

Intercontinental Press

combined with

Impreco

Ernest Mandel:
Plunge of Dollar

Vol. 16, No. 16

© 1978 by Intercontinental Press April 24, 1978

USA 75¢

UK 30p



Costa Ricans Picket for Marroquín

Supporters of Mexican socialist Héctor Marroquín's right to asylum in the United States picketed the U.S. embassy in San José, Costa Rica, April 5. Signs read,

"Student and trade-union leader in danger of death"; "We demand Carter's government grant political asylum to Héctor Marroquín." Case has received extensive publicity in Costa Rica, where political exiles have recently come under government attack. See page 482.

'Socialist Challenge' Firebombed

NEWS ANALYSIS

Carter Scorched by Neutron Bomb

By Jon Britton

On April 7 Carter announced that he had "decided to defer production" of the neutron bomb. Opponents of this fiendish weapon—which is designed to kill human beings by means of intense radiation while doing little damage to property—should not rest easy however. Carter and his imperialist allies in Western Europe have every intention of incorporating the deadly device into NATO's arsenal, after public opinion has been "adequately prepared."

Meanwhile, Carter has ordered the Pentagon to continue "modernizing" artillery and short-range missiles deployed in Europe so they will be ready for the neutron warheads at a later date.

The neutron bomb is only one element in Carter's escalation of the arms race. What Carter is up to was summarized quite well by columnist Joseph C. Harsch in the July 14, 1977, *Christian Science Monitor*:

The Carter administration gives every evidence of intending to go ahead into a whole new generation of weapons which the Soviets could not at present duplicate and might not be able to duplicate for a long time. . . .

The three new American weapons [neutron bomb, cruise missile, MX missile] together would shift the strategic balance enormously to American advantage.

While the cruise and MX missiles are being developed to give the U.S. the capability of knocking out Soviet land-based missile installations in a first strike,* the neutron bomb is designed for use against armies, possibly as a follow-up to such a strike.

Carter claims that the neutron bomb is necessary to "deter" a tank-led Soviet invasion of Western Europe. And why is such a deterrent needed when there are already 7,000 tactical nuclear weapons based in Western Europe?

The answer, according to Carter and his generals, is that the neutron bomb, allegedly a "cleaner" and more precise weapon, would be a more "credible" deterrent to a would-be aggressor.

Claiming falsely that the Soviet Union is responsible for the threat of war, proponents of the bomb such as Gen. Alexander Haig, commander of NATO forces in Europe, argue that deploying neutron warheads would actually reduce the danger of nuclear conflict.

In fact, as more and more people around the world and especially in Europe have

come to realize, the neutron bomb in the hands of the Pentagon atomaniacs would enormously increase the danger of a nuclear holocaust.

That is why the bomb has been such a hot potato for Carter and his imperialist allies ever since plans for its production were first revealed last year. They at first counted on keeping production of the weapon secret: "Production . . . was first approved by President Ford in November 1976—a decision that was kept secret at the time and not expected to be made public until the weapons were deployed with NATO forces in Europe," Walter Pincus said in the April 7 *Washington Post*.

The Carter administration tried to sneak authorization for funds through Congress by listing the weapon as a one-line item in the budget of the Energy Research and Development Administration. The line read "W70 Mod 3 Lance Enhanced Radiation Warhead." A journalist deciphered these code words, and the *Washington Post* broke the story last June.

In the ensuing uproar, Carter at first claimed that he didn't know anything about the weapon but then pressed Congress for quick approval so that production, which had been set for August, could go ahead on schedule. To facilitate Congressional action, he promised that he would withhold final approval, pending "consultations" with NATO allies.

Congress finally gave its go-ahead July 25—after a protracted, partially secret debate and sharp prodding in favor of approval by the late Sen. Hubert Humphrey and other influential liberals. Carter then dispatched high-level emissaries to arrange for public endorsement from the other NATO powers, which was expected to be a mere formality.

Unfortunately for Carter, public outrage over the bomb was even stronger in Europe, the Pentagon's projected theater of operations, than in the United States. Bonn, London, and the other NATO governments assured the emissaries that they were anxious to see the bomb produced and eventually deployed in Europe but couldn't say so publicly.

This wasn't good enough for Carter, however, who felt he needed a public commitment. As a high-ranking administration official later explained to reporters:

[The president] was concerned about his image and did not want to be viewed as a big weapons

man. His feeling was that in the past 30 years the President of the United States had to take a great deal of political heat on important military decisions, and this time he did not want to take it alone, especially with full-fledged, economically powerful allies. [*New York Times*, April 9]

Carter's worry about being viewed as "a big weapons man" is understandable in light of the escalation of the arms race he is now carrying out. In fact it is crucial to the success of this escalation that he project the opposite image—that of a peacemaker and strong advocate of disarmament. Thus, in his inaugural address he spoke hypocritically of "ridding the earth of nuclear weapons."

For awhile it looked as if Carter was stymied, but then he came up with a new ploy. Back went the emissaries with a scheme to put the onus on the Soviet Union for production and deployment of the neutron bomb. Here is how the April 17 issue of *Newsweek* described the "compromise" that was finally reached:

By mid-March [1978] the NATO Council had drafted a summing-up statement that made three points: (1) a decision on neutron-weapon production was purely American, (2) if production were begun, it should be accompanied by attempts to trade off future deployment for Soviet concessions on weapons, and (3) if such negotiations failed, NATO would consider deployment in the Central European theater. Britain and Germany would support the statement explicitly, along with Canada and the U.S., while Italy, Norway and the Netherlands would tacitly acquiesce.

John Robinson, writing in the March 10 *Washington Post*, pointed out that U.S. officials fully expected the Soviet Union to reject the offers, providing the pretext to go ahead with deployment. In any event, the weapons would be produced and could be stockpiled on U.S. soil for future use.

Everything was set for formal approval of the plan at a NATO meeting on March 20. But at the last minute Carter backed out of the agreement and canceled the meeting.

Carter's closest aides were later to claim that he didn't even know negotiations for a compromise agreement were being carried on, or if he did, that they had gone so far. But one top official told *Newsweek*: "That just isn't so. All of us felt quite sincerely that we had clear direction and that we were doing what was expected."

A much more likely explanation, however, was the mushrooming opposition to the bomb in Europe in early March.

On March 4, a demonstration of 40,000 persons in Almelo, Holland, denounced the neutron bomb. That same day the Dutch defense minister resigned as a protest against the plan to deploy the weapon. A few days later, the Dutch Parliament adopted a resolution opposing production of the bomb.

With protest assuming massive proportions in Europe, Carter began to have doubts about the private commitments

*See *Intercontinental Press*, October 17, 1977, p. 1130.

from his NATO allies to eventually allow deployment of the bomb. He also saw the need for a significant show of political support before he could go ahead with production. To resolve these problems, he tried another maneuver. In late March he dispatched U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher to tell West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and British Prime Minister James Callaghan that he was leaning toward postponing indefinitely production of the neutron bomb, although he was still interested in consulting seriously with them on the issue.

Then, on April 4, the *New York Times* published a leak from administration officials saying that Carter had decided against production.

A storm of criticism from editorial writers, columnists, and members of Congress followed. Even former President Gerald Ford got into the act. Ford called development of the new warhead "highly essential," declaring at an April 6 news conference that "the safety of Western Europe and the preservation of Western culture depends upon it."

The reaction was just what Carter had hoped for. As *New York Times* reporter Hedrick Smith pointed out April 8, "Over the last week, he has . . . virtually invited pressure from Republicans and Democrats on Capitol Hill against his restraint on the neutron warhead so that any move toward its production would seem forced upon him."

Carter also received a visit from German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, whose previously scheduled visit to Washington had been moved up a day to make sure his government would not be blamed for any no-go decision on the bomb. "We feel this should be produced," Genscher told reporters.

Carter's announcement that he was not canceling the neutron bomb program, only deferring production, followed on April 7. In accordance with his earlier calculations, he claimed that the ultimate decision "will be influenced by the degree to which the Soviet Union shows restraint in its conventional and nuclear arms programs and force deployments. . . ."

Carter's real intentions were summed up graphically by a high administration official quoted by *Newsweek*: "The President's decision puts us 90 per cent down the road toward where we would have been with a complete green light."

Another White House official told reporters that "in the end Mr. Carter got what he always wanted—real political support for the weapon."

While it is true that Carter has succeeded in mobilizing political backing from proponents of the ideal capitalist weapon, he is far from winning the support of those who feel they are the ultimate targets—the working people of Europe and America. □

In This Issue

Closing News Date: April 15, 1978

FEATURES	476	The Headlong Plunge of the American Dollar—by Ernest Mandel
PHILIPPINES	478	Marcos Caught Red-Handed Stealing Election—by Ernest Harsch
USA	479	Tongsung Park Names Bribe Recipients
	482	Three Top FBI Officials Indicted—by Matilde Zimmermann
MIDEAST	480	Israel Rained Hundreds of Cluster Bombs on Refugee Camps
	481	"Get Shah's Troops Out of Lebanon Now!"
COSTA RICA	482	Picket Demands U.S. Asylum for Marroquin
PANAMA	483	Mobilize Against the Pentagon's "Right" to Intervene!
COLOMBIA	484	Socialist Denied TV Time
BRITAIN	486	"Socialist Challenge" Firebombed
CHILE	486	Political Prisoners Answer Pinochet
ZAIRE	487	New Phase of Imperialist Domination—by Ernest Harsch
	491	A West German "Cape Canaveral" in Zaire?
IRAN	492	Censorship and the Plight of Iranian Writers—by Reza Baraheni
NEWS ANALYSIS	474	Carter Scorched by Neutron Bomb—by Jon Britton
BOOKS	485	Superships—Superprofits and Superspills—reviewed by Fred Murphy
FROM OUR READERS	496	
DRAWINGS	489	Mobutu Sese Seko—by Copain

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

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

Editor: Joseph Hansen.

Contributing Editors: Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.

Managing Editor: Michael Baumann.

Editorial Staff: Jon Britton, Gerry Foley, Ernest Harsch, Fred Murphy, Susan Wald, Matilde Zimmermann.

Business Manager: Harvey McArthur.

Copy Editor: David Martin.

Technical Staff: Paul Deveze, Ellen Fischer, Larry Ingram, Arthur Lobman, James M. Morgan, Sally Rhett.

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

Signed articles represent the views of the authors, which may not necessarily coincide with those of Intercontinental Press. Insofar as it re-

flects editorial opinion, unsigned material stands on the program of the Fourth International.

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

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

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

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

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

Copyright ©1978 by Intercontinental Press.

The Headlong Plunge of the American Dollar

By Ernest Mandel

In the last six months the dollar has dropped in spectacular fashion on the money markets of Frankfurt, Tokyo, and Zürich. Even in London and Paris its standing has declined perceptibly. Since the realignment of currencies in 1971, the dollar has dropped on the order of 33% to 40% in relation to the strong currencies. This is as clear as day. It cannot remain without consequences in a capitalist economy in which money—including paper money—is not only a means of exchange but also a means of paying debts and of hoarding.

To be sure, the dollar has not declined in relation to all currencies. Over the longer range the currencies of several imperialist countries, above all the British pound and the Italian lira, have depreciated as much as the dollar. In the shorter term, the same applies to the currencies of the Scandinavian countries. The Canadian dollar has depreciated even in terms of the American dollar. Furthermore, most of the currencies of the semicolonial countries—with the exception of those of the richest Arab oil exporters—are either aligned with the dollar or have experienced a depreciation even steeper than that of the dollar.

Nonetheless, this does not mean that the decline of the dollar does not have significant consequences for all aspects of the international capitalist economy. It even has repercussions, although obviously in a more limited way, on the economies of the bureaucratized workers states. These stem from the predominant role the dollar has played in the capitalist economy since the Second World War. Because of that role, these repercussions exert a destabilizing tendency on the entire international economy.

The general impression prevalent among commentators of both the right and the left is that the decline of the dollar is the result of a more or less deliberate maneuver by American imperialism, so as to improve its competitive position and to impose its economic proposals on its reluctant competitors, above all West Germany and Japan. The headlong plunge of the dollar, according to this view, is supposed to stimulate American exports at the expense of those of West Germany and Japan, making the former cheaper and the latter more expensive.

To protect exports by their own capitalists, this theory holds, the West German and Japanese governments will sooner or later be compelled to "support" the dollar, that is, to buy it in massive amounts on

the money markets. But in doing so they will automatically expand the amount of their own currencies in circulation, thereby finally beginning the much talked about process of "accelerated reflation" the Carter administration has tried to impose for more than a year without great success.

An accelerated monetary expansion in West Germany and Japan will renew inflation there, this theory continues, while at the same time stemming the depreciation of the dollar in relation to the strong currencies. Accordingly, American imperialism will gain on all accounts by allowing the dollar to continue to fall for the time being.

It is true that monetary manipulation, of which devaluation is only one variant, is an instrument used by all the imperialist powers to improve their competitive position. Conditions of economic recession or depression, such as we have experienced for the last four years, favor the use of such techniques. To postulate that the United States has only repeated on a grand scale what Britain, Italy, France, and Sweden had done earlier would therefore seem quite reasonable.

But the consequences of such manipulations are much more complex when they involve the main reserve currency of the capitalist world, including the consequences for the economy of a country that takes the initiative of lowering the exchange rate of its currency.

We should note first of all that although the massive devaluation of the pound sterling and the Italian lira seems to have resulted in effectively reestablishing the balance of payments of these two imperialist powers, the same is not true for the United States. There is no sign that the U.S. balance of payments deficit is on the verge of being rectified—quite the contrary.

Why? Because big business—first and foremost the multinationals, including the American multinationals—expect the U.S. balance of payments deficit to persist. This means continued erosion of the dollar's rate of exchange, which big business is compelled to prepare for, namely by speculating against the dollar, which in turn accentuates and amplifies the drop in the dollar's exchange rate.

We should also note that the extent of U.S. oil imports cannot be the fundamental explanation for the growing trade and balance-of-payments deficits in the United States. With the exception of Britain, the United States relies less on oil imports

than any other imperialist power. It is not in regard to oil imports that the shoe pinches but in regard to the trade balance for manufactured products. The U.S. share in world exports of manufactured products continues to decline. On the other hand, its share of imports of such products continues to increase. To be sure, the rate of inflation in the United States, which is higher than in West Germany and Japan, also comes into play here.

But underlying the crisis of the dollar is a structural phenomenon of long duration and not a mere accident of the moment. The United States has lost the "monopoly on high productivity" it enjoyed in the decade following the Second World War. Increases in the productivity of U.S. industrial labor have consistently been less rapid than those recorded by its main competitors.

Apart from the advantage the United States retains in certain fields such as big computers and "aerospace," its edge in nearly all other major export sectors is a thing of the past. These include autos, electrical and electronic equipment, machine tools and electrical machinery, steel, textiles and synthetic products, and shipbuilding. Even in the fields of nuclear power and aviation, where the U.S. monopoly seemed assured, American capitalists have had some of their tail feathers plucked in the last few years.

The figures speak volumes. There is a clear correlation between the evolution of increases in the productivity of labor and the respective share of the world market for manufactured products gained by the different imperialist powers. The least that one can say is that if the decline of the dollar is a step taken to modify this correlation, up until now it has certainly not been a major success.

Between 1964 and 1975, labor productivity in manufacturing in the United States increased at an annual average rate of about 3.5%, as opposed to 5% for West Germany, 6.5% for France, and 10.6% for Japan. Between 1970 and 1974, the average annual increase was, respectively, 3.8%, 5.1%, 5.9%, and 8%.

The U.S. share in world exports of manufactured products dropped from 21.5% in 1964 to 18.5% in 1970, 17.7% in 1975, and 16.5% in 1977. The West German share rose from 19.3% in 1964 to 19.8% in 1970, 20.3% in 1975, and 20.5% in 1977. The Japanese share rose from 8.1% in 1964 to 11.7% in 1970, 13.6% in 1975, and 15.4% in 1977.

In 1959 an American company dominated 11 of the 13 branches of the manufacturing industry. By 1974 this figure had dropped to 7 out of 13. In 1959, 63% of the 156 biggest industrial corporations in the world were American. By 1974 this figure had dropped to 43%, as opposed to 36.5% for the European multinationals and 20% for the Japanese multinationals.

We should add that the "Machiavellian" scenario attributed to the imperialist chiefs in regard to the decline of the dollar has not only turned out to be of little help in terms of exporting goods, but that this is not the only possible outcome of that decline. If the West German and Japanese governments persist in giving the fight against inflation the same priority they have up until now, they could reply to the swelling of the monetary supply provoked by the influx of dollars by instituting both sharp budgetary restrictions and measures to control the movement of capital (as the Swiss have already done). The result would be to precipitate a new contraction of world trade and a new recession, and not an alignment of the mark and the yen with the depreciated dollar.

However, the main weakness of all the analyses that exaggerate the politically induced and sought-after aspect of the decline of the dollar lies elsewhere. It involves a clear underestimation of the consequences of this decline for the movement of capital, a failure to understand the specific nature of the imperialist epoch and the essential role that finance capital and the international movement of capital play in it.

The accelerated depreciation of the major paper currency on the world market undermines its role as the general equivalent and generally accepted means of payment. Even within the borders of a single state, and all the more so on the world market where no sovereign state exists, no extra-economic force can in the long run compel an owner of goods or a creditor to accept an unwanted currency in payment. To suppose the contrary is to close one's eyes to the nature of the capitalist system, which is based on private property and competition.

In the present circumstances the accelerated depreciation of the dollar cannot help but provoke a series of chain reactions, the most important of which appear to us to be the following:

1. If the fall of the dollar favors the export of American goods, then by the same logic it must also make more likely the export of capital by the European and Japanese imperialists. In fact, while investment by the American multinationals in Europe is stagnating or even diminishing (i.e., an actual drop in investment), European and Japanese capitalists are swarming to the United States. There, one after another, they are building factories, taking over American companies, carrying out mergers, buying real estate, and even

purchasing farms. If the present tendency continues for a few years, the cumulative sum of direct investment of capital abroad by European and Japanese capitalists will equal or exceed foreign investment by American capitalists. We should not forget that a 40% depreciation of the dollar in relation to the mark or the yen means that it takes 40% fewer marks or yen for a European or Japanese trust to buy a factory in the United States.

2. The depreciation of the dollar facilitates the expansion of the European and Japanese banks on a world scale. These banks have aggressively gone after business, both in the field of international credit and in issuing international loans. In fact, among the 20 largest banks in the world in terms of total deposits, at the end of 1977 only 4 were American (it is true that 2 of those 4 were still the world's first and second largest). Ten were European, 5 were Japanese, and 1 was Brazilian. And while in September 1977, more than 75% of new Eurobonds were payable in dollars, this percentage had fallen to less than 20% by February 1978 (*Business Week*, March 20, 1978, p. 150).

3. A growing portion of world trade is beginning to be conducted in currencies other than the dollar, above all the mark and the yen. This tendency is still embryonic, but is becoming more pronounced.

4. A growing portion of the liquid capital held by the big multinationals, American as well as European and Japanese, has been placed in banks outside the United States, in currencies other than the dollar.

5. The central banks are beginning—cautiously and on a scale that is still limited—to hold exchange reserves in currencies other than the dollar. Whereas the share of these "other currencies" in the overall reserves of the world capitalist banks amounted to only 7% in 1970, it has risen at present to 25%. And if you take into account the increase in the price of gold as expressed in depreciated dollars—an increase that at present only the Bank of France and the Bank of Italy take into account in calculating their exchange reserves—the dollar's share in these reserves appears likely to fall below 50% in the first quarter of 1978.

6. The creators of the famous petrodollars—that is, the richest oil-exporting countries, essentially Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, and the Arab Emirates—have practically stopped accumulating new dollars. They are maintaining their old deposits in dollars but their current revenues are immediately converted into strong currencies. This shift has been under way for more than six months. In February alone, a billion dollars were converted in this way.

7. The decline of the dollar means a loss of revenue for countries whose exports are paid for in dollars, a loss that in the space

of a year has amounted to 10% for the OPEC [Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries] countries as a whole and nearly 13% for Qatar (the hardest hit). The imminent response appears to be a move to base the price of oil in terms of an average of eleven currencies (*The Economist*, March 18, 1978, p. 15). That would mean an increase in the price of oil imported by the United States, and therefore a worsening in the U.S. balance of payments deficit, and therefore a new depreciation of the dollar.

In their most extreme form, these chain reactions include the risk of a general withdrawal of petrodollars from the United States, which could lead to a general collapse of the country's credit system.

To be sure, there is little likelihood of such an outcome at the moment. Saudi Arabia, which alone holds \$65 billion in dollars, is highly dependent on American imperialism politically, militarily, and technologically. Its ruling class has no interest in destabilizing the international capitalist economy in a disastrous way. But the financial sacrifices that it is prepared to accept in return for socio-political considerations have their limits. Altruism does not exist in the universe of the owners of capital, above all among billionaires.

If keeping the famous \$65 billion in the dollar zone means a loss in purchasing power on the order of 40% to 50% over the course of a few years, the sheiks will calculate how to limit their losses, like all good managers of fortunes educated at Harvard Business School (which is where the new generation of sheiks have gone for their education). The Arab Emirates were dependent, and still are, from every point of view, on British imperialism. But when the pound sterling was declining sharply they ended up making massive withdrawals from their deposits in London.

What frightens the imperialist world is not so much the fall of the dollar in and of itself. In the last analysis, capitalism has survived the decline of the pound sterling and any number of other monetary and financial catastrophes. What frightens them is that there is no other currency ready to take the place of the dollar, the way the dollar had previously taken the place of the pound sterling as the main reserve currency.

Paradoxically, West Germany and Japan, not to mention Switzerland and the Netherlands, are making frenetic and desperate efforts to avoid having their currencies used as reserve currencies. Apart from the fact that the history of the last forty years shows how dangerous it is to be caught up in the whirlwind of speculation that goes along with the "honor" of exercising such a function, the economies of these countries clearly do not have the necessary scope—comparable to that of Britain in the nineteenth century or of the United States in the period from 1940 to

1975—to exercise such a role.

And it is here that we touch on the core of the difficulties imperialism has encountered in trying to replace the international monetary system based on the gold-dollar standard, the system that collapsed in 1971, with a new one. It would have been difficult enough to do this in a period of relative prosperity. It is even more difficult to do it in a period of depression. The resistance put up by the international

working class toward shouldering the burden of the "restructuring process" increases even more the difficulty of the task. Still, however, the main difficulties lie in the fact that in face of the relative decline of American imperialism—which is still by far the relatively strongest power—no other power has risen that is capable of replacing American leadership.

"Collective leadership" will certainly be no more of a success for the imperialists

than it has been for the Soviet bureaucracy. In the absence of both a dominant leadership and a collective leadership, it is the absence of any leadership at all that characterizes the political, economic, and monetary scene for the imperialists. The way in which the crisis of the dollar has been "managed," or rather not managed, is a perfect illustration of this crisis of leadership.

March 31, 1978

600 Arrested for Protesting Vote Fraud

Marcos Caught Red-Handed Stealing Election

By Ernest Harsch

Despite published evidence of extensive vote fraud, President Ferdinand E. Marcos of the Philippines has claimed that his candidates won a sweeping victory in the April 7 elections to an interim National Assembly. The announced results were in sharp contradiction with the massive outbursts of opposition to his martial law regime that marked the election campaign itself.

Apart from a few stage-managed referendums to bolster his repressive regime, the elections were the first since Marcos declared martial law in 1972. Marcos called the elections to give his regime a "democratic" veneer, largely for purposes of foreign consumption. Correspondent Jay Mathews quoted a key Marcos adviser in the February 16 *Washington Post* as explaining, "The elections are being held at the suggestion of the U.S. State Department and to present to the U.S. Congress a martial law regime that looks more democratic."

Washington was a former colonial power in the Philippines and American companies are still the largest foreign investors there. Washington also provides substantial military aid to the Marcos regime, and retains a number of U.S. bases in the islands.

But Marcos's detention of thousands of political activists and the frequent reports of torture of prisoners have become an embarrassment to the Carter administration, particularly at a time when the agreements on the U.S. bases are coming up for renegotiation.

The establishment of the National Assembly, while useful for Marcos's propaganda purposes, marks no real concession to the desires of Filipino masses for greater democratic rights. Martial law remains in effect and Marcos himself retains ultimate authority. As the Civil Liberties Union of

the Philippines pointed out:

The interim parliament does not have the power to lift martial law. It cannot restore the people's liberties. It cannot even elect the Prime Minister—unless President Marcos resigns or dies. It has no say about treaties. It cannot repeal or even modify any of the 2,000 laws so far issued by President Marcos. . . . In fact, it cannot even legislate freely because . . . if its members prove recalcitrant, they may be arrested for "subversive" activities. [Quoted in the March 10 *Philippine Liberation Courier*.]

At first the bourgeois opposition Liberal Party refused to participate in the elections, pointing out that the decks were stacked in Marcos's favor. But Liberal Party General Secretary Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., who has been imprisoned for five years and who was recently sentenced to death by a military court, favored campaigning, even from his prison cell. Together with a few other Liberal Party leaders and a number of opposition figures outside of the party, Aquino helped form a new opposition bloc to contest the elections in Manila, called the Laban (Fight) Party.*

The March 3 *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported that only a few Laban candidates were Liberals. Others included former student leader Gerry Barican; Trinidad Herrera, a leader of Manila's slum dwellers who was arrested and tortured last year; and Alex Boncayo, president of a Manila trade union, who has been arrested four times for his union activities. Because of the Laban Party's weak base in other parts of the country, it limited its campaign to the twenty-one seats from Manila (the National Assembly is to have 200 seats).

For purposes of the election, Marcos's supporters formed the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL—New Society Movement).

Despite police harassment of opposition candidates and the limitations of the Na-

tional Assembly itself, the campaign provided an opportunity for Manila's residents to express their hatred for martial law.

The Laban candidates drew large crowds to public rallies. At one rally alone, on March 12 in the Tondo slum area, about 40,000 persons turned out to hear Trinidad Herrera. She challenged her KBL opponent, who has been prominent in Marcos's schemes to bulldoze shantytowns, to debate her. Other Laban rallies were reportedly attended by as many as 60,000 persons.

In an action called in support of the labor candidates running on the Laban slate, more than 20,000 workers demonstrated in Manila April 4, in one of the largest antigovernment protests since martial law was declared. A United Press International dispatch reported:

Bearing torches, red streamers and placards that read, "Down with martial law," and chanting "Marcos, Hitler, dictator," the workers marched from various parts of the city and converged at the downtown Plaza Lawton.

During the rally two effigies of Marcos were burned to the cheers of the screaming crowd.

Two days later, on the eve of the elections, tens of thousands of persons in Manila honked their car horns, banged pots, and shot off fireworks in a gesture of protest against the regime.

Fox Butterfield reported in the April 7 *New York Times*, "Tonight's noisy demonstration, which lasted several hours all over the city . . . seemed a genuine release of pent-up frustrations and to have been stimulated by fears that votes against the

*Laban is an acronym for Lakas ng Bayan (People's Power).



Herblock/Washington Post

Government would simply not be counted."

Butterfield reported the next day that the demonstration had even extended to enlisted soldiers and their families at Fort Bonifacio, where Aquino is being held.

Although the Laban Party ran only in Manila, Marcos no doubt feared the impact an electoral setback in the country's largest city could have on his regime's ability to maintain control.

There were indications of vote rigging even before the balloting began. Butterfield reported that employees of government agencies had been instructed how to vote by their bosses, that the efforts of the opposition to organize poll watching were obstructed, and that pledges of pay hikes had been made to teachers, who were involved in the vote counting.

During the counting, Butterfield walked in on a group of teachers who were preparing a tally sheet of the vote results without even looking at the ballots. The one tally sheet he saw indicated no votes for the opposition.

Mathews reported in the April 8 *Washington Post*:

In the Manila suburb of Las Pinas, where the opposition slate held a well-attended rally at the end of its campaign, the pro-Marcos mayor and some aides allegedly brought hundreds of ballots already marked for the Marcos slate into polling places. Early returns from Las Pinas last night showed the pro-government slate winning some precincts by 200 to 0 and 244 to 0 margins.

Marcos responded to the reports of vote fraud by claiming that it was the opposition that had cheated. Although he said that he had amassed a large dossier on the

Laban Party's fraudulent electioneering, he declined to make it public on the grounds that the material was "classified."

Marcos apparently concentrated so much on stealing votes in Manila that he overlooked the rest of the country. Butterfield reported in the April 10 *New York Times* that a separate local opposition party appeared to have won a complete victory in Cebu, the second largest city.

About 600 persons, including Laban leaders, workers, students, and nuns, were

arrested in Manila April 9 during a march to protest fraud. Most were soon released, but it was announced that nine persons, including six Laban leaders, would be tried by military courts on "sedition" charges.

Marcos indicated the beginning of a renewed crackdown on dissent, ordering the police to take "anticipatory action" to prevent unrest, including the arrest of protest leaders. Despite this warning, plans for new protests were being circulated in Manila. □

Admits Payments of \$850,000

Tongsun Park Names Washington Bribe Recipients

Tongsun Park, the South Korean influence-peddler who made payoffs to dozens of American congressmen, gave his first public testimony April 3 before the House ethics committee.

Park acknowledged that between 1970 and 1976 he gave \$850,000 to about thirty past and present congressmen, as well as to former President Nixon's reelection campaign. He has been granted immunity from prosecution in exchange for his testimony.

Most of those named by Park were congressmen from rice-growing areas whom Park dealt with in his position as rice-buyer for South Korea, important members of congressional committees concerned with aid allocations to the South Korean government, and congressmen who were thought to represent "swing votes" in matters relating to South Korea.

Though much of what Park said in his testimony was already known, he provided some further details. Among the more notable payoffs were \$262,000 for former Representative Richard T. Hanna, \$221,000 to former Representative Cornelius E. Gallagher, and \$250,000 to former Representative Otto E. Passman. Former Representative William E. Minshall received \$21,000, plus an unspecified amount of "spending money." Minshall also helped funnel between \$20,000 and \$25,000 to the Nixon reelection campaign.

Park, a close observer of American business ethics, told his questioners, "What I have done constitutes an American success story, on a small scale. With some imagination and hard work . . . perseverance and persistence, I succeeded as a businessman."

He claimed that the payoffs were intended only to help his rice purchases and

denied that he had acted as an agent of the South Korean regime.

However, in the trial of Hancho C. Kim, an American businessman of Korean descent, Park testified that he had "lent" \$500,000 to Gen. Yang Do Whan of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA). Part of that money was channeled back to Kim for his "lobbying" efforts in Congress. On April 8, Kim was convicted by a federal jury in Washington of perjury and conspiring to bribe congressmen.

Just three days before Park began his testimony, Passman was indicted on charges of receiving bribes from Park and conspiring with him to defraud the U.S. government. The indictment contains evidence that Park worked on behalf of the South Korean regime.

In another development in the "Koreagate" scandal, a document has been made public that implicates House Speaker Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill in the payoff operations. Written in Korean and bearing the official South Korean government classification stamp, the document was originally found by American police in Park's Washington home. The release of the document was delayed for three months by the Justice Department, which finally handed it over to the ethics committee March 28.

Besides indicating that Park helped influence O'Neill's position toward South Korea, it revealed that O'Neill had requested money from the South Koreans for congressional friends who had helped him become House speaker.

O'Neill called the charges "absurd" and termed the document a "fabrication." Park claimed he did not know how the document got into his house. But four of the congressmen O'Neill is said to have requested money for are admitted recipients of Korean funds. □



Björn Ravnbdl/Klassekampen

COPENHAGEN, March 30: Part of march of 2,000 to Israeli embassy protesting Zionist invasion of southern Lebanon. Sponsors of the action included the Anti-Imperialist League, Communist League, Left Socialist

Party, Communist Party, Socialist League, Communist Workers League (Marxist-Leninist), Palestine Workers Union, and the Revolutionary Socialist League (Danish section of the Fourth International).

Israel Rained Hundreds of Cluster Bombs on Refugee Camps

As Israeli troops began April 11 what one Lebanese official accurately described as a "microscopic" withdrawal from southern Lebanon, further revelations emerged as to the murderous scope of the Israeli military operation.

In a tour of the devastated area south of the Litani River, reporters found hundreds of casings of American-made cluster bomb units (CBUs) that had been dropped by Israeli warplanes.

Although Israeli military officials claimed that the deadly antipersonnel weapon had been used against "artillery units and field positions" in southern Lebanon, eyewitness dispatches by American correspondents revealed that the bombs were used indiscriminately against Lebanese civilians and Palestinian refugees during the Israeli blitzkrieg. Associated Press correspondent George Krimsky reported April 10:

Evidence that Israel used U.S.-made "cluster" bombs in its invasion of southern Lebanon is visible at refugee camps, farms and hillside villages throughout the region. Some are still

doing their lethal work, weeks after they were dropped. . . .

On-the-spot inspection by reporters and others found that the deadly cannisters, each filled with hundreds of tiny bombs, were dropped on areas from the Mediterranean coast in the west to the foothills of Mount Hermon in the east. . . .

It was not possible to confirm independently how many casualties resulted from the cluster bombs, or whether they were targeted for Palestinian guerrilla positions. But many landed on civilian areas. . . .

Guerrillas and Lebanese villagers interviewed Saturday [April 8] said apparently two kinds were dropped, one that explodes on impact and another that explodes when it is moved.

The distinctive seven-foot-long cannisters and the olive-colored bombs they hold can be seen in fields around this Palestinian-held market town [Nabatiyeh], in the refugee camps of Rashidiyeh and Bourg Chemali near the biblical port of Tyre, and in southeastern hamlets.

Lettering on one of the cannisters inspected by reporters confirmed that the bombs had been supplied by Washington. It said: "Loading date: 7-73. Loading activity: MAAP." MAAP are the initials for the Pentagon's Military Assistance and Advi-

sory Program.

Mahmoud Labadi, a representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization, told reporters in Beirut that "dozens of families" in refugee camps were killed by the cluster bombs. "Our men are still combing the beach areas in and around the three camps and coming up with scores of unexploded cluster shells," he said.

Twenty-two thousand of the cluster bombs, originally developed for use in Vietnam, have been given to the Israeli government by the Pentagon since 1970. Although it is officially claimed that their intended target is anti-aircraft positions, this is a self-serving lie. American military expert Donald Duncan explained why in a 1967 report on their use in Vietnam:

The steel balls have no effect on military structures. They cannot pierce cement and can penetrate earthen or sandbag military revetments only to a depth of two or three inches. The one thing they do penetrate effectively is human flesh. Because of their shape and/or velocity, once they tear into a body they move in a complex path, doing great damage and complicating removal. There are cases where people

have been hit by as many as thirty pellets.*

Associated Press correspondent Krinsky described how the updated version used by the Israeli forces works:

After a cluster bomb is dropped, the casing splits in an explosive flash before hitting the ground and rains down hundreds of the fist-sized bombs over an area about 200 yards in diameter.

Each small bomb consists of a hollow brass-colored sphere filled with the explosive TNT and covered by a thin steel casing. The inside of the TNT-filled ball is deeply cut into a grid that becomes more than 200 diamond-shaped pieces of shrapnel when the bomb explodes.

Widely publicized reports on the Israeli use of this horror weapon have touched off a furor in the United States, where support for Israel had already eroded dramatically after the Begin government adopted a policy of humiliating Sadat and sponsoring new settlements in the occupied territories.

A telling sign of the depth of the opposition the Israeli invasion has aroused is the fact that it has begun to be reflected among elected officials, who have traditionally considered full support for Israel as necessary to win the Jewish vote.

On April 10, for example, Congressman Paul McCloskey of California sent a letter to President Carter, Israeli Ambassador Simcha Dinitz, and all 435 members of the House of Representatives. In it he condemned the use of cluster bombs in Lebanon and urged an amendment to the foreign aid bill calling for termination of all arms shipments to Israel in the event of further use of such weapons against civilians.

"I have always supported the right of Israel to exist," he said, "but if it continues to use this sort of weapon I am going to vote for an end to aid to Israel. . . . I do not . . . believe that the use of CBU against civilian areas can be justified under any circumstances."

A *New York Times*/CBS poll, published April 14, showed that interest among Americans in developments in the Middle East had "increased dramatically" in the last five months, with 71% of those questioned saying they now followed news from the area, as opposed to 48% in October.

"The expansion of the group following Middle Eastern news cut across all demographic lines," the *New York Times* reported, "and the new interest was accompanied by a decline in backing for Israel."

Of the 71% who said they followed Middle East news, "only 34% approved Mr. Begin's performance and 46% disapproved."

College graduates, in particular, showed a marked change in attitude toward Israel. In October, 35% of those questioned said they sided with the Arabs and 49% with

Israel. By April, following the invasion of Lebanon, sentiment among graduates questioned had shifted to 40% pro-Arab and only 36% pro-Israeli.

In an attempt to reduce the damage done by the revelations about Israeli use of U.S.-supplied cluster bombs, the Carter administration has tried to downplay the issue,

Statement by Iranian Trotskyists

'Get the Shah's Troops Out of Lebanon Now!'

[The following statement was issued April 7 by the Political Committee of the Sattar League, Iranian sympathizing organization of the Fourth International.]

* * *

The shah of Iran has the distinction of being the first among the imperialists and their puppet regimes to send troops into Lebanon under the guise of the United Nations peacekeeping force. The shah's troops first went to Israel and, on March 22, crossed the border into Lebanon.

During the previous week Israeli aggression had already laid waste one-tenth of Lebanon, uprooting more than a quarter million Arab people—including 65,000 Palestinians—and driving them out of southern Lebanon.

This act of Israeli aggression is a continuation of the periodic onslaught of the expansionist Zionist state against the Arab people. The colonial-settler state of Israel came into existence by forcibly expropriating Palestinian land and expelling the Palestinians from their homeland. Ever since, Israel, with the help of U.S., British, and French imperialists, has used every opportunity to consolidate and expand its stolen domain and make millions of people homeless. In contrast to this criminal drive, the Palestinian liberation movement calls for a democratic, secular Palestine. The sentiment of the masses in Iran has always been with the Palestine liberation struggle.

Despite the pious and verbal polemics in the press, the U.S. government supports Israel politically and militarily. When President Carter welcomed Prime Minister Begin to Washington on March 20, Israeli tanks were still rolling in southern Lebanon. The Zionist state is the main imperialist stronghold in the Middle East, and a major force against the Arab revolution.

In their attempt to make further counter-revolutionary inroads against the Arab people, weaken the Palestinian resistance movement, help Israel to consolidate its gains, and cut off a massive response to Israeli brutality and occupation, the imperialists have sent in more troops to Leb-

an on under the guise of UN peacekeeping forces. If they were really peacekeeping forces they would have been sent to Israel, the source of war and aggression, and not to Lebanon.

These forces were sent into Lebanon to play the type of "peacekeeping" role they played in Korea in the early 1950s and in the Congo in the early 1960s. They are there to suppress the Arab people and further stifle the Palestinian resistance movement. The UN troops and the Israeli troops are two sides of the same coin. The shah's role makes this completely obvious.

Despite his occasional rhetoric, the shah has always looked to Israel as a major ally and supported it. He has provided oil for the Israeli military, exchanged spies, and imported Israeli instructors for SAVAK torturers. He has viewed the Arab masses with contempt and considered the Palestinian movement, which has been a source of inspiration to the masses of Iran, as dangerous to his throne.

The shah's troops will play the same aggressive role in Lebanon that they did against the Omani people two years ago, when they helped to suppress the Dhofari rebellion against the corrupt puppet sultan. They will play the same role in Lebanon that they play in oppressing the Arab people *inside* Iran who, along with the other oppressed nationalities such as the Baluchis, Kurds, and Azerbaijanis—are denied their national and cultural rights. They will play the same repressive role in Lebanon that they do against the toilers and masses of Iran.

Iran's censored press is trying to portray the presence of the shah's troops in Lebanon as pro-Arab. This is a blatant lie that must be exposed. Our people have no interest in this reactionary plot against the right to self-determination of the Arab people. In solidarity with the Palestinian resistance movement and the Arab people, the demands must be raised:

Get the shah's troops out of Lebanon now!
Stop the shah's support to Israel!
Israel out of Lebanon and all Arab territory!
Palestine for the Palestinians!

Get the shah's troops out of Lebanon now!
Stop the shah's support to Israel!
Israel out of Lebanon and all Arab territory!
Palestine for the Palestinians!

*See "Cluster Bombs—The Target Is Unprotected Civilians," in *Intercontinental Press*, April 17, 1978, p. 445.

Costa Ricans Demand U.S. Asylum for Marroquín

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica—The Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee has held a number of public activities to win support for the case of Héctor Marroquín.

The committee initiated a campaign to collect signatures for a petition demanding that the U.S. government grant political asylum to the trade-union and student leader. Thousands of leaflets have been distributed, explaining the danger faced by Marroquín if he is deported to Mexico and asking support for the defense campaign.

On April 5, the defense committee organized a picket line in front of the U.S. embassy in San José. Participants included workers, women, students, and a number of members of the Socialist Workers Organization (OST).

The main newspapers and the radio and television stations went to the embassy to cover the event. The main television station, Channel 7, carried on its news program a report, several minutes long, on the picket line. In addition, they interviewed Carlos Coronado, the presidential candidate of the OST in the recent elections.

A story about the picket line appeared in *La República*, one of the papers with a large national circulation, on April 6.

Costa Rica is a country that traditionally grants asylum to persecuted political figures, Latin Americans especially. This is a long tradition, one strongly rooted in popular consciousness. The struggle for Marroquín's right to political asylum in the United States is thus something to which Costa Ricans have quickly responded.

The struggle also comes at a time when democratic rights here are more and more under attack. In recent months various victims of political persecution, Argentines in particular, have had their right to political asylum denied. Political exiles living in Costa Rica have been subjected to police harassment.

So it is not strange that a case so little known at the outset in Costa Rica would have such national repercussions. U.S. embassy personnel asked to discuss the Marroquín case with the Costa Rican defense committee. The street in front of the embassy was filled with people wanting to discuss and know more about the case. The Civil Guard was present but did not provoke any incidents. The arrival of a number of journalists led the Civil Guard to withdraw from the area.

On April 12 the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee is scheduled to turn over to the U.S. embassy a list of signatures asking the American government for asylum for Héctor Marroquín. □

The Case of Héctor Marroquín

Héctor Marroquín is a Mexican socialist seeking political asylum in the United States. Washington is currently seeking to deport him back to Mexico, where he faces frame-up charges of "terrorism" because of his student political activity at the University of Nuevo León.

Marroquín fled Mexico in 1974, fearing torture, "disappearance," and possible death at the hands of the Mexican police. It is for this reason that he has requested political asylum.

Since going to the United States

Marroquín has been active in the movement against deportation of undocumented workers and as a trade unionist. He is a member of the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance.

Letters and telegrams demanding that Marroquín be granted asylum should be sent to Leonel Castillo, Director, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Washington, D.C. 20536. Send a copy to the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee, 853 Broadway, Suite 414, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Three Top FBI Officials Indicted

By Matilde Zimmermann

Evidence of criminal activity by the Federal Bureau of Investigation has been piling up for five years, much of it uncovered through a lawsuit filed by the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance. The FBI's crimes included burglaries, intimidation and threats, electronic surveillance, and all sorts of "dirty tricks" designed to stir up animosity and violence. People began to wonder why no one was being prosecuted for all these documented illegal acts.

Finally, on April 7, 1977, the Justice Department was for the first time in history forced to indict an FBI agent for actions carried out in the line of duty. Criminal charges were brought against John Kearney for illegal wiretaps and mail openings.

Now Attorney General Griffin Bell has made a gesture that he hopes will restore the credibility of the FBI and make it possible to end once and for all the investigations of FBI wrongdoing. On April 10 three former top officials of the FBI, including former Acting Director L. Patrick Gray, were indicted on federal charges arising from their authorization of illegal break-ins.

The indictment charges that the three conspired "to injure and oppress citizens of the United States who were relatives and acquaintances of the Weatherman fugitives" by interfering with their civil rights.

The maximum penalty for a felony con-

viction on the charge would be a \$10,000 fine and ten years in jail.

The indictment cites break-ins at five homes by the New York FBI's Squad 47 during late 1972 and early 1973. But the FBI and its predecessors carried out not five, but hundreds and probably thousands of illegal break-ins throughout the United States over a period spanning decades. As the *New York Times* pointed out on April 11: "In 1974, an investigation by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and a lawsuit by the Socialist Workers Party disclosed that break-ins were an established method of investigation." The SWP national office in New York was burglarized by the FBI at least ninety-two times during the period from 1960 to 1966.

In announcing the results of his investigation, Attorney General Bell said he was satisfied that responsibility for the crimes went no higher than Gray—for example, to the Nixon White House. "I was not able to place the responsibility outside the F.B.I.," Bell claimed.

Charges against Kearney were dropped because, according to Bell, the activities for which he was being prosecuted "are not likely to recur given the present attitude and safeguards in the FBI and the Department of Justice."

This theory got a rude jolt three days later when the director of the New York City FBI office accused Bell himself of continuing the policy of unauthorized entries to gather information. J. Wallace

LaPrade, threatened with internal bureau discipline for his role in the break-ins, held a news conference to challenge Bell "to a debate on national television about terrorism, civil rights and warrantless investigations which he has approved."

LaPrade, who has put in twenty-seven years in the FBI, added: "I have no expectation of getting a fair hearing before any forum in the United States except the American people."

The Attorney General made a great show of righteousness in indicting the three high-ranking FBI men. But Bell's

recent behavior in response to the Socialist Workers Party lawsuit conveys a somewhat different image.

Bell is refusing to comply with a federal judge's order that he turn over the uncensored files of some of the informers used against the SWP and YSA, even though the order has been upheld twice by the Court of Appeals. Bell has appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, arguing that he is prepared to defy the court order and that "it would be unseemly for the chief law enforcement officer of the United States, sworn to uphold and obey the law," to be

found in contempt of court and possibly jailed.

In almost five years of pretrial hearings and "discovery" motions, the SWP's lawsuit has uncovered much of what is today known as surreptitious break-ins and other illegal FBI actions. The lawsuit is frequently mentioned in newspaper articles about the current indictments and the problems still facing the FBI. And, unlike the Justice Department investigation that Bell tried to bury on April 10, the SWP lawsuit is continuing to press for the full story of FBI crimes. □

Mobilize Against the Pentagon's 'Right' to Intervene in Panama!

[The following statement was issued in Panama City April 3 by the Liga Socialista Revolucionaria (Revolutionary Socialist League), the Panamanian sympathizing organization of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

To the trade-union organizations CNTP, CTRP, CIT, CATI, CPTT, SUNTRACS, to the peasant organizations CONAC and the Peasant Movement of Panama, to the Student Federation of Panama, to the Party of the Panamanian People and other political and people's organizations:

In face of the imperialist onslaught against Panama and the dignity of the Panamanian people led by the U.S. Senate (where there are no "friends of Panama," as was evidenced by the ratification vote), the Panamanian people and those of us who have always fought at the side of the people have not seen the leaderships of the organizations that in other periods mobilized in defense of the dignity and sovereignty of Panama begin to organize and mobilize their ranks in a huge demonstration of opposition to imperialism.

Up to now, the most serious attack by imperialism since January 9, 1964, that aims to affect not only the Panamanians of today but future generations as well, has gone unanswered by the sole guarantors of sovereignty, that is, the Panamanian people and their mass organizations.

How the Surrender of Our Sovereignty Has Occurred

In the short, one-sided discussion of the Torrijos-Carter treaties prior to the plebiscite of October 23, 1977, official government spokesmen—Rómulo Escobar B., Aristides Royo, Gerardo González, López Guevara, and others—urged the Panamanian people, through *all* the means at their disposal, to approve the treaties. When opponents of the treaties pointed out that

they would establish the right of Yankee intervention in Panama, whenever imperialism considered it necessary, and that they left open the possibility of maintaining U.S. bases after the year 2000, they argued the contrary.

The defenders of the treaties—the government, bosses, Party of the Panamanian People, leadership of the Student Federation of Panama, and others—contended that the Yankees were not being handed the right to intervene whenever they wished and that the bases would remain on our soil only until the year 2000. With this position, and by emphasizing the crumbs contained in the "Treaty on the Panama Canal," they managed to obtain the approval of the Panamanian masses for a treaty clearly tailored to imperialism.

Today we see that the U.S. Senate has made some "revisions" in the "Treaty Concerning Neutrality" (and is preparing to amend the other one). These revisions *clarify* some of the points in this treaty. Thus, the U.S. Senate has unilaterally agreed to incorporate the Torrijos-Carter declaration of October 14, 1977. This spells out the possibility that the United States may maintain military bases after the year 2000, and explicitly emphasizes the right of Yankee intervention in our territory, for which they can take the measures they consider appropriate (including military force), in whatever circumstances, including "internal problems such as a strike, political uprising, or other events of a similar nature."

The Imposition of Silence

Notwithstanding what was said in the discussion prior to the plebiscite and to the U.S. Senate's attack on our sovereignty, the government representative, Dr. Rómulo Escobar B., cynically declared that the amendments would be "acceptable" to the Panamanian people. In contradiction to the history of the struggle for full sovereignty over our whole territory, the

government concluded by stating that from now on, the best method of struggle against imperialism was "silence."

So far, the mass organizations appear to have fallen into this deadly trap. While some have added their voices to the call for silence, others have confined themselves to terse communiqués, *without even explaining the need for mobilizations* that give the Panamanian people the opportunity to make their voices heard and their strength felt in defense of the dignity and sovereignty of Panama in face of the imperialist onslaught.

It is sad that at such a crucial moment in our history, the leaderships of the mass organizations are echoing the "campaign of silence" orchestrated by the bosses and their allies inside and outside the government, beneath the contented gaze of imperialism.

But why this silence? How is it that the clamor of the legitimate aspirations of our people, which they have held for so long, and which burned in the hearts of the martyrs, are now harmful to Panama, while the amendments, reservations, and "understandings" are "acceptable"?

Today in Panama, those who hold economic power seem to be the only ones who have clear objectives and intend to realize them, while trying to sow and nurture confusion among the masses.

The bosses have publicly shown that they support the Torrijos-Carter treaties because of the prospect the accords raise of solving the economic crisis. But what kind of solution do they offer? The businessmen admit that the direct economic benefits of the treaties do not represent a permanent solution to the crisis. This, to them, will result from the indirect benefits.

And what are these indirect "benefits"? Nothing less than the imposition of a "social peace"—that is, a pax Americana—that raises the prospect for national, and especially international, investors of finding a country that offers secure possibili-

ties for making big profits in a short time. In other words, a country without strikes, with frozen wages, a country of Law 95 multiplied many times over.

And how can this be obtained? By imposing treaties on us that, with the revisions, *spell out* the right of intervention and permanent presence of Yankee bases on the isthmus of Panama. This means *the possibility of repressing any movement that threatens the interests of either the bosses or imperialism.*

It is beginning to become clear why the ruling class does not want the people and their mass organizations to take to the streets. If the people remain silent and confused, not knowing how to react to the offensive by the imperialists and bosses, then political initiative will remain in the hands of the bosses. And this would mean that the bosses and their government would be compromising the chances for the Panamanian people and future generations to throw off the yoke of pacts injurious to sovereignty.

For a United Anti-imperialist Mobilization

Therefore, all those who are on the side of the people should unite their voices and efforts to promote and organize *united anti-imperialist mobilizations* against the right of Yankee intervention.

We are proposing to the trade-union federations, CNTP, CIT, CATI, CPTT, CTRP, SUNTRACS, to the peasant organizations CONAC and the Peasant Movement of Panama, to the Party of the Panamanian People, to the leadership of the Student Federation of Panama, and to all sectors of the people, that a picket line be organized on Thursday, April 13, at 3:00 p.m., at the U.S. embassy, to repel the offensive by the U.S. Senate.

We view this picket line as the first step (and not the only one) in the direction of large *mobilizations against the right of Yankee military intervention* agreed to by the bosses and imperialism. One of these should be on *May 1*, a date that should be commemorated with anti-imperialist mobilizations as its central theme.

We are calling on the ranks of the trade unions, peasant, student, political, and people's organizations, to put pressure on their leaderships to sponsor and organize such mobilizations.

We have already stated that we will participate in and support any popular anti-imperialist demonstration on whatever date on which the organizations decide to take to the streets.

We urge that all those who are against imperialism and the bosses' maneuvers declare themselves publicly, because it is important for the Panamanian people to know their own strength, and to know that this strength is making itself felt in opposition to the agreements of the bosses and imperialists, for the good of the Panamanian people and future generations. □

Socorro Ramírez Denounces 'Censorship'

Colombian Socialist Denied TV Time

Socorro Ramírez, socialist candidate for president in Colombia's June elections, has been denied access to the free television time the López Michelsen government is providing to other candidates.

A presidential decree earlier this year specified that two hours on the government station operated by the National Radio and Television Institute (Inravisión) would be made available to each candidate. But Inravisión officials refused to tape Ramírez's first presentation on April 1, saying she did not meet the constitutional requirements. (The Colombian constitution states that one must be thirty years old to take office as president; Ramírez is twenty-seven.)

President López's decree had mentioned no requirement of that kind, and in any case the constitution places no such restriction on a person's right to *run* for president.

In addition, supporters of Workers and Socialist Unity (UNIOS*) had gathered 80,000 signatures of Colombian citizens so that Ramírez could meet an extra requirement López laid down for candidates whose parties have no representation in congress.

Colombia's two big bourgeois parties colluded to keep Ramírez from getting equal access to television. During a March 30 meeting to draw lots for the dates and times of the presentations, representatives of Liberal Party candidate Julio César Turbay Ayala and Conservative Belisario Betancur demanded that time be allocated only to those who were constitutionally qualified to hold office.

At that time Ramírez and two other presidential candidates, Julio Pernía and Jaime Piedrahíta, issued a joint statement rejecting "the limitations and censorship imposed on the exercise by candidates of the left of the elementary democratic right to use the public communications media to present their ideas to public opinion."

Socorro Ramírez met with López Michelsen on April 3 to demand that he fulfill his commitment to grant television time to all presidential candidates. The results were reported in the Bogotá daily *El Espectador* on April 4:

*Unidad Obrera y Socialista is an electoral coalition made up of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers Party), the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR—Revolutionary Communist League), the Organización Comunista Ruptura (Breakaway Communist Organization), and the Unión Revolucionaria Socialista (Revolutionary Socialist Union). The PST and LCR are sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International. □

"Socorro Ramírez said that during the meeting López Michelsen told her that he had to support the statements made by [representatives of] the candidates Julio César Turbay Ayala and Belisario Betancur, because they were complying with the constitution." López also said "it was impossible to provide the services of the state to a person having no possibility of being president of the republic."

UNIOS announced April 4 that marches and rallies protesting the president's refusal of television time to Ramírez would be held April 7 in Bogotá and other cities, and that the noted Colombian novelist Gabriel García Márquez had denounced the government's move as a measure "limiting freedom of expression."

UNIOS called López's action "a serious case of political persecution, which illustrates the way the regime and the ruling classes deal with the country's problems. Its gravity derives from the fact that socialists . . . are denied all access to such an important means of mass communication, while during the rest of the year and every year the regime allows the two traditional parties to monopolize almost all the opinion programs on TV and to manipulate the news deceitfully to benefit their policies and candidates."

The April 10 issue of the conservative Bogotá weekly *Guión* noted a contradiction in López's present stance:

"Sixteen years ago, when the candidacy of Guillermo León Valencia was launched . . . Alfonso López Michelsen announced his own, without meeting the requirements of the constitution then in force. . . . López asserted that such a requirement was for exercising the high office, but not for being a candidate. A similar situation now presents itself for Doña Socorro. . . ."

Ramírez has announced that she will file legal actions against the minister of communications and the director of Inravisión for "abuse of authority," as well as against the government's "arbitrary measures."

Protests against the Colombian regime's attack on freedom of expression should be sent to Alfonso López Michelsen, Presidente de la República, Casa de San Carlos, Bogotá, Colombia. Send copies to UNIOS, Cra. 4a. No. 14-92, Bogotá, Colombia, and to Daniel Samper, c/o El Tiempo, Bogotá, Colombia. □

Intercontinental Press/Inprecor
will give you a week by week
analysis of the most important
world events.
Subscribe now!

Superships—Superprofits and Superspills

Reviewed by Fred Murphy



The supertanker *Amoco Cadiz* broke up on rocks off Portsall, France, on March 16, disgorging 68 million gallons of crude oil onto more than 100 miles of the Brittany coastline. It was the largest oil spill in history, but anyone reading Noël Mostert's *Supership* will realize that this dubious achievement must almost inevitably be surpassed.

Mostert is a journalist who has worked for South African and Canadian papers. He has spent much of his time on ships, however, both merchant and passenger, and is obviously someone who knows and loves the sea. *Supership* is Mostert's warning—so far unheeded—of the grave dangers vessels like the *Amoco Cadiz* pose to the vitality of the world's oceans.

Some years ago, Mostert sailed aboard the S.S. *Ardshiel*, a 214,000-ton British supertanker, on one of its continual voyages from Western Europe to the Persian Gulf and back. A narrative of *Ardshiel's* trip provides Mostert with the framework for a series of digressions on marine ecology, the history and economics of oceanic oil transport, tanker construction and technology, and the need for measures to prevent further fouling of the seas by petroleum.

The prototype supertanker was the 84,000-ton *Universe Leader*, ordered by Texas oilman Daniel K. Ludwig in 1955. "The *Universe Leader* already was in the water when, late in 1956, [Greek shipping tycoon Aristotle] Onassis ordered the first 100,000 tonner. [Onassis's rival Stavros] Niarchos topped this by ordering a 106,000 tonner, and Ludwig outdid them both by asking for four 100,000 tonners."

"They might have remained a trio of eccentric gamblers on big ships had it not been for the first Suez crisis in 1956 and the general political instability of the Middle East that followed," Mostert says. But after the Suez Canal was closed temporarily in 1956, and especially after the more extended shutdown of Suez following the 1967 Mideast War, supertankers became the standard means of getting crude oil from the Persian Gulf around Africa to the refineries of Europe.

But were supertankers necessary?

The tanker industry has never presented a convincing case. The usual defense is that these ships were built to save us money by carrying oil

more cheaply, and to save our coasts by reducing the number of ships and thereby the risk of collision. These are justifications after the fact. The ships were built as a speculation against

Supership, by Noël Mostert. New York: Warner Books, 1975. 382 pp., no index. Paperback, \$1.95.

Middle Eastern politics and with the prospect of immense profit—no more, no less.

Without question smaller ships would have made their owners and operators quite rich enough; but the superships promised so much, much more, an excess beyond all prevailing notions of profit that, once this had been confirmed by practice, the case for them was regarded as obvious. . . .

By 1973, profits were running at \$3 million or more on a single voyage, and in an "astounding ship-ordering spree" that year, tanker operators ordered a doubling of their fleet.

Technological innovations pioneered by Ludwig and Japanese shipbuilders had by then brought construction time for a supertanker down to about seven months.

As others followed the Japanese into giant tankers, they introduced their own variations on these prefabricated principles. The idea always was to turn the ship out as fast as possible. . . . Admirable and inventive as all this was, supertankers wherever and by whomever and whatever method built unhappily began to reveal unusual stresses and strains, and a high and dangerous rate of structural failure.

They had grown too big much too quickly, without commensurate knowledge of the forces created by their enormous hulls. . . . They were always growing faster than any proper experience of their sea qualities or their wearing qualities, and to some degree therefore being built blind. No one truly knew how they would behave.

Some tankers simply tore apart in heavy seas. Others broke up after running aground in shallow water, like the *Amoco Cadiz*. Mysterious tank explosions destroyed three supertankers in a sixteen-day period in December 1969.

Adverse experiences such as those led to some design modifications and efforts to make future generations of ships more structurally sound. But the "oil glut" that followed the 1974-75 world economic slump made this question "academic," Mostert says, and "the prospect of many, indeed

any, new big ships being built in the future is not a serious one considering the surplus of available tonnage." Thus "the thousands of existing tankers . . . will be operated for as long as possible, and they will be driven hard."

. . . the much-vaunted economic advantage of these ships has been undermined and contradicted by reality. [Tanker operators] will therefore, I believe, attempt to carry on as long as possible without costly repairs and maintenance, or attempt to make and mend as best as possible on their own. In that lie perilous prospects for the seas, particularly since the sheer number of VLCCs [Very Large Crude Carriers] afloat and their increasing age and deterioration mean we have truly entered the age of giant spills. . . .

The nature of these "perilous prospects" should be clear from Mostert's concise summary of the effects of petroleum pollution:

Oil poisons, smothers, burns, coats, taints; among many consequences, it can start carcinogenic processes in sea animals, affect reproduction, and cause genetic change; it affects respiratory organs and clogs the filtering mechanisms of fish; . . . [it upsets] the balance and independence of a bird such as the penguin; it causes imbalance in the cycles of plant life, when it doesn't kill it altogether; its degrading process consumes large quantities of dissolved oxygen, which is vital to life in the sea.

A substantial portion of *Supership* is devoted to a discussion of the damage already done to the Southern Ocean (the waters that surround Antarctica). This sea—"whose fauna and flora are the richest and most prolific of all"—has been especially hard hit by oil pollution owing to the heavy tanker traffic around the Cape of Good Hope. Mostert's concern stems partly from his greater familiarity with this area as a former Cape Town resident, but he makes clear why this is no parochial preoccupation:

Several of the world's major ocean circulatory systems draw their initial force of propulsion and much of their organic seed from the Southern Ocean. These systems provide the dominant currents of the South Pacific, South Atlantic, and Indian oceans. . . .

It is sufficiently apparent alone from the great currents it propels and nourishes that the Southern Ocean's impact upon the body of the world's waters is probably greater than any other ocean's. . . .

Supership sheds light on many aspects

of the *Amoco Cadiz* disaster. One that has aroused particular controversy is the French government's charge that Captain Pasquale Bardari of the *Amoco Cadiz* wasted valuable time haggling over a salvage contract with the skipper of the tugboat that came to the tanker's aid. Bardari has consequently been indicted for "causing pollution."

Once the *Amoco Cadiz* had lost its steering and was facing thirty-foot seas and fifty-mile-an-hour winds, there was virtually no way to prevent disaster. Under the best of circumstances, supertankers "cannot respond to split-second timing. It takes at least three miles and twenty-one to twenty-two minutes to stop a 250,000 tonner doing sixteen knots: over-long hulls create different forces of momentum, giving the effect of a lower resistance to the water . . . and sheer weight seems to augment this and to keep them rolling on and on and on. . . ."

"Anchors don't stop these ships. Where an ordinary merchantman would drop its anchors in an attempt to hold its motion, putting down anchors to stop a 200,000 tonner even slightly underway would simply mean having their cables wrenched from the deck."

So Captain Bardari had little choice but to summon a tugboat for the *Amoco Cadiz*. But as Mostert explains, "commissioning salvage tugs is a costly business which usually is regarded by owners as a final desperate resort," and the masters of supertankers sometimes even face disciplinary action from their employers for summoning assistance. Mostert recounts the experience of Captain Basil Thomson of the *Ardshiel*, who was censured by the P & O Line for securing tugboat aid when the ship suffered a power failure nine miles off the South African coast.

In discussing possible solutions to the growing problem of oceanic oil pollution, Mostert hopes that some means can be found to "ensure that those men who profit from [supertankers] should be held accountable for making these ships as fail-safe as possible," and that the insurance companies will "establish a code of acceptance based on something more than mere seaworthiness of a vessel."

But he is not optimistic, and feels that—virtually predicting the *Amoco Cadiz* spill—"it would take the shock and incalculable impact of a fully laden VLCC totally wrecked . . . in an area sensitive to public opinion and political reaction" before anything is done.

Such a disaster has now occurred, and one result has been tougher action by the French government against supertankers plying that country's coasts. But to halt once and for all the danger Mostert describes so thoroughly in *Supership*, control of the oil and energy industries will have to be wrested from the capitalists who profit from their polluting activities. □

Offices of 'Socialist Challenge' Firebombed

A few minutes before midnight, Sunday, April 9, the offices of *Socialist Challenge* in Islington, north London, were firebombed. The weekly paper is sponsored by the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International.

According to an article in the April 13 issue, police confirmed that arson was the cause of the fire that destroyed journals, newspapers, and storage equipment in a basement room.

At 1 a.m. on Monday two London dailies received phone calls claiming that the firebombing was the work of "Column 88."

The same organization has claimed credit for a series of other attacks on radical groups and a trade union in the past several weeks.

On March 29 a parcel bomb exploded in the face of Roger Prouse, a bus driver in High Wycombe who is a member of the Anti Nazi League.

The following week, parcel bombs were sent to Communist Party headquarters

and to offices of NUPE, the public employees union.

Luckily none of these bombs caused serious injury.

Socialist Challenge warned that "Britain's fascists are evidently well-versed in the terror tactics perfected by their mentors in Nazi Germany. The physical attacks that have become an everyday experience for black people in Britain, are now being systematically extended to all those identified with the fight against fascism and racism."

There are indications that the police are less than wholehearted in their effort to catch the perpetrators. The London *Daily Express* quoted "detectives" as saying that "it could have been a left-wing plot" to discredit the extreme right.

Socialist Challenge has appealed for funds to help meet the costs of the fire damage and measures to improve the security of its offices.

'The Proposed Amnesty Is a Fraud'

Chilean Political Prisoners Answer Pinochet

[The following statement was issued in Santiago de Chile on April 4. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

In reply to the announcement made yesterday by Pinochet, to the effect that he was considering an amnesty for those tried and convicted by military tribunals, the Chilean political prisoners held in jails and prisons from north to south wish to point out:

1. That the political prisoners tried and convicted by military tribunals are only a tiny fraction of all Chilean political prisoners. Indeed, to the vast number of political prisoners who have disappeared after their arrest must be added the political prisoners tried and sentenced by ordinary tribunals.

2. That the proposed amnesty is a fraud and a last-ditch attempt by Pinochet to polish his image and resolve the acute crisis of his government.

3. That the aim of this measure is to enable the government to declare that there are no political prisoners in Chile, as it did previously, at the end of 1976. However, it is up to neither Pinochet nor his judicial power to decide who are political prisoners and who are not. Only the people and their organizations can assign

such status to those fighters who have been deprived of their freedom.

4. That as long as the DINA-CNI [the Chilean secret police] and similar bodies exist, nothing can guarantee the lives of those who might be amnestied if they remain in Chile, nor prevent the number of disappearances from growing.

5. We therefore call on the working class and Chilean people, as well as on those around the world who support the struggle against the dictatorship, to immediately undertake a vast campaign of mobilization and struggle for:

a. An explanation of each and every case of disappearance, the dissolution of the DINA-CNI, and exemplary punishment of the torturers and hangmen;

b. Amnesty with full guarantees of security if they remain in Chile for all political prisoners behind bars in Chile; for those tried and sentenced both by military and by civilian tribunals, on the basis of the lists drawn up by the political prisoners themselves and verified by the International Committee of the Red Cross;

c. The amnesty and return to the country of all those exiled and forced to live abroad;

d. The full restoration of democratic freedoms, the overthrow of the dictatorship, and establishment of a government that insures unconditional respect for democratic freedoms and social justice. □

Zaire—New Phase of Imperialist Domination

By Ernest Harsch

President Mobutu Sese Seko, who styles himself the "father of the revolution" and the "guide" of the Zaïrian peoples, has been confronted for the past three years with the gravest economic crisis since he seized power in a military coup in 1965. Outbreaks of renewed unrest in various parts of the country have compounded the strains on his regime.

Despite his heavy use of nationalist demagoguery, Mobutu's main response to these challenges has been to lean ever more heavily on the support of his imperialist backers, in the process opening Zaïre up to yet greater imperialist domination.

Before the current economic crisis, the regime enjoyed a period of relative "prosperity," based largely on the mining and export of the country's natural wealth, which includes large deposits of copper, cobalt, diamonds, manganese, zinc, and other important minerals. Since the nationalization of the major Belgian mining interests at the end of 1966,¹ much of the revenues from mining have poured into the government coffers.

The world market price of copper, Zaïre's major export product, reached a high in 1974 of \$1.40 a pound. Under the apparent belief that copper prices would remain at such a high level, Mobutu initiated a number of long-range, capital-intensive economic projects, including the Inga dam on the Zaïre River and the Tenke-Fungurume copper complex in the mineral-rich province of Shaba.

In addition, the high earnings from copper and other mineral exports gave Mobutu a certain economic margin to continue his efforts to foster the emergence and growth of a Zaïrian bourgeoisie.

In November 1973, Mobutu "Zaïrianized" all foreign-owned agricultural, transport, and commercial enterprises, offering them to local entrepreneurs. But few Zaïrians had enough capital to take them over, and the next year Mobutu nationalized many of these firms, along with other companies with more than \$2 million in

turnover (U.S. interests were largely spared). He then appointed loyal party members and business executives to "manage" them in a bid to spur the development of an indigenous capitalist class under direct state protection.

These economic measures were also part of Mobutu's attempts to create an "anti-imperialist" image for himself. Seeking to rally support for his regime and to draw together the country's large and ethnically diverse population, Mobutu declared himself a proponent of "authentic Zaïrian nationalism."

As a symbol of his new nationalist stance, Mobutu changed many of the geographical names used by the Belgian colonialists to "authentic" African ones; in 1971 the country itself was renamed from the Congo to Zaïre (ironically, it was the Portuguese colonialists in the fifteenth century who used the name Zaïre for the Congo River, which runs through the territory of the Bakongo people).

Through such methods, Mobutu sought to disguise his regime's close ties with imperialism. He likewise hoped to sufficiently disorient the masses to head off a resurgence of the massive unrest that swept the Congo throughout the early and mid-1960s.

Economy on the Skids

Beginning in 1975, however, Mobutu's schemes were hit by a series of devastating shocks.

The world price of copper plunged to \$0.55 a pound and copper revenues for 1975 consequently fell to less than half of what they were in 1973. Copper exports and production were further disrupted by the civil war in neighboring Angola, in which the Mobutu regime was directly involved; the complete disruption of service on the Benguela railway through Angola cut off Zaïre's major trade route.

To cover the mounting balance-of-payments deficits, Mobutu borrowed heavily from foreign governments, creditors, and financial institutions. As the economic situation continued to worsen, the regime was pushed to the brink of international bankruptcy and had to default on loan repayments. Although some payments have now been made, Zaïre's foreign debt still stands at about \$2 billion, a figure equivalent to Zaïre's entire gross domestic product.

Affected as well by the world economic recession, Zaïre's agricultural and indus-

trial production declined sharply. Since 1975, the economy has actually shrunk by about 4% or 5% a year. The \$850 million Tenke-Fungurume copper project was shelved indefinitely in January 1976. In 1977 alone, according to a planning department study published in Kinshasa, the production of printed cloth fell 45.9%, of synthetic fabrics 34.6%, of sugar 16.3%, and of cement 10.9%.

This economic crisis has greatly hampered Mobutu's efforts to assist Zaïre's aspiring capitalists. But it is the masses who have been the hardest hit of all, especially those in the urban centers.

Inflation skyrocketed to about 100% by the end of 1975 and continues today at around 70%. Unemployment is growing. Though Zaïre has a rich agricultural potential, some basic food items have now become scarce in the cities.

About 70% of Zaïre's 26 million people still live on the land, engaged largely in subsistence agriculture, and are thus more removed from the worst effects of the economic crisis. But they too have suffered from the regime's inability to provide agricultural assistance.

In a survey of the current situation in Zaïre in the January 1978 issue of the London quarterly *African Affairs*, Kenneth L. Adelman noted that despite its vast resources, "Zaïre remains a poor nation." Its per capita income is under \$200 a year.

"Those in both urban and rural areas," he stated, "face greater hardships today in eking out a living than throughout either the colonial or immediate post-colonial period. Some estimates place the average standard of living now at a level comparable to that of 1910-15. Domestic food production is down; the transportation system disjointed if at all operative; commercial credit tight; and social and economic discontent high."

A Combustible Situation

This discontent has led to simmering unrest in several parts of the country, at times erupting into open revolt against the Mobutu regime.

The most massive display of opposition thus far was the uprising that began in Shaba in March 1977. It was initiated by a group of exiled dissidents who had fought in the 1960s with the imperialist-backed secessionist regime of Moïse Tshombe in Katanga (Shaba's former name) against

1. The Belgian-owned Union Minière du Haut Katanga, which had controlled the bulk of the mining industry in the country, was nationalized December 31, 1966. At the same time, the Mobutu regime set up a state corporation, Société Générale Congolaise des Minerais, to exploit the vast copper and other mineral resources. Belgians still continued to provide much of the management for the mines, however.

the central government of the Congo.

Calling themselves the Front National de Libération du Congo (FNLC—National Liberation Front of the Congo), the former Katangan gendarmes reentered Shaba from their bases in northern Angola with the avowed aim of overthrowing Mobutu. They were backed by a broad array of other dissident groups, which function largely in exile and are united only in their opposition to Mobutu.

Thanks to their continued ties with the local Lunda people and to the disorganization and low morale of the Zaïrian army, the insurgents were able to make rapid advances. They occupied a series of villages with little actual fighting and captured the Zaïrian military headquarters at Mutshatsha.

Mobutu's initial failure to contain the rebellion encouraged antigovernment forces in other parts of the country as well. Leaflets were distributed in Kinshasa and the province of Bas-Zaïre calling on the Bakongo people to rise up against Mobutu. Intellectuals began to speak out against Mobutu's repressive rule.

One sign of Mobutu's growing isolation came when he tried to rally support through a mass assembly in Kinshasa April 3. He was barely able to attract half the projected turnout. Even those who showed up expressed their disgruntlement with Mobutu, many by walking out.

The conflict in Shaba threatened to seriously weaken Mobutu's regime and possibly lead to his downfall. Whatever the FNLC's overall aims, Washington and the other imperialist powers feared that the overthrow of their ally in Kinshasa could open up a new period of massive unrest similar to that of the 1960s.

Because of Zaïre's strategic location in the center of the African continent and its significant mineral deposits, the imperialists sought to avoid such a development. They responded quickly to Mobutu's pleas for aid.²

As a result of the massive antiwar sentiment in the United States, however, Washington was forced to limit its direct assistance, sending only about \$15 million worth of "nonlethal" military aid. Instead, it chose to let its European and African allies carry the bulk of the foreign intervention in Zaïre.

The Belgian regime, the former colonial

2. Some imperialist figures, particularly in Washington and Brussels, have expressed displeasure with Mobutu over the years. But with no reliable substitute in sight, they appear reconciled for the moment with keeping him in power. As one Western diplomat in Kinshasa was quoted as saying, "There is just no one else here who could take his place" (*New York Times*, April 2, 1978). Mobutu, for his part, has taken care to prevent anyone in the military or civilian administrations from building up an independent power base that could some day be used to depose him.

ruler of the Congo, rushed machine guns, mortars, grenades, and other arms to Mobutu. King Hassan of Morocco sent 1,500 experienced combat troops, and the French government provided the planes and pilots to airlift them into Shaba. Paris also sent a number of military advisers. The regime in Egypt dispatched a few pilots to Zaïre and Saudi Arabia helped finance the rescue operation.

With the aid of this foreign backing, Mobutu's forces retook the last of the towns held by the rebels in late May and drove them back across the border into Angola. Reprisals by the Zaïrian military against the local population, including aerial bombardment, also forced about 220,000 refugees to flee into Angola, according to a United Nations estimate.

Mobutu was able to suppress the rebellion in Shaba for the time being, but the antigovernment forces in the area remain a threat to his rule. Adelman estimated in the January-February issue of the *New York* bimonthly *Africa Report* that the FNLC had recruited 1,500 persons since the Shaba uprising.

Mobutu faces continued small-scale guerrilla resistance in a number of other provinces as well, including Kivu, Haut-Zaïre, and Bandundu (formerly Kwilu and Kwango). Some of these guerrilla units are led by former followers of Patrice Lumumba, the first prime minister of the Congo, who was murdered in 1961 by imperialist-backed forces.

The government has claimed to have wiped out the guerrillas in the eastern mountains near Lake Tanganyika in June 1977, but Buana Kabue reported in the February issue of the Paris monthly *Demain l'Afrique* that the fighters under Laurent Kabila of the Parti de la Révolution Populaire (People's Revolutionary Party) were still defying the regime.

There have likewise been signs of unrest in some urban areas. During 1977, strikes were reported in both Kinshasa and Lubumbashi, respectively the largest and third largest cities in the country.

Noting the migration of hundreds of thousands of persons from the countryside to the cities during the past two decades, an April 1 Reuters dispatch from Kinshasa commented that the "protracted economic crisis is widening the gap between rich and poor, adding to the potential for discontent in this sprawling city."

The most recent outbreak of sizable opposition to the regime came in the province of Bandundu. The Comité Zaïre, a group in Belgium opposed to Mobutu, charged that according to its sources in Zaïre the regime carried out a massacre in January of about 2,000 persons in the Idiofa region, following the discovery of an underground political meeting in the village of Mulemebe. The committee also charged that many persons had been arrested in the nearby city of Kikwit and that some of them had been executed.

At first the Mobutu regime denied these charges. But on March 7 the official Zaïrian press agency admitted that fourteen persons had been executed after troops crushed a rebellion near Idiofa. It also announced the trial of ninety-one persons, sixty-seven of them army officers.

During the trial, the prosecution charged that the defendants had planned to carry out a terrorist campaign in Kinshasa and assassinate Mobutu and his family. A bourgeois opposition group, the Mouvement d'Action pour la Résurrection du Congo (MARC—Action Movement for the Resurrection of the Congo), was implicated in the alleged plot and some of its exiled leaders were tried in absentia. The MARC accused Mobutu of fabricating the charges.

Thirteen of the defendants were executed March 17 and most of the others were sentenced to prison terms ranging from one to twenty years.

More Advisers, More Guns

In a concerted effort to reimpose firm control over the population, Mobutu has launched a broad campaign involving a reorganization of the military and the government administration, a reversal of some of his earlier economic policies, and above all the securing of even greater direct imperialist assistance. The foreign intervention during the Shaba war was the most overt instance of imperialist military support to Mobutu, but since then Washington, Paris, Brussels, and Bonn have continued to provide significant aid, especially in relation to Mobutu's efforts to refurbish the military into a more efficient repressive force.

Godwin Matatu reported in the September 1977 issue of the London monthly *Africa* that following the poor performance of the Zaïrian armed forces during the Shaba war, "President Mobutu enlisted the services of four French generals and Moroccan officers to help in the restructuring of the army and air force."

In late 1977, the French Council of Ministers adopted a draft law authorizing approval of a technical and military agreement between Paris and Kinshasa that had been signed in May of that year, toward the end of the Shaba war. It covered the employment in Zaïre of French technical personnel, visits to Zaïre by French military experts, and the training in France of Zaïrian officers.

The December 12, 1977, London weekly *West Africa* reported that there were already sixty French military instructors in Zaïre and sixty-five Zaïrian officers being trained in French military academies. Belgian officers as well are reported to be part of the corps of foreign advisers now attached to the Zaïrian military.

As part of the military reorganization, several dozen top officers have been dismissed, including Chief of Staff Gen.

Bumba Moedes Djogi. Mobutu took over direct command himself. The purges among the ranks were reported to have reached into the hundreds.

To supplement the reorganized regular forces, a new special commando brigade under Col. Eluki Monga is being set up. The elite Kamanyola Division, which was formerly stationed in Kinshasa, is now to be permanently based in Shaba. Other military units, also generally stationed near Kinshasa, have been dispersed throughout the country to be in a better position to act quickly against unrest.

Though Washington is taking a less direct hand in this project than its French and Belgian allies, it too is providing valuable assistance. The Carter administration allocated \$17.5 million in foreign military sales credits to Zaïre for the current fiscal year, to cover improved mobility and communications, to replenish supplies, and to provide additional ground equipment. (Carter had originally asked for \$30 million, but the figure was reduced following some opposition in Congress.) The White House is requesting authorization for another \$17.5 million for fiscal 1979.

Tad Szulc, an investigative reporter with generally excellent sources of information, revealed in an article in the March issue of the New York monthly *Penthouse* that West German transport planes, under a "civilian" cover, "have delivered several million rounds of 9-mm ammunition and an unknown number of submachine guns to Zaïre. At the height of this airlift, around September 1977, there were three weekly flights of this type."

Perhaps as a precondition for this West German military aid, Mobutu signed agreements with a West German rocket company in 1975 and 1976 leasing a vast area of eastern Zaïre for rocket testing (see accompanying article). It was the biggest territorial concession to imperialism made by any independent African government to date.

Creditors Name Their Terms

To lighten the burden of his staggering international debts, Mobutu has also been trying to get his major imperialist creditors to reschedule payments and to extend some new loans.

In July 1977, the "Club of Paris," a group of eleven imperialist governments that have made loans to Zaïre,³ agreed to reschedule over a ten-year period the debt payments that were due in 1977 (the payments for 1975 and 1976 had already been

rescheduled earlier). In November, the Club of Paris likewise agreed to reschedule the interest payments due in the second half of that year.

Mobutu's private lenders have taken a harder stance. Irving S. Friedman, a se-



MOBUTU

nior vice-president of Citibank, was quoted in the December 17, 1977, *New York Times* as declaring that the banks "have ruled out rescheduling." He explained, "There is a principle involved here that is more important than the amount of money involved. When you accept a debt it must be repaid."

In return for Mobutu's agreement to stick to the repayment schedule on his \$400 million in commercial loans, Citibank is seeking to raise another \$250 million loan from a number of private banks to help Zaïre subsidize its imports. Reflecting the continued lack of investor confidence, however, it has so far been unsuccessful.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has provided Mobutu with \$235 million in credits since 1975 and is considering additional ones. Coordinating its efforts with the Club of Paris, the IMF has at the same time laid down a series of conditions that Mobutu must meet as the price for new credits and for the rescheduling of the debt payments.

At the November 1977 congress of the Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution (MPR—People's Revolutionary Movement, the only legal party in Zaïre), Mobutu outlined a new economic scheme incorporating a number of the IMF "suggestions."

He called his scheme the "Mobutu Plan."

Under the plan, all nationalized companies are to be reorganized on a basis of strict profitability and competitiveness. Such government firms as ONATRA (the state transport agency) and Air Zaïre are to lose their official monopolies and will no longer get direct state aid. Unprofitable state-owned companies will be closed down in a bid to cut state spending. Since the government and the state corporations are the biggest employers in the country, this could well lead to a higher unemployment.

To ensure that the imperialists are better able to monitor Mobutu's performance and to give them a more direct hand in influencing the Zaïrian economy, Mobutu is to employ more foreign personnel in areas of economic management, especially in the financial, agricultural, and transport sectors. The February 27 *West Africa* reported that Mobutu has agreed to the appointment of an IMF official to the No. 2 post in the Central Bank of Zaïre.

Welcome Mat for Foreign Business

Most significantly, Mobutu announced a new investment code that will allow imperialist interests to considerably expand their stake in the country.

Mobutu had already begun this process in 1976, when he agreed to hand back 60 percent of the interests in many nationalized or "Zaïrianized" foreign firms to their former owners. But the new investment code includes no restrictions whatever on the extent of foreign ownership of companies and offers guarantees for the transfer of dividends abroad.

The January 2 *West Africa* reported that during his speech at the MPR congress, Mobutu "expressed his desire to open the economy to private foreign investment without any limits regionally or in their activities."

The Mobutu regime is also considering the establishment of a "free trade zone" in the province of Bas-Zaïre, near the Inga dam project, according to the report by Kabue in *Demain l'Afrique*.

Mobutu has not given up his plans to create profitable opportunities for Zaïrian capitalists, however. He has just scaled them down and readjusted them to allow for greater imperialist collaboration. In his MPR congress speech, he recommended that foreign investors find Zaïrian partners, holding out the incentive that if they do so, "they could effect the transfer of dividends before others."

Referring to the Zaïrian capitalists, a *West Africa* correspondent commented January 2, "It would seem that they have every opportunity to make an even greater profit with the 'denationalisation' which the President emphasised in the speech."

Following Mobutu's decision to offer the nationalized companies back to their former owners, many European, especially

3. The eleven members of the Club of Paris are the governments of the United States, France, Belgium, West Germany, Britain, Japan, Canada, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland.

Belgian, corporate officials who left the country in 1973 and 1974 are now returning. In exchange, the Belgian government has approved a no-interest loan of 200 million Belgian francs (US\$6.3 million) for Mobutu, repayable over twenty years after a ten-year grace period.

Until recently, French imperialism had a minimal stake in Zaïre. But as Adelman noted in *Africa Report*, French President Giscard d'Estaing's 1975 visit to Kinshasa "had convinced him that a more substantial presence could be profitable to French business and government alike." The French military assistance to Mobutu during the Shaba rebellion was no doubt intended to help smooth the way.

Since the rebellion, a number of agreements have been signed between Kinshasa and Paris. French interests are to be involved in the construction of a deep-water port at Banana. Thompson, the giant French electronics firm, is to build thirteen telecommunications stations around the country. French-Zaïrian trade is expected to increase.

Mobutu has made several trips abroad since the Shaba war to plead for increased foreign investment in Zaïre. In February he met in Paris with Giscard. According to a February 1 Reuters dispatch from Bonn, Mobutu stopped off there as well "to persuade West German businessmen to invest in an ambitious plan to develop Zaïre's economy."

American imperialist interests in Zaïre are fairly large. Total direct U.S. investment stands at about \$200 million, the third biggest American stake in Africa after South Africa and Nigeria. In addition, American banks are the largest lenders to the Mobutu regime, accounting for about \$1 billion of Zaïre's outstanding loans. Since 1962, moreover, Washington has poured about \$400 million in economic and military aid into the country.

In late 1977, the American government's Export-Import Bank approved a loan of \$68 million for the Inga-Shaba power transmission project and is considering the provision of \$20 million in export credits for Zaïre's copper production. In addition, the Agency for International Development has agreed to give \$20 million in economic assistance in 1978, half of it to go toward financing food imports.

At the same time that Mobutu has thrown open Zaïre's doors to the American and European imperialists, he has increased his economic ties with the white racist regimes of southern Africa. About one-third of Zaïre's copper exports pass through Rhodesia and most of its imports for Shaba come from Rhodesia and South Africa. The April 8, 1977, *Johannesburg Financial Mail* reported that as early as 1976 South African exports to Zaïre reached 40 million rands (US\$46 million). At the beginning of 1977, a South African firm won a R37.5 million contract to ship

125,000 tons of Zaïrian copper concentrates from the South African port of East London.

A 'Democratic' Facelift

Mobutu has accompanied his recent openings to imperialism and his efforts to bolster the repressive forces with some minor adjustments in the government administration. By appearing to make some concessions to the sentiments for greater democratic rights, he is aiming to defuse the widespread discontent with his rule.

In a series of speeches in 1977, Mobutu tried to direct the wrath of the populace against a few select scapegoats. He claimed that corruption was the main cause of the country's problems and denounced elements in the military, administration, judiciary, and police. He also demagogically condemned "a certain Zaïrois bourgeoisie which seeks to enrich itself without working, consume without producing and to direct without being controlled."

Mobutu dissolved the powerful Executive Council, which had become a symbol of his own corrupt patronage system. A number of top officials were dismissed, including Nguza Karl I Bond, who was stripped of his posts as foreign minister and vice-president, tried on dubious charges of being involved in the Shaba rebellion, and sentenced to death (Mobutu later commuted his sentence to life imprisonment).

In July 1977, Mobutu pledged to curb abuses by the army and police, "warning" the armed forces, who had committed atrocities against villagers in Shaba, to stop harassing civilians. He likewise promised to "democratize" the MPR.

In October 1977, Mobutu allowed direct elections to municipal governments, to the largely powerless legislative assembly, and to half the seats on the MPR Political Bureau. However, all candidates had to be MPR members and were screened beforehand by MPR officials. On December 2, Mobutu himself stood for reelection as president (he was unopposed) and claimed to have won 98% of the 10.7 million votes cast.

The elections were designed to channel criticisms through the MPR, where they are considered easier to control. As the only legal party in the country, the MPR's main function is to rally support for Mobutu and to prevent the emergence of a viable pole of opposition. Organized hierarchically, from Mobutu downward, it officially follows Mobutu's own brand of demagogic nationalism, known variously as "authenticity" or, less modestly, "Mobutuism."

To give this facelift operation some credence, Mobutu promised a limited degree of freedom of speech; "that is to say," he declared at the November MPR con-

gress, "the right of the ruled to criticize, constructively, the rulers."

Mobutu invited some prominent dissidents living in exile to return to the country. A few, including Gaston Soumialot, Christophe Gbenye, and Cleophas Kamitatu,⁴ have done so.

Kabue described the new atmosphere in Kinshasa resulting from such moves: "A boldness, previously inconceivable, sets the tone of the daily press. The conversations and remarks of the man on the street are freer. In the corridors of the Palais de la Nation (national assembly), on the banks of the Zaïre River, the new representatives use very critical language."

Mobutu, it should be noted, has made similar promises of reform in the past, with little lasting effect. As his program of military reorganization shows, he is already making preparations to clamp the lid back down should the criticisms get out of hand or should mass opposition flare up again somewhere in the country.

Moreover, the executions in March were intended as a warning to all opponents of the regime. "I solemnly declare that from now on I will be without pity for all attempts of this kind," Mobutu declared during his announcement of the death sentences. "Whoever tries again to use the

4. All three were former followers of Patrice Lumumba. Gbenye was president and Soumialot defense minister in the rebel government set up in Stanleyville (now Kisangani) in 1964 to fight against the imperialist-backed Tshombe regime in Leopoldville (Kinshasa). The Stanleyville regime was overthrown in November 1964 by a joint Belgian-American military intervention. Soumialot then continued guerrilla resistance for a while. Kamitatu held a number of posts in the central government during the early 1960s before going into exile. In 1977, he formed the African Socialist Forces, a group opposed to Mobutu.

Still Available Complete Back Files (Unbound) Intercontinental Press

1967	42 issues (1,072 pages)	\$25
1968	44 issues (1,176 pages)	\$25
1969	43 issues (1,152 pages)	\$25
1970	43 issues (1,120 pages)	\$25
1971	45 issues (1,128 pages)	\$25
1972	47 issues (1,448 pages)	\$25
1973	46 issues (1,520 pages)	\$25
1974	47 issues (1,888 pages)	\$25
1975	47 issues (1,888 pages)	\$35
1976	49 issues (1,888 pages)	\$35
1977	48 issues (1,456 pages)	\$35

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

sword will perish by the sword."

Through their greater involvement in Zaïre and their open military support to

the Mobutu regime, the imperialist powers have delivered a similar warning of their own to the Zaïrian masses. □

A West German 'Cape Canaveral' in Zaïre?

In December 1975, Mobutu signed an initial agreement with a West German rocket company, Orbital Transport und Raketen Aktiengesellschaft (OTRAG—Orbital Transport and Rocket Company), concerning the provision of Zaïrian territory for purposes of missile testing. This was followed by a lease contract signed March 26, 1976.

The initial agreement was first revealed in August 1977 by the Paris fortnightly *Afrique-Asie*, which published the text. Details of the subsequent contract were reported by former *New York Times* correspondent Tad Szulc in the March 1978 issue of the *New York* monthly *Penthouse*.

According to the agreements, OTRAG is to have extraordinary rights over a 100,000 square kilometer area in Zaïre's Shaba Province, on Lake Tanganyika, until the year 2000.

Article 2 of the lease contract states that the Zaïrian regime "expressly and without restrictions grants to OTRAG the right to take all measures that it deems necessary for the exercise of full and complete power in the territory. . . ." The same article exempts OTRAG employees from being subject to Zaïrian laws and establishes the "permanent" closing of air space over the region to all but OTRAG and Zaïrian air force planes.

Article 3 gives OTRAG powers to keep out "undesirable" persons, forbids all unauthorized observations, and obliges the Zaïrian regime to evacuate anyone the company wants out of the territory.

According to the contract, OTRAG "needs a vast operational area lending itself to the launching into the atmosphere and space of payload missiles and to all activities in every domain that, directly or indirectly, are related to it."

As payment for the lease, OTRAG is to place into orbit a reconnaissance satellite for the regime and pay \$50 million a year in rent after OTRAG gets paid for the first launching of a rocket payload for a "client."

These agreements mark a virtually unprecedented waiver of sovereignty by a formally independent regime. The only comparable case is the 1903 Panama Canal treaty between the Panamanian and American governments.

Mobutu at first denied the reports of the deal, but in February 1978 he officially confirmed them. He still continued to deny that the base had a military function, however, stating, "We signed a contract with a private German firm called OTRAG

to build a missile base which has nothing to do with nuclear missiles. They are in fact weather missiles."

The lease makes no mention of weather satellites.

Lutz Kayser, the president of OTRAG, publicly acknowledged the agreement months before Mobutu did. He was quoted in the October 10, 1977, *West Africa* as stating that "we want to help Africans get their own Cape Canaveral. We build rockets which will later carry satellites."

In an interview in the December *Africa*, Kayser likewise stressed that OTRAG was involved in developing commercial satellites for civilian use. However, he admitted that reconnaissance satellites like the one for Mobutu "can count planes and tanks and record any major concentration of troops."

Citing "highly reliable sources" in Washington and Bonn, however, Szulc charged that the OTRAG operation was connected with West German military research plans to test a West German prototype of the cruise missile developed by Washington and to prepare for the possible manufacture of intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBMs).

Szulc noted that because of the 1954 Treaty of Brussels, which limits West German rearmament, Bonn cannot legally conduct such tests within West Germany itself.

Significantly, the West Germans displayed a photograph of a cruise missile at the 1977 air show in Le Bourget, France, without explaining how they had gotten one.

Szulc charged that OTRAG has received funds through the West German defense budget and has been granted a tax exempt status. Among the companies linked to the OTRAG project, Szulc stated, were the principal West German military contractors, Messerschmidt, Belkov, and Blaum, as well as the French electronics firm Thompson-CSF.

The West German government dismissed Szulc's report as "pure nonsense," but it did admit that OTRAG had received \$3.1 million from the Research Ministry.

The American government may also have a hand in the project. According to Szulc, "Carter administration officials have privately confirmed that both the Central Intelligence Agency and the Bundes Nachrichtendienst (BND), its West German counterpart, have played a crucial role in this program through the recruiting of American-trained scientists



Africa Report

and political coordination in Kinshasa, Bonn, and Washington."

Szulc reported that Kurt Debus, who worked with Werner von Braun at the Army Rocket Research Center in the United States in the early 1960s, was now involved in OTRAG's Zaïre project.

Szulc added that "there is a strong possibility that the United States has made available to West Germany the required technology for the cruise missile and IRBM projects under the so-called Program of Cooperation (POC)."

Because of all the publicity generated by OTRAG's Zaïre deal, the company may be considering moving to another site. According to the March 13 *West Africa*, Kayser said that "on the advice of an important West German adviser" his company was looking for a new location for missile testing in Brazil. □

Plutonium in the Ganges?

The U.S. magazine *Outside* has reported that in 1965 a Central Intelligence Agency mountaineering team attempted to place a nuclear-powered device high in the Indian Himalayas to monitor Chinese atomic weapons tests. The climbers were halted 2,000 feet short of their goal by bad weather and reportedly left the power pack in some rocks. By the time the CIA team returned a year later, the device had been buried by an avalanche.

The device was said to contain plutonium 238, a highly carcinogenic isotope that remains radioactive for up to 500 years. Once the outer covering corrodes, the magazine said, the material could contaminate the watershed of the Ganges River, the principal waterway of northeastern India.

A State Department spokesman in Washington said the report was being looked into. CIA Director Stansfield Turner refused to comment, the AP dispatch said.

Censorship and the Plight of Iranian Writers

By Reza Baraheni

[In March 1978 the American Center of PEN, the international writers organization, published a report on the situation of writers in Iran, from which the following are major excerpts. The author of the report, Iranian poet Reza Baraheni, was imprisoned and tortured for 102 days by the shah's secret police.]

* * *

Censorship in Iran has always been brutal. In the old times, if a poet composed anything against the established ruler of the city, the society or the country, he was forced to lick the ink off the pages of his poem. But this was a very minor punishment. Sometimes the king would order his men to fill the poet's mouth with gold or silver until the poet, unaware of his impending fate, finally suffocated. Poets were also drowned on the orders of kings, and there are dozens of recorded instances in which they were thrown into the most horrible dungeons in the land.

During the twentieth century, the writers of the country have suffered as cruelly as in the past. The poet Bahar lived a very precarious life both during the Constitutional Revolution and afterwards. Mohammad-Ali Shah had the two writers and orators, Malekol-Motakallemin and Sur-e-Esrafil, hanged in the Bagh-e Shah Garrison, while he himself sat on the balcony facing the gallows and ate an entire plateful of rice and kabob as he watched. Reza Shah, as we mentioned earlier, killed many prominent men of letters and politics during his reign.

During the present Shah's reign, dozens of writers have been eliminated, among them the novelist-journalist Mohammed Mas'oud (before 1953), the journalist Karim-pour Shirazi, the poet Morteza Kayvan, right after the coup in 1953; short story writer-folklorist Samad Behrang, translator-folklorist Behrouz Dehghani, novelist-critic, Jalal Al-Ahmad—one of the most formidable writers of oppositionist literature in Iran—the poet Khosrow Gole-sorkhi, and many other lesser known authors.

The names of those authors and intellectuals who have suffered incarceration and/or torture during the last twenty four years make up a very long list. Some of the outstanding names are: the poets Nima Youshidi, Mehdi Akhavan-e Sales, Ahmad Shamlou, Houshang Ebtehadj (Sayeh), Fereydoun Tavallali, Mohammad-Ali Sepaniou, Saeed Soltanpour, Ne'mat Mirza-

zadeh (Azarm), Ja'afar Kooshabadi, and Hassan Hessam; the novelists Ali-Mohammad Afghani, Ahmad Mahmoud, Mahmoud E'temadzadeh (Behazin), Fereydoun Tonokaboni, Gholamhossein Sa'edi, Mahmoud Dowlatbadi; the translators Nadjaf Daryabandari, Ebrahim Yoonesi, Djahangir Afkari, Manouchehr Hezarkhani; the Islamicists Mehdi Bezar-gan, Mohammad Taleghani, Ali Shariati, the social critics Khalil Maleki, Mohammed-Reza Zamani and Vida Hadjeba; the theatre directors Nasser Rahmaminezhed and Mohsen Yalfani; and many, many intellectuals from other fields.

If a similar purge had afflicted the United States, the blacklist of those affected would have had to include all post-war poets, novelists, playwrights, critics, translators and theatre and film directors. It is no wonder that the whole of contemporary Iranian fiction, poetry and criticism revolves around one central theme: repression. The theme has acquired so crucial a significance in the life of Iranian literature and the lives of its creators that a writer's authenticity and integrity are, more often than not, veritably measured by the degree to which he has suffered under torture, repression and censorship.

In 1966, the government sent a directive to all the print shops ordering them to submit copies of every book they printed to the Writing Bureau of the Ministry of Culture and Arts before any of the books were actually published. A group of Iranian writers, including Al-Ahmad, Sa'edi and the present author, went to the Prime Minister's office to protest against the directive. The directive was aimed at closing all the small publishing houses that put out the works of the oppositionists and, consequently, helping the big publishers who were on the side of the government. But its main purpose was to throttle the oppositionists and control everything they wrote. In fact, later on, when the government was arresting the writers of the opposition, many small publishers were also incarcerated and tortured.

Sa'edi wrote a report of this meeting with the Prime Minister for publication in *Jahan-e-No* "The New World," which was later translated by the present author and used in his *The Crowned Cannibals*. The report read in part:

The censorship of books, the way it has been practiced during the last several months, has no precedent in contemporary history. In the twenty-year period (when Reza Shah was in power) the fate of writers of this country was

determined by the two seals, 'lawful' or 'unlawful'. In those days, censorship was an open, official arrangement. Nothing could be done about it. There were no detailed official ceremonies for it. Everybody knew what was and what was not permissible for publication. Nobody discussed the issue whether censorship was anticonstitutional or against the Declaration of Human Rights or such-and-such an article of the law. Now that the Constitution, the Declaration of Human Rights and all kinds of claims of liberty are being talked about, the censorship of books starts to acquire a very manifest meaning. This censorship has taken place through only one letter, a directive from a ministry. Afraid of being closed down by the authorities, the printing shops are not ready to accept anything for printing that is of a questionable nature.

The aims of censorship are too evident to be discussed. But it is of the same caliber that the Ministry of Culture and Arts is trying to implement for the theater. A play is sifted through in such a fashion that it doesn't hurt or touch anyone. Literature, religion, traditions, underprivileged classes of the society are not to be discussed. Now the publication of books is being subjected to the same rule.

In a literary work, discussions, politics, family relationships, traditions and religion, eroticism, folklore—particularly when the work in question ignores the rules of bourgeois decorum—are all forbidden. Of course, the censors criticize the composition, spelling and orthography of the literary work, too, lest the 'sweet Persian language' be dirtied by the author, because the Ministry of Culture and Arts has undertaken the job of policing the art and culture of the country. Two or three agents have been charged with these duties. They determine the destiny of the literature and thought of a whole nation. Everything is tailored to the obsolete, stereotyped measures of the style, taste and thought of these excellencies of censorship, who distort everything and turn literary works into filtered, squeezed mixtures of bland-tasting juices. These people do not know that the virtue of every pen lies in its ability to overthrow past values and create new ones. The end result of this censorship will be the destruction of small publishers who have limited capital to spend for the publication of books. This leads to the creation of large publishing houses and 'colonies' of big publications that move in the direction of each and every wind blowing from the ruling power. Thus, the hands of the contemporary writer are tied. It is quite clear that whatever happens to the art and literature of this country, it is not the big publishers or the censors who care, because they are not the ones who carry the burden of the creation of anything. They feel no responsibility. Whatever commitment there may be belongs to the writers of the country who still resist and do not want to give up.

When we came out of the Prime Minister's office, we realized what the situation was. The Prime Minister, who is supposed

to be the constitutional head of the executive branch of the government, even prevented the publication of Sa'edi's report in the magazine the present writer edited. We had to find other means.

The Writers Association of Iran

After months of negotiations among ourselves, we decided that we needed our own independent organization to fight for our rights as writers and poets. The Writers Association of Iran, the first of its kind in the entire history of the country, was born as a result of our mutual efforts to fight censorship.

At the end of its charter, all the writers of the country were invited to join the Association and harmonize their activities within its framework. But there were troubles right from the start, for the government was not willing to register the organization. There were about thirty founding members, and an additional fifty writers joined their ranks in a matter of months. This was the largest gathering of intellectuals and artists of the country under the banner of a campaign against censorship in the entire history of Iran. In less than two years, it became the most viable organization for writers in the country, embracing men and women from all political tendencies and all forms of art and research. It set up speeches on the writers of the country; it initiated gatherings to discuss themes of vital interest to its members and the public, and it tried to establish independent publications for itself. Almost all the major writers and poets and critics of the country were among its members.

The authorities chased the writers out of all the places they tried to rent for their meetings. All their efforts to become registered failed. Then the government engaged in horrendous measures. Jalal Al-Ahmad, the towering figure of the Association, was mysteriously killed in his small cottage on the Caspian Sea; before him, Samad Behrangi, one of the solidest of the sympathizers of the organization, had been drowned in the river. Then the incarceration and torture of the members of the Association started and continued; it goes on even now. Fereydoun Tonokaboni, the treasurer of the organization, Mohammed-Ali Sepanlou, an alternate member of the Executive Board, Manouchehr Hezarkhani, a sympathizer of the Association, and Behazin, one of the important figures of the Association as well as a member of the Executive Board, were detained in prison for months. The books of most of the members of the Association were removed from the bookstores; some of the most significant members of the association were blacklisted, thrown out of the press and laid off from their jobs.

The present writer was among the writers who went to see the Prime Minister to protest against censorship, one of the Founding Members of the Association, an alternate member of the Executive Board in the second year of its life, and the head of its Committee for the Campaign against Censorship in Iran. This was the most sensitive area with which any Association committee dealt, as far as its relation to the dictatorship was concerned. The author collected the names of those whose books had been suppressed; he went around and talked to the publishers who had given books to the Bureau of Censorship of the Ministry of Culture and Arts and interviewed writers in regard to the works which they had submitted to the Ministry. Out of these activities, there grew up a whole mass of material which itself could be the subject of a book.

Censorship in Iran during the last twenty-four years has passed through distinct phases: (1) the period from 1953 to 1963, i.e., the interval between the coup and the spring massacre of 1963, during which there were still organized political activities against the Shah's dictatorship in the form of demonstrations and rival parties; (2) the period from 1963 to 1971, during which the Shah's regime, backed by the U.S. government, belied any allegations of shakiness and established itself openly as a nonconstitutional dictatorship in the eyes of the world; (3) the period from 1971 to early 1976, during which the guerrilla movement started in Siyahkal on the Caspian coast and spread, in spite of SAVAK's concentrated efforts to stop it, to the other parts of the country in the form of clandestine urban detachments; and the present period during which the Writers Association of Iran has started its new and courageous attempt to fight against repression.

During the first period under the present regime, Iranian writers suffered the worst degradation of their lives: a coup triggered by a foreign country and carried out by fascists, spies and thugs. For several years they sank into utter despondency, sneaking into their homes, crying after their mothers and lovers and burying their dead in the rhythmical images of their poetry. The last years of the fifties saw the revival of the intellectual spirit of resistance in the figure of Al-Ahmad. Censorship was openly fought. The Shah's heavy-handedness in the massacre of 1963 brought this period to a close. During its short life, the prominent writers of the country not only declined to eulogize the king and the regime, but, on the contrary, wrote against them in their stories, plays and poetry. Of course, nothing critical was allowed to be written directly against the Shah or his court.

During the second period, there ensued a battle between the censorship bureaus of the government and the writers of the country, as has been delineated above in

the account of our meeting with the Prime Minister and the creation of the Writers Association. Our works were sent to the censorship bureaus, and although some of them were not published, the government could not yet conceive of the writers of the country as people who should be forced to write in terms of the establishment. This period saw the publication of some of the best prose, poetry and criticism available in contemporary Persian literature.

The escalation of torture, repression and censorship was attributed in part to the presence of U.S. Ambassador Richard Helms and the large number of Americans working and living in the country, in part to the impatient building up and acceleration of activities by the armed opposition to oust the Shah and his clan by forcible assault. But there is another reason behind it. In the past it has proved very difficult to bring all the writers of the country to their knees and coerce them to write the way the Shah wants them to write. As in Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia, total indoctrination has proven impossible. Great confusion arose in the minds of intellectuals as to the correct path to take under the given circumstances. They had no doubt as to the totalitarian nature of the Shah's regime. To be sure, several Iranian writers were co-opted by the regime as spokesmen, but there was no doubt in anyone's mind that these were the third-rate writers who had already been nibbling at the possibility of being co-opted during the second phase of the Shah's censorship. These co-opted writers created all kinds of problems for the genuine writers of the country; having lost the favor of the whole nation, they were loath to see around them writers who were becoming favorites of the people. They worked hand in glove with SAVAK to disgrace these "good guys" either through the dissemination of rumors and scandals or through encouraging the authorities to imprison them and force their recantation under torture.

Moreover, the "good guys" had become divided among themselves into two factions: those who had not recanted and considered themselves to be heroes, and those who had recanted and either considered themselves to be victims of torture and repression or had simply become demoralized. Thus the tactics of the government had divided the writers, among whom polemical scuffles and suspicion and bitter cynicism were rife.

Techniques of Censorship

There are two ministries in Iran, in addition to the SAVAK and the police, who conduct censorship on a permanent basis. These ministries are the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Culture and Art. The first ministry has a Press Bureau, headed by Ataollah Tadayyon, the vice-minister and an acknowledged member of the SAVAK. Tadayyon has

controlled the Iranian press for the past decade. The Bureau reads the papers before they come out. It has its members in Kayhan, Ettela'at Rastakhiz, and Ayandegan, the four daily papers of Iran. Everything, even the ads in the press, is shown to the ministry and this bureau before publication. The censorship of radio and television also belongs to this ministry. The man in charge of the Iranian Radio and Television services is Reza Qotbi, a cousin of Queen Farah. This man has more authority in the ministry than the minister himself.

The Ministry of Culture and Arts has a department called Edare-ye-Negaraesh, "Writing Bureau," which is headed by another SAVAK agent by the name of Zandpour. The Minister of Culture and Art for the past fifteen years has been Mehrdad Pahlbod, the Shah's brother-in-law, the husband of his older sister, Princess Shams.

This is what happens to a book. It is given by the writer to the publisher. If the publisher agrees with the contents of the book, he prints it. His agreement means his own assessment of the judgement of the Writing Bureau on the book. When the book is printed, two copies are sent to the National Library, which is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture and Arts. The SAVAK agent in charge of receiving books sends them to the Writing Bureau. It takes months before a book is released. The Bureau has its censors, "barrasan-e ketab," who go through a book for months, make suggestions and changes, or recommend to the Ministry to stop the publication of the book.

The printing of a book is one thing and its publication another. Between the two stands the Shah's censorship. If the book has anything in it slightly critical of the court, a copy of the book is sent to the SAVAK. In a few days the writer is incarcerated. No printing-house or publisher has the right to distribute a book before the written approval of the Bureau. The shops do not release a book until they see the written permit from the Bureau.

The government informs the shops and the publishers whose works not to accept for printing and publication. The publishers know about the blacklist of names and books. They never accept their works, or if they do, they show the manuscript to the SAVAK, who either agrees with its publication or disagrees. Many elements are taken into consideration for this permit. First, the work itself; second the writer, because the particular book handled by the publisher may not be of any oppositional significance, but the writer may have done or written something that might have blacklisted him. So permission is declined. If the writer is a favorite of the people, the intellectuals, or any particular group of people, he is considered to be suspect; because it is generally agreed that a writer

must have done something to gain the favor of some kind of readership. No one is entitled to be the favorite of the people, except the Shah and his minions. To gain respectful reputation in Iran is almost next to impossible.

But the censorship does not give up on the book once it is distributed. The government knows that those in its service are not as clever as the writers of the country. They may make mistakes and issue permits for books which should not be published. In other words, the government does not trust the intelligence of some of the men and women it has summoned to its service. They may be friendly to some of the members of the opposition, or they may have been bribed. The government also watches for the reaction of the public. If a book is a best-seller, there must be something anti-governmental in it. Otherwise, why should it sell so well?

If the government suspects a book of having anything in it against the policies of the State and the Shah, its copies are immediately collected by the squads of the SAVAK, and the writer is incarcerated. But nothing happens to the Bureau of the censors. If the publisher is a small one, he is also arrested, and sometimes even the salespersons in the bookstores are arrested.

A recent development shows the horrendous dimension of the government's censorship. Every salesperson is ordered to write down the names and addresses of the persons who buy the books, so that the government, upon blacklisting a book, will have access to the names and addresses of those who have it. Thus the government goes around and collects copies of the particular book and burns or pulps them. In more than one case, the persons who possess copies of the book have been arrested. There is a rumor that the government allows the publication of some of the books of the opposition, for instance those of Samad Behrangi, in order to find out who is sympathetic to the opposition so that in due course he will be arrested.

Blacklisted writers are those whose names I mentioned above, i.e., those writers who have been incarcerated and tortured. But hundreds of foreign writers are likewise considered to be unlawful in Iran. It is not only avowedly Marxist books which are illegal. Some of the works of writers like John Steinbeck, Arthur Miller, Jack London, Jean-Paul Sartre, Aime Cesaire, Frantz Fanon, Maxim Gorky, Sholokhov, Chernyshevsky, Schedrin, and any book on any revolutionary movement, from the time of Spartacus to the French workers and students' strike of 1968, are considered to be illegal.

Sometimes a single sentence in a book is sufficient to turn it into an unlawful book. The most striking example is the Shah's own book, *Mission for My Country*, in which nearly two decades ago the Shah

said that whoever speaks of a one-party system must either be a Hitler or a Mussolini. Since the Shah wanted to set up a one-party system himself, he had to order the SAVAK to ban his own book. If such is the fate of his own book, one can easily imagine what the fate of his opponents' books will be.

The only books exempted from undergoing the above channels of control and censorship are the ones published by Iran's Cultural Foundation and Translation and Book Publishing Firm. Both these organizations are subsidized by the Pahlavi Foundation and the court. The chairperson of the first institution is Dr. Parviz Natel Khanlari, and among the persons in charge of the second firm, and particularly as the general editor of a series of its foreign publications, is a Persian scholar, Dr. Ehsan Yar-Shater, a professor at Columbia University and a long-time court-affiliated scholar. These two men own and run the only two monthly literary magazines in the country, *Sokhan* and *Rahne-maye Ketab*, correspondingly, "The Word," and "The Book Guide." These two magazines have weathered all the storms of the last two decades, and keep publishing because of their owners' ruling class connections. In fact, the boring contents of both periodicals bespeak the tedium that ruling class conceptions of literature represent in modern Iran.

The National Library and the Ministry of Culture and Arts have their representatives in the other cities of the country. No book is published without the permission of these two branches of government offices under the control of the court. When a book is published, the government may decide to collect it at any time, or incarcerate its writer and publisher any minute. In Iran, a writer is *ipso facto* a potential enemy of the State, unless he proves through explicit deeds that he is actively and openly on the side of the Shah.

In order to paralyze the papers and periodicals in which members of the opposition were working and writing, the government started its own periodicals in the sixties. *Talesh* "Struggle," *Tamasha* "Watching," *Rudaki*, *Farhang* "Culture," and many other periodicals, all subsidized by the government, and run by co-opted intellectuals, began competing with *Jahane No*, "The New World," *Arash*, *Enteqad-e Ketab*, "The Criticism of Books," *Jonge-Esphahan*, "Isphahan Anthology," *Sahand*, *Mahd-e Azadi*, "The Cradle of Freedom," *Bazaar*, *Ferdousi* and many other similar "committed" periodicals. In 1974, the Shah shut down these latter publications along with hundreds of others in Teheran and the provinces, and promoted the publication of the former ones. In fact, in the same year ninety-five percent of all the publications in the country were closed and most of their writers were banned from publishing anything in the alternate press.

The government's policy in the middle of the sixties also consisted of imposing the publication of articles on the press by its own agents. In order to discredit, for instance, the *Ferdowsi* magazine, which had become the organ for the literature of the school of political commitment, the government placed articles in this magazine by well-known agents such as Samin, Hashemi, or pro-Shah intellectuals, such as Iradj Nabavi. For every anti-establishment article, one pro-establishment article was imposed on the magazine.

The government took still another step to disarm oppositionist literature. It initiated several festivals and congresses of art and literature, each with specific aims. Some, like the Art Festival in Shiraz and the Film Festival of Teheran, and the Third World Film Festival, were ostensibly staged to satisfy the avantgardist urge of the Iranian artists, but in reality to embellish the Shah and his court's image internationally. Some, like the Poetry Congress, the Iranology Congress and the Culture and Art Festival of the ministry by that name, were designed to honor traditionalist scholarship of pro-Shah academicians who were being driven into isolation by the fresh spirit and the novelties of the oppositionist literature. Thus, on one hand, some of these government-sponsored festivals and congresses advocated a pseudointernational spirit in art and literature, and on the other, invoked the nationalist spirit in art through all that could be called genuinely tedious and extremely traditionalist. The indigenous Iranian writer and creator had to battle not only against the violations of his own rights by the government, but also against empty and rootless internationalism and boring traditionalism, both supported with money and personnel provided by the regime.

The government enlisted allies both of the traditional and modernist types. Censors, spies, informants and torturers were the traditional allies. Some of the Orientalists and Iranologists working in the Middle and Near Eastern Centers of European and American universities, and some of the artists, directors, dancers and playwrights of international renown—who knew nothing about the atrocities of the Shah's regime—were among its modern allies. On one hand, the Shah was keen on adding to the number of agents in his intelligence network, and on the other hand, he pretended nationally and internationally that he cared for art, philosophy, literature, both traditional and modern. The Shah brought into the country such genuinely great artists as Jerzy Grotowski, Peter Brook, Maurice Béjart, Robert Wilson, and many others. Some like Merce Cunningham and John Cage have recently declined the Shah's invitation for human rights reasons.

One other factor in the Shah's censor-

ship game is the problem of newspaper advertising. The Shah's government took charge of advertising for even private firms early in the seventies. All the advertisements go to the Ministry of Informa-



SHAH: Bans his own book.

tion; the Ministry divides the work and distributes the money. If a newspaper does not go along with the repressive policies of the regime or hires a writer the government does not approve of, the first punishment of the owner of that paper comes in the form of stopping his advertisement quota, which means blocking the flow of subsidy which under ordinary circumstances would have belonged to the paper. If a newspaper owner wanted to hire a journalist who would want to write the truth about the country, he could not do so, because of fear that his writing might threaten the publisher's own income. Because of this particular repressive arrangement, almost every day one sees pages of advertisements put out by owners of the big corporations in Iran congratulating the Shah on what a good job he is doing in the country. The formulation of these ads comes from the Ministry of Information. This Ministry was created by Reza Shah under the ominous name of Propaganda Department and was patterned on Goebbels' bureau of that name when the old Shah was flirting with the Nazis.

A new development in the country is the unavailability of paper. A company was started a few years ago to make the country self-sufficient in paper. The price of imported paper skyrocketed to discourage its importation. The company itself went broke, thus making it difficult for the

publishers to buy the extremely expensive foreign paper, or buy it cheap from the native company. It was not actually the big publishers who suffered, because they either had shares in the native company or imported paper directly from abroad. Those who suffered were the small publishers who actually cared to publish the works or the translations of some members of the opposition. Recent information from the country shows that most of the small publishers have gone broke, and one major publishing house, Amir-Kabir, has bought the assets and the contracts of many such small publishing houses, and is proceeding to buy others. The government prefers to deal with one major publishing house, rather than several small ones who may have intellectual sophistication and may not be so easily coped with.

One other element which should be noted, is the absolute repression imposed upon all the nationalities in Iran, except the Persians. Since 60 percent of the people are not allowed to read and write in their own languages, and since, if they want to study anything, they must do it in Persian—the official language for all the people of the country including the non-Persians—the speakers of these languages should be considered doubly oppressed.

A writer addresses himself to those who can read and write; and the majority of the people from these oppressed nationalities cannot read and write the language of their masters, the Persians. This deep-rooted repression, which can be called a sort of racist strangulation of ethnic groups in Iran, creates a special kind of censorship, a socio-historical censorship. The government tells these people: "Read in my language or perish!" Not until the racist attitude of the regime is stopped will this category of racist censorship disappear.

Kayhan, a daily newspaper in Tehran, wrote on January 4, 1977:

According to existing figures, more than 4,200 books were published in 1970, but in 1975, this figure was 1,300, i.e., less than one-third of the books published by the press for the first eight months of the year [solar year], 700 titles were published this year, and the number, according to the same sources, is estimated to reach 900 by the end of the year. This is even less than one-fourth of the books published in 1970. Most of these books are reprints.

Systematic political and economic censorship of the press, the writers, the publishing houses, and printing shop workers could result in nothing but the above condition. At present not only the writers but also the whole culture of the country are suffering from the repressive measures of the regime. But their suffering is an extension of the sufferings of the whole people in the country. Only a reversal of this situation and the overthrow of all official repression can result in securing the liberties that both the people and the writers in the country yearn for. □

FROM OUR READERS

Since the merger of the newsgathering resources of Intercontinental Press and Inprecor in January, readers around the world have dug down into their pockets to send us contributions ranging from \$2 to \$150 to help out with this big step forward.

Last week, we received this welcome note from C.H. in Levell, Maine, along with a check for \$100:

"Here's a contribution to the added costs of publishing the magazine. Keep up the fantastic coverage of France, Ireland, Italy, India."

E.P. in Madison, Wisconsin, helped out by conducting a subscription campaign among some potential new readers, with the following results:

"Enclosed is a \$24 check from a friend of mine in NYC. He wants a year's subscription to IP. . . .

"I've written to all my friends telling them what a fine journal IP is and asking them to support your endeavors by subscribing."

J.C. in San Antonio, Texas, sends this suggestion:

"I think now would be an excellent time to publish a series of in-depth articles on the history and development of the Irish struggle, and its relationship to the worldwide class and national struggles of today."

He adds: "Let me end by saying that as a 'cover-to-cover' reader of IP/I every week, I thoroughly enjoy and am most proud of the work you and all the comrades do to put out such a first-class publication as Intercontinental Press/Inprecor."

After waiting four months, a reader in

Lima, Peru, thought she had better ask for another copy of the November 21 issue.

"I'm a reader of Intercontinental Press," she said, "and I now receive your newspaper regularly. However, before changing my subscription to Air Mail, I was receiving Intercontinental Press via 'boat.'"

"One of your newspapers never got here and I would like you to send it again. It is no. 43, vol. 15, 1977."

This issue is on the way.

Help, says M.H. in Chicago. "I'm another anguished reader writing to ask 'what happened to my IP?' I renewed my subscription for 6 months at the end of December.

"Has the post office or the computer unjustly excluded me? I haven't received an IP since Feb. 20."

When our business manager, Harvey McArthur, checked the records, he found out that the culprit was indeed the deteriorating postal service. Although M.H.'s subscription copies were correctly addressed, the post office had returned them as "Undeliverable."

The missing issues are on their way again. In the meantime, we offer below cartoonists Templeton and Forman's comment on another familiar aspect of postal delays.

"I'd like to give you my new address," A.A. in Israel writes.

"Thanks a lot. It's hard to imagine leading a political life here without your paper."

"As a political prisoner," a reader behind bars in the United States says, "I

want to extend my deepest appreciation to you for permitting me to receive a subscription to your powerful, very critical, and broadly informative magazine.

"I have quickly come to regard it as an outstanding piece of revolutionary literature and one of the best publications in the country."

"Please change my address" right away, L.R. in San Francisco said.

"I don't want to miss an issue of this excellent paper. Between the IP and the Militant I manage to stay informed on what's going on, which I could never do reading the regular press."

"Congratulations on your consistent coverage of the nuclear power issue," G.A. in Taringa, Australia, writes.

"My main political activity is through the anti-uranium-mining campaign here, and for information on the international movement I haven't found anything to match IP/I."

G.H. in Trondheim, Norway, does not have some of the earlier issues of IP in his files. In a recent note he explains why:

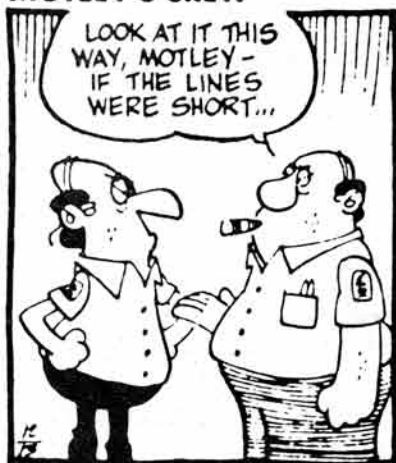
"In 1967, I was 10 years old and did not of course subscribe to Intercontinental Press. Therefore I will use this opportunity to fill out my subscription file.

"I want to start with the 67 and 68 volumes, and have sent you today \$50, which you should receive in a few days."

He adds: "PS. I find the I.P./Inprecor very useful, both in my university study of modern history and in my day-to-day political work. I'm waiting for an article on the Zionist occupation of Lebanon."

Other readers who would like to fill in their subscription files are encouraged to take advantage of the offer on p. 491. We can also supply back issues for any recent year. The cost for single issues is 75 cents (30p in Britain and Ireland). □

MOTLEY'S CREW



Templeton and Forman/Chicago Tribune