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Conor O'Brien/Socialist Republic

The Case of the IRSP Four Demonstration in Dublin April 8 in support of the four members of the Irish Republican Socialist Party who face frame-up charges in connection with a train robbery. Osgur Breatnach, Michael Plunkett, Nicky Kelly, and Bernard McNally face sentences of fifteen to twenty-five years despite fact that sole evidence against them is their own statements extracted under torture. See page 530 for a report on this important case.

Spanish CP Buries 'Leninism'

Fresh Revelations on U.S. Role in Angolan War

By Ernest Harsch

The official shroud of secrecy over the joint American and South African intervention in the Angolan civil war of 1975-76 has now been further tattered—by Washington's South African allies themselves.

Speaking before the South African Parliament April 17, Defence Minister Pieter W. Botha revealed that he had personally witnessed American planes flying supplies into South African-held bases in southern Angola. "I was there myself," he said, "and I saw how the arms were offloaded."

Correspondent John Patten reported in the April 22 weekly edition of the *Johannesburg Star* that Botha "made it clear that not only were the aircraft American, but the weapons were American and that South Africa had been asked to distribute the weapons to anticommunist forces."

(During the civil war, both Washington and Pretoria supported the FNLA and UNITA against the MPLA.¹ Although the MPLA, which now rules Angola, is a procapitalist organization, it was frequently called "Communist" by its opponents on account of its Soviet and Cuban backing.)

Patten reported that Botha "was also adamant that the supervision of the unloading was done by American security men. He would not say to which group or agency these men were attached."

On another aspect of the American collaboration, Botha asserted that Washington had actually encouraged the South African involvement in the war and had then "left us in the lurch."

At the time, reports about Washington's direct collaboration with the South African invasion received scant coverage in the American bourgeois press.

However, the January 19, 1976, issue of *Intercontinental Press* reported that according to Senator John Tunney, who cited "an eyewitness to operations in Angola," American pilots flying C-130 Hercules cargo carriers had airlifted weapons into Angola from bases in neighboring Zaïre.

The February 16 issue reported that Sean Gervasi, a consultant to the UN Special Committee on Decolonization, had revealed in December 1975 that American

cargo planes air-dropped supplies to South African columns operating in Angola.

This was only one aspect of the American imperialist intervention in the civil war. The Ford administration provided tens of millions of dollars in arms and funds directly to the FNLA and UNITA, as well as to the Zaïrian army, which was aiding the two Angolan groups. American pilots flew artillery spotter planes over Angolan battle zones from bases in Zaïre. The Central Intelligence Agency helped organize and fund a small group of American and European mercenaries to fight against the MPLA. And at the height of the war, the Lockheed aircraft company, with Washington's evident approval, sold six Hercules transport planes to South Africa.

Given the rapidly escalating imperialist intervention in Angola, there was a grave danger that American "advisers" or troops would also be sent. The American Committee on Africa, for instance, revealed in December 1975 that American air force units had been put on alert to fly tactical air strikes in defense of South African troops in Angola should that have become necessary.

Fortunately, antiwar sentiment in the United States stayed the White House's hand and forced Congress to cut off further funds for the war effort.

Following the decline in direct American involvement, the South Africans were reluctant to carry the burden of the imperialist intervention on their own and pulled

their troops back from the front lines. The last South African troops left Angola in late March 1976.

It was around this time that Pretoria first began to hint at the direct American collaboration and encouragement, while publicly expressing its disappointment at Washington's unwillingness to maintain its previous level of involvement.

In an interview in Cape Town on February 3, 1976, Botha said that the South African incursion into Angola had the blessing of at least one "free world" power. Although he refused to explicitly name that power, he added, "I would be the last man to destroy our diplomatic relations with the United States."

Two days later, an unnamed South African "high official" indicated that Washington had actually encouraged the South African intervention. The American officials who were believed to have delivered that encouragement were Patrick Moynihan, the American representative to the United Nations, and William Bowdler, the American ambassador to South Africa.

The White House has so far continued to deny any direct role in the South African invasion. For instance, the State Department recently claimed, "The decision of the South African Government to intervene in Angola was made unilaterally by that Government in what it considered to be its own interest." It also denied that American planes had flown supplies into Angola or that American arms had been given to Pretoria during the civil war.

Even though the intervention in Angola was carried out under Ford, the revelations of the extent of American collaboration with South Africa could no doubt prove embarrassing to Carter as well. He is already facing criticisms over continued American economic assistance to Pretoria and over the American veto in the UN Security Council in October 1977 blocking a formal ban on foreign investments and credits for the racist regime. □

The Case of the IRSP Four

By Gerry Foley

The Dublin republican weekly *An Phoblacht* reported April 22:

Gardaí [Irish police] have started torturing Republicans again. . . . Over a few days last week a man was beaten continuously in a Garda station in the west in an effort to make him sign statements of confession. He is a Sinn Féin cummann [branch] member, Jim Cull. . . .

Jim Cull was taken to Boyle Garda Station. There he was beaten and kicked by relays of Gardaí all night. He asked for a solicitor and was refused one.

The threat represented by Irish police using such methods to extract false confessions is shown by the fact that since the formal ending of internment in Northern

Ireland, the British authorities have put more people in prison on terrorist charges than were ever interned, and more than 80 percent of these have been convicted on the basis of statements made "while in police custody."

It is the normal practice of the neocolonialist Dublin regime to let the British test a repressive technique before they use it. For example, in the late summer of 1971, they followed in the steps of the British government's preparations to carry out mass roundups and internment of anti-imperialists.

The first indication that Dublin was experimenting with the systematic use of

1. Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (Angolan National Liberation Front), União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola), and Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola).

torture to extract confessions came with the detention of members of a small left republican group in April 1976.

This case, however, caused a public scandal. At the time, the liberal Dublin weekly *Hibernia* said in an editorial:

If only a fraction of the allegations made by the Irish Republican Socialist Party concerning abuse of their members while detained was true . . . it would still be deserving of a judicial enquiry. The IRSP has alleged that 15 of their members arrested under Section 30 of the Offences Against the State Act between April 5 and April 9 were denied sustenance and sleep while in custody; that they were physically beaten, kicked and assaulted over long periods; and in general that they were subjected to degrading and brutal treatment. Some of them have signed statements which allegedly implicate them in the recent train robbery in Co. Kildare, and as these cases are now sub-judice, it is not permissible to comment on them or on the conditions under which the statements were made, in particular. But the majority of the IRSP members have been released without any charges being brought against them. Their injuries have been examined by doctors, photographed and recorded. . . . The significance of this experience goes far beyond the particular people involved, because it seems to indicate a concerted attack on the membership of a registered political party. . . .

The public outcry touched off forced the Dublin government to retreat. It also exposed the existence of a special "Heavy Gang" in the Irish police, the equivalent of the "interrogators" in the Northern Irish torture center of Castlereagh.

This case began the reaction against the repressive system being set up by the National Coalition, which was one of the causes of this government's overwhelming defeat in the June 1977 elections.

The new Fianna Fáil government promised that the "Heavy Gang" would be disbanded. However, under the cover of this sweet talk, it has evidently moved to resume the dirty work initiated by its predecessor. It has begun by reinstating the case against the IRSP members charged in 1976. They are now before a special tribunal, and the extorted confessions have been ruled acceptable as evidence; they are the only evidence.

The torture of Jim Cull shows what is at stake in the IRSP case. It shows that Bernadette Devlin McAliskey was right when she said at a rally for the IRSP defendants in Dublin on April 8:

If the authorities succeed in having confessions extracted under torture accepted in court the IRSP four will not be the last to be sent away on long terms of imprisonment on the same basis.

Michael Plunkett, Osgur Breatnach, Nicky Kelly, and Bernard McNally face fifteen to twenty-five years in prison if convicted. The verdict could come within weeks. Since there is no jury, the only effective defense is organizing protests that can make the government retreat again. In this, international support can play a particularly important role. □

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Spanish CP Congress Buries 'Leninism'

By Gerry Foley

The first congress of the Spanish Communist Party since Franco's death concluded in Madrid on April 21. The scenario was obviously designed to create a new image for the party. General Secretary Santiago Carrillo ended the last session on this note:

This is a historic congress, because it is our first congress in legality and it has been a profoundly democratic one such as we have never had before in our history.

The changes in the party were supposed to be confirmed by the adoption of the leadership's theses dropping the definition of the party as Leninist. The relevant section says:

The Spanish Communist Party defines itself as a Marxist, democratic, and revolutionary party, which incorporates Lenin's contribution, insofar as it is applicable today, as well as that of the other great revolutionists. . . . On this basis, there is no room for any such restrictive conception as that defining Leninism as the Marxism of our day.

The leadership's full thesis on this question included the following statement:

As a result of self-criticism, we Spanish Communists have overcome Stalinism, and we are regaining the democratic and antibureaucratic essence of Marxism. We will continue to advance in this direction.

The fact that there was a divided vote on this question (968 for the leadership's proposal, 248 against, and 40 abstentions) had some favorable effects for Carrillo's operation. It tended to give the impression this decision had been adopted after serious consideration, and therefore represented a deepgoing change in the attitudes of the great majority. It also gave the appearance of a reasonably democratic vote, in contrast to the totalitarian "unanimity" typical of Communist Party congresses.

However, there was virtually no discussion on the floor of the congress to clarify the concrete political meaning of the change proposed by the leadership. Carrillo himself argued that the opposition to dropping the definition of the party as "Leninist" was incoherent, revealing his own conception of "Leninism" in the process: "The Leninists advocate democracy based on general assemblies, which goes against the grain of Leninism."

On the other hand, *Le Monde* reported that the Soviet CP representative was greeted by a large minority with shouts of

"Leninism!" as if it were represented by the Soviet bureaucracy.

The furor over dropping the definition of the party as "Leninist" was apparently useful to the Carrillo leadership in another respect. It drew attention away from the fact that there was no discussion at the congress of the results of the CP's work in the period since Franco's death or of the keystone of the party's strategy in the recent period, its signing of an austerity pact with the Suárez regime (the Moncloa Pact).

Nonetheless, the Spanish CP congress revealed a considerable malaise in the party over the Carrillo leadership's policies. These were expressed far more clearly, however, in the regional conferences preparatory for the all-Spain congress. In fact, the vocal opposition in the local meetings seemed to fall strangely mute at the central one. In its April 22 issue, *Le Monde* noted:

The first representatives of the provincial committees that spoke Thursday [April 20] gave almost unconditional support to the proposal of the outgoing Central Committee. The Asturian and Catalan delegates, who after the recent local congresses might have been expected to express certain reservations about the basic issues, announced their support for Carrillo's Eurocommunist line.

On April 8, by a vote of 97 for, 87 against, and 6 abstentions, the PSUC congress approved the all-Spain leadership's theses removing the designation "Leninist" from the Spanish CP statutes. On April 9, by a vote of 97 for, 81 against, and 7 abstentions, it approved maintaining this term in the statutes. The upshot was that the PSUC delegates to the all-Spain congress were left free to vote as they chose on the question.

The battle over "Leninism" in the PSUC congress, in fact, showed that this abstract and unclear question had simply become an outlet for all sorts of discontent.

Catalonia, for example, is far from being either a stronghold of any left wing of the party or of nostalgic old Stalinists. It has been known as the most "Eurocommunist" section of the party, and it is the area where the moderate line of the Carrillo leadership has had its greatest success. In fact, it was the only bright spot for the CP in the June 1977 legislative elections. Catalonia elected eight out of the twenty CP members of the Cortes [parliament].

In its April 15-21 issue, the Madrid weekly *Cuadernos para el Diálogo* reported:

A comment heard a lot around PSUC headquarters is: "It would be absurd to say that the Catalan Communists voted for Leninism in opposition to Eurocommunism. What is happening is that there is an enormous concern about the lack of discussion of certain subjects, and because too often we let ourselves be caught up in day-to-day politics. There is no debate."

The Madrid weekly reported that the following comment was also frequently heard in talking to PSUC members:

We can't be satisfied with just defending the Moncloa accords or insisting on the need for a government of national unity.

The growth of national feeling among the oppressed peoples of Spain has also apparently promoted the development of centrifugal tendencies in a party where the line is set undemocratically by the central leadership.

Le Monde reported that there was considerable, if muted, discontent about the CP's line on national rights at the all-Spain congress, particularly over the party's tendency to give too much credit to the Suárez government's "autonomy" schemes.

In the pre-congress period, the sharpest clash came at the conference of the CP regional organization in Asturias, where more than a fifth of the delegates walked out in protest against what they considered the leadership's undemocratic way of organizing the debate.

The leader of the Asturian opposition, Vicente Alvarez Areces, has argued publicly that something is gravely wrong with the party. In the April 19 issue of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*, Michel Rovere quoted him as saying:

Let's just look at the attendance at the discussions on the theses for the [all-Spain] congress. It rarely exceeded 20% or 30% of the membership. The causes of this discontent are manifold, but they lie essentially in the political barrenness and unattractiveness of rank-and-file work. There has been practically no recruitment since the June elections.

Carrillo claimed that his leadership has democratized the party: "If the leading team had wanted, instead of making this party into a free and easy democratic party where everything is out in the open, it could have made it into a hermetically closed one. Past precedents prove this." However, the Carrillo leadership has clearly gained none of the advantages that democracy has in a truly Leninist party.

The discussion has not clarified the issues. Instead discontent with the party's political work has focused around vague abstract questions, in the worst traditions of Stalinist byzantinism. The authority of the leadership has not been strengthened, but obviously further weakened. And the party has not been united around a clear line, but rather all sorts of confusion, divisions, and contradictions have been made worse.

The Carrillo leadership has been unable to consolidate a strong bureaucratic regime in the party precisely because his policies have not brought success by anyone's standards.

Unlike the case of the Portuguese CP, the Spanish CP's attempts to cozy up to the bourgeois transition regime have not resulted in gaining positions in the state apparatus. But they have allowed the Social Democrats to appear to be more militant opponents of the regime, and this has become an additional handicap for the CP, which was already compromised by its history of totalitarian practices and associations. In fact, in this respect it was more compromised than any other Western CP because of its cooperation with the Soviet secret police during the Spanish civil war.

At the same time, the CP leaders' attempts to get closer to Suárez than the SP have enabled the Social Democratic leaders to put the blame on them for the sectarian conflicts between the two bureaucratic workers parties. In fact, the CP congress was also marked by a rebellion against Carrillo's stance toward the SP.

In the April 23 issue of *Le Monde*, Charles Vanheck reported:

Another difference emerging between the general secretary and the ranks was on the question of the SP. Carrillo was considered to have been too harsh toward the SP policy. The activists are much less so, and seem in any case determined to sacrifice their personal views for the sake of unity in action, which they think must begin "right now."

However, in the absence of an open discussion on the party's general strategy, this pressure can only lead the CP into deeper contradictions. In *Rouge*, Michel Rovere noted:

The delegates from Andalusia, the PSUC, and Madrid argued for giving priority to unity in action with the PSOE. . . .

While none of these delegates questioned the line of a coalition of national unity, in advocating a special alliance with the PSOE in this framework, they are going against the Spanish CP leadership and its line, which involves a special alliance with the 'progressive' sectors of the Democratic Center Union. . . .

Obviously, however, a lot of CP members are thinking about how to resolve the contradictions in their party's line. That, undoubtedly, is why they applauded the greetings to the congress from the Spanish section of the Fourth International, which called on the party to demonstrate its concern for democracy in the workers movement by calling for the rehabilitation of leading members of Lenin's Central Committee murdered by Stalin—such as Trotsky.

Such a concrete action would certainly do more to establish the democratic principles of the Spanish CP leadership than any definition of itself that it gives in its statutes. □



Micha Bar-Am/New York Times

Two of 4,000 demonstrators along Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway.

4,000 Rally in Jerusalem for 'Peace Now'

Stretched in a line fifteen miles long from Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin's office to the outskirts of Jerusalem, 4,000 demonstrators rallied for 'Peace Now' April 26.

The demonstration was called to dramatize the turning in to Begin's office of 60,000 signatures on postcards bearing the message "I want peace now."

"This has never happened in Israel before," said Uri Avneri, a former member of the Israeli parliament. "It's very American and reminds one of the beginning of the anti-Vietnam movement."

New York Times correspondent William E. Farrell drew the same conclusion.

"Along with several other recent developments," he said, "today's demonstration seemed to indicate that there is a growing grassroots peace movement in Israel. The participants today were middle-class students, young married couples with babies, some elderly persons, youngsters, and members of kibbutzim, or communes. . . .

"There were many bumper stickers, many car lights blinking on in daylight in acknowledgment of the demonstrators' aims, placards and an evocative chant in Hebrew that translates: 'One, two, three, four! We don't want another war!'"

The demonstration was only the latest in a series of protests against the invasion of Lebanon as well as Begin's policy of humiliating Sadat and sponsoring new settlements in the occupied territories. Other developments include the following:

- On March 7, some 300 reserve officers

sent an open letter to Begin urging him to "take the road to peace." They subsequently received 7,000 telephone calls of solidarity and gathered 10,000 signatures on a petition for peace.

- On April 1, 45,000 persons rallied outside City Hall in Tel Aviv to demand "Peace Now!" and a return of the occupied territories. The demonstration, which filled the largest public square in downtown Tel Aviv, was one of the biggest protests on any issue in Israel's thirty-year history.

- On April 6, at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, demonstrators picketed a ceremony awarding Begin an honorary doctorate, chanting "Peace yes! Occupation—No!"

- On April 25, a group of 300 Orthodox Jews, including 10 rabbis, joined 350 professors and senior staff members of Israeli institutions of higher learning in urging Begin to accept the demands of the "peace now" movement.

In the United States the Begin government received another blow when thirty-six prominent American Jews released a statement April 20 extending their support to the "peace now" movement. The signers included Nobel Prize winners Saul Bellow and Kenneth Arrow; Ira Silverman and Irving Levine of the American Jewish Committee; and Lewis H. Weinstein, former president of the Council of Jewish Federations.

A poll published by the *Daily News* April 24 showed that New Yorkers opposed the invasion of Lebanon by a plurality of 41 percent to 34 percent. □

Hugo Blanco Discusses Socialist Alternative in Peru Election

The following interview with Hugo Blanco appeared in the April 20 issue of the Lima weekly *Marka*. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.

* * *

With Hugo Blanco's return to the country, FOCEP¹ can play its electoral "trump card." In reality, Blanco is one of the best-known and most prestigious leaders of the Peruvian left, inside or outside the country. In the following interview the author of *Tierra o Muerte*² gives his opinions on the elections, alliances, and the constitutional program of his party, the PST.

Question. The PST was calling for elections long before the Morales regime convoked them; besides the Liga Comunista it was the only group that paid serious attention to this question. Why was that?

Answer. Because we in no way recognize the authority of a government that has come to power through a coup. We aren't fooling ourselves. The bourgeoisie never holds free and democratic elections. But with the elections a situation has opened up in which there is less repression and greater opportunities to discuss and act politically.

