprising in Santo Domingo.

In 1967, there was a new radicalization in Bolivia and the launching of guerrilla warfare. At the same time, there were the first signs of a new radicalization in Argentina (the crisis in the Tucumán region). In 1968, there were struggles and mobilizations by students and workers in Brazil, the upsurge of the student movement in Mexico, and a rise in the combativity of the masses in Uruguay.

In 1969, the Córdoba uprising ushered in a turn in Argentina. In 1970, there was the victory of Unidad Popular (UP—Popular Unity) in Chile, which was accompanied and followed by big mobilizations of the students, peasants, and working class.

In 1972-73, there were strikes, mass mobilizations, and urban guerrilla actions in Argentina; the military dictatorship fell; and in early 1973 there was a situation close to a prerevolutionary crisis. In 1973 also, there was a general strike with factory occupations in Uruguay.

The balance sheet unfortunately is a simple one. These upsurges ended in an impressive series of defeats. In 1964, the military dictatorship was established in Brazil. In 1965, the Santo Domingo uprising was smothered by imperialist intervention. In August 1971 there was the victory of Banzer in Bolivia. In July 1973, the general strike in Uruguay was defeated. In September 1973, the UP government was overthrown in Chile. In 1976, there was the military coup in Argentina.

Such defeats are the landmarks of an epoch. Their breadth and the systematic character of the repression that they brought with them exceed all historical precedents on the continent.

Some people, even in the revolutionary Marxist movement, have rejected and continue to reject such a conclusion for Argentina. In my opinion, we should dispose of false questions such as whether the defeat there was a historic one or not. Likewise, we should realize that the fact that a working class endowed with considerable organizational strength and a great tradition of struggle proved able immediately after a grave setback to wage some battles does not automatically mean that it was not defeated.

For still stronger reasons, we cannot accept any argument that the Argentine proletariat did not suffer a defeat because it did not get involved in a conflict between two sections of the bourgeoisie. The very fact that a working class that played the leading role in a powerful upsurge between 1969 and 1973, and which in 1975 organized massively in the Coordinadoras [coordinating committees], remained a spectator in a situation gravely affecting its fate indicates the scope of its defeat.

The indisputable fact is that for long decades the Argentine working class has not experienced such severe repression, lost so many cadres, nor been forced to give up so much ground in every area (living standards, basic democratic rights,

freedom to organize, and so on).

Moreover, the 1976 coup marked the conclusion of an entire epoch in the political history of the Argentine proletariat. Over a thirty-year period, the Peronist movement had many ups and downs, even in its relations with the broad masses. In this instance, however, there is no question but that Peronism met with a historic defeat, *its* historic defeat.

It is not excluded that Peronism may still feed some currents, reappear in some form, or regain a marginal influence. But it will never again be recognized by the great majority of the working class as its leadership.

This development is not the result of the Peronists being replaced by a working-class leadership, either revolutionary or reformist. Rather, it has so far involved an absence of leadership; thus, I think that my estimate of the events in Argentina is all the more justified. And I think that this conclusion can be extended more generally.

Has not the defeat in Bolivia made possible the establishment of the least unstable regime the country has known in decades? Did not the defeat in Uruguay precipitate profound structural and political changes? Has Chile ever experienced an upset of such proportions in its entire history?

In characterizing the period, all these considerations seem far more decisive than how much resistance the working class put up or even how long the mass movement remains crushed.

### Origin of the Defeat

For years, in the prisons, in the underground, or in exile, the Latin American militants have been puzzling over the causes of their defeats. Many of them agree in general on an answer: There was no revolutionary leadership; there was no revolutionary party.

This answer is correct, but risks being too abstract. In the period of rise, a series of countries did in fact experience revolutionary or prerevolutionary situations that the working class failed to take advantage of. But these situations occurred in markedly different political and socioeconomic contexts.

In one category of countries, to begin with, the working class is small and has only a slight specific weight in the society. I do not mean to suggest that in such countries it is necessary to adopt a strategy of revolution by stages, or that we have to water down the theory of permanent revolution. However, the fact that the working class represents only a very small part of the working people in these countries is an obstacle to a victorious conclusion of a revolutionary dynamic even in a context of profound crisis. In the case of Santo Domingo, for example, the political weakness of the insurrectionary movement



was not unrelated to the structural weakness of the working class. This weakness, moreover, made it easier for a section of the bourgeoisie to gain hegemony over the insurrection.

There is a second category of countries in which the working class, while having considerable or even a predominant specific weight, did not before or during the crisis achieve political and organizational independence. We are touching here on a crucial question for understanding a half century of Latin American history, one whose concrete implications we ourselves have sometimes tended to lose sight of.

On this question, as well, we have to avoid slipping into any mechanistic approach. At bottom, structural factors have unquestionably played a role. But political factors have also exerted an influence, and in the last analysis, a decisive one. I am referring to the fact that the first attempts to organize the workers movement, especially in certain countries, followed foreign models. But most of all I am referring to the consequence of the Stalinization of the Communist parties, which sabotaged real possibilities and squandered a painfully accumulated legacy.

It was precisely the conceptions and the orientations of the Stalinists in the 1930s and during the war that facilitated the emergence and rise of the national-populist movements that have held predominant influence among the masses. The effects of this continued to be felt into the period of rise whose balance sheet I am drawing here.

In Brazil in 1963-64, the Communist Party was not a negligible force, and sections of the union movement, in São Paulo for example, were guided by class-struggle conceptions. But the overwhelming majority of the working class had not reached the level of political and organizational independence, much less the rest of the exploited masses. Their actions remained subordinated to the logic of the conflicts within the ruling classes.

In Argentina, the working class had had a very great weight for thirty years; and, beginning in the late 1960s, important sections, especially in Córdoba, freed themselves from the tutelage of the Peronists. But in their majority, even in 1973-74, the masses did not break the umbilical cord tying them to a political movement whose conservative nature had become more and more apparent.

In Bolivia, despite an extremely rich experience, very broad strata of the working people continued under the Torres regime to harbor illusions in bourgeois or petty-bourgeois currents and their organizations (for example, that of Juan Lechín).

Finally, there is the case of a country like Chile. Here a prerevolutionary crisis occurred when there was a working class with a considerable specific weight in the society and in political life, and which had long been organized in unions and parties

independent of the bourgeoisie. Moreover, during the crisis, this working class achieved a level of consciousness comparable to that of the most politicalized and militant proletariat in Western Europe.

Unquestionably, if there is an instance where the decisive factor in the defeat was the lack of a revolutionary party—which by means of a correct well-rounded strategy could have averted the dangers of mass mobilizations occurring in an uncoordinated way and dissipating their force, and could have directed the dynamic of such mobilizations toward the objective of seizing power—it is the case of Chile. In this, the reformists and neoreformists of the Socialist and Communist parties bear a very grave historic responsibility.

### Responsibility of the Castroists and Centrists

An analysis of these defeats must also take into consideration another factor, the responsibilities of the Castroist and centrist currents.

In the case of Castroism, we should never overlook the distinction between the influence of the Cuban revolution, which may be termed a structural factor, and that of Castroism as a political current. The Cuban revolution exercised a very great influence throughout the period analyzed and will continue to do so in the future, unless the imperialists succeed in overthrowing the Cuban workers state.

The Castroist current exerted a powerful force of attraction, not only for the vanguard layers of the working class and the radicalized petty bourgeoisie but also for the masses. This was a result of the prestige deriving from the victory of the revolution, as well as the impetus given by Castro and Guevara, sometimes in open conflict with the bureaucratized Communist parties, to revolutionary conceptions concerning crucial questions of the nature of the revolution and the seizure of power.

However, the Castroist current developed in a context in which a crisis had broken out or was brewing in all the national-populist movements. It acted as a pole of attraction for the sections of these movements that were in crisis, and in this area it achieved greater results than in the traditional workers movement. This had concrete political and ideological implications, inasmuch as the linkup with these currents has represented an additional obstacle to the theoretical development of the Castroist current in relation to Stalinism. Also in the last analysis, it led to its becoming adulterated by absorbing the ideological residues from which these currents had not succeeded in freeing themselves.

Most importantly, as a result of the social composition of the national-populist currents, the Castroist movement became much more integrated into the radicalized petty bourgeoisie than into the working

class. Unfortunately, the fact that the working class stood relatively apart from the process of regroupment of the revolutionary movement was not felt to be a serious deficiency. Rather it engendered substitutionist conceptions denying or greatly minimizing the role of the working class in the struggle for power.

Régis Debray's book *Revolution in the Revolution*, the Bible of thousands of Latin American revolutionists, was the most systematic expression of such an orientation. Guevara had many objections to Debray's work, and it was not in line with the document submitted by the Cuban delegation to the OLAS Conference in 1967.

Nonetheless, *Revolution in the Revolution* was published with great fanfare in Havana, and thus received the endorsement of the Fidelista leading group. And this work played a central role in the education of the Castroist current throughout the continent.

In certain countries, such as Uruguay, Chile, Brazil, and others, the Castroist current also gained influence in sectors organized by traditional workers parties. But it was precisely here that its limitations and contradictions came out most clearly. It proved incapable of consolidating its influence politically and organizationally. What is worse, because of its empiricism on the question of Stalinism, it not only did not help to advance the consciousness of the sectors under its influence but rather reinforced their ambiguity about some crucial questions, sowing disastrous illusions.

In the case of Chile, for example, Fidel's criticisms of the "peaceful road" were neutralized by his all-out support for the UP leadership. In Bolivia, Che himself counted on a section of the pro-Moscow CP and on its leader Monje to organize the support network for his guerrilla operation.

Che Guevara once said that the revolution had to be a "socialist revolution, or a caricature of a revolution." And, apart from some confused formulations, the Second Declaration of Havana repeated the conception of the permanent revolution. This was a major gain. But the course followed remained an empirical one. As long as the Cuban leadership judged that there was a possibility of a victory of the revolution in the short run in other countries in Latin America, it followed this perspective. It harked back to the best internationalist traditions and polemicized openly with the bureaucrats of the Soviet Communist Party and of the Latin American CPs.

However, following a series of setbacks, whose causes it has not yet analyzed, the Cuban leadership began to consider that a prolonged isolation of the Cuban state was inevitable. Then it not only undertook a series of diplomatic operations directed at other Latin American countries but it went

so far as to "forget" its previous general conclusions and to idealize certain national bourgeoisies and their armed forces. In the case of Peru, this had the effect of liquidating the Castroist current as a revolutionary current.

Coming to centrism, in the 1960s and 1970s, we saw a dual development. There was both the emergence of a new kind of centrism and the reemergence of a more traditional centrism (and even a combination of the two). In Bolivia, the ELN [Ejército de Liberación Nacional—National Liberation Army], which came out of Che's guerrilla movement, belongs to the first category. But the old centrism of Lechín and his more or less conscious allies (including Lora) played a much more decisive role in the 1971 defeat.

In Chile, the Socialist Party was the scene of a convergence between traditional centrists, who often had a "Trotskyist" education, and new centrists (who were called "Elenos").<sup>1</sup> The latter were more interested in stockpiling arms and in accumulating technical expertise for use when the "zero hour" came than they were in waging a consistent and principled struggle against Allende's strategy.

I cannot analyze here all the components of this new centrism. It was a byproduct of the Cuban revolution. It was also shaped, whether those involved realized it or not, both by the crisis in the international Communist movement and by the traditions and experiences of the national-populist movements. (In its initial phase, the Argentine PRT<sup>2</sup> was also influenced by a peculiar interpretation of Trotskyism.)

I will limit myself to recapitulating the criticisms the Trotskyists have made of the Chilean MIR [Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria—Movement of the Revolutionary Left]. This was the most important of these new centrist formations, which drew on many ideological sources (including even revolutionary Marxism). In the period of the UP government, it acquired a real mass influence and won an important layer of the vanguard:

1. Before the Allende victory, when the upsurge of the mass movement was al-

ready clearly taking shape, the MIR was guided by putschist and substitutionist conceptions. (The break that the leadership provoked in 1969 with a sector influenced by Trotskyism was an eloquent testimony to this.)

2. After September 1970, faced with the reality of the UP success and the mobilization of the masses, the MIR made a 180-degree turn, adopting a tail-endist attitude toward the UP. It failed to see the need to differentiate its strategy from that of the UP right from the start of the process.

3. Even when it began to differentiate itself more clearly from the UP, it hesitated to fight consistently for an alternative, revolutionary strategy. (An example of this is the empiricism with which it confronted the crucial problem of dual power and the errors it made when the "cordones industriales" [industrial belt committees] appeared.)

4. For a long period, the MIR chose to build its organization first among the students and secondly among the peasants and slum dwellers. What work it did in the proletariat was subordinated to these priorities. Even when it changed its axis, focusing much more on the working class, it concentrated its efforts in relatively marginal sections, which were supposed to be easier to penetrate. All this had very negative consequences for the composition of the organization and its ability to play an effective role at the crucial moments.

5. The organization was built on the basis of a verticalist conception, assuring total control by the leadership and its apparatus over the cadres and activists. (It is sufficient to note that no congresses were held after 1967.)

6. During the entire period of the UP government, the MIR avoided taking any clear positions on the major international questions. In this field, it limited itself to taking the Cuban revolution as its point of reference. It made no analysis of the policies of Moscow or of Peking. Fundamentally, this attitude was inspired by an underlying illusion, shared for example by the PRT of Santucho, that in this way it could maintain good relations with everybody and hopefully get material aid.

#### Balance Sheet of the Dictatorships

In drawing a balance sheet of the dictatorships, Brazil offers the best point of departure. The Brazilian regime, which was imposed and has been maintained by the most brutal force, has in fact succeeded for years in promoting substantial economic growth. In this way, it won a real social base not merely among small layers of exploiters but also among the middle and petty bourgeoisie in the cities.

Such growth has been possible, as we know, by increased exploitation of the working class (which in general has suffered impoverishment in the absolute sense), by imposing a miserable standard

of living on the lower strata of the petty bourgeoisie, and at the expense of very broad strata of the peasantry, who have either been superexploited or driven from their traditional place in society and left without perspectives.

However, these "conditions" do not appear as a debit in the eyes of the native ruling class and the imperialists, at least not as long as they can be imposed on the victims without major conflicts. So, the Brazilian example could be offered as concrete evidence that it is possible to regenerate a process of capital accumulation by establishing a new political regime in which the military and political apparatuses are tightly intertwined and in which the armed forces become in fact the dominant political party of the ruling classes.

From the standpoint of the bourgeoisie and the imperialists, the Bolivian military regime also represents a success, although more limited in scope. Since August 1971 Bolivia has undergone rather profound changes. First of all it cannot be seen as any small thing that a country whose economy has suffered from serious bottlenecks for decades achieved an annual increase of 6% in the national income between 1971 and 1976, and this even went as high as 7% in 1977.

It is no small thing either that in the recent period the increase in prices has been running at 12% a year (it will probably be 15% in 1977), after it went as high as 64% in 1974. Moreover, in the past six years monetary reserves have gone from \$34 million to \$180 million, and savings and investments have been strongly stimulated (although the foreign debt remains quite high).

However, what is more important is that the economic structure has undergone or is in the process of undergoing a considerable transformation. The economic center has shifted from the mining regions to the Santa Cruz area, the heart of the oil industry. In 1970, tin exports were 44.6% of total exports. In 1976, this figure fell to 30%, while oil exports rose from 6% to 25% of the total (and natural gas rose to 10%).

It is expected that in 1980, the mining sector as a whole will account for 52% of exports (35% for hydrocarbons), with agricultural exports accounting for about 12%. In this same year, Bolivia is supposed to be able to smelt five-sixths of the tin it produces. A petrochemical industry is developing in Santa Cruz and a steel industry in Mutun. The imperialists are trying to assure the success of these operations by granting very large loans. At the same time, they are providing enough military aid to make Bolivia the third largest recipient in Latin America in absolute terms and the largest in proportion to population.

This restructuring of the economy has gone hand in hand with a partial reprivatization of the traditional mining sector itself and a reconsolidation of big land

1. National Liberation Army, with the initials ELN in Spanish, was a common name of guerrilla groups inspired by the Cuban experience.—IP/I

2. Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (Revolutionary Workers Party). Before 1968, this was the name of the Argentine Trotskyist organization as a whole. After a split that took place that year, it was used by both factions, which were distinguished by the names of their newspapers, until 1972, when the PRT (*La Verdad*) took the name Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores. The reference here is to the PRT (*El Combatiente*), which formally severed its ties with the international Trotskyist movement in 1973 and disavowed Trotskyism.—IP/I

holdings (operated according to typically capitalist methods).

There is scarcely any need to point out that a heavy price has been paid for this "renewal" by the masses of workers and peasants, whose living standards have plummeted. But Banzer's success lies precisely in the fact that he has succeeded in imposing such superexploitation and in depriving the masses of their means of defense over a period that, in terms of Bolivia's chronic instability, seems rather long.

Should the conclusion be drawn from this that the Brazilian "model" can be applied generally?

It may be debated how scientific the concept of subimperialism is. It is unquestionable, however, that, especially beginning at a certain stage, the fact that Brazil has been able to find foreign outlets for its products and its capital in other Latin American countries and in Africa was one of the preconditions for its economic "miracle."

The Argentine bourgeoisie wanted to follow the same path, as indicated by its propaganda slogan calling for *La Argentina potencia* [a "great power Argentina"], especially under the neo-Peronist regime [the second Peronist regime, which began in 1973]. But practice has shown that at least in a context of economic stagnation, there is scarcely room for two subimperialisms in Latin America. (Note, for example, the conflict between Brazil and Argentina over the exploitation of certain areas in Bolivia and the very sharp competition between the two countries in the automobile industry.)

Let's consider a second aspect. The kind of capital accumulation achieved under the military regime, based on the government

cutting the wages of workers, could be carried through without boomeranging inasmuch as in Brazil a large part of the population remains outside the capitalist market.<sup>3</sup> It was this reality that those who tried to impose the same model on Chile chose to ignore. There, it failed, even though the political conditions were about the same as in Brazil (the mass movement was crushed, the workers parties destroyed, etc.).

Although the Chilean economy was more backward than the Brazilian, it was more balanced, and, taken as a whole, less far removed from the developed capitalist economies. Mass consumption, not just by the petty-bourgeois masses but also by masses of workers, played a much more important role in the capitalist national market. Therefore, the steep drop in the buying power of the broad masses brought about by wage cuts and massive unemployment—and so far not compensated for by the opening up of new outlets—has had disastrous consequences for important sectors of industry and for the services.

Finally, the Brazilian model could be applied with a relative success because it achieved a takeoff when the prolonged economic boom of the world capitalist economy had not yet lost its momentum. The economic situation began to cloud over, beginning in particular in the early 1970s, and this trend worsened as a result of the 1974-75 world recession.

The recession hit Brazil itself hard and created additional obstacles for countries

3. "Eighty million Brazilians do not have the means to become consumers." *Le Monde*, dossier économique, 1977, *La Langueur*, p. 81.

such as Argentina and Chile. At the same time, it upset the precarious balance in countries that had made it through the fifteen years in which the mass movement was on the rise, without major conflicts. (This is true notably of Mexico, where the recession has brought a serious drop in the standard of living of broad strata of the working people.)

January 5, 1978

### Argentine Junta Charged With Murder of Four Political Prisoners

Amnesty International said March 8 that it had received "reliable reports" of the murder of four political prisoners who had been held in La Plata Prison in Buenos Aires Province.

The four were reportedly released from La Plata on February 2 and then killed on a railway line near the prison. One of the victims was Gonzala Carranza, a university student who had just completed a three-year term on charges of collaboration with the ERP (People's Revolutionary Army). Of the other three, only the last names of two were known—Dominz and Segalli.

"Fears for the lives of the estimated 15,000 individuals who have disappeared without trace since the March 1976 military coup must now be extended to those prisoners in official custody," Amnesty International said.

The Argentine military regime admitted in December that it was holding 3,067 persons in official custody. As of March 8, the junta had published five lists containing the names of 2,699 prisoners. However, Amnesty International estimates the true number in detention to be 8,000.

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### A Begging Bowl for India's Landless Peasants

By Sharad Jhaveri

JAMNAGAR—In preparation for the drafting of a new budget, the Janata Party regime of Morarji Desai presented an economic survey to Parliament on February 23. The survey paints a rosy picture of the Indian economy and claims that the "medium-term prospects also seem to be very good."

It expresses satisfaction with the performance of the Indian economy during the current fiscal year. The gross national product (GNP) has been relatively high, the harvest was plentiful, prices have been more or less stable, monetary expansion has been moderated, and the balance of payments is in good shape.

India's GNP is likely to register a growth rate of 5% in 1977-78, compared to a feeble 1.6% the previous year. But a big share of this increase was in agriculture—the production of food grains reached 121 million tons against 111 million tons the preceding year. As the survey itself concedes, this was partly due to good monsoon rains.

Despite a steady increase in the cultivated area under irrigation, most acreage is still dependent on the fluctuating monsoons. The regime says that it will give a priority to irrigation, although new irrigation schemes generally benefit only a very thin stratum of rich farmers.

Industrial production fared considerably worse. In contrast to the industrial growth rate of 10.4% in 1976-77, the rate this year stands at only 5-6%. The survey blames this on power shortages, absence of expanding capacity, industrial unrest, and lack of sufficient demand. Pinpointing the lack of demand as the key factor, the survey stresses the need for a revival.

The survey at the same time ignores the severe distortions in the pattern of investment and production that have led to serious socioeconomic imbalances. The highly unequal distribution of income and wealth has a vital bearing on consumption patterns and market demand.

Sustained inflation has also contributed to a decline in demand, while the deflationary policy of the previous regime of Indira Gandhi sought to curb the purchasing power of the urban proletariat and the lower petty bourgeoisie by curtailing wage increases and bonus payments. This also caused a shrinkage of the home market.

Under Gandhi, economic policy was geared largely toward production for export, involving lavish export subsidies and incentives. This occurred at the expense of the home market, since subsidised exports

of such products as sugar, edible oil seeds, and textiles led to scarcity of these goods on the home market and consequently to higher prices.

But the increasingly protectionist policies followed by India's competitors abroad has set back this approach. The Janata Party has therefore begun to lay greater stress on reviving demand and creating higher employment within India itself.

To this end, the capitalist state is acting as a major agent for capital accumulation. It has created various financial and credit institutions to aid the private sector. The public sector has also sought to provide a viable market for the private industrialists. Incentives, subsidies, and excise duties have become a permanent feature of budgetary and fiscal policies.

Thus every year during the prebudget period industrialists step up their pressure and lobbying efforts. According to a report in the February 21 *Economic Times*, industrial circles in Bombay are hopeful that the 1978-79 budget, due to be presented March 28, will include measures to promote savings and investment.

But overall, business has not yet responded to tax rebates and other concessions. Private-sector investment is on the decline. Capital that is accumulated in the process of production is not reinvested for expanded production on any significant scale.

In its industrial policy statement, the Janata regime has asked the business community to accumulate capital on its own and to reinvest it in production. It remains to be seen how its upcoming budget will seek to implement this aim.

The survey doubts that much more revenue can be raised from existing taxes. Although it mentions the need to tax the rich farmers who receive government subsidies, an editorial in the February 24 *Economic Times* notes the "hesitant manner" in which it raises such a possibility.

In late 1977, the Janata Party projected an annual average growth rate of 7% over the next five years, with a conscious shift toward agriculture and decentralized, small-scale industry. Fully 40% of available resources were to be invested in agriculture. The hand of the farming lobby was clearly visible through Home Minister Charan Singh, who is an ardent advocate of capitalist farming.

During the previous three decades, the average growth rate barely reached 4% a

year. The Janata Party regime has not spelled out how it expects to raise this to 7%.

The implicit claim behind the Janata Party's stress on agriculture is that agricultural development has up to now suffered from the Congress Party's ostensible emphasis on industry. This is a complete distortion of reality.

Considerable diversion of resources to agriculture have taken place for many years, through incentives, price policies, subsidised irrigation, power, and fertilisers, and so on. If the farming sector is broadly defined to include allied industries and services, agriculture received about one-fourth of the total government outlay in both the fourth and fifth plans under the Congress Party.

The stress of both the Congress and Janata parties on technical improvements in agriculture ignores the badly needed reforms in the property structure of rural India. Land is still the most basic means of production, and it is a major source of credit, prestige, and power. It is concentrated in the hands of a very few landlords, who reap all the benefits of the government's massive investment in agriculture.

The vast mass of pauperised peasantry, living at a subsistence level, has no incentive to raise agricultural production since it has little stake in the land.

Besides further aiding the rich farmers, the Janata Party's policy of diverting even more resources toward agriculture will further upset the balance between industry and agriculture. In the absence of any means to reinvest the massive capital already in the hands of the rural rich, this policy will accentuate the extreme social and economic inequalities that characterize agrarian society today.

These aspects of the regime's economic policy were acknowledged in a recent review published in *Margin*, the prestigious quarterly journal of the National Council of Applied Economic Research.

"Prevailing pattern of land holdings and cultivation," it said, "show that more than half of the cultivated land is owned by a small minority of rural households and in the matter of resources including cooperative credit, it is this group which has cornered the lion's share. Thus even the gains of the modest growth rates attained in the past presumably accrued to this minority. It is therefore clear that unless land reform and land distribution is speedily implemented and access to resources is freely available, it is futile to expect solutions to unemployment and poverty in the near future." □

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## Crisis of the Japanese Reformist Parties

By Jun Yazaki

The emergence of West Germany and Japan as leading industrial, commercial, and financial powers over the last fifteen years has its counterpart in the relative decline of American imperialism's hegemony in the capitalist world, which it acquired in every sphere at the close of the Second World War.

The plummeting of the dollar relative to the deutsche mark and yen, far from being simply a maneuver on the part of American imperialism to ease the way for exports of its goods, is the purest reflection of this change in the interimperialist relationship of forces.

Against the background of gloomy economic prospects for the international capitalist economy, this change in the relationship of forces means a sharpening of interimperialist rivalries and conflicts.

Each side is striving to make its own working class, as well as the world working class, bear the costs of this battle of giants. The battle revolves around such major sectors of industry as automobiles (20 percent of the automobiles sold in the United States in 1977 were imported, mainly from Japan and West Germany), steel, shipbuilding, electric appliances, pocket calculators, synthetic textiles, even "sectors of the future" (some future!) like nuclear power and computers.

A previous article (see *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, February 6, 1978, p. 132), analyzed the narrowly averted trade war between Japan and the United States. In this article, we will try to show how the organized workers movement in Japan has been thrown into crisis by the combined effects of a recession, the end of full employment, and the bosses' offensive.

We should recall that in the wake of the Lockheed scandal (which revealed that the country's top bourgeois politicians, including a former premier, had taken bribes from an American aircraft company), the Liberal Democratic Party, the bourgeois party in Japan that had held power uninterrupted for thirty years, went through an exceptionally severe crisis.

The fact that the Socialist and Communist parties did not manage to take advantage of this unusually favorable combination of circumstances to put an end to the parliamentary reign of the Liberal Democrats, and instead emerged from the political and economic crisis relatively weakened, on the defensive, and beating a

retreat on the ideological and political front, says a great deal about the political impotence and spinelessness of these reformists.

The blows that will rain down on Japanese workers in the coming months could be crippling, especially where jobs are concerned. Revolutionary Marxists in Japan are striving to make sure that an adequate response is given by the toiling masses on as broad a basis as possible, through a policy of alliances and unity in action, working mainly within the trade-union movement.

The reformist parties in Japan suffered a defeat in the elections to the high chamber in July 1977. This defeat helped stabilize—at least temporarily—the political regime in power in Japan since the end of the 1950s, a regime characterized by the continuation in office of the Liberal Democratic Party (see *Inprecor*, October 13, 1977).

However, while the open crisis of the ruling party was temporarily overcome, that of the reformist parties continued to deepen, leading to a series of splits and expulsions from the CP and SP.

During the recent national congress of the SP, several members in the right wing of the SP parliamentary bloc, who were opposed to the alliance between the SP and CP, split and later formed a new parliamentary party with a grouping that had come out of the Liberal Democratic Party, the New Freedom Club. In the district of Fukushima, a largely agricultural area north of Tokyo, the local SP organization in its entirety decided to establish a new socialist organization, based on a peasant movement that has national influence. The crisis of leadership shaking the SP was, to be sure, superficially resolved by the election of a new president, Asukada. Nevertheless, the July election defeat continued to have a deeply unsettling effect on the party, spreading gradually to all echelons of the SP.

The major difference to emerge up to now concerns what policy to follow with respect to the CP. Should the SP's united-front policy continue to include the CP (in addition to the center-left formations, like the Democratic Socialist Party and "Clean Government" Party), or should it exclude the CP from now on and present itself as a more moderate alternative to the Liberal Democratic Party?

It should be recalled that the reason the SP and CP suffered a defeat in the last elections is that their leaderships, for the sake of a class-collaborationist orientation applied both in the legislature and in the plants, alienated their own mass base by breaking up struggles. The progress made by the new, so-called center-left currents (like the Democratic Socialist Party, the Clean Government Party, and above all the New Freedom Club) reflects the feelings of many voters who rejected the Liberal Democratic Party, but could not place their confidence in the CP and SP leaderships, and thus had no other alternative but to vote for relatively new formations that had not yet been tested in the eyes of the masses.

The Japanese CP could not remain immune to this far-reaching postelectoral crisis of the left, even if the strength of its bureaucratic apparatus enabled it to contain these centrifugal forces to a greater extent. On January 4, its paper *Akahata* (Red Flag) announced the expulsion of its vice-chairman, Satomi Hakamada, a long-time associate of CP General Secretary Kenji Miyamoto. Hakamada, along with Miyamoto, spent eighteen years in prison, before and during the Second World War. He symbolizes a period in the history of the Japanese CP that the party boasts about. At that time, it was the only political formation involved in antimilitarist resistance under the imperial regime.

The immediate reason for Hakamada's expulsion is bizarre, but what it really reflects is the profound crisis currently shaking up this bureaucratic party that claims more than 300,000 members.

According to *Akahata*, Hakamada disclosed the content of secret discussions in the CP Executive Committee to a right-wing weekly. Moreover, the former vice-chairman of the CP reportedly claimed that General Secretary Miyamoto was indeed responsible for the death of a government agent who had infiltrated the CP's ranks nearly fifty years ago (for which Hakamada and Miyamoto spent eighteen years in prison). Leaving aside the sensational aspects of the matter, which are of interest only to the bourgeois press, it is important to take a closer look at what Hakamada said he proposed at the Executive Committee meeting following the July elections.

He claims to have said that the responsi-

bility for the election defeat fell on the Miyamoto leadership and on its political line; he criticized the way in which CP activists, wholly preoccupied with selling the party's paper, were turning away from mass work; and he also criticized the way in which the "bureaucratic administration of the party" had demoralized sincere worker cadres and provoked their wholesale resignations. Hakamada calculates that 132,550 members left the party in the last eight years! He went so far as to describe the current electoral policy of the Miyamoto leadership as "anti-working-class." This policy led the CP to "defend Japanese national interests in opposition to the USSR's establishment of a 200-mile fishing zone," to state that "national defense is a necessity," and that "the problem of the American military presence in Japan would not be an obstacle to forming a coalition government including the CP."

For trade-union cadres who must confront attacks by the bosses on a daily basis, the CP's current line, which aims to hold back all struggles in the name of a supposed "public interest," is intolerable. For instance, the CP is against teachers' strikes on the grounds of the "dedicated" nature of their work.

The fact is that open criticism is now being directed at the CP leadership by rank-and-file activists in various sectors of the trade-union movement since the outbreak of the strange Hakamada incident.

Taking advantage of the postelection crisis of the two reformist parties, the Fukuda government has engaged in a series of repressive measures aimed at the independent, radical struggles led by workers, peasants, and fishermen. However, it has steered clear of any provocative actions that might imperil the class-collaborationist policy of the SOHYO<sup>1</sup> leadership, and other national unions, by pushing them too far and risking their loss of control over young worker activists. In the guise of "worker participation," decisions about how many workers—and which ones—will be laid off or transferred to affiliates are now made by the DOMEI<sup>2</sup> unions in most of the large monopoly firms.

In the big steel industry, for example, thousands of seasonal workers had their jobs transferred to other companies controlled by the same big families, particularly in the automobile plants like Toyota or Nissan which are less affected by the current "trade war." The DOMEI bureaucracy also plays a direct and influential

role in organizing scab and company unions in Southeast Asia, Brazil, and other neocolonial countries, especially in the automobile, metal, and chemical industries. This corresponds, moreover, to the broader steps taken by Japanese imperialism to strengthen its ties with the regimes represented in ASEAN.<sup>3</sup>

The new leadership of SOHYO, represented by Tomizuka, essentially no longer opposes these practices of DOMEI, but since it comes under constant pressure from rank-and-file trade-union activists, it cannot openly espouse such a right-wing policy. When the DOMEI bureaucracy announced that it would not raise a single demand—even regarding wages—for the upcoming "spring offensive,"<sup>4</sup> the SOHYO leadership used more cautious formulations, stating that the problem of unemployment was going to become graver than that of wages, since it was a time of economic crisis. With such an attitude on the part of the trade-union leaderships, the Japanese working class must stand up to the ruthless attacks of the bosses on its own, unable to count on the support or initiative of its leadership, and must also combat the bureaucrats' control over its organizations.

Furthermore, in a time of growing inflation and very high unemployment (the number of bankruptcies of small and medium enterprises is constantly setting new records), it is essential to organize a united response of the working class to defend its living standards and job security, and to fight deteriorating working conditions.

The close cooperation between employers and trade-union leaderships has been facilitated by ancient paternalistic traditions based on the guarantee of lifetime employment that has existed up to now in the big companies, and on the strength of the company unions. When workers reject such collaboration and enter into struggles on their own initiative, it is common for the police to intervene to smash the radical elements within the unions, with the tacit approval of the bureaucratic leaderships. On January 11, for example, sixty or so plainclothes police searched several union headquarters of the metalworkers federation, including one belonging to the workers at Citizen Watch, a watchmaking company on the outskirts of Tokyo, and arrested four union leaders.

(In December 1977, the local metalworkers federation had organized a "collective negotiation"—in which about 200 workers participated—at the headquarters of Mitsubishi Metal Company, one of the

leading metal-manufacturing trusts in Japan. This action was carried out during a nationwide mobilization called by SOHYO. The objective of the repressive measures was clearly to smash the militant leadership of this metalworkers local, which had "gone too far," mainly by organizing solidarity actions with the Sanrizuka farmers.)

The workers in small and medium businesses, the first to be hit by the crisis, have to face conditions that are still much harder than in the big companies. To take but one example, the Petri firm, a well-known camera exporter, closed on account of bankruptcy at the end of last year. The 200 workers at the Petri company in Saitama, north of Tokyo, found themselves abruptly facing a cruel dilemma—either to leave the firm with vague hopes of finding a new job, or to stay behind to fight for the payment of back wages and for reorganizing production. The leadership of the SOHYO union local asked for support from the leadership of the district council of this union, to no avail. It then decided to occupy the plant with the help of the Japanese Communist Youth (JCY—the youth organization of the Japanese section of the Fourth International). At present, the union local is selling the camera stocks to other worker militants and to all who support their fight, in order to be able to continue the struggle.

Occupying factories and placing them under "self-management" has become increasingly frequent in the small-business sector, where the management often suddenly declares bankruptcy to avoid having to pay back wages, and later simply "disappears." It is becoming more and more essential to provide regionwide coordination of these struggles, since they cannot rely for support on the national federations of SOHYO, which are organized along branch lines of industry and which are strongest in the public sector.

The militancy of the Japanese working class, especially the young workers, has not been completely smashed in the wake of the rightward evolution of the reformist SOHYO leadership. Consequently, it is necessary to organize a class-struggle current inside SOHYO, as well as in the unorganized sectors, to develop a national alternative to the class-collaborationist leadership of the CP, SP, and SOHYO.

On January 21-22, the bimonthly publication *Workers News* held its second national conference in Osaka, in which 200 workers, representing radical struggles across the country, participated.

*Workers News* serves as a liaison not only for small, radical unions representing a minority of workers, but also for a broad layer of trade-union officials within SOHYO itself. It thereby reflects the growing political polarization at work within the union, which should lead to the formation of class-struggle currents in a number of important sectors in the period ahead.

1. General Council of Trade Unions of Japan, whose leadership mainly looks to the Socialist Party, with a minority supporting the Communist Party. Its principal strength is in the public sector.

2. Japan Confederation of Labor Unions, a trade-union confederation that collaborates very closely with the bosses. Its main strength is in big private industry.

3. Association of Southeast Asian Nations, made up of the governments of Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

4. "Spring offensive" is the name given to the economic struggles that take place each spring, when collective-bargaining contracts come up for renewal.

The conference heard greetings from the former president of SOHYO, Makoto Ichikawa; the former general secretary of the national teachers union, Miyoji Hiragaki; and the president of the Sanrizuka Opposition League, Issaku Tomura.

The main report was presented by a local leader of the metalworkers union. He dwelt on the need for workers unity in the fight for socialism to deal with the severe capitalist crisis in progress, and on the need to revive the militant traditions of the Japanese working class in order to combat class-collaborationist currents within the workers movement.

A good part of the discussions at the conference centered on the struggle of the Sanrizuka farmers and on the tasks of working-class solidarity with this struggle. A representative of the union of Japanese National Railway workers from the Chiba district called for a boycott of fuel shipments to the new Tokyo International Airport in Narita, which the Sanrizuka farmers have been fighting. The union is under a two-pronged attack from the government and from the national leadership of the rail workers union. He emphasized the need to strengthen the alliance between the workers and farmers, and especially to see to it that all class-struggle currents nationwide were united in support to their strike against the opening of Narita airport.

For twelve years, the farmers of Sanrizuka have been waging a determined struggle against the building and opening of the new international airport in Narita, a densely populated area about sixty kilometers northeast of Tokyo. This struggle has received broad support from students and workers. One of the measures taken by the Fukuda government to attack the militant sectors of mass struggles was to schedule the opening of the airport for March 30 of this year, more than six years after the date originally chosen. In May 1977, the two steel towers set up at the end of the runway, which had barred its use by planes, were torn down by the government. To do this, thousands of riot police were mobilized. One of the demonstrators was killed after a heavy barrage of tear gas. The government and the airport authorities used all the means at their disposal, both legal and illegal according to their own laws, to smash the opposition movements.

However, even though the opening date for the airport is now only a month away, a series of major technical problems remain unsolved. Currently, the airport has only one runway, and there are still at least two "fortresses" built by farmers on undeveloped land tracts where the other runways are supposed to be built. Furthermore, the handling of 150 flights per day will require shipping enormous quantities of highly flammable fuel to the airport by rail. However, the local railway workers

union has decided to go on strike if the airport opens.

In addition, opposition to the airport is no longer limited to the farmers and workers involved in the struggle. The International Air Transportation Association has lodged several public protests with the Japanese government, since the fees that the airlines will have to pay will be three times as high as at any other international airport. Security costs are also considered too high, because airline personnel are unwilling to transfer to Narita airport from Haneda airport, where they now work. Narita is one of the most remote airports in the world. The trip to downtown Tokyo from there takes more than two hours, assuming the trains run on time. However, trains on the outskirts of Tokyo are frequently stalled for long periods.

The employees association of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also protested, announcing that it would refuse to use the new airport to welcome foreign diplomats and guests of the government because of security problems and the airport's "ramshackle" construction. In an open letter to the government dated September 1977, the association noted that "at the new Narita airport, planes will be forced to land and take off amid security forces and barricades. An opportunity and a place for celebrating international friendship will be lost."

For some time now, the struggle of the Sanrizuka farmers has become a national rallying point for all who are revolutionary-minded, and for all those within the workers movement who want to fight back against the attacks of the bosses and the class-collaborationist line

of their reformist leaderships. The support to Chiba Doro (the local rail workers union that is ready to strike against the opening of the airport and shipment of fuel) is spreading across the country to many trade-union bodies.

Rentaisurukai, a unified solidarity committee to support the Sanrizuka farmers, has launched a month-long campaign that began February 20, to prepare for as large a turnout as possible when the airport opens. In September 1977, this committee organized a 600-kilometer march from Kobe to Sanrizuka, during which the farmers were able to share their experiences with a large number of local unions, antipollution groups, and others. In October, 22,000 persons from around the country responded to its call to participate in a rally near the site of the airport.

The struggles in March in Sanrizuka will be a test of strength between the revolutionary mass movement and the Fukuda government's repressive apparatus. On February 6, a 50-meter-high metal tower was built overnight on the roof of one of the "fortresses" ringing the airport. The police were finally able to tear it down with the help of a gigantic crane, even though four members of the JCY were perched at the top.

Whatever repressive means the Fukuda government resorts to, whatever the brutality of the measures it takes, one thing is certain: the fight of the Sanrizuka farmers will continue, as it has for twelve years already. It will continue to win ever broader revolutionary support from farmers, students, and workers who reject the class-collaborationist outlook offered by the reformist leaderships. □

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Intercontinental Press/Inprecor,

P.O. Box 116, Varick Street Station, New York, N.Y. 10014

# FROM OUR READERS

A reader in New York, who appears to have received the good news even before we did (see article below), sent us a note along with a contribution of \$12:

"This check is for the subscription of Udi Adiv, who is a political prisoner in Israel. "Would you be kind enough to send him the paper as soon as possible?"

Two recent publications reflect appreciation of our coverage of Cuba.

In Turkey, the Oda Yayinlari publishing house has issued as a ninety-six page paperback book the full text of the Barbara Walters-Fidel Castro interview, translated from Intercontinental Press. The unexpurgated text of the interview—more than four times longer than the version televised in the United States—appeared in four parts in our September 12, 19, 26, and October 3, 1977, issues.

These issues may be ordered for \$3 postpaid by anyone who missed them.

In the United States, Greenhaven Press of Minneapolis has recorded on cassette tape for class-room use the article "End the Embargo on Cuba Now!" The item, by Michael Baumann, appeared in our May 9, 1977, issue and will be offered along with a recorded statement in favor of the embargo in the publisher's "Opposing Viewpoints" series.

"I enjoy the I.P./Inprecor very much," B.L. in Kent, Ohio, told us.

"I also enjoyed the recent articles on Argentina, only they presupposed greater knowledge than I have. An article detailing more clearly the nature of Peronism would be very welcome."

Four articles published in earlier issues may be just what B.L. is looking for. These include "The Dilemma Peronism Failed to Solve" (IP, April 5, 1976), "Balance Sheet on Thirty Years of Peronism" (IP, July 22, 1974), "After Perón, What Next for the Argentine Bourgeoisie?" (IP, July 15, 1974), and "Perón's History of Holding Back the Masses" (IP, July 23, 1973). These issues may be ordered from our business office for \$0.75 each.

G.H. in Palo Alto, California, sent us a check for a year's renewal, with this note:

"I believe my subscription runs out in April or May, so this will help you save some money by not sending me a notice. The extra two dollars is a donation to the finest international publication."

The "\$12.00 is to extend my subscription (renewal) for another 6 months," J.E. of

Berkeley, California, informs us.

"Keep up the great work."

"Congratulations to your correspondent, Sharad Jhaveri . . . on his article, "Hawkers of Popular Frontism in India" (Inter-Continental Press, March 6, 1978)," John Archer writes from London. "Its worldwide significance will not be overlooked, I think, by those who are fighting for the Fourth International, just because he wrote only about India."

He adds: "There is one small correction to suggest. In fact the idea of a united front with reformist workers parties—demonstrated by the Bolsheviks between May and October 1917—was first formulated in the 'Theses on Tactics' of the Third (not the Fourth) World Congress of the Comintern in summer 1921, where it was paralleled by the Thesis on the 'Structure, Methods and Action of the Communist Parties' required to enable the tactic to be applied successfully. . . ."

R.H. of St. Catharines, Ontario, sent us this welcome note:

"Enclosed is a copy of a letter which I have just sent as part of the international

campaign launched by Intercontinental Press/Inprecor to demand that the government of Chile free the six young Chileans jailed in November and accused of violations of the State Internal Security Act.

"This letter is the second I have mailed in this campaign. Hopefully, each of us who writes will send you a copy so that there will emerge some idea of the effect that the call is having for letters and telegrams to Chile demanding the immediate release of these opponents of the junta."

An idea of the impact such letters have can be gained from the recent campaign to defend six Iranian activists who faced jail and possible deportation from the United States.

The six, all members of the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran, were the victims of trumped-up charges of "disruption" filed by the administration of Jersey City State College, in Jersey City, New Jersey.

An appeal in their behalf, printed in our February 6 issue, brought international attention to the case, with the result that the college received letters of protest from as far away as Britain, the Netherlands, and West Germany.

These messages, along with protests and petitions signed by hundreds of persons in the United States, helped speed the college's decision to drop all charges.

## Israeli Prisoners Win Right to Read 'Intercontinental Press/Inprecor'

TEL AVIV—For several years, political prisoners in Israel have been fighting to win the right to read political literature.

Even though the Israeli Supreme Court ruled three years ago that any reading matter permitted outside the prison walls should automatically be allowed inside, the fact remains that political prisoners only rarely receive permission from prison authorities to read revolutionary literature.

About six months ago, Udi Adiv, sentenced to seventeen years in prison in the 1973 Haifa "espionage" trials, made a new appeal to the Supreme Court, asking that it instruct the Ramleh prison administration to let him receive *Inprecor*, *New Left Review*, *Matzpen-Marxisti*, and the writings of Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, and Mao.

A common-law prisoner, Yossef Frankel, demanded the right to obtain Felicia Langer's book *With My Own Eyes*, as well as a pamphlet by Professor Israel Shahak, *The Truth About Zionism*, published by the Revolutionary Communist League, the Israeli section of the Fourth International.

During the first court hearing, the prosecutor announced that he had no objection to the "classics" of socialist literature

being read in the prisons. However, he maintained his opposition to the other publications.

On February 16 the hearing resumed. Lea Tsemel presented a lengthy brief, calling attention to the international standing of the periodicals in question and of their publishers. She also pointed out that while some articles might deal with the torture and mistreatment of political prisoners (as alleged by the prosecution), the prisoners did not need newspapers in order to confirm or deny the truth of these charges, which they knew from firsthand experience, and that in any case, all newspapers, even Zionist journals, had to undergo prior censorship by the prison administration.

The court decided to authorize *New Left Review* and *Inprecor*, noting, moreover, that what applied to *Inprecor* would also apply to its continuation in combination with *Intercontinental Press*.

As for the Shahak pamphlet on Zionism, the book by Felicia Langer, and *Matzpen-Marxisti*, the Supreme Court gave itself a few weeks in which to render its verdict. □