Q. How do you think the left has dealt with electoral matters up to now?

A. There are good and bad aspects. What is positive is that the majority of the left is participating in the elections; this means they understand that the masses are interested in this electoral process. Although the masses weren't concerned about it beforehand, once the elections were called they began taking interest. The left is showing that it has some Leninist experience—Lenin was a good organizer of election campaigns.

It also seems positive to me that part of the left is participating in the election campaign in order to move forward the



Ivan/Militant

HUGO BLANCO

working-class struggles that are going on. And it is good that the elections are serving to raise questions of principle.

Q. And the bad aspects?

A. Well, it seems to me—and in this I am in agreement with one of the *Marka* comrades, Martín Luna, I think—that there is still a vacuum in the electoral process; that we must not waste our opportunities in these elections. It is not every day that constituent assembly elections are held, and in general, elections in Peru are rare. Even as old as I am, I have never participated in one. The first time I could have done so I was studying in Argentina, and the second and third times I was being persecuted.

A constituent assembly election makes it possible to say many things. In ordinary elections many of the ideas that we raise have the problem of being far beyond the limits of the constitution in force. But now nothing we raise can be considered illegal, since it is precisely a question of formulating a new order—social, juridical, economic, and so on. Our obligation as revolutionists is to raise the socialist alternative, and not to stay within the capitalist framework.

Q. Do you think the workers' alternatives are not being presented clearly?

A. I think that is in fact part of the problem. Although we are certainly going to the heart of the question with a draft constitution that I have presented to my party. It still has to be submitted to a formal discussion, but I have yet to find any comrade who objects to it, because it isn't an invention of mine but simply involves systematizing Marxist-Leninist-Trotskyist ideas in constitutional form. The form is the only novelty in the document.

Q. And what does this document propose?

A. In the first place, that the government must be made up of democratically elected delegates from among the workers, peasants, employees, soldiers, and so on—all the exploited sectors, in other words. In this we differentiate ourselves sharply not only from the bourgeoisie and the reformists, but I think also from the UDP³—concretely, from the Maoist comrades and their call for a Democratic People's Government, which would include what Mao called "the four classes": besides the workers, peasants, and middle layers, the so-called "progressive bourgeoisie." And on that point we are not in agreement.

We also differentiate ourselves from the bourgeoisie, the reformists, and the Maoist comrades in our economic slogans, since we call for expropriation not only of the imperialist enterprises but of the national companies as well. When we nationalize Moraveco without compensation, we won't ask Señor Drassinower for his passport to see whether he is a Peruvian or not. But this should not be misunderstood to mean that we want to expropriate artisans' shops, and so on—we make clear that those will remain in their owners' hands. Automobiles for public transport, for example, or stores tended by their proprietors, all those will remain the property of their owners. But we are certainly going to expropriate the bourgeoisie without payment.

Another thing we are raising with clarity is the problem of the armed forces. We are of the opinion that they should not be organized as they are now but rather as armed committees of workers, peasants, employees, and other oppressed sectors. On this point I suppose we are in agreement with the Maoist comrades. The same

3. Unión Democrática Popular (Democratic People's Union), electoral coalition of Maoist and centrist parties and the main Peruvian miners union.

1. Frente Obrero, Campesino, Estudiantil, y Popular (Workers, Peasants, Students, and Poor People's Front), coalition of workers parties and union organizations that includes Blanco's party, the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers Party).

2. Blanco's account of the La Convención Valley peasant struggles in the early 1960s. Available in an English translation, *Land or Death*, from Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. \$3.45.

with the judicial power—we call for popular tribunals elected by the masses.

We raise our proposals on unemployment and other questions in the same way, trying to show that this country's evils have solutions, not under this system, but rather with socialism. We call for repudiating the foreign debt, and expropriating without compensation foreign and domestic commerce, land, and industry. The result of all these expropriations will be development—not as some bureaucrats talk about it today, but according to the decisions of the masses themselves.

This is the time to say all these things to the masses in a simple way, now that the people are considering not only their immediate demands but the question of power, since we are in an electoral period. Our constitutional program has been given to the other comrades in FOCEP so that it can be discussed, and to the UDP so that it can tell us where it agrees and disagrees. And here, through *Marka*, I want to call on the UDP and its parties to say what they think of my proposal for a constitution.

Q. Do you think the number of candidates from Cuzco, especially the PSR's,⁴ will significantly affect FOCEP's electoral possibilities in that department?

A. I don't know what the situation is in Cuzco now. But regarding the PSR, I read a UDP document somewhere saying that their difference with FOCEP is that we speak of deepening the reforms made under Velasco while in their opinion nothing remains that is worth deepening. What is paradoxical to me is that the UDP holds that position yet is seeking a front with the PSR, the representative of the first phase.⁵ We, on the other hand, reject such a front.

Q. Do you think the CNA⁶ has changed its character at all from the first phase to the second?

A. I think the regime's move to the right has forced the CNA to break with it, but in a certain sense the CNA remains the same. Although it is no longer an official organization, it is still an organization that puts confidence in "revolutionary generals"—who are now out of power. But they could

4. Partido Socialista Revolucionaria (Revolutionary Socialist Party), party formed by leftist military officers who had served in the Velasco Alvarado government.

5. The nationalizations and limited land reform carried out under Velasco are referred to as the "first phase"; the "second phase" is the partial reversal of these policies that has taken place under Morales Bermúdez.

6. Confederación Nacional Agraria (National Agrarian Confederation), peasant organization set up by the Velasco government. It has participated in struggles against the Morales regime.

return to power tomorrow, and then the CNA would again be an instrument of a bourgeois government—of a PSR bourgeois government, for example.

Q. Why couldn't this electoral process restore the unity of July 19, 1977?

A. I was not in the country during that whole period so it is difficult to give an opinion. But it seems natural to me that the masses united and forced unity on their leaders when faced with the urgency of immediate needs. That is logical. It is also logical that the various strategies of the left are reflected in an election campaign that raises the question of power. These strategic differences must not keep us from uniting in joint actions in the main struggles of the workers, however.

I am not talking about unity for unity's sake, either. It is logical in turn for two groups having different strategic positions to proceed separately. But in Peru this has been carried to exaggeration, and sometimes differences over details have divided organizations on the left.

Q. Is it true that for once in this part of the world the Trotskyist organizations are holding discussions about unification?

A. It is true. The Trotskyist movement at present is growing stronger internationally, and one of the symptoms of this strengthening has been the dissolution of the two big tendencies that had existed inside the Fourth International. That has resulted in the reunification of Trotskyists in such countries as Spain, Canada, Aus-

7. Date of a twenty-four-hour general strike and mass upsurge protesting regime's austerity policies. Nearly all Peruvian workers organizations united in support of the strike.

tralia, and Mexico, where we have our largest Latin American party. The same thing is beginning to get under way in Peru.

Q. It caused great indignation here that a Peruvian literary critic played a provocative role at one of your meetings on the tour for the Committee of Solidarity with Latin America⁸. . . .

A. Oh yes, now I remember. And I remember that it caused me pain, just as it is painful to see a prostitute. Prostitutes do not anger me—what angers me is the economic system we live under that forces some women into prostitution.

And the same thing happens with José Miguel Oviedo and other Peruvian compatriots, or Latin Americans, who have to talk and think like *gringos* in order to eat. I even spoke to him sympathetically on that occasion, since it makes me sorry to see the situation he and other people have fallen into. They end up being more papist than the pope, defending imperialism more than the *gringos* themselves.

But it was good that *Caretas* published Oviedo's article, since it showed that I had been to the United States. The theme of my talk was "Carter and Human Rights—Myth Vs. Reality," to show that the great adversary of human rights in Latin America is Yankee imperialism, symbolized by its president, Carter. □

8. The U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners organized a speaking tour of the United States for Blanco earlier this year. At Indiana University Blanco was confronted by Peruvian expatriate José Miguel Oviedo, who later wrote an article for the Lima magazine *Caretas* (March 7) taking Blanco to task for his "manichean," "simplistic and dogmatic" portrayal of U.S. imperialism's responsibility for oppression in Latin America.

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Selections From the Left

REPUBLICAN NEWS

Reflects the views of the Provisional republican movement. Published weekly in Belfast.

The April 22 issue focuses on the plight of republican prisoners in the British-occupied part of Ireland who refuse to accept criminal status. As a result they are kept naked and in solitary confinement in cells with no beds or other furniture. The number of persons in this situation has been growing rapidly since the British government decreed that republicans jailed after March 1976 would be treated as criminals.

The condition of these prisoners has been worsening dramatically. (In an interview published in the May 1 issue of *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, Bernadette Devlin McAliskey said that it was only a matter of time until some of these prisoners died or went insane.)

Republican News points out:

"Today more than 300 Republican prisoners lie incarcerated in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh [concentration camp]; they are totally naked except for a blanket which they clutch around them. They are justly demanding their rights as political prisoners.

"Their incredible sufferings are forced upon them by the evil inhumanity of the foreign invaders with their vicious prison system of degrading treatment. Yet the solidarity of the protest is glaringly evident. For whereas in the early days the 'Northern Ireland Office' used to put out statements saying what percentage of men were accepting 'criminal' status . . . nowadays they maintain a 'diplomatic silence.'

"The Brits' instinctive response to failure is repression and yet more repression and that is what we are now seeing. The beatings of the prisoners are now being stepped up, anyone seen, or suspected to be playing, any kind of leading role in organising resistance and keeping up the men's spirits is immediately dragged away to the punishment cells on trivial or trumped-up charges. (It was such treatment that led to the recent hunger and thirst strike by two men, Thomas McFeely and Sean Campbell).

"The men's response to this increased inhumanity and brutality is to step up their protests through the only means left open to them. They have been driven to refusing to wash, or to clean out their cells, or to slop out their poes [chamber pots].

"For many men the screws have refused to bring around buckets to allow them to slop out their poes. This has led over a period of days to some of the cells getting into a disgusting condition. . . .

"Because the screws reduced the normal (ridiculously inadequate) 3 sheets of toilet paper a day, to 1 sheet a day, the men had to tear pages out of their religious magazines to clean themselves. . . .

"Normally the men are allowed two religious magazines (their *only* reading material). *But* because some men had to use these pages for sanitary purposes this 'privilege' has been withdrawn.

"Although nearly all of the men are suffering from medical complaints of some kind (muscular aches, skin rashes, dandruff, eyesight complaints); and despite their thin haggard appearances with deathlike pale features, their morale and spirit of unity remains sound.

"In fact their spirits have been raised by their latest step-up of protest (a protest decided upon solely by themselves contrary to any malicious suggestions regarding 'armchair godfathers.')

"The men are possessed by a quiet confidence that what they are doing is right and eventually they will win. Thus there can be little doubt that the morale of the screws will break before the morale of the men 'on the blanket.' . . .

"We are going to crack through the wall of silence erected by the Brits around the horrors of their Hell Holes in Long Kesh. . . ."

COMBATE

"Combat," organ of the United Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist League and the Communist League, Fourth International. Published weekly in Madrid.

The April 20 issue comments on the founding of a new "people's power" party in Portugal.

"In Marinha Grande, the founding congress of the United Workers Organization has met under the aegis of Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho.

"The new organization is marked at its birth by ambiguity. Its manifesto begins by recalling 'the extraordinary period of the Portuguese revolution that occurred when Vasco Gonçalves headed the government and Otelo headed COPCON [military security police], when the workers were occupying land and houses. . . .' This preoccupation to gain an influence on the Communist Party ranks by identifying with the Vasco Gonçalves government, which was responsible for the 'battle of production,' sticks out like a sore thumb throughout the document.

"Still more obvious are the goo-goo eyes being made in the direction of the 'Group of the Nine,' the members of the Council of the Revolution who, under the leadership

of Melo Antunes, prepared the November 25 counter-coup. In fact, the entire strategy of the new organization consists of seeking an alliance with this group of military officers. Such an alliance was not consummated in the summer of 1975, and this, according to Otelo, was the main reason for the failure of the MFA [Armed Forces Movement]. Thus, the new organization falls back into all the illusions about a 'people-MFA alliance' and the 'revolutionary generals.'

". . . The new party is essentially a continuation of the PRP [Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat] and the FSP [People's Socialist Front]. The first openly advocated armed struggle in Portugal both before and after November 1975, while the second recently concluded an electoral alliance with the Communist Party.

"So, to say that the fusion between these two groups caused some surprise is putting it mildly. . . .

"The manifesto exposes this founding conference as a political maneuver. It says: 'It is necessary to create an independent organization, one free from the influence of any political chapel, and a revolutionary one, made up of workers regardless of whether they are members of parties.'

"Let's leave aside the question of this nonparty-party shell game. . . . The fundamental problem is that this approach totally leaps over the essential task of winning the immense majority of the workers, who are still influenced by reformism and place their confidence in the Socialist Party and Communist Party leaderships, to support a socialist revolution. It tries to do this by creating a catch-all organization, which is supposed to be more attractive because of its lack of program.

"Otelo is not the inventor of 'all-inclusive parties,' or parties that 'are not parties.' Two years ago, the PRP tried to form all-inclusive groups parallel to the workers commissions that existed then, calling them Revolutionary Workers Councils. These bodies disappeared before they got anywhere. The 'Soviets of the Portuguese revolution,' as they were proclaimed to be, never existed, because the Portuguese workers did not let themselves be sucked into any such voluntaristic and premature project."

was fun

"What Is To Be Done," weekly paper of the International Marxist Group. Published in Frankfurt, West Germany.

An article in the April 13 issue comments on the West German Stalinists' sectarian attacks on the Russell Tribunal on professional blacklisting (*Berufsver-*

bote), which recently concluded its first session:

"The course (of the tribunal) up to now has confirmed the fears of West German democratic forces that the Russell Tribunal is not serving to unite the democratic forces, but rather is being misused for anticommunist, organizational-chauvinist goals and purposes"—according to *Unsere Zeit* [Our Time], organ of the DKP [the pro-Moscow Communist Party].

"Actually, the DKP is in rather a tight spot. Its favorite allies, the Young Socialists and left SPDers, support the tribunal. However, those with whose chorus the DKP is howling against the tribunal are already so far to the right that they want nothing to do with the DKP. Thus, these so-called democratic forces shrink down to the DKP itself.

"Shortly before the tribunal, the citizens initiative committees against the *Berufsverbote*—or rather, their DKP-dominated steering committee in Hamburg—under pressure from those Young Socialists, Young Democrats [youth group of the Free Democratic Party], and SPDers who support the tribunal, decided to leave it up to the individual local citizens' initiative committees whether to support the tribunal.

"This step once again allowed the question to be raised within the support movement as to whether the DKP could be finally won over.

"At the first press conference in Frankfurt-Harheim, on the day the tribunal opened, Professor Narr, a member of the committee, revealed to the press that as a result of compiling cases to be examined by the Russell Tribunal, he had learned of more cases, in which the DKP had forbidden its members to appear as witnesses before the tribunal, under the threat of being expelled from the party.

"The coverage in *Unsere Zeit* before the tribunal was pretty much a caricature of what the bourgeois press had written. Shortly before the tribunal, they once again gave 'left' criticism a try: the tribunal will demonstrate whether there are violations of human rights in West Germany. In this it lags behind the work of the citizens' initiative committees against the *Berufsverbote*. Today we consider it an established fact that violations of human rights exist.

"At the beginning of the tribunal itself, nothing more was printed about it. Now all they say about it is something about the ultraleft crazies who took over the tribunal in order to deepen the split in the movement against the *Berufsverbote*. The fact that the bourgeois press reported extensively on the tribunal didn't faze the DKP writers. Oh well, it wasn't being organized by the 'real' communists, but by the false ones, and they of course are supported by the bourgeois press.

"This expresses the fear that a few more

DKP members might ask sometime why the party isn't supporting the tribunal."

Y Ddraig Goch

"The Red Dragon," monthly Welsh-language organ of Plaid Cymru, the Welsh Nationalist Party.

The cover story in the April issue deals with the question of compensating quarry workers for job-related illness. A headline on the inside pages compares a British parliamentary commission's report on this problem to "the betrayal of the blue books."

This term, "*brad y llyfrau gleision*," has become a traditional saying in Welsh. It refers to a British parliamentary commission's report in the nineteenth century blaming poverty and illiteracy in Wales on the reluctance of the Welsh people to abandon their own language and adopt English.

Y Ddraig Goch reports:

"Plaid Cymru members of parliament hope to hold meetings in the quarry districts to discuss the next step in the struggle to win compensation for the workers who are suffering from dust-caused diseases. This follows release of the Pearson Commission report on industrial accidents, and the astounding news that the quarry workers are to get no additional compensation.

"The Plaid said that the government had been hiding behind the Pearson Commission since 1974. Two years ago, the prime minister said that there were no reasonable grounds for denying the quarry workers compensation when the coal miners were getting payments under the Black Lung Plan.

"In a statement, the MPs for Meirion and Arfon, Dafydd Elis Tomos and Dafydd Wigley, said that the reasons given for rejecting a plan similar to that for the miners for the quarry workers were superficial to say the least.

"Their argument is that it would be necessary to extend such a plan to other groups, such as those who suffer from sickness caused by asbestos dust.' . . .

"The Plaid said that the fight is not over but is just beginning. It is estimated that 800 men are suffering from dust-caused illness throughout Gwynedd [the largely Welsh-speaking north of Wales].

The paper quoted Emyr Price, Plaid Cymru candidate for Conwy, as saying:

"The Pearson report, which was released after much delay, is a grave blow to hundreds of quarry workers and their families . . .

"This report . . . reflects the prejudices of the commission members, who are interested only in the English industrial centers.

"It's disgraceful that a bunch of English

solicitors and barristers can do such an injustice to the quarry workers of Gwynedd.

"If the government wants to keep a modicum of respect in Wales, it must go to work immediately on a plan that will give sufficient compensation to these workers for what they and their families have suffered."

la gauche

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

Now that Peking has issued a condemnation of Carter's decision to "postpone" development of the neutron bomb, the Belgian Maoists can be expected to follow suit, F.V. writes in the April 20 issue:

"As of December 24, 1977, Amada-TPO [Alle Macht aan de Arbeiders-Tout le Pouvoir aux Travailleurs—All Power to the Workers] was still demonstrating against the neutron bomb in the streets of Brussels. To be sure, they did not forget to denounce 'Soviet social-imperialism.' But they were still trying to link up with the real desire for peace among the population.

"Now China has stated its position. What will Amada-TPO do? So far, they have been silent. But there is no uncertainty as to what their final decision will be. Amada-TPO will fall in line, given that it is a Maoist-Stalinist group. Its leadership should get out the smelling-salts—180-degree turns of this type can sometimes bring on seasickness. So Amada-TPO will dangle a red herring. It has already condemned the 'one-sided character' of the struggle against the neutron bomb. It is concentrating on a general propaganda campaign against 'the two superpowers,' above all the USSR.

"In fact, Amada-TPO had already sensed what way the Eastern wind was blowing. 'The neutron bomb more or less squares with the American policy of constantly retreating, and, if necessary, abandoning western Europe to the Russians,' they wrote in their paper on April 5. Oddly enough, manufacturing the neutron bomb is seen here as a policy that reveals the weakness of the United States. Carter's decision not to develop it should thus logically be applauded by Amada-TPO, instead of being viewed as a capitulation to 'the Russians' (sic), à la Peking. There is a simple explanation for this contradiction—Amada-TPO needed to fall back on this line of reasoning in order to make the turn and realign itself with China.

"Indeed, what does logic matter, since Amada-TPO's aim—its only aim—is to follow the Chinese bureaucracy as far as its counterrevolutionary aberrations take it!"

Growing Dissatisfaction Among Iranian Masses

By Parvin Najafi

Widespread protests against the shah's dictatorial rule erupted throughout Iran during the first week of April.

The demonstrations were held in response to calls by several prominent religious leaders for a day of mourning and a nationwide bazaar strike on March 30, to honor those killed by the shah's army during the huge antigovernment demonstration in Tabriz in February.

The religious leaders called for "peaceful" mosque ceremonies and repeatedly asked their supporters to be "calm" and "disciplined" so as not to give the government any excuse to repeat the bloodbath it carried out in Tabriz February 19.

On that day the army was ordered into Tabriz and tanks were deployed against a demonstration of several hundred thousands of persons that had begun the previous day. Scores of demonstrators were killed and hundreds were wounded.

The demonstration in Tabriz, in turn, had begun as a day of mourning for those who had been killed in a demonstration in Qum, south of Tehran, on January 9.

The wave of protests that began on March 30 spread through at least fifty-five cities, towns, and villages. According to official accounts, they resulted in five deaths and ninety-eight arrests. Judging from the past performance of the shah's regime, the actual number of those killed, wounded, and arrested is undoubtedly much higher.

The government-controlled press reported that the demonstrators had attacked public buildings, banks, movie theaters, and Rastakhiz Party headquarters in many cities, breaking windows and in some cases burning the buildings. (The Rastakhiz is the only legal political party in Iran.)

It is not clear whether this was actually done by the demonstrators, or whether the government had simply repeated its past practice of instigating violent actions so as to discredit the protesters.

Leaders of both the political and religious opposition in Iran have publicly repudiated the violence and denied that they encouraged it. On April 4, two prominent leaders of the opposition, Mehdi Barzargan and Dariush Forouhar, charged the government with fabricating reports of violence and staging incidents in an attempt to discredit the dissident movement and create a climate of approval for a crackdown.

Similar charges were made in an open

letter to the prime minister, issued by the newly formed Iranian Committee for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedom. The committee said the authorities clearly intended to use the disturbances as a pretext to suppress dissent "in the guise of maintaining law and order."

In the weeks following the Tabriz protest, the government-controlled press has been filled with propaganda against the shah's opponents, attempting to capitalize on the incidents of violence.

On April 4, the semiofficial Tehran daily *Kayhan* reported that the Foreign Ministry has formed a "Guidance and Information Committee." A spokesman for the ministry said that the committee will conduct an "educational campaign," if necessary "from door to door, shop to shop, talking to the people face to face in the street," explaining and "exposing" the "increased subversion against our country."

According to a report in the April 3 *Kayhan* one wing of the Rastakhiz Party (called the "Leading Wing") announced that it has organized a "Committee for National Action" to "fight the rioters and demonstrators relentlessly."

In the weeks that followed, a series of bombings, threats, and beatings were carried out against leaders of the opposition. A group calling itself the "Underground Committee for Revenge" took credit for these terrorist actions.

On April 8, bombs damaged the homes of four prominent oppositionists. Two of the victims were government officials under Mossadegh, before the 1953 CIA-engineered coup—Karim Sanjabi, a member of Mossadegh's cabinet; and Mehdi Barzargan, managing director of the National Oil Company under Mossadegh. All four of the victims are members of the Iranian Committee for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedom.

According to a report by William Branigan in the April 22 *Washington Post*, "there have been no injuries in any of six bombings so far, but a spokesman for the [Underground] committee has telephoned death threats to several opposition writers, lawyers and human rights activists in recent days. . . ."

Dr. Peyman, another member of the human-rights committee, was kidnapped from his office April 8, taken to the outskirts of Tehran, severely beaten, and left there unconscious.

"Dissidents charge that the campaign of

'revenge'—apparently for the recent wave of civil unrest in Iran that the government has blamed on political opponents—is really the work of the Iranian secret police, SAVAK," Branigan reported. "Authorities have ascribed the bombing to 'terrorists,' without elaboration."

He continued: "However, [diplomatic] observers feel, the bombing campaign may have the opposite effect by creating greater sympathy for the old-guard dissidents. It also seems to give them political importance greater than their disorganized ranks and generally aged membership warrant."

Meanwhile, a hunger strike has been conducted in Qasr prison, the largest political prison in Iran. The protest started March 13 and lasted for more than a month.

Almost all of the prisoners in Qasr were convicted by military tribunals. Many have been held there for months or even for years without a trial.

The London *Guardian* of April 10 estimated the number of prisoners taking part in the hunger strike at between 400 and 450, but some opposition sources say that as many as 1,000 may have been involved.

The prisoners' demands were for uncensored books and newspapers, fewer restrictions on visits by relatives, the right to write and translate inside the prison, and new trials before civilian courts. They won wide support inside Iran and internationally.

In Iran, a Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners was formed. This committee and many prominent oppositionists sent letters of protest, asking the government to meet the prisoners' demands.

International support came from such well-known organizations as Amnesty International and the International League for Human Rights, which is affiliated with the United Nations.

Washington Post correspondent Branigan said that "the government reportedly . . . has made some minor concessions. . . . In return for ending the strike last week, authorities agreed to provide better food and living conditions and more relaxed visitation rules, dissidents said. The prisoners' demands to have their cases reviewed by civilian instead of military courts apparently have been rejected."

On March 28, court proceedings began against sixteen students who were arrested for participating in a demonstration during the shah's visit to Washington last

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November. These students were tried in an open civilian court. The government charged them with "disturbing the peace" by participating in a demonstration, carrying banners, and shouting antigovernment slogans.

Later they were also charged with breaking the windows of two police cars, causing injury to several police officers. The government had no proof of its charges other than the testimony of the arresting officers.

Forty-three oppositionist lawyers defended the students in court. Pointing to the Iranian constitution and to the declaration of human rights signed by the government, the lawyers argued that since participating in demonstrations and carrying banners voicing criticism of the government is not a crime, the government had no right to arrest the students in the first place.

This was the first time in many years that a real defense has been mounted in a trial of political prisoners.

In the past most political prisoners were tried in secret military tribunals. The "defense attorney" was usually a retired army officer, who often asked for even harsher penalties for his "client."

This time, the Iranian press reported the case extensively, including the statements by the defense attorneys. The trial stayed on the front pages of most of the newspaper

ers in Iran for more than a week.

Eleven of the students were eventually convicted and five were acquitted. All of them charged in court that they had been systematically beaten at the Tehran central police station after their arrest.

The new wave of demonstrations, the long hunger strike in Qasr prison, and the open trial of the sixteen students all made clear that there is growing dissatisfaction with the shah's regime, a deepening radicalization of the Iranian masses, and a readiness to put up a fight.

For example, writing from Tehran about the recent unrest, *Le Monde* correspondent Jean-Claude Guillebaud said April 6: "Not one person I have met here tries to dismiss the subject or minimize its importance. Instead, all—even those close to the government—stress the 'new' significance of what has been happening since the beginning of the year in a number of provincial cities compared with the sporadic disturbances of the past."

New York Times correspondent Paul Hofmann summed up the situation as follows in an April 2 report: "... while the shah looks secure in his nearly absolute power, he might meditate about the popular disaffection that keeps erupting in Iran. The land reform and other social changes that were enacted 15 years ago are officially labeled the 'Shah-people revolution.' The latest events showed that many Iranians would like more revolution and less Shah." □

the World Cup boycott.

The Paris meeting decided to organize a series of events throughout Europe on March 24 (second anniversary of Videla's coup) and on April 28. Another international gathering has been scheduled for Amsterdam on May 6.

A protest rally of 2,000 persons was held March 23 in front of the Argentine embassy in Paris. The next day a united meeting heard speakers from the Latin American Committee for Information and Solidarity (CAIS), the Organizing Committee for a Boycott of Argentina in the 1978 World Cup (COBA*), the French Democratic Confederation of Labor (CFDT), the Socialist Party, and the Revolutionary Communist League.

In Spain, the boycott campaign has won the support of a broad spectrum of political and trade-union organizations. The sole exception is the Spanish Communist Party, which has not yet taken a position (although the Workers Commissions, which are led by CP activists, have joined in the appeal, which has also been signed by nationalist groups).

In Sweden the Social Democratic Party has declared its support for the World Cup boycott.

The international press is giving substantial coverage to this important campaign, putting Videla's military junta on the defensive before public opinion. The expensive publicity campaign mounted by the Argentine torturers in their effort to forge a holy football alliance and lure foreign capital to their "island of stability" has thus been put in check.

The boycott campaign is a springboard for ongoing activity against not only the Argentine dictatorship but the dictatorships in Chile, Uruguay, Brazil, and other countries as well. The campaign also makes possible the concrete exposure of the thousand threads that bind the multinational corporations and their governments to this type of regime. It can show that for these "democracies," superexploitation of the peoples whose countries are dominated by imperialism is a very profitable way to shift the burdens of the worldwide crisis of capitalism from the imperialist centers to the dependent countries.

Already more and more voices are being raised on all sides, calling for a boycott of the next International Cancer Congress, scheduled for Buenos Aires in October.

All these efforts should make it possible to put on the agenda a break in diplomatic relations between the various countries concerned and the bloody regime of the Argentine military dictatorship, along with the demand for an immediate halt in arms sales to the Argentine and Latin American dictators. □

*Comité pour le Boycott de l'Organisation par l'Argentine de la Coupe du Monde de Football, 14 rue de Nanteuil, 75015 Paris.

Campaign Against Argentine Junta

The Boycott of the World Cup Football Match

Today, for the first time in many years, a mass campaign against a military dictatorship is unfolding in Europe, around the upcoming World Cup football (soccer) matches to be held in Argentina.

The campaign to boycott Argentina as the host country of the World Cup is being carried out around two main demands:

- Freedom for all political and trade-union prisoners, including those who have "disappeared" (i.e., whose detention is not officially acknowledged by the Argentine military junta).

- Restoration of all political, trade-union, and democratic rights.

The appeal to boycott the World Cup was launched in France and Sweden at the end of 1977. Since then the campaign has taken on considerable scope with the formation of united action committees in most West European countries. Thirty thousand signatures were gathered in a

few weeks' time in France to demand French diplomatic moves against the holding of the World Cup in Argentina. Nearly 100 committees have already been set up, composed primarily of youth.

At the same time, a committee of relatives and friends of French citizens who have disappeared in Argentina has been formed and is demanding action from the government. Broad support in France has also come from committees of exiled attorneys, journalists, physicians, psychologists, and others.

A meeting was held in Paris on February 25 to coordinate seventeen European committees. Representatives came from Denmark, West Germany, France, Belgium, Spain, Switzerland, and the Netherlands. A number of members of sections of the Fourth International participated in that meeting. They had been delegated by the committees of their respective countries on the basis of their active support of

The International Women's Day Celebration in Port Louis



Speaker's stand at February 26 rally. Signs call for equal pay for equal work, end to discrimination based on sex.

PORT LOUIS, Mauritius—"A Historic Page in the Struggle of Women," "Big Success for Mauritian Feminists." These were some of the headlines in the daily newspapers February 27.

On Sunday, February 26, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. women gathered for an outdoor rally in the Jardin de la Compagnie here for the first meeting opening a week of activities to commemorate International Women's Day. It was the first time in Mauritius that International Women's Day was celebrated. About 300 women came. They were of all ages and included students, office workers, mothers of families, servants, factory workers, and women from the villages. Many wore the t-shirts saying "Solidarité Fam—1978" that were sold to raise funds for the event.

In early January, the Muvman Liberation Fam (MLF) initiated a call to form an ad hoc committee with other women's organizations. The Solidarité Fam—March 8 Committee was formed on January 15 and met regularly every Sunday morning until February 26. Organizations participating included the MLF, Ligue Féministe, Christian Movement for Socialism, the Curepipe Joint Play Group, the Servants Union, women from the General Workers Federation, and the Rivière du Rempart Women's Association.

The meetings planned and organized a

week of activities, including the outdoor rally; a debate on abortion; two exhibitions, one by women artists and the other, drawings and paintings by young school girls on the conditions of women in Mauritian society; a trade-union meeting; a cultural show by women; and a symbolic rally on March 8 near the Free Industrial Zone where many young women work in the factories. The committee sold 200 women's t-shirts in less than two weeks.

The themes of the week were equal pay; trade-union rights; the legalization of abortion; fight to change discriminatory laws; struggle against violence in the home, on the streets, and on the job.

Women in Mauritius are considered second-class citizens and suffer from superexploitation and oppression.

Women from birth never leave the patriarchal circle. In their families they are under the tutelage of their fathers, and when they marry (often in prearranged marriages) they come under the tutelage of their husbands. Women do not realize when they marry that marriages are in "common" unless they specifically ask to be married in "separation." This means that women do not have the right to purchase property or goods in their own names or to have accounts in the bank. They even have to ask their husband's permission to go to court to get a divorce.

In Mauritian society, although not specified by law, it is a custom that women do not leave the house without first asking their husbands' permission. To attend the Solidarité Fam committee meetings, some women had to ask their husbands' permission or present a letter from the committee to show where they were going. There were even women who would like to have participated in the cultural show but could not because they knew their husbands would never give them permission. The most common complaint that women discuss is that they are beaten at home, especially if their husbands have been drinking.

Rape is a common occurrence here. This theme was discussed by women on February 26. Women seldom bring a case in court when they are raped because society will ostracize them and in the court they become the criminals rather than the victims. Often families try to cover up a rape because once it is known that a woman has been raped, she is no longer considered "marriageable."

Abortion is not legal, yet one out of ten women get abortions every year in unsafe and filthy conditions. Poor women who cannot pay for abortions often try to abort themselves. Many women die each year from abortions though they are not reported officially. Although the pill is easily obtainable, one of the most common forms of contraception is the "Depo-Provera," a contraceptive shot given every three months. This form of contraception is used in only thirty-five countries. It was banned in the United States in 1977 because of the risk of sterility and uterine cancer.

Women workers participating in the week of activities spoke about the conditions of servants and young women working in the Free Industrial Zone (created by the government in 1970 to encourage industrial development through special tax privileges).

Servants work in conditions that are a carry-over from the slave days. They are at the beck and call of their employers and get paid as little as a rupee an hour or less (1 rupee = about US\$0.16). They are now organizing into a union with gardeners, drivers, and cooks to fight for better pay, a stable work timetable, and the right to sick leave and holiday pay.

Young women provide the cheap labor for the factories in the Free Zone. About 30,000 young women work long hours every day for starvation wages of a maximum of 49 rupees a week (US \$7.75) whereas men earn a maximum salary of 81 rupees a week (\$12.78). Although both women and men in the Free Zone are

A History of Colonial Oppression



Financial Times

The history of Mauritius, an Indian Ocean island some 1,400 miles east of the African mainland, is one of brutal colonial oppression. Annexed briefly by the Dutch in the seventeenth century, the island was seized by France in 1715. A century later, in 1814, during the Napoleonic Wars, Mauritius was ceded to Britain, which maintained direct

colonial rule until 1968.

In the eighteenth century, French colonists set up large sugar plantations and shipped in thousands of African slaves to work in the fields. Today, the descendants of the slaves, the Creoles, comprise a little more than 30 percent of the island's population of 900,000.

Slavery was abolished in 1835. When freed Creole slaves refused to work for their former masters, Indian indentured labourers were imported as an alternative source of labour. Today, the Indo-Mauritians, including both Hindu and Muslim communities, comprise more than 65 percent of the population.

Since formal independence in 1968, Mauritius has been governed by Prime Minister Seewoosagar Ramgoolam's Labour Party.

But the island's economy is still dominated by the imperialist monopolies and the local white elite, the 10,000 Franco-Mauritians. French plantation owners hold more than 70 percent of the sugar-producing lands—a striking statistic when it is noted that sugar-cane covers 90 percent of the cultivable land and accounts for 89 percent of the country's exports.

superexploited, women are demanding that they at least get the same wages as men. The same superexploitation exists in the sugar industry, where a woman earns almost 50 percent less than a man for the same amount of work.

All of these conditions of women in Mauritian society were openly discussed and deplored during the International Women's Day activities.

It was these conditions that prompted a few women to come together and form the MLF in September 1976, to begin to raise consciousness and to struggle against the oppression, traditions, and customs that exist in Mauritius. The MLF, in the last year and a half, has formed branches in five places throughout the island. It petitioned the government to open up technical schools for girls, and formed a front with other organizations to fight to reverse the "Immigration Act" and "Deportation Act" passed in April 1977. These acts leave to the discretion of the Prime Minister whether a foreigner married to a Mauritian woman can settle in Mauritius with his wife, and make him liable to deportation at any time. These acts do not apply to foreign women married to Mauritian men. These acts discriminate against Mauritian women and, in effect, she loses her right to reside in the country of her birth if she marries a non-Mauritian.

By the end of December 1977, the MLF felt that it had reached the stage where it could initiate a united effort with other women's organizations to plan activities for International Women's Day.

The week of activities came at a time when the rank and file of the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM, the opposition government party) was demobilized, and many women who are active MMM supporters and organizers were drawn into the women's activities. The MMM itself has done little to push for women's rights, and its Governmental Programme contains only one reference to women, under the heading "Youth and Sports." It calls for "the real promotion of Mauritian women and aid to feminist groups." The Solidarité Fam asked for the MMM's support and it donated 1,000 rupees to the committee.

The Labour Party (the government party) has a network of Women's Associations organized in every village throughout the island. These associations are given government grants for sewing teachers, home economics teachers, and a place to meet. Although they are led by Labour Party supporters, these associations organize most of the women in the villages within them and often have very large meetings.

The Solidarité Fam committee was organized on a nonpartisan basis as an autonomous woman's group and attempted to get the Women's Associations involved in the week of activities. But it seems that the government labeled Solidarité Fam as an MMM project and instructed the Women's

Associations not to participate. On March 8, the government, through the Ministry of Social Security, organised its own women's meeting for the Women's Associations with the prime minister as one of the main speakers. These meetings were thus counterposed to the Solidarité Fam activities and were given headline news in the Labour Party newspaper and on television, which is government controlled.

It is noteworthy that Mauritius is the only African country where an *autonomous* women's movement exists. In other African countries, women's activities are organized under the auspices of the government party, as the Labour Party did here in Mauritius.

Since International Women's Day, there have been three further developments. First, the government is now preparing to amend the divorce laws to allow women whose husbands are out of the country to get a divorce. Secondly, the president of the Labour Party has declared that he is in favor of legalizing abortion. Thirdly, in the Throne Speech on March 28, opening the 1978 session of the Legislative Assembly, the government has proposed as one of its main tasks to abolish all restrictions that remain on women and bring about their complete emancipation.

The barrage of newspaper articles on various aspects of women's oppression during the week of activities, and the enthusiastic way women here for the first time took up and talked in public on subjects considered "delicate," such as abortion and rape, shows that there is much interest in women's issues and fighting to change women's conditions.

The women's movement here sees itself as a part of the international women's movement, which is fighting for the liberation of women throughout the world. In this spirit, Solidarité Fam wrote to women's groups in Europe asking for solidarity messages, and wrote to women's groups in the Indian Ocean countries asking them to organize activities for International Women's Day to coincide with activities here and to send messages as well. Simone de Beauvoir was invited to come here and speak. She was unable to come but sent a message that was printed in the press.

Solidarité Fam has since had a meeting to evaluate the week's activities. The women's movement in Mauritius has grown stronger, and women have gained much experience through organizing these activities, which will be of help to them in the struggles ahead. □

Carter OKed Political Burglaries

By Syd Stapleton

[The following article appeared in the April 28 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist newsweekly published in New York.]

* * *

The Carter administration's attempts to clean up the image of the FBI have provoked a squabble that is already baring new secrets about government spying.

The furor was touched off earlier this month when Attorney General Griffin Bell nominated seventy-one FBI agents, officials, and former officials to take the rap for a series of FBI burglaries in New York. Three former officials—including former Acting FBI Director L. Patrick Gray—face criminal charges. The other sixty-eight will receive some kind of administrative discipline.

The indictments and disciplinary measures are based on FBI burglaries in the early 1970s during an unsuccessful effort to locate members of the Weather Underground.

In response, some of the agents have launched a counterattack against Carter and Bell. The opening gun was fired by J. Wallace LaPrade, former head of the FBI's New York field office. LaPrade was recently booted out of his post by Bell in connection with the Justice Department burglary investigation.

LaPrade went public April 13 and told a news conference in New York that Carter and Bell themselves have authorized FBI burglaries—warrantless break-ins—just like the ones L. Patrick Gray ordered.

In response to LaPrade's bombshell, the Justice Department admitted that "warrantless investigations" (burglaries and wiretaps) are used in cases involving "national security." The Justice Department claims these "warrantless investigations" are carried out against American citizens only if there is "probable cause" to believe that they are "agents of a foreign power."

But LaPrade blew that story out of the water the next day. He said on the "CBS Morning News": "We have matters today . . . under investigation which, five, six years ago, were considered to be domestic investigations—and now . . . have been put into the category of foreign counterintelligence."

This statement is backed up by the record. In August 1976 the FBI shifted the Socialist Workers Party, the Communist Party, and several other groups from its



Time

LAPRADE: Tosses bombshell in Carter's lap.

"internal security" section to its "foreign counterintelligence" section.

While the FBI claims it has stopped investigating the SWP, neither the FBI nor the Justice Department will answer questions about which groups are today targeted for "counterintelligence." The Justice Department's widely publicized guidelines for FBI investigations apply only to "domestic security" cases. The guidelines for "counterintelligence" are secret.

The moves against Gray, LaPrade, and the other gumshoes are part of the Carter administration's efforts to appear as a staunch defender of democratic rights. After years of revelations about FBI and CIA assaults on individual rights, the American people feel strongly that a way must be found to protect basic civil liberties from the secret police. To try to restore confidence in the government, Carter has taken a number of steps to try to show that he shares this conviction.

But Carter faces problems in achieving this goal. One is the difficulty he has had in forcing the FBI to act publicly in harmony with the changed political mood in the country today. The policies openly proclaimed and justified in the past year

of McCarthyism and anti-communist witch-hunting now must be criticized and hidden behind rhetorical commitments to human rights.

But significant sections of the secret police agency have resisted demands to shape up to Carter's new specifications. Recruited and trained in the J. Edgar Hoover spirit of fanatical battle against "subversion," many "street agents" and their bosses have difficulty adjusting to the new political pressures.

Moreover, they see no reason to do so. Like secret police throughout history, they jealously guard their "independence" from the shifting political needs of the class that employs them to defend its interests.

The agents who are up to their ears in flagrantly illegal activities—which is quite a few of them—have added reason to resist any changes. Their own rotten necks are on the block.

"Many agents," noted the April 16 *New York Times*, "fear they now will become vulnerable to civil suits, such as the one being pressed with a measure of success by the Socialist Workers' Party."

Angry that they are being made personally liable for crimes they committed on behalf of the government, the FBI agents singled out by the Justice Department are potential dynamite for the Carter administration.

They know which skeletons are in which closets. And if it comes down to a question of personal survival, they could easily decide to bring them out and rattle the bones.

Attorney General Bell has become the administration's point man in the skirmish with the FBI. "I'm trying to run the FBI; I'm trying to save it," he told a Senate committee.

"I feel that the [FBI] director should run the FBI," countered LaPrade. He has dared the attorney general to debate him on nationwide television. LaPrade also called for FBI burglars to down tools and refuse to perform any more burglaries unless they get written authorizations—for self-protection—from the president.

The conflict between the Carter administration and the FBI erupted into public shortly after the indictment of John Kearney in April 1977. Kearney was indicted for his role in the Weather Underground break-ins, but the indictment was dropped by Bell last week on the grounds that Kearney was just following orders.

Three hundred FBI agents massed to show support for Kearney outside federal court in New York City when he was arraigned last year. A spokesman for the demonstrators told Kearney that they were there to "give testament to your moral leadership . . . in the fight against the enemies of our nation, namely—anarchy and terrorism."

Various other right-wing groups announced their support for Kearney, includ-

ing the Young Americans for Freedom and the American Legion. And groups have been cropping up with names such as "Ad Hoc Citizens Legal Defense Fund for the FBI" and the "Security and Intelligence Fund."

As in Watergate, partisan conflicts among the Democrats and Republicans play a role in the dispute over which tactics best serve the capitalist government. And as Carter's bickering with LaPrade and his backers continues, it has the potential of degenerating into an every-burglar-for-himself orgy of charges and countercharges.

Bell and Carter are clearly not prepared to leave sensitive political matters in the hands of the FBI. They want to be the ones to determine who gets wiretapped and burglarized.

The Carter administration has already proclaimed its right to carry out warrantless break-ins, and it is vigorously defending the legality of two "surreptitious entries" done without warrants against David Truong and Ronald Humphrey. The Justice Department has charged Truong and Humphrey with espionage for allegedly giving government documents to Vietnam.

The Justice Department has also asked Congress to pass legislation that would prevent anyone victimized by the FBI from suing the individual agents involved. In addition, government lawyers have been arguing that when the government is sued, victims of FBI attacks should not be entitled to any damages for violations of their rights. If the FBI kicks down your door, holds you at gunpoint, and photographs your papers, all they owe you is the cost of the lock—says the Carter administration.

The Justice Department's position in the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance suit against government spying has revealed quite a bit about Carter's attitude toward FBI crimes. Bell and Carter have told the Supreme Court that they will defy court orders to release files on FBI informers. They claim that "law enforcement . . . would be severely damaged" if the truth about FBI informer activities were made known.

Bell has also asked the Supreme Court to rule that the government can bog down suits against government spying for years by making drawn-out legal appeals to preserve FBI secrecy.

Six years ago another assistant director of the FBI was kicked out of the bureau in a policy dispute with higher-ups. That official, William C. Sullivan, went to the press with a little of what he knew, and helped spark the massive revelations of FBI crimes. Recently, he was preparing to tell more. Then, four months ago, Sullivan got a rifle bullet in the neck. Police ruled the fatal wound was the result of a "hunting accident."

LaPrade should stay out of the woods.

17 Members of Helsinki Groups Now Behind Bars

Petr Vins Sentenced in Kiev

By Marilyn Vogt

A fifth member of the Ukrainian Helsinki Monitoring Group, Petr Vins, has been sentenced. Vins, who joined the Ukrainian group in early 1977, soon after the Kremlin authorities began arresting group members, was himself arrested February 15, 1978.

He was sentenced in Kiev April 6 to a one-year term on charges of "parasitism." The Stalinist rulers periodically resort to this charge to persecute dissenters who have been fired for criticizing authorities and are subsequently without jobs because they are refused other employment.

Vins is the son of Georgy Vins, a prominent leader of dissident Baptists in the USSR who is now serving a ten-year term because of his role in an officially unregistered religious group. Petr's grandfather, a Baptist pastor, died in Stalin's camps in 1943, but was posthumously rehabilitated. Petr has been active, with his three sisters and his brother, in protesting his father's imprisonment.

The four other members of the Ukrainian Helsinki Monitoring Group who have been sentenced are Myroslav Marynovych and Mykola Matusevych, each of whom received twelve-year terms on March 29, 1978; and Mykola Rudenko and Oleksiy Tykhy, who received terms of twelve years and fifteen years respectively July 1, 1977. They were convicted on charges of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda."

The Ukrainian Helsinki Monitoring Group was organized November 9, 1976, to "foster compliance with the humanitarian provisions" of the Helsinki Accords. To do this, the group endeavored to collect information from Soviet citizens on violations of the Helsinki Accords' humanitarian provisions and to make these cases public by issuing documents enumerating the violations.

The first such Helsinki group to be formed in the USSR was the Moscow group, formed in May 1976. Similar groups exist now in the Lithuanian, Georgian, and Armenian republics.

In February 1977, the Kremlin rulers began a crackdown on these groups and to date at least seventeen members of Helsinki groups are imprisoned, six of whom have been sentenced to terms totaling fifty-three years.

In addition to the five Ukrainian group members who have been sentenced, Grigory Goldshtein, a member of the Georgian group, was sentenced in March 1978

to a one-year term, like Vins, on a charge of "parasitism."

The other members still awaiting trial are: Yuri Orlov (arrested February 10, 1977), Aleksandr Ginzburg (arrested February 3, 1977), and Anatoly Shcharansky (arrested March 15, 1977) of the Moscow group; Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Merab Kostava (both arrested April 7, 1977), and Victor Rtskhiladze (arrested January 1978) of the Georgian group; Robert Nazarian and Shagen Arutunian (both arrested in December 1977) of the Armenian group; Victoras Petkus and Antanas Terleckas (both arrested in August 1977) of the Lithuanian group; and Lev Lukyanenko (arrested December 12, 1977) of the Ukrainian group.

In addition, two members of the Working Commission to Investigate the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes have been sentenced. Felix Serebrov received a one-year term in October 1977, and Kirill Podrabinek received a two-and-one-half-year term in March 1978.

The Working Commission is associated with, but not technically a part of, the Moscow Helsinki group. Kirill Podrabinek is the brother of the head of the Working Commission, Aleksandr Podrabinek. In December 1977, the Kremlin rulers warned Aleksandr they would arrest him and his brother if Aleksandr would not emigrate. Aleksandr refused to leave the Soviet Union, and his brother was then arrested. A number of Helsinki group members have been forced to emigrate or face arrest. □

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AROUND THE WORLD



Get French Troops Out of Chad!

The French government officially confirmed for the first time April 26 that it had dispatched "several hundred" troops to Chad, a former French colony in central Africa, to help the military junta of Gen. Félix Malloum contain an antigovernment rebellion. Some news reports, however, have placed the number of troops sent at more than 1,000, in addition to hundreds of "advisers" already stationed in Chad.

Jean François-Poncet, a presidential representative, said that the French forces would give "technical assistance for the instruction and training" of the Chadian military. He claimed that the troops were being sent only to protect military training centers and French residents, and would not be used in military operations.

Similar justifications were employed by Paris in December 1977, when its planes flew bombing raids against Saharan guerrillas, supposedly to "protect" French citizens in Mauritania.

This new imperialist intervention in Chad comes at a time of growing opposition against the Malloum regime, which is closely identified with its French benefactors. Guerrilla forces of the Front de Libération Nationale du Tchad (Frolinat—Chad

National Liberation Front), who have been fighting the central government in Ndjamená for twelve years, have recently made a series of military advances in the central part of the country. Many government troops have been killed or captured by Frolinat forces and the morale of the Chadian army is reportedly very low.

Demonstrations have also been reported in a number of towns in the south, against both the junta and the French military presence.

The current French intervention in Chad is only the most recent. Between 1968 and 1971, thousands of French troops fought alongside Chadian forces against the Frolinat guerrillas. And as recently as July 1977, Paris announced that it had supplied "logistical support" to the Malloum regime in its war against Frolinat in the northern part of the country.

Banned in U.S.— OKed in Réunion

Depo-Provera, a contraceptive drug that was banned in the United States in 1977 when it was shown to cause cancer in laboratory animals, is being widely administered to poor women in the French territory of Réunion, the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge* reported April 6.

Government-sponsored family planning clinics are the main suppliers of the drug; it is seldom prescribed by private doctors, according to *Rouge*. Twenty percent of women on public assistance (about 6,000) are receiving Depo-Provera injections.

Campaign to Defend Rudolf Bahro

In response to reports that a secret trial of East German dissident Rudolf Bahro is due to begin shortly, defense efforts are being stepped up in several West European countries, *Rouge* reported in its April 15-16 issue.

Bahro was arrested on August 23, 1977, for having published a book in West Germany called *The Alternative—A Critique of Existing Socialism*.

Rouge cited the following developments:

- In West Germany, a group of university professors has demanded Bahro's release and is seeking permission to visit him in prison.
- In Britain, supporters have issued an open letter signed by Tamara Deutscher, Jan Kavan, Ken Coates, and others, ask-

ing organizations in the workers movement to join the effort to win Bahro's release.

- In West Berlin, the Committee to Free Rudolf Bahro is gathering signatures on petitions, organizing public meetings, and conducting a campaign to publicize the case in the press.

- In France, a defense committee has been formed and has issued an appeal to many prominent individuals. Jean Elleinstein, a leader of the French CP, and Simone de Beauvoir were among the first signers. A rally is planned for May 31, in which exiled East German poet Wolf Biermann will participate.

Women Hit Hardest By Unemployment

These are "hard times" for women workers in Western Europe, says an article in the April 10 *New York Times*. The figures cited suggest that there is no relief in sight.

Female unemployment in France has been rising more than twice as fast as male unemployment over the last three years. More than half of those out of work are women, although they make up barely a third of the total work force.

In Belgium, unemployment of women continued to soar when that of men dropped off after the 1974-75 recession. In 1977 more than 11% of women workers were unemployed, compared to 4.2% of men.

Over the last two years female unemployment has been rising twice as fast as male unemployment in Britain. Already the jobless rate for women in production and manufacturing is four times as high as that for men.

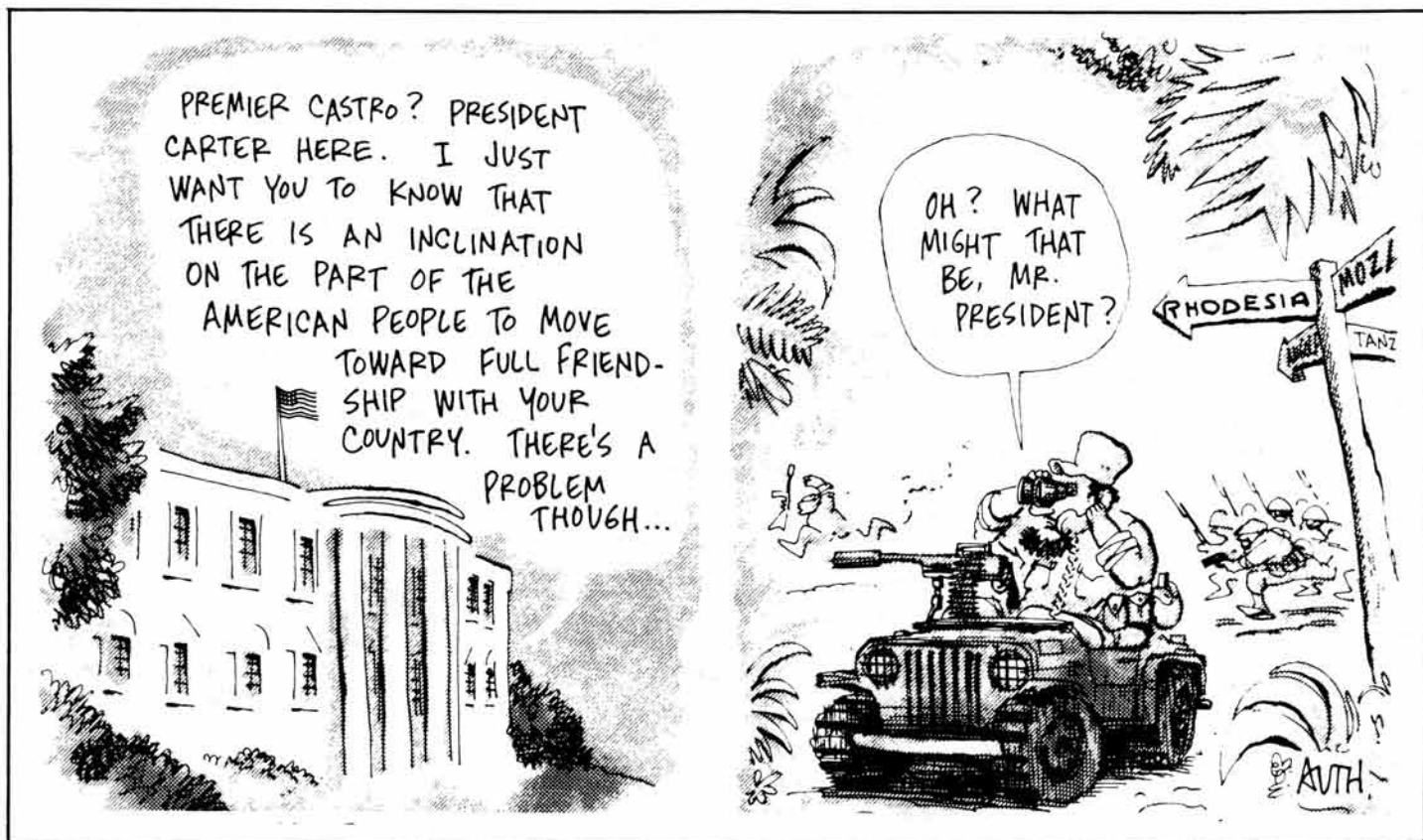
The *Times* quotes a 1978 International Labor Organization report on female unemployment in France, Belgium, Britain and Sweden. The report concludes that work for women "generally remains rooted in traditional spheres of feminine activity," and that the large-scale entry of women into the work force that began in the 1960s "has not to any significant extent broadened their range of employment opportunities."

This helps explain why women workers in France earn 34% less than men for doing comparable work—despite the existence of an equal-pay law.

Women get little support from the courts, admits the *Times*, but they are not likely to



New African Development



Auth/Philadelphia Inquirer

get any more from their own unions. A Louis Harris poll conducted in France in late 1977 indicated that only 12% of women workers believed that their unions represented their interests.

Women have reported being discouraged by their unions from taking action against discriminatory firings and unequal pay. And at a textile factory near Belfort, France, the unions and the company collaborated on drawing up a list of workers to be fired. In announcing the dismissals, the company reassured the workers that "no man is on the list."

Hungarian CP Announces End of Price Subsidies

At a closed meeting held April 19 and 20, the Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party decided on a series of economic measures that could result in sharp price increases for consumer goods.

Most government subsidies for consumer goods will be phased out over the next two years. Last year, subsidies accounted for \$7 billion out of a \$20 billion budget.

In addition, price controls imposed in 1968 on most industrial and agricultural enterprises will be lifted.

The government has been moving cautiously to reduce price subsidies since 1976, when some meat prices were raised. This was followed by similar increases for milk and dairy products. Last January, sharp

price increases of more than 20 percent were decreed in some sectors.

According to a report in the April 24 *New York Times*, government and party officials expressed concern that the new measures might touch off a wave of public opposition, but said they hoped that the sweetener of "selective" wage increases would make them more palatable.

Paris Printers Back Worker Dissidents

Workers in the printing trade in Paris have issued a statement of solidarity with Soviet workers who have formed an independent union, *Le Monde* reported April 8.

The proofreaders section of the printers union (affiliated with the General Confederation of Labor) called on all other French unions to adopt similar positions of support, "because the formation of unions independent of the bosses, the state, and parties is a step forward for democracy throughout the world."

The statement, issued in a general assembly, also urged the workers movement to fight for the release of the founders of the independent Soviet union, many of whom have been arrested and imprisoned.

Raul Sendic's Life in Danger

Raul Sendic, founder and principal leader of the Tupamaro guerrilla organization, has been subjected to new tortures by the Uruguayan military authorities, and

his state of health is deteriorating.

Sendic has been held since September 1972. On a number of occasions he has been placed in total isolation and deprived of all medical and legal assistance.

An international congress of the Uruguayan Solidarity Committees, meeting in France April 8-9, issued an appeal for letters and telegrams to be sent to Uruguayan embassies demanding medical aid for Sendic, an immediate halt to the tortures he has been subjected to, and permission for his family to see him regularly.

'Euro-Right' Meets in Rome

Representatives of extreme right-wing parties in Italy, France, and Spain announced April 20 that they were forming a coalition to combat Eurocommunism and hoped that other far-right groups—which they referred to as the "forces of sanity"—would join it.

The statement was made at a press conference in Rome following the first congress of the "Euro-Right."

Giorgio Almirante, secretary of the neofascist Movimento Sociale Italiano (Italian Social Movement), said that all of Europe is threatened by "communism."

"Sincerely or not, [Italian CP head] Berlinguer represents the 'carrot' that Communism is using in Italy, while the terrorists of the Red Brigades are the 'stick,'" Almirante asserted.

"The Italian CP is the direct beneficiary

of the strategy of terror," he added.

Blas Pinar, speaking for the Fuerza Nueva (New Force) of Spain, said that "the immediate enemy behind which Communism is hiding is the policy of an institutional break followed by Juan Carlos and Suárez."

The French Parti des Forces Nouvelles (Party of New Forces) was represented by Pascal Gauchon, who called attention to what he said was his party's "role in the defeat of the leftists in the recent elections."

To Win the Game, Change the Rules

Several major Brazilian daily newspapers reported April 12 that the military government was considering dissolving the only two legal political parties in the country—the government party ARENA and the opposition Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB).

The Geisel regime has ordered an opinion poll to determine the likely results of congressional elections to be held in November. Should the poll indicate an ARENA defeat, the parties would be ordered dissolved and candidates would run as individuals.

MDB candidates defeated ARENA in a number of urban centers in the 1974 elections. The regime's main fear is that the MDB could gain a majority in the Chamber of Deputies; a presidential decree a year ago virtually eliminated the opposition's chances of controlling the Senate.

Credit Where Credit Is Due

Top U.S. executives interviewed on a radio program broadcast recently by the Latin American Broadcasting System had warm praise for "the favorable evolution of the process of national reorganization" in Argentina, the "professionalism" of Argentine Economics Minister José Martínez de Hoz, and "the spirit of sacrifice and cooperation of the people."

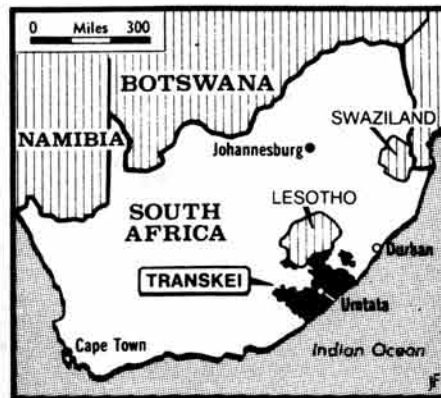
The comments were quoted in an article published in the April 17 weekly edition of the Buenos Aires newspaper *La Nación*.

George Gross, vice-president of Manufacturers Hanover Trust, said Martínez de Hoz has "carried out an almost incredible task. The banking industry considers him one of the best economic ministers Argentina has had."

Charles Silver, finance director of the International Telephone and Telegraph company (ITT), said "it is indubitable that confidence in the Argentine situation exists, and that there is international recognition that the policy followed by the minister is correct."

Martínez de Hoz's policies—backed up by the Videla dictatorship's brutal repression—have driven the wages of Argentine workers to their lowest levels in decades while inflation has been allowed to spiral out of control.

The prospect is for more of the same, according to Ricardo Bugwe, director of the Latin American division of Revlon, International: "The remaining nine months of 1978 will be the hardest of the past two years, and, in this final stage, will require more than ever the sacrifice and effort of all sectors. But we are confident. . . . The results we obtained in the last two years exceeded our expectations."



Christian Science Monitor

Transkei: 'Breaks Ties' With South Africa

Kaiser Matanzima, the South African-backed tribal figurehead of the Transkei, is trying to inject some credibility into his performance as head of an "independent country."

On April 10, Matanzima announced a break in "diplomatic" ties between his Transkei administration and the South African regime, the only one in the world that recognizes Transkei "independence." The dispute was ostensibly over Pretoria's refusal to incorporate a bordering area into the Transkei reserve.

To show that he meant business, Matanzima warned that the Transkei's "army" of 300 men would eventually go to war against the 80,000-strong South African armed forces. A leader of the Transkei parliamentary opposition went one better, declaring that if a war broke out "we will not hesitate to go to Castro" for aid.

Matanzima, who was groomed and placed in a nominal position of authority by the apartheid regime, likewise tried to establish his "antiapartheid" credentials, stating, "We have been compelled to join the liberatory movements and claim the whole of South Africa as belonging to blacks and whites, with blacks controlling the majority."

Matanzima did not explain how it was possible for him to become part of the liberation struggle while his administration was dependent on Pretoria for the bulk of its funds and while he himself is an important figure in Pretoria's "separate development" policy, which seeks to divide the African population both physically and politically and deprive them of their

last remaining rights in South Africa as whole.

Prime Minister John Vorster added his bit to the stage-managed display the following day when he publicly deplored Matanzima's outburst. But reflecting the actual degree of concern, he added that Pretoria would continue to provide 70 percent of the Transkei budget and that the 1,000 white officials staffing the Transkei administration would remain at their posts.

Letelier Murder Suspect Charged

Michael Vernon Townley, a U.S. citizen and former agent of DINA, the Chilean secret police, was charged April 26 in Washington with conspiracy in the murder of Orlando Letelier.

Letelier was the Allende regime's ambassador to the United States. After the 1973 military coup he became a leader of Chilean exiles and a prominent opponent of the Pinochet dictatorship. He was killed in September 1976 when a bomb exploded beneath his car in Washington.

Townley had lived in Chile since 1958. Before the coup he was active in the extreme right-wing group *Patria y Libertad* (Fatherland and Freedom). He is being held without bail.

Save Fernando Ortiz!

Members of the academic community in the United States are circulating an appeal to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance asking that he make an official inquiry into the case of Fernando Ortiz, a Chilean professor detained in Santiago by the secret police in December 1976.

Ortiz has not been heard from since his arrest. He had been a member of the governing body of the University of Chile and president of the Association of Instructors and Staff at the university.

The Chilean junta has persistently denied his detention.

Embassies Occupied in El Salvador

The Venezuelan, Costa Rican, Panamanian, Mexican, and Swiss embassies in San Salvador were occupied in mid-April by groups of peasants. The actions—organized by the Revolutionary People's Bloc (BPR) and the Christian Federation of Salvadoran Peasants (FECCAS)—were held to protest brutal repression unleashed in Cuscatlán province in March.

An appeal to public opinion and to the International Red Cross issued by the BPR said that fifty persons had been killed and hundreds wounded when heavily armed troops and paramilitary bands swept through Cuscatlán in late March to put down actions by peasants demanding land and protesting high rents.

The troops sent by Gen. Carlos Hum-

berto Romero's government burned crops and slaughtered farm animals. The BPR said dozens of women were raped and killed, and a number of children disappeared. More than 2,000 peasants fled their villages to seek refuge in the mountains or in other towns.

The government troops were accompanied by bands from the Democratic Nationalist Organization (ORDEN), a fascist-like outfit founded and led by General Romero.

After the embassies were occupied, riot police surrounded all the buildings as well as the Metropolitan Cathedral, which was also the scene of a sit-in. Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero protested that "the persons occupying the cathedral are practically under siege by the National Police. This security unit is impeding access to the cathedral. It has not permitted persons bringing food, provisions and medicine to the occupiers to enter.

"We have to remember that there are children inside the cathedral who could die of hunger."

Thousands Protest in Jamaica

Five thousand persons demonstrated at Coronation Market in Kingston, Jamaica, on April 17.

"The demonstration began as a peaceful demand that the government clean up the market," the April 18 *New York Daily News* reported. "Its ranks were swelled by shantytown residents of West Kingston, who shouted for jobs, better sewer and water services, repair of potholes and a series of other grievances."

Breaking through police roadblocks, the crowd marched toward uptown Kingston. Some stores were emptied of their contents and windows in city buses were broken.

Police reinforced with army troops fired into the air and used tear gas against the demonstrators. Three persons were killed, allegedly while trying to escape after looting a store.

The government declared a curfew in the western part of Kingston. Police and soldiers patrolled the area.

Five days after the protests, a "peace concert" by Jamaican reggae singer Bob Marley was held in Kingston. Organizers of the concert said it was to raise money for 10,000 jobs for Jamaican youth. Marley, a friend of Prime Minister Michael Manley, refrained from performing two of his most popular songs, "I Shot the Sheriff" and "Burnin' and Lootin'."

Unemployment in Jamaica stands at more than 20 percent.

Brief 'Dialogue'

Argentine dictator Jorge Rafael Videla, observing the second anniversary of the 1976 military coup, called for a "working dialogue" between the regime and "the most representative figures of national

life." He indicated that some political parties might be legalized.

Taking Videla at his word, forty leaders of the Radical Civic Union (UCR), one of



VIDELA: Changes his mind.

Argentina's main bourgeois parties, issued a statement April 23 accepting the call for "dialogue."

Hours after the UCR leaders met, two of them were taken from their homes for questioning by police. Carlos Perette and Antonio Troccoli were freed seven hours later, but on April 25 Minister of the Interior Gen. Albano Harguindeguy asked a criminal court to punish all forty UCR leaders for violating the military's ban on political activity.

Harguindeguy said April 26 that no major Argentine political parties would be allowed to "raise their voices to advise or criticize the Government. . . . Political parties have a place in the future. They are necessary for the representative form of government that we seek in the future, but not now."

Videla—No 'Political Prisoners'

Rejecting a request by Argentine bishops that all political prisoners be freed, President Jorge Videla declared April 10 that Argentina has no "political prisoners," but only 3,600 "subversive or economic delinquents who will, at an opportune time, be brought to justice for their acts of terrorism or corruption." (*Le Monde*, April 12.)

FSLN Leader Jailed in Costa Rica

Plutarco Hernández, the central leader of the "prolonged people's war" faction of

the Nicaraguan FSLN (Sandinista National Liberation Front), was captured by police April 13 on the outskirts of San José, Costa Rica.

Hernández had been sought by Costa Rican authorities since 1969 for his role in freeing FSLN leader Carlos Fonseca Amador from jail in Costa Rica. He had been sentenced in absentia to seventeen years in prison.

Argentine Physicians Kidnapped

Four physicians were kidnapped in Argentina during the first week of April.

Francisco Manuel García Fernández, Jorge Eduardo Heuman, Norberto Ignacio Liwski, and Hilda Norma Erenu de Liwski were all employed at a health clinic for poor people in La Matanza, fifteen miles west of Buenos Aires.

García Fernández's wife went before a judge to ask that her husband's whereabouts be verified. She said he had been taken prisoner on April 5 by armed persons claiming to be members of a security unit.

García Fernández had attended a mass held to protest the deportation of a person who lived near the clinic. A number of other persons who attended the mass have also been kidnapped.

'Harvard Out Now'

About 1,000 students demonstrated at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, April 24 to demand that Harvard Corporation withdraw its investments from South Africa. The rally, one of the largest at Harvard in recent years, was sponsored by a coalition of Black and campus organizations.

After the corporation decided to retain its South African holdings, students continued protest actions. On April 28, a group of them blocked the entrance to the administration building, hanging a large banner across its doors, reading, "Harvard Out Now."

Jayewardene Threatens Tamils

The Sri Lankan regime, headed by President J. R. Jayewardene, announced in mid-April that it would set up an "antiterrorist" unit to deal with militant Tamil nationalists who advocate an independent Tamil state. A police representative claimed, "They have already murdered several policemen and made attempts on many others. This can't go on forever."

The Tamils, who comprise 22 percent of the Sri Lankan population, are an oppressed nationality. For the past several years, and especially since scores of Tamils were killed in chauvinist attacks on August 1977, the sentiment among Tamils for their own separate state has been rising. The Tamil United Liberation Front, which advocates the establishment of an independent state of Tamil Eelam, is the largest opposition party in Parliament.

The Developing Crisis in Italy

By Lidia Rossi

On March 16, about two months after the beginning of the governmental crisis, and one day after the kidnapping of Aldo Moro, the new all-Christian Democratic cabinet got a vote of confidence in Parliament. It was supported by four or five parties that had previously abstained, and by the fascists of the National Democracy. There wasn't even any debate.

The Red Brigades' action appeared to give substance to the cry that the government had kept up throughout the crisis that an emergency situation existed. It gave the reformists an excuse to abandon their final timid resistance.

The way in which the crisis began and developed and the way it ended, together with the ensuing events, give the clearest picture of the Italian situation today. This process likewise points up the contrast between a politically sticky situation for the workers movement and a social reality that is full of potential for anticapitalist struggle.

The governmental crisis actually started long before it officially opened. Its beginnings go as far back as November. The breakdown of the policy whereby the CP and other opposition parties gave tacit support to the government by abstaining on key votes had been shown by the resumption of workers struggles and by rising concern in some sectors of the bourgeoisie about the future of the Italian economy in the immediate period ahead. It was apparent that a turn was called for. The year 1977 ended with several disturbing developments for the bourgeoisie and the bureaucrats.

Capitalists Decide to Swing the Ax

During the second half of the year the economic situation took a sudden turn for the worse, and it became urgently necessary for the bourgeoisie to take on the workers on some fundamental questions (i.e., layoffs and control of wage demands in new contract negotiations).

A new level of militancy in the factories forced the trade-union leaders to threaten a general strike and to support the mobilizations called by the steelworkers union on December 2. Discontent grew among the ranks of the Italian Communist Party and even in its secondary leadership, as a consequence of a stalemate situation that was undermining the party's credibility and its very organization.

The Communist Party was also afraid

that, faced with the problem of the referendums, the Christian Democrats—a heterogeneous power bloc with an unpredictable internal balance of forces—might try some strong-arm operations.

It is clear why the CP decided to speed things up if we look at the discussion that developed within the labor movement concerning the common document drawn up by the leaderships of the three trade-union federations (the CGIL, CISL, and UIL*) during the governmental crisis, and at the interview with the Communist secretary of the CGIL, Lama, that appeared in the daily *La Repubblica*.

There have been few other occasions that show so clearly how the bureaucrats prostrate themselves before the demands of the bosses. The key point in both Lama's interview and the union leaders' document was the acceptance of the massive layoffs that the bosses had been previously forced to put off because of the unfavorable balance of forces they faced in the big industrial centers. This capitulation was coupled with the proposal of a "labor agency" that would provide assistance to the unemployed for some unspecified period of time, probably not more than a year.

Both statements emphasize the need to hold back wage demands and space out the gradual increases. And above all they point up the limitations of the contracts signed for specific categories of workers, which have not been formally abolished but have been reduced to being essentially an application of deals made by the leaderships of the national confederations of labor.

Lama's bluntness in expressing ideas that the trade-union statement put more subtly and ambiguously, was not designed to reassure the bosses about the good intentions of the bureaucrats (about which they haven't had any doubt for a long time). Rather it was an indication that no further concessions would be made to the secondary layers of leadership in the trade unions, who up until now have represented the major obstacle to the social pact.

So the CP's demand to be included in an

*CGIL—Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (General Confederation of Labor); CISL—Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Liberi (Italian Confederation of Free Trade Unions); UIL—Unione Italiana dei Lavoratori (Italian Confederation of Workers).

emergency government was a necessary counterpart to the commitment it was in fact making. Likewise, raising this demand was a way of answering the doubts of its own activists, to whom the leadership's line looked more and more like a dead-end.

A Dilemma for the Stalinists

The CP was trying to square the circle—to appease its own rank and file and at the same time meet the most pressing demands of the profit-makers. It was trying to get into a better position to make inroads into the Christian Democratic power structure, and at the same time achieve a consensus with the Christian Democrats. The benefits of this operation for the CP were meager. And there were negative results that sooner or later will cause the Communist Party worse problems than those it was trying to solve when it precipitated the governmental crisis.

In the first place, the goal of an emergency coalition government itself has proved to be more or less utopian in view of the stiff resistance put up by the Christian Democratic power structure. This structure is a tangled web of functionaries and favor-seekers, as well as corporate and parasitic interests. This whole network has a logic of its own, which is, to a certain extent, independent of the bourgeoisie itself.

The refusal to include the CP in the government, on which the Christian Democracy held very firm, without any bending or signs of weakness, illustrates two concomitant factors in the Italian situation:

1. The self-defense reflex of an established power structure that is more elaborate and far-reaching than any other in Europe.

2. The bourgeoisie's unwillingness to delegate defending its interests to the bureaucratic leadership of the workers parties. This is because they have good reasons to doubt the ability of the bureaucrats to control their own ranks. On several occasions, most recently at the meeting of Christian Democracy members in Rome March 29, the CD has spelled out the extent and the ways in which it is willing to cooperate with the CP. It will accept—since it has no choice—a temporary collaboration that does not challenge its monopoly of institutional power.

The differences within the Christian Democracy were revealed in a particularly

clamorous way at the meeting of the parliamentary groups to decide whether or not to accept the programmatic accord. (The CP for its part had staged a rapid retreat on this question.) But these differences must be seen in their real context.

Debate in Christian Democracy

The conflict between the Christian Democratic right and the rest of the party throughout the crisis involved no more than a different estimation of the advantages of calling elections. What most influenced the lineup of the CD leaders was the realization that new elections would not alter the relationship of forces in Parliament, as well as their fear of undermining the social pact. Not a single one of them had the courage to support openly the revolt of the "peons," those nameless members of the CD who opposed the programmatic agreement with the CP.

Moreover, all that was needed was for Moro to make it known that he would not permit adventuristic behavior or any power plays, and the party fell into line quickly behind a statement lifting its reservations about the CP. The statement was approved unanimously.

However, it was notable that the Christian Democratic Senate leader Bartolomei made a particularly violent anti-Communist speech at that meeting. He was obviously not just speaking on impulse. And his speech went beyond what would correspond to the scope of dispute. It also expressed a certain spirit of "revanche" that is abroad among the conservative forces, and it laid out the line beyond which the reformists cannot step now.

Both Moro and Andreotti had maintained the need for a programmatic agreement with the reformists. But neither one viewed the formal registration of the CP's support for the motion of confidence as a step toward its inclusion in the government. The Christian Democratic leaders know that their adversary is not going to be able to follow a straight line of advance, and they fully intend to throw every possible obstacle in the CP's way, including special elections when the time is favorable.

Preparations for a Witch-hunt

While the reformists are helping to re-establish the credibility of the main bourgeois party by keeping any kind of criticism of the Christian Democratic government out of their press and their speeches, and while the Italian CP's newspaper *l'Unità* is denouncing the slightest criticism of the government or the state as backhanded support to the ultraright militarist groups, in its membership meetings the CD is whipping up a new form of anti-Communism.

The building up of a martyr cult around

Moro, to which *l'Unità* has been the most zealous contributor, is being used to restore the credibility of one of Western capitalism's most corrupt power structures. (A book by a bourgeois journalist will be published shortly exposing the shady dealings of President of the Republic Leone, his family, and his circle of hangers-on.) The CD also is using the Moro case in its campaign against the CP, trying to imply that the Stalinists are the spiritual godfathers of the Red Brigades.

Raising a hue and cry about the alleged complicity of ultraleftists with the terrorists, in a style reminiscent of Strauss's campaign against so-called terrorist sympathizers, Lama and another CP leader, Pecchioli, have made statements as abject as they are counterproductive.

For the Christian Democrats, the accomplices of the terrorists include not only the groups of the extreme left, but the whole radical-secular culture, sections of the CP ranks, and even part of the trade-union organization that the Christian Democracy itself controls, the CISL. The CD has called the CISL leadership to order and warned them to be on the lookout for troublemakers.

The confrontation between the two political machines has not only taken place at the approaches to the government, which the Christian Democracy continues to guard jealously. In recent years, taking advantage of the rise of the mass movement, the Communist Party has managed to gain a toehold in the fringes of the state apparatus. It has also brought about a certain shift of power in that direction within its own ranks, giving rise to a whole new layer of bureaucrats more closely linked to the state apparatus.

Moreover, the support that the reformists have given to efforts to keep a rein on the deficit in public spending, which amount to an effort to bring public spending more in line with the needs of capital in a period of crisis, have decreased the margin of maneuver of the Christian Democracy, whose power has been based on its ability to dispense patronage.

CP Electoral Gains Turn Sour

But even such crumbs of power are beginning to become a mixed blessing for the CP, because when the reformists take over local governments they inherit all the problems left unsolved by previous administrations. Furthermore, in the context of growing economic crisis, the Christian Democracy is keeping a tight grip on the central government and trying to direct the discontent of the social layers hardest hit by the crisis against the new local administrations.

Such hostility and resistance on the part of the Christian Democratic apparatus explains the paradoxical conclusion of the crisis. Only the kidnapping of Moro cut short the polemics against the foot-in-

mouth statement of CP leader Natta, who hailed the presence in the government of some "technicians" not linked to the Christian Democracy as the decisive achievement of the accord. That same day, probably violating a semiofficial understanding, Andreotti announced the composition of the new government, making it clear that there was no question of including any "technicians." To the contrary, the cabinet makeup looked like a topographical model of the various currents in the Christian Democracy.

The price the CP paid for its new parliamentary status was signing the programmatic accord; but in the days following the kidnapping of the president of the Christian Democracy, the price the CP ended up paying was far higher than it had originally intended.

Offensive Against Workers' Rights

The social pact has only partially settled accounts with the workers. The working class remains strong and the bourgeoisie cannot consider it defeated. So the bourgeois parties wanted to do something to get some immediate results in creating more favorable conditions for a new attack on the workers. The CP's acceptance of the governmental program, and the climate the media were able to whip up around the Moro kidnapping, enabled them to pass a number of law-and-order measures, the seriousness of which should not be underestimated.

The unionization of the police, long considered a fundamental plank of the left's program, has, to all intents and purposes, been blocked. The rank-and-file police organizations that developed in recent years, and were tied to the trade-union federations, are to be dismantled and reorganized into an independent union with no links to the workers organizations.

The Reale public order law has been rewritten in order to avoid the referendum to abolish it altogether, and in several aspects it has been made harsher. Worst of all, a decree-law went into effect March 22, representing a whole body of emergency measures designed to increase the powers of the police and curtail certain basic civil liberties. The measures include allowing the police to detain anyone for any reason whatsoever for twenty-four hours, abolishing in part the right to confidential legal consultation in the first stage of trials, authorizing telephone wiretaps for unlimited lengths of time and on the basis of a simple order or even merely verbal authorization from a judge, and authorizing preliminary interrogation without the presence of a lawyer.

The Moro Kidnapping

It is obvious that the actions of the militarist groups have created a climate

not only favorable to easy passage of emergency legislation but also one in which the parties involved in the accord can gain greater popular support for their appeal for national unity.

Recently in Italy we have seen cynical attempts to exploit the Moro kidnapping. The Christian Democracy and bourgeois media have sought to use it against the CP. In turn, the CP itself has tried to use it against the extreme left and against opposition currents within the political and trade-union organizations of the workers movement. At no other time in the history of the Italian CP has the leadership defended the bourgeois state and its institutions and its method of political expression with such overtness and with such repressive zeal. A vicious mudslinging campaign has been opened up, not just against the extreme left, or even mainly against it, but against all forms of opposition to the social pact and against the slightest hesitation to rally to the defense of the state.

The CP leadership's recriminations against intellectuals guilty only of failing to join in the chorus of condemnation, its refusal to renew the membership of CP members in Genoa who circulated a leaflet entitled "Against Both the Red Brigades and the State," the vulgar insults that the old Stalinist Trombadori hurled at the extreme-left groups when he appeared on television—these are only a few of the episodes in a bureaucratic campaign that echoes bourgeois propaganda and is apparently solidifying the basis for the governmental accord.

Here again, the reformists are unlikely to get what they want out of this campaign in the long run. They are running the risk of falling into a double trap. On the one hand, they are leaving themselves defenseless against reactionary attacks, helping to create a climate that is quite favorable to the right and will be used by the right against the CP. On the other hand, the CP's reconsolidation of its own forces, which it sought to accomplish by provoking the governmental crisis and waging the campaign against the extreme left, has too fragile and precarious a basis.

Trouble With the Ranks

This brings us to another political problem that the CP leadership has not yet resolved—what to do about its relationships with the working class and with its own ranks.

The unpopularity of the CP's line can be seen at different levels. It is shown by the results of some administrative elections in the south, where the economic crisis has aggravated the process of social breakdown; by the student organization elections in the schools, where conservative forces have gained considerably in strength; and by the astonishingly low level of recruitment to the Communist Party youth organization. These are some

early warning signs of the difficulties the party faces.

This is the price the bureaucrats know they have to pay for their changed relationship with the masses: they cannot ride with the mass movements the way they did in 1969-1970, nor can they take them over and deflect the masses' energies toward winning only partial gains, as they did during the early 1970s. The sharpness with which questions are posed today and the political stance of the working-class militants leaves the CP leadership with no other choice but to try to avoid conflict wherever possible, to turn its back on mobilizations when they develop outside the bureaucrats' control, and in some cases to oppose them.

The goal that the CP could reasonably set in this phase would be to rally around its line a certain body of cadre who are convinced that the line is correct and are determined to carry it out, who could block any opposition in the workplaces, and who could provide some defense against a revival of right-wing activity. What in fact convinced the CP to press for an emergency government was the beginning doubt and dissatisfaction that had appeared among its own membership and reached the regional secretary level.

The CP conference of worker cadre, announced with great fanfare and held during the governmental crisis, was supposed to demonstrate to people both inside and outside the party that the CP was strong and in control of the working class. A careful weeding-out process assured that only supportive and enthusiastic voices were heard at the microphone when the leadership laid out its austerity line. This time it presented the line under the new cover of a perspective of "our class becoming the state," and a view that the role of workers is to make sacrifices. This view was defended most enthusiastically by Berlinguer.

In shouldering the political tasks they have assumed, the CP leader said, "Communist workers become transfigured, and this enables them to bear the agonies, sufferings and grief of everyday life."

The CP's reconsolidation campaign seems to have been most effective over the last few days. During the demonstration that followed the Moro kidnapping, there was a notable contrast between the disorientation of the workers who marched behind their trade-union banners, and even of the extreme left, and the militancy of the CP youth, all of which was directed against terrorism.

However, the climate the bourgeoisie is trying to create in Italy, the type of programmatic accord the CP was obliged to sign, and the economic policies of the government will all soon create new contradictions whose character can already be predicted.

There are above all two unresolved questions on which no compromise is

possible—the problem of rents, on which the proposed law does not satisfy anybody; and the problem of abortion, which no longer lends itself to any type of compromise. It is above all on the latter question that the CD-CP accord will be put to the test.

The ideological framework of the Christian Democrats and their relations with the church and with large layers of the Catholic and conservative masses will prevent the Christian Democrats from yielding to the major demands of the women's movement. On the other hand, the reformists are under pressure from a movement that, while it goes through long periods of inactivity, wells up again and again unexpectedly, with exceptional strength and militancy.

The demonstrations of March 8, which brought tens of thousands of women into the streets (30,000 in Rome alone), and the success of the national conferences through which the movement is trying to reorganize itself place a certain limit on the concessions the CP can afford to make in this area.

Under the pressure of the more militant sections of the movement, even the women's organization tied to the reformist parties, the UDI (Union of Italian Women), has adopted positions that despite their limitations are incompatible with Catholic ideology and with positions on which the Christian Democracy seems to have decided to stand firm.

Besides this, the social pact and turn carried out by the unions have led to a worsening of the material conditions that are at the root of the difficulties and isolation faced by the CP's working-class cadres. No amount of propaganda can conjure this reality away.

When examined with the help of a computer, the data on the situation in the factories presented in the Communist workers conference itself appear less favorable than the glowing reports in the conference hall might suggest. And it may be easily predicted that when they see actual implementation of the policy whose general lines and ideological bases they have accepted, the Communist workers will not respond in the way their political leaders expect and hope.

Overtures by the SP

There is still another factor that goes against the CP's desire to "become the state." The Forty-First Congress of the Italian Socialist Party has only begun, and it is not possible to make a definitive judgment about it. But it seems to mark a turning point for a party that has always been out of step with European Social Democracy. The results of the local congresses and the speech by SP National Secretary Craxi indicate that in spite of internal differences and conflicts, the majority of the party is oriented toward a

rapprochement with Western Social Democracy. It seems to be moving toward abandoning the flirtation with maximalism that it has been carrying on since the collapse of the center-left in particular.

L'Unità published a long summary of Craxi's speech, placing special emphasis on his attacks on so-called ultraleftism (including on the writers Sciascia and Moravia, who were supposedly guilty of taking an attitude of a "distressing detachment" as regards the events of the last few days). But it mentioned his attacks on the CP only in a few lines of commentary: "Along with occasional false notes that detracted from the general tone and some rhetorical affectations, the speech also had some polemical barbs directed against the CP."

Nonetheless, this part of Craxi's speech was one of the most significant. The SP secretary's attack on the slowness of the process of revision going on in the CP and his conciliatory tone toward the Christian Democracy represented an offer of the SP's services to put together a revamped cabinet. This will become a possibility as soon as the emergency is over and the Christian Democrats can get along without the formal collaboration of the strongest working-class party.

The events of the last few weeks have given a boost to the view in the far left that the period beginning in 1968 in Italy has now come to an end. There are a number of theories, with different analyses and conclusions, but they all start from the same premise and condemn their advocates to the same impotence. Some talk about a "Germanized" Italy, caught in the vise of class collaboration between the bourgeoisie and the reformists. Others see the workers movement as already defeated. In any case, the common denominator of these theories is their underestimation of the obstacles that stand in the way of the government's efforts to restore stability, which it is trying to do now with the CP's help as preparation for turning against the Communists later.

It is worth examining several of these obstacles in greater detail: the crisis of bourgeois leadership, the problems with the bureaucrats' turn, and the expectations of the youth. Although they may not prove decisive right now by halting the current trend of events in Italy, they can prove so in the longer run. The bourgeoisie has not yet been able to eliminate any of these obstacles.

The Crisis of Bourgeois Leadership

During the years following 1968 the social, economic, and political crisis in Italy resulted in a deep crisis of leadership for the bourgeoisie. The inability of the ruling class to regain its control and its previous power was revealed most clearly by the "strategy of tension" and its failure, by the defeats suffered by the Christian

Democrats in the referendum on divorce and in the elections of June 15, 1975, and by the divisions that brought the party to the brink of dissolution.

Collaboration with the CP went directly against the interests, traditions, and ideology of the Catholic party, but the Christian Democracy was forced to accept this option, since there was no other practical solution. The fact is that such cooperation enabled the bourgeoisie to regain at least part of the ground it had lost. This was reflected in the recovery of big profit margins by the strongest section of the capitalist class and in the consolidation of new bases for conservative values in certain areas. It is also true that the partial resolution of the Christian Democrats' internal contradictions following the party's victory in the 1976 elections gave the bourgeoisie a stronger and more efficient instrument for running the government.

The CP deliberately helped to reconsolidate the Christian Democracy in deciding not only to subordinate its line to the most immediate needs of capital but also to avoid any confrontation with the main political representative of capital, which is what the Catholic party is.

Nevertheless, the leadership crisis will not be resolved so long as the Christian Democrats still need the consent of the CP in order to govern, and this consent could be called into question by the next massive wave of attacks against the standard of living of the masses, before the Christian Democrats are ready to attempt a more permanent solution based on a changed relationship of class forces.

The fear that they will not be able to control the situation until the CP has been pushed back and isolated is what causes the decisive sectors of the bourgeoisie and its parties to continually try to speed things up. They are impatient for a stabilization, which still seems too far away and too uncertain.

The bourgeoisie knows very well that signing a pact with the CP does not necessarily mean signing a pact with the working class and with the mass movement. And as a result, it may be driven to try contradictory approaches in its search for a more reliable governmental framework.

Precisely in the present situation we are seeing an example of how precarious the readjustment of the bourgeois leadership is. The Moro kidnapping has upset the internal equilibrium of the Christian Democracy. It has thrown the party off balance by depriving it of an arbitrator who was often able to heal divisions. The party's right wing is becoming turbulent again, and Agnelli's paper, *La Stampa*, has come out with a proposal that seems to mean setting up a second republic [i.e., adopting a new constitution].

Since 1976 the working class, despite its strength, has taken some hard blows. Particularly severe setbacks were the tak-

ing away of seven holidays and the partial elimination of automatic cost-of-living allowances.

The case of Unidal, a candy factory that was reorganized to eliminate about 1,500 jobs, is the first concrete example of what the social pact is going to mean. In coming months, however, if the trade-union leaderships are going to live up to their part of the bargain with the bosses, they are going to have to launch much broader attacks against the strongest bastions of the working class. The way the bosses see it, this attack has to be violent enough to make up for every minute of the time they have had to hold back from launching it.

The rough reception the social pact is going to get in the big industrial complexes and in particular from trade-union activists is already clearly indicated by the extent of the unrest in the factories since November, and by the tenor of the discussion in the trade-union organizations over the document signed by the union confederations.

Danger Signals for the Bureaucrats

It is not by chance that the turn expressed so clearly in the interview with Lama comes right at a time when the trade unions have been once again coming to the fore as the most effective means of reorganizing the fighting potential that still exists in the working class. In fact they were threatening to emerge as the established opposition to the government.

After the December 2 demonstration, the trade-union leaderships had to come down hard in an attempt to halt the momentum before it got any further. They had to make a special effort to try to get the workers to accept the bosses' demands in full. So the bureaucrats called all sections of the labor movement to order and made it clear that the unions were to play a purely subordinate role in political life.

The contradiction between the forms of organization, the role, and the potential that the trade unions have developed in Italy in recent years and the turn the bureaucrats are trying to carry out was shown with particular clarity in the discussion that took place during the government crisis.

The statement by the trade-union leaderships met with opposition from whole sections of the working class, such as the workers in the chemical and steel industries. There was a particularly sharp response from the steelworkers. Their union is the largest single trade union and the one whose membership is most concentrated. It is also the most militant. For years every time the steelworkers' contract has come up for renegotiation, it has been an event of major political importance nationally. Whole local union bodies opposed the tenor of the statement. The most notable example of this was the reaction of the Milan District Council, where 30 per-

cent of the delegates present, and perhaps more, voted for what was in effect—in its tone, its logic, and in what it proposed—a counter-motion.

Whole factory councils, as well as a large number of local public-employees organizations, came out more or less clearly against the statement. The 12 votes against the statement and 103 abstentions in the final discussion at the confederation level were only the palest reflection of the feelings of the middle layers of union leadership. This vote was taken in a tightly controlled assembly, insulated to the highest degree from the real feelings expressed at the rank-and-file level.

The union leaders ought to be more worried about the type of opposition they are encountering than about its size. The organized workers are by and large indifferent to the discussion, since they think there is no way they can have any effect on what happens. This attitude is a result also of the way the bureaucracy tries to turn every meeting into a confrontation with the union activists, trying to beat them down and get them to accept its line.

Whole sections of the rank and file have abstained from the debate. Sometimes this represents a primitive form of protest against the leadership's line. Sometimes it is a result of the influence of those far-left groups that remain most unconvinced of the need to work in an organized way in the trade unions.

New Opposition Current Forming

No bureaucratic maneuver can erase the fact that despite all this, despite the damper put on discussion and the rigging of elections, a strong opposition made itself heard throughout the country. Whether the bureaucrats like it or not, the accords signed with the bourgeoisie during the government crisis are going to have to face a test of fire from the union activists. These activists constitute a whole vanguard layer that has matured politically during the recent years of struggle and ferment.

During the last two years of converging economic, political, and social crises, the line of the bureaucrats, which may have been influenced by their analysis of what happened in Chile, undoubtedly has had a certain impact on the working class.

In the fall of 1976 the "abstention" government's antilabor measures produced an immediate reaction. But the response of the workers to subsequent blows has been confused. And they have had difficulty in finding ways to express their general rejection of the bureaucracy's policies in real, concrete struggles.

During 1977, despite some periods of sharp struggle toward the end of the year and continuing mass participation in strikes, the extent of the discussion and political activity was reduced. But at the same time there was a deepening realiza-

tion on the part of many militants that they were facing a dangerous turning point.

The vanguard in the struggles have come to know the trade unions as organizations that could lead fights and win victories. They have no knowledge of their checkered past. Now for the first time these militants are in a position to draw up an initial balance sheet of the results of the line that has been followed for the past two years. They will be able to assess this line in still clearer perspective in coming months.

The workers who make up this vanguard come from different backgrounds. Often they have ties to the CP, much more rarely to the milieu around the far left. But frequently they have no involvement beyond their trade-union activity. In fact, a section of radicalized youth turned to union work as an alternative in the absence of any political outlet. They did not find the far-left groups credible. And the most radical sections of the rising generations have always found the CP too conformist and bureaucratic.

There is a good chance, however, that whole sections of the working class, particularly the most powerful, are going to try to break out of the constricting framework that the confederations are seeking to impose on these most unruly unions. And the struggle by these sections of workers to escape from the straitjacket represented by the deal between the bureaucrats and the government may give impetus to a new rise in combativity.

Such a possibility today depends more and more on the ability of the embryonic opposition elements, those sections of the far left that have not been dispersed by the crisis and that continue to work in the trade unions, to coalesce and take the initiative. The coming national contract negotiations in the major industries offer an opportunity that should not be missed.

The Time Bomb of Youth Unemployment

In Italy two-thirds of the two million unemployed are between sixteen and twenty-nine years of age. The great majority of them have graduated from secondary school. Of the three million persons who work at below-minimum-standard and irregular jobs, it is hard to determine precisely what percentage are young people, but it is certainly very high. Four million high-school and university students vegetate in their classrooms with no perspective of getting jobs. These figures obviously cannot just be added up, since the categories overlap. Students are often workers with irregular jobs, and those who work at below-minimum-standard jobs often show up in the statistics as unemployed.

Nevertheless, they give a fairly clear idea of the extent to which young people are currently excluded from productive

roles in society, that is, of the "marginalization" of youth. In the last few years, the boundary between education and marginalization has become very fuzzy. This is not only because the lack of jobs has made it virtually obligatory for young people to enroll in some school or university. It is also because the uselessness of diplomas and the economic crisis have forced students to try to get into the job market.

The term "youth proletariat" has been coined to describe this tendency toward the consolidation of large layers of young people who are reduced to a status somewhere between student and a semi-employed worker, unprotected by the trade unions and extremely mobile, living in the cities and around the fringes of the universities, with a life style of their own. This term points up a structural phenomenon (the marginalization of the young work force) and also a cultural one (a readiness to struggle, a tendency to coalesce, and a sometimes rather ambiguous rejection of petty-bourgeois myths).

During the 1977 struggles, the universities, particularly in Rome and Bologna, became rallying grounds for masses of young people caught up in a new wave of radicalization—high-school students, unemployed young people, and young workers. These youths created a movement of a different social character from the student mobilizations of 1968-69.

Collapse of the Universities

The specter of a larger and more violent mobilization obviously disturbs the sleep of the bourgeoisie. The ruling class has no solutions for the problem of unemployment of youth and intellectuals. Nor does it have any solutions for the problems of the educational system itself, where the obsolete structures are collapsing under the weight of a massive growth of the school population that can be neither directed nor slowed.

The youth employment law that was supposed to guarantee temporary employment (for not more than one year) to hundreds of thousands of young people was not passed. The CP is proposing to reintroduce the bill, with the proviso that all the necessary investment be made in 1978. But, in any case, what this measure could accomplish is very limited.

The projects to reform high-school and college education, which should be coming before Parliament in the next few months, are nothing more than an attempt to restrict the right to education by introducing numerical quotas and a rule that university enrollment cannot exceed what the available facilities can accommodate. But these facilities have already been dismantled or cut back because of the freeze in public spending.

Even if the government succeeds in passing its reforms—which is not very likely—the immediate result will be that

the last safety valve will be removed and masses of youth will be thrown directly onto the job market. These youth will be deprived of even the limited assistance and the illusory hopes provided by universities up to now. It is no wonder that the gathering places of youth, the high schools and universities, as well as all the groupings that have proliferated in the big cities in recent years, are being kept under close watch today by the state repressive apparatus.

The bourgeoisie is trying to deal with student rebelliousness and the potentially explosive situation created by the marginalization of youth and intellectuals by the same techniques it is getting ready to use against the working class.

The reorganization of education has been preceded over the last few months by a step-up of repressive measures against the student vanguard. The new minister of education, Pedini, gave a committee of experts the task of updating the old fascist disciplinary code adopted in 1925, which is still in effect today. The revised code will then be given to the school authorities and they will be expected to take on responsibility for enforcing it.

Meanwhile, a veritable lynching campaign is being carried out in the mass media against students, youth, and the far left—all of whom are lumped together as juvenile delinquents and terrorists.

But it is precisely with respect to the youth problem that the bourgeoisie's attempts at reorganization and repression, in which it has the total collaboration of the bureaucrats, are most obviously futile. In fact, they come down to no more than trying to remove the threat by waving a witch doctor's rattle. The economic policies of the new government and the prospects for the Italian economy cannot help but reinforce and aggravate the material bases of the discontent and marginalization of youth. The biggest danger for the workers movement and for the class struggle in Italy is that the despair of the youth may make fertile ground for right-wing extremism and militarism.

Need for a Working-Class Alternative

The building of an opposition within the trade unions, of a pole of attraction within the working class, becomes all the more urgent because of this situation. Wherever an alternative to the bureaucrats begins to take shape in the unions, the tendency of masses of students and young people is to turn immediately toward it. Recently we have seen this demonstrated concretely on two occasions.

In Bologna, at the time of the March 11 demonstration commemorating the first anniversary of the murder of the student Lorusso by police, thousands of students rallied around a trade-union coordinating committee that had been formed a few

months earlier in that city.

In Milan, where the opposition within the trade unions has been the strongest, the militant workers decided to attend the funerals for the two youths murdered by the fascists in the aftermath of the Moro kidnapping. One hundred thousand workers and students took to the streets even though the official union leadership did not want to see the burials transformed into political demonstrations.

I think that this last episode offers the

Arson Attempt Against Québec Trotskyists

When Montréal Trotskyists came to work at their headquarters on the morning of April 7, they found gas-soaked, partly burned newspapers propped up against the front door—evidence of an arson attempt.

Fortunately, except for the charred door, no damage was done to the headquarters. However, another building two doors down the street was burned down.

This was not the first attempt to burn down the three-story building that holds the offices of the Ligue Ouvrière Révolutionnaire (LOR—Revolutionary Workers League) and the fortnightly newspaper, *Lutte Ouvrière*. On April 4, at closing time, an employee of the tavern located on the ground floor discovered an arson attempt. The police were informed, but they failed to notify the LOR. It was only after the second attempt had succeeded—although not against its intended target—that the cops admitted they knew of the criminal activity, claiming that only a single person was responsible, although no investigation had been made.

However, there is reason to suspect that the arson attempt was politically motivated, as an editorial in the April 19 issue of *Lutte Ouvrière* pointed out.

"*Lutte Ouvrière* has been campaigning since its first issue against the RCMP's [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] illegal actions against the workers movement, the left, and community organizations.

"Our paper supports Operation Freedom, the campaign launched by the Human Rights League (Ligue des Droits de l'Homme) against illegal RCMP harassment.

"The RCMP has already admitted to the Keable commission that it set fire to the barn where activists of the Québec Liberation Front (FLQ) were to meet Black Panthers from the U.S. in 1971. Is this a similar 'dirty trick' by the RCMP?"

Socialist Voice, fortnightly newspaper reflecting the views of the Revolutionary Workers League in English Canada, pointed out in its April 24 issue that recent disclosures had linked an RCMP agent to a series of physical attacks on offices of radical organizations, including the RWL's bookstore. A statement by the editors

best conclusion for this article. On March 16, some 30,000 persons participated in a disoriented and divided demonstration against terrorism, seeking above all to block the threat of a right-wing backlash resulting from the actions of the Red Brigades. A few days after this, anger at the murder of two comrades, combined with the initiative of the militants and secondary union leaders, led to one of the most militant and united demonstrations we have yet seen in Milan. □

called for a full inquiry into the arson attempts:

"Defenders of democratic rights must see to it that all the facts in relation to these mysterious fires are fully investigated. Those responsible must be charged with the full force of the law.

"Demands for a complete investigation should be sent to the Montréal police, the Québec Sûreté, and the RCMP. Send copies to the LOR, at 226 est, rue Ste-Catherine, Montréal, Québec, H2X 1L1, Canada." □

Nigerian Students Gunned Down

At least eight persons were killed as of April 22 following police attacks on student demonstrations in several parts of Nigeria. One unconfirmed report said that the death toll had risen to thirteen. The student demonstrations were in response to increased school fees.

April 21, Education Commissioner Col. Ahamdu Ali banned the National Union of Nigerian Students and closed three major universities, claiming that the students had provoked the police.

Black Students March in Salisbury

About 200 Black university students marched into Salisbury April 24 to protest the agreement reached between Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith and three prominent Zimbabwean figures.

Although the accord brought a number of Black ministers into the government, it seeks to safeguard white privileges for many years, even under a proposed "majority rule" regime. Thus far, the agreement also excludes the main leaders of the Patriotic Front, Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe, who are involved in a guerrilla campaign against the Smith regime.

The student protest was the first organized demonstration against the accord since it was signed March 3. The protesters had marched two miles from the University of Rhodesia toward downtown Salisbury before they were blocked by armed riot police. The police stopped the march and seized the protesters' placards, which condemned the agreement and expressed support for Nkomo and Mugabe.

The Three-Year Battle of a Dissident Workers Group in USSR

At the start of December 1977 details became known outside the USSR of a sizeable group of workers which had come together in Moscow to protest collectively against the authorities' refusal to satisfy their complaints of wrongful dismissal from work and other employment-related abuses and against persecution of workers for exercising their right of formal complaint on such matters.

But new information and documents from the USSR show that already in 1975 a number of these workers were acting collectively in support of their complaints.

The group began through the "accidental meetings" of unemployed workers who had come to Moscow to press their complaints in person at the offices of the highest party, government, and legal authorities. Some of the workers who met in the public reception rooms of these official offices evidently decided to press their complaints collectively, and also to appeal collectively against the repression of themselves or other protesting workers known to them. Their numbers had reached 38 by November 1977. Then in late January 1978, by which time the group claimed to have some 200 adherents, they decided to attempt to establish an "independent trade union."

The Gaidar Case

The first known collective action by the group was in May 1975 in connection with the confinement of Nadezhda Gaidar to a psychiatric hospital. This incident was described in some detail in a report ("On Psychiatric Abuses") issued by the unofficial Moscow Helsinki Monitoring Group in October 1976. This report stated that "approximately 12 persons per day are sent by the police to duty psychiatrists from the reception room of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet alone." Nadezhda Gaidar, an engineer from Kiev, was one of these. It is worth quoting in full the Helsinki Group's account of her case:

Gaidar had gone on 6 May to the reception room at the Central Committee of the CPSU, where she saw the Deputy Receptionist V. I. Filatov. He sent her on to Tsibulnikov, the Deputy Receptionist at the USSR Procurator General's Office. She turned up twice at the times indicated by Tsibulnikov. The second time she was seized by police officers, taken to Police Station 108 in Moscow and then taken to Psychiatric Hospital No. 13. There they began at once to give her injections of the drug aminazin. The head of Ward 2 of Psychiatric Hospital No. 13, L. I. Fyodorova, said regarding N. Gaidar's hospitalization: "We will not make any diagnosis of her. We have made a note that she is suffering

Association of Free Trade Unions in USSR

In early December 1977, a group of Soviet workers held a press conference in a Moscow apartment to make available to foreign correspondents information about the persecution of dissenting workers by the bureaucratic rulers in the USSR.

The workers, who had met in the reception rooms of high government and party bodies in Moscow where they had unsuccessfully sought redress of their grievances, made public dossiers documenting dozens of individual cases in which workers who exposed corruption or unsafe working conditions were demoted, fired, and sent to psychiatric hospitals.

Since December, these workers have issued further dossiers describing more cases of persecution. The documents have been signed by dozens of other

workers from throughout the USSR, many of whom are still being persecuted for their past protests.

On January 26, 1978, the group held a press conference to announce their intention to form an "independent trade union" to defend workers' rights and stated that 200 workers had agreed to join. In early February, they launched the Association of Free Trade Unions of Workers in the USSR.

The accompanying summary of the documents this group has issued was compiled by the Amnesty International research staff in London.

We have taken the text of the summary from the March-April issue of *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*.*

*Bottom Flat, 116 Cazenove Road, London N. 16, England.

from nervous exhaustion brought on by her quests for justice. To keep her from complaining any more we will keep her here for a while and then we will send her to Kiev via a special detention point. There too they will hold her for a while."

When Gaidar's acquaintance V. A. Klebanov came to ask after her and to say that her two children had been left without their mother and without anyone to look after them. Dr. Fyodorova told him: "Then next time she'll think a little before going to complain."

N. Gaidar was transferred from Moscow to a psychiatric hospital in Kiev, from which she was released after two months.

Members of the workers' group appealed collectively on behalf of Nadezhda Gaidar in 1975. It appears that already in 1975 she herself was among the workers who were acting collectively, and since then she has been an active participant of the group.

Miners' Rights

Vladimir Klebanov has acted as the principal spokesperson and organizer of the group since its inception. The group's documents describe his background as follows: Klebanov worked for 16 years as a foreman at the Bazhanova coal mine in Donetsk region (in the Ukraine). Already in 1960 he tried to start an independent trade union among coal miners at his mine, but the local authorities called this "anti-Soviet activity" and stopped his ef-

orts. Klebanov was dismissed (apparently in 1968), for refusing to assign overtime to his men and to send them onto jobs where he believed safety standards were not met. At around this time he wrote a letter of protest about the high accident and fatality rate at the mine. When he protested at his dismissal he was detained, ruled mentally ill and confined to a maximum security special psychiatric hospital from 1968 to 1973. After his release he was unable to obtain work because it was noted in his personal Labour Book that he had been "dismissed in connection with arrest."

The group's activities in the remainder of 1975 and in 1976 are not well documented. However its members were then being subject to official repressions. On June 30, 1976, Valentin Poplavsky, a factory worker from near Moscow and one of the most active members of the group, was detained in Moscow at the reception room of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and "within one hour" was sentenced to 15 days in jail. (The charges against him are not known.) At around this time other members of the group were, reportedly, picked up by the police and threatened in connection with their complaints. In January 1977 two workers named Fazalkhanova and Tulikova were detained at the

reception room of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and put in Moscow Psychiatric Hospital No. 7. This hospital is used mainly for persons who are temporarily in the capital, and it appears that these two workers were subsequently dispatched from Moscow to their home towns.

On February 10, 1977, Vladimir Klebanov was detained and put in Moscow Psychiatric Hospital No. 7. He was kept there for two months. According to later accounts by the group, KGB officers tried at this time to link Klebanov with an explosion which had reportedly occurred in the Moscow metro in January 1977. On May 1, 1977, another worker, I.P. Bobryshevy, was detained and put in a Moscow psychiatric hospital.

Thirty-five Workers Jailed

The earliest document of the group of which the text has arrived outside the USSR is dated May 20, 1977. It is an "Open Letter" signed by eight workers from different parts of the Soviet Union. As is typical of the group's statements, the document gave the addresses of the signatories. It said that all of the signatories had been deprived of their work. It listed 35 workers in different cities who, "though innocent, have at various times been thrown into prisons and psychiatric hospitals" for "exercising their rights to complain." The signatories described themselves as "honest Soviet citizens who have worked honestly and conscientiously for many years in various enterprises" and stated that because their complaints to Soviet authorities could not bring redress for their wrongful dismissal they were "compelled to give world-wide publicity" to their Open Letter.

On June 22, 1977, Varvara Kucherenko, a worker from the Caucasus and a member of the group, was detained in Moscow. According to later statements by the group the police tried to have her put in a psychiatric hospital but a psychiatrist refused to admit her. Evidently she was then picked up and taken to a police station by KGB officers, who demanded of her that she promise in writing not to return to Moscow.

A second "Open Letter" was dated September 18, 1977. This document, signed by 33 persons was addressed to "world public opinion" with copies to the United Nations and the participants of the Belgrade Review Conference. The signatories described themselves as "Soviet people from different strata of the country . . . of various nationalities and from different localities of the country who are compelled to appeal to the so-called 'bourgeois press.'" The statement said that the ranks of the unemployed signatories would be joined by any worker who criticized "wasters of socialist property, poor work conditions, low pay, high rates of work injuries, rising work

output obligations and norms leading to breakage of low-quality output, the increasing rise in prices of basic necessities and food products." The signatories had all been dismissed from their jobs for making this sort of criticism, the statement said.

In this document 22 of the signatories described in some detail the circumstances of their own dismissal from work and their subsequent harassment for lodging complaints. The document also listed 50 workers (including some retired workers and some white-collar workers) who had been repressed in various additional ways for making such criticisms. Finally it listed 23 workers, including some of the signatories, who "as a sign of protest," had applied to emigrate from the USSR but without success.

With regard to all of the above groups of persons the "Open Letter" of September 18, 1977, said:

None of the persons mentioned above by us are renegades. None of them has committed any sort of anti-social attacks, supplied the West with slanderous information or spread false rumors. However, some of them have been put in psychiatric hospitals and expelled from Moscow solely because they came to Moscow with complaints against their groundless dismissal or for improvement of their living conditions, etc.

This document also charged that the internal affairs authorities were operating a number of special detention centres in Moscow for holding persons who had come to the capital to complain. It gave details on one such centre, and said that the prevailing practice was to hold complainants in such detention centres so as to intimidate them before expelling them from Moscow.

On October 4, 1977, Yevgeny Nikolayev, an engineer from Moscow and an active participant in the group, was detained in Kamchatka region and sentenced to 15 days in jail. On October 5, another participant, Gennady Tsvyrkov, was detained in Moscow and put in the ward for violent patients in Moscow Psychiatric Hospital No. 1, where he was held for about 10 days. On November 7, 1977, 33 workers signed a "Collective Complaint" addressed to Soviet authorities and the foreign press asking that the authorities create a commission to investigate treatment of complainants by the Administrative Organs Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU. They singled out for criticism A. S. Pankratov, Deputy Procurator General of the USSR, who, they said, had driven complaining workers from his office and humiliated them by calling them (in specified cases) "speculators," "prostitutes," and "slanderers." The signatories complained that in contravention of Soviet laws authorities were passing on their formal complaints to the officials named in the complaints, and that this facilitated acts of repression by the latter.

The documents listed a number of protesting workers who had been confined to psychiatric hospitals.

Although in May, September, and early November 1977 the group had issued statements calling for publicity for their grievances, they began to receive publicity only when at the end of November 1977, in a private flat in Moscow, they held an informal press conference for non-Soviet journalists. At the meeting, the workers showed the correspondents some of their collective statements. According to foreign news agency reports, the group said at the meeting that 38 persons from 24 different cities had signed their latest appeal. In the first few days of December 1977 Gavrill Yankov, a loader and a regular signatory of the group's statements, was detained by police and held without warrant in the "special cells" at the Moscow City Soviet. According to later statements by the group, the police were initially unsuccessful in efforts to have him confined to a psychiatric hospital, but on January 2, 1978, Yankov was confined to Moscow Psychiatric Hospital No. 3, where he was held for two weeks.

'Mania for Justice'

On December 19, 1977, Vladimir Klebanov, who had been the group's spokesman at the press conference, was picked up by police on a Moscow street and taken to Moscow Psychiatric Hospital No. 7. On that same day 17 members of the group signed an appeal to various Soviet authorities for his release. They said that his detention violated civil instructions on forcible confinement to psychiatric hospital, since Klebanov was neither mentally ill nor "socially dangerous." On December 22 he was delivered to the Regional Psychiatric Hospital in Donetsk, his home town in the Ukraine. There, according to a later statement by the group, he was diagnosed as suffering from "paranoid development of the personality" with a mania for "struggling for justice." He was released in Donetsk after about two weeks and ordered not to return to Moscow.

In the first days of January, according to a later statement by the group, Vladimir Shcherbakov, formerly a worker in a copper works in Chelyabinsk, "disappeared." He had been confined to psychiatric hospitals in 1976 and again in 1977, and the group surmised that now the same had happened to him again.

On January 10, 1978, ten of the workers held a press conference in Moscow. They were led by Klebanov, who had returned to Moscow in spite of official orders not to do so. The workers reported more cases of wrongful dismissals of workers who had tried to expose corruption by economic officials.

On January 12, 1978, 21 members of the group signed an appeal on behalf of group member Gavrill Yankov, who was con-

ined to a psychiatric hospital. Like their earlier appeal on Klebanov's behalf, this appeal stated that Yankov's confinement was illegal.

On January 13, 1978, group member Gennady Tsvyrko was detained. He was held for several days and then expelled from Moscow. According to later statements by the group, the authorities tried to persuade Tsvyrko to sign a statement that he was leaving Moscow voluntarily and to renounce the complaints he had been pressing. (Tsvyrko had already been confined to a Moscow psychiatric hospital for 10 days in October 1977.)

On January 20, 1978, according to a later statement by the group, all police precincts in Moscow were circulated with a list of the 43 signatories of an earlier appeal by the group.

On January 21, 1978, Pyotr Reznichenko, a metal worker from Odessa and an active member of the group, was detained in Moscow. According to a subsequent statement by the group the authorities "tried to incriminate him with malicious litigation and violation of the passport rules." The group also stated on January 28, 1978: "Reznichenko is being held in one of the special cells (cell no. 7) at the Moscow City Soviet's Executive Committee, without the sanction of the procurator, because they haven't succeeded in putting him in a psychiatric hospital." Reportedly Reznichenko was still in detention in mid-February 1978.

On January 26, 1978, the group held its third press conference. This time 6 workers led by Klebanov met foreign journalists.

It was at the January 26 press conference that the group announced its intention of forming an "independent trade union."

They stated that 200 workers had agreed to join the body and showed foreign correspondents a list of some 100 "candidate members." Most of these candidates for membership were unemployed. Group spokespeople were still uncertain as to the name of their independent trade union, but thought it would be called the "Trade Union for the Defence of Workers."

They said that they had decided on this step because of the ineffectiveness of the country's established trade unions, which were "government-controlled." Klebanov told the journalists: "We can't do anything individually. We have to act together."

The spokespeople said that they were going to ask the Geneva-based International Labour Organisation (ILO) to recognize the independent trade union.

On January 27, 1978, 21 members of the group signed an appeal to government authorities regarding the imprisonment of Reznichenko, Tsvyrko and Yankov. The appeal also said that on that day the police had tried to arrest Vladimir Klebanov and his wife. Another appeal, dated January 28, 1978, added that fellow group members and passers-by had prevented the police

from arresting Klebanov. It was later reported that Klebanov went into hiding after this attempted arrest.

On January 30, 1978, 43 members of the "free trade union" signed an open letter to various Soviet professional organisations and Party and government authorities and to a number of official newspapers and journals. In it they stated:

Instead of objectively investigating our complaints and appeals the authorities have given us empty formalistic replies, sent our complaints and appeals to the very persons against whom they were made, applied repressive measures against us and our comrades in misfortune: with police assistance they drive us out of Moscow, and they put mentally healthy people in psychiatric hospitals in Moscow.

Call to Western Unions

On February 1 the independent trade union issued several new documents. One of these was an open letter to foreign correspondents in Moscow. This document, signed by 43 persons, made known for the first time that the independent trade union was to be called the "Association of Free Trade Unions of Workers in the USSR." It referred to the fact that Article 34(4) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims: "Everyone has the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of his interests." It repeated that the independent trade union would appeal to the ILO, and added that it would also appeal to "trade unions in Western countries." The open letter said: "The defence of human rights is not interference in another country's internal affairs" and asked for an objective investigation of their grievances. Valentina Chetverikova signed this document as secretary of the union.

Also dated February 1 was the "Appeal of the Association of Free Trade Unions of Workers in the USSR to the ILO and the Workers' Trade Unions in Western Countries." This document is signed by 43 persons, who are designated as members of the body. The addresses of Klebanov, Shagen Oganesyanyan and Valentin Poplavsky are given for correspondence with the union. Attached to this appeal to the ILO and foreign trade unions are: 1) citations from the Statute of the ILO relevant to the union's request for recognition by the ILO; 2) the "Statute" of the union; 3) a list of 110 "candidates for membership in the free trade union." To the list of 110 "candidate members" is appended a note saying that other workers wish membership but have asked that for the time being their names not be made public.

The list of 110 candidate members of the independent trade unions indicates the work speciality of each of the persons named: 45 are designated as "workers," 25 as "employees," 6 as miners, 10 as engineers, one as a lawyer, 4 as pensioners, 4 as collective farm workers, 1 as a war

invalid, 5 as teachers, 4 as doctors or nurses, 2 as housewives, and 1 as a work invalid; 2 are unidentified. Fifty-two of them are women. These 110 persons come from all parts of the USSR.

In this appeal the signatories say that they are on average between 35 and 45 years of age, that they have worked for more than 10 years, that they are all unemployed on account of their criticism of management abuses and that some of them have been unemployed for up to 5 years.

The appeal stated:

When we have appealed to higher authorities, instead of taking constructive steps they have applied impermissible methods against us for exercising our right to complain: under the pretext of registering us for reception by the leadership, they seize us one by one and in groups, sending us to police stations and psychiatric hospitals. This happens at the highest offices of the authority: in the receptions of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the Presidium of the USSR Procurator General's Office. We decided to unite. We began to speak out collectively—just as before they continued to expel us from Moscow with the help of the police and to put us in psychiatric hospitals.

The statement said that the country's established trade union organisations likewise had not given satisfaction to their complaints.

We decided therefore to organize our own genuinely independent trade union so that we may officially and legally have the right to defend our rights and interests and enlist for common struggle for our rights other persons who are willing and whose rights are unjustifiably violated.

The statement asserts at some length, with quotations from officially published sources, that the established trade unions "do not protect our rights," do not reflect the members' needs and wishes and are not democratically elected or led.

The appeal concludes: "We request the ILO and workers' trade union organisations to recognise our free trade union of workers and to show us moral and material support."

On February 6, 1978, four members of the new body were detained for not having official permission to reside in Moscow, according to a statement by member Nikolai Ivanov. The 4 were Mikhail Guriev (a metal worker from Rostov), Konstantin Gucherenko (a railway worker from the Caucasus), Valentin Poplavsky (a factory worker from near Moscow who had already been detained for 15 days in June 1976), and Victor Luchkov (a miner from Donetsk).

On February 7, 1978, Klebanov was again detained in Moscow and again taken to a psychiatric hospital in Donetsk where he was put into "strict isolation" and was still being held there as of February 22. At about the same time, another member, an engineer called Yevgeny Niko-

laev, was warned not to use his Moscow flat for meetings of workers with foreign correspondents. Also on February 7 the Moscow Helsinki Monitoring Group issued a statement that the formation of an independent trade union was "based on law" according to Soviet labour legislation.

On February 15 group member Yevgeny Nikolaev was detained and forcibly placed in a psychiatric hospital, and on February 27 Valentin Poplavsky and Varvara Kucherenko, who had been released from detention, stated that 2 of the union's members were in psychiatric hospitals and 4 others were 'missing'. The two in psychi-

atric hospitals were given as Y. Nikolaev and Valentina Pelekh. A seventh member, Klebanov himself, was also declared missing since the union's members in Moscow could not confirm earlier reports that he was still held in the Donetsk psychiatric hospital.

Meanwhile, in the West, Amnesty International delivered all the documents in its possession, including the group's appeal to the ILO and foreign trade union organisations, to the ILO in Geneva. And international labour movement solidarity with Vladimir Klebanov and his comrades began to mount in various countries of Western Europe.

management—i.e., democratically centralized—can solve the problem. This requires an end to the separation of the workers from the process of social reproduction. In Kardelj's view, state ownership was "an inevitable revolutionary act, historically speaking," but one which left the worker separated from the management of the "social capital." "This separation gave rise to two tendencies: one toward the exclusive stranglehold of the state . . . over the planning and management of social capital; the other toward a lack of interest on the part of workers as to what becomes of the state capital."³

It is that very lack of interest that the Titoist leadership is trying to overcome, without thereby relinquishing their state power; for, as Kardelj contends, the level of development of the productive forces in Yugoslavia, and the consciousness of the workers, does not allow for the creation of a complete system of self-management. Hence the leading role of the CP and its mass organizations (trade unions and the Socialist Alliance).

Kardelj thus expresses in an intelligent way the ideological justification of the bureaucrats he represents. But he also affords a glimpse of the real problems which we will be confronted with in any society in transition to socialism. Therein lies the advantage to us of examining the Yugoslav plan and its contradictions.

The Yugoslav leadership has several goals in theory:

1. *Determine the fundamental choices of development.* Against the effects of opening the market to international competition, restate the importance of developing the country's natural resources. In face of the conflicts between nationalities, give the various republics a greater role in working out their plans of development and in their institutions; but at the same time, be sure to maintain a unified system, and to even out the inequalities among regions by increasing aid to the less developed areas. What is involved here is an extremely complicated problem, to the extent that one of the very criticisms leveled by the Croats in 1971 was that the federal authorities were taking away part of the wealth produced in Croatia and redistributing it elsewhere. These so-called political interventions were greatly criticized by advocates of direct economic "profitability" from investments. While it is true that elimination of inequalities is the only guarantee in the long run that national tensions do not sharpen for economic and social reasons, the fact remains that, for the time being, while centralized planning and redistribution of wealth are supported by the least developed regions,

3. For lack of a better term, Kardelj refers to "social capital" and "state capital," without, however, defining these societies as state capitalist; he thinks it is necessary to consider them in transition to socialism.

In Preparation for Tito's Exit

The New System of Self-Management in Yugoslavia

By Catherine Verla

The Yugoslav Communist Party is preparing for its eleventh congress. It will be an important one, not only because it will probably be the last congress Tito will attend, but also because it will have to draw a balance sheet on all the measures taken since 1971 to counter the real danger of a blowup of the Socialist Federal Republic.

In addition to repression in all spheres, and an effort to restore a disciplined monolithism within the CP to make it better able to play its "leading" role, a feature of the new line has been to halt the development of a market economy, which had brought with it its share of growing inequality, unemployment, dismantling of the planned economy, and the growth of strata bearing the seeds of capitalist restoration.¹ A whole body of laws establishing a new system of production, chiefly described by the "Law on Associated Labor," has been put into effect. This law was passed at the end of 1976, and is undergoing a trial period that should be completed this year.

The new system raises a wealth of questions for us, in terms of the lessons it provides for our own definition of self-management and the kind of socialism we want. It is too soon to be able to evaluate it in proper perspective. But it is important to examine the new system, the way in which the Titoist leadership defines it, its obvious contradictions, and the first factual results that help to illustrate them.

The new system that has been introduced is the product of a two-pronged

rejection accompanied by pragmatism on the part of the Titoist leadership—on the one hand, rejection of the Soviet model of planning, which it could hardly hope to impose today anyway, and which has by and large proved bankrupt; on the other hand, opposition to the uncontrolled spread of a market economy, of which the leadership has been forced to draw negative results. The "supercentralist" currents (which are termed "Cominformists"), and supporters of a free market (who have only pushed the official line of the period of economic reform, begun in 1965, to its logical conclusion) have been checked, as has the Marxist left, many of whose criticisms have now been adopted by the government.

But in rejecting the two extreme lines, the Titoist leadership is not prepared to see its own monopoly of power come under challenge. The characteristic feature of the new system—and of its inevitable failures—thus lies in the plan to give self-management more weight in decision-making and control over a large area of social reproduction, without, however, conferring real power or genuine workers democracy on the workers. Kardelj, the regime's foremost theoretician, has given this line a theoretical gloss. He accurately outlines the problems of Yugoslav society: "How to institute and organize the social force that can manage the surplus produced by collective labor, without this management process also recreating the exclusive power initially held by the state and technostructure?"²

His reply is that only "integrated" self-

1. See *Inprecor*, December 5, 1975 and November 11, 1976 (French edition). Also *Critique Communiste*, No. 18-19, October-November 1977.

2. Kardelj, "Les contradictions de la propriété sociale dans le système socialiste," Editions Anthropos.

they collide head-on with the desire of other regions for greater autonomy of management. The bureaucratic character of the planning decisions can, of course, only reinforce this mistrust and regional self-centeredness.

Finally, in terms of the tempo of overall economic growth, the Yugoslav leadership must deal with the problem of unemployment (about 600,000, or some 10% of the work force), which has been aggravated by the return of Yugoslav emigrant workers.

Their line (not a new one) in this area aims at extending the productive capacities of the country, chiefly by inviting foreign capital, at giving an impulse to the development of small-scale private craft industries, and at allowing the participation of workers (and of their funds accumulated abroad) in the opening of new plants that can give them work.

2. *Finding the means to put these choices into practice.* The state has supplied itself with an arsenal enabling it to intervene to see to it that the major provisions of the social plan are adhered to. But these administrative methods are rightly considered to be of limited effectiveness. That is why a whole series of measures are intended to confer more responsibility on self-management within the limits already mentioned, and to reconcile the goals already decided on by the government with those expressed by self-management:

a. Through the method of drafting the social plan, which is subjected to a lengthy period of comparison and reconciliation with local plans (without, however, enabling several alternative national plans to be compared among themselves; we will come back to this).

b. Through introduction of a "system of delegations," which is supposed to make for workers' participation in political control of the budgets and choices worked out by the cities, republics, and autonomous provinces, but not at the federal level. The state agencies at these various levels (called "sociopolitical institutions") now actually are made up of three chambers, representing the inhabitants, the workers through their work units (known as OBTA—rank-and-file organizations of associated labor), and the sociopolitical organizations as such (the CP and the mass political and trade-union organizations). Thus, among the members of these various chambers are not only local deputies of a sort, but delegates elected and given a mandate by the assemblies and delegations of workers in each OBTA.

Apart from this system of delegations, whose limits we will see later, the new constitution provides for:

c. "Self-managed communities of interest," which unite users and producers of services at various geographic levels (i.e., in health and education). The Yugoslavs speak in this context of "destatization," in the sense that these functions were once fulfilled by the state and are now directly

taken over by those affected (the producers and users), who together determine the needs, resources, and plans of development within the confines of the social plan.

d. Finally, prices and incomes are now supposed to be determined by "self-managed" "agreements" and "contracts," under the control of the national government or the governments of each republic, according to certain criteria established by the central government. Certain goods are subject to "direct exchanges of labor" among the OBTA. These are measures that aim at the withering away of the role of the market in these areas.

3. Against those whom the Yugoslav rulers refer to as "technocrats"—that is, the plant managers who built up a degree of autonomy in the preceding period—several types of measures have been taken: elimination of anonymous bank accounts, new regulations on the banking system and credit, reinforcing "political" criteria in assignments to positions of responsibility. In addition, smaller units to be managed by the workers have been set up, so that they can control their functioning better; the large industries (OTA—organizations of associated labor) are broken down into rank-and-file organizations of associated labor (OBTA), which are nevertheless organized on the basis of a complete process of production of goods and services, capable of being inventoried. The OBTA possess several self-management bodies. Their workers council (CO) is elected for two years, and is made up in proportion to the social composition of the OBTA. The director, appointed and recallable by the CO, is permitted to attend meetings, but does not have voting rights. The executives of the workers council are elected for two years, and their members cannot be reelected twice in succession. The enterprise as a whole has a workers council made up of delegates from the workers councils of each OBTA, in proportion to their size.

Two series of questions modify the application of these measures:

- What is the status of political democracy in Yugoslavia—that is, through what political processes can the workers' collective consciousness be forged?

- What are the sociocultural prerequisites for applying the proposed new system (which also has a bearing on the formation of a collective consciousness)?

This information will explain the reasons for the obvious impasse facing the new system, of which we will give a few initial indications.

In the political sphere: the left Marxists contributing to the journal *Praxis*, which was banned after 1971, have often denounced the severe limitations on democratic rights in Yugoslavia, and attribute to this factor a fundamental share of the blame for the nonfunctioning of self-management (correctly adding to this the nefarious role played by the extension of

the market). Whatever the real differences between the Yugoslav system and those of its neighbors to the east (much greater freedom of travel, information, and expression), the Titoist rulers have remained faithful to the Stalinist conception of a single party. The 1971 turn included an attempt to restore its monolithism. It did so in vain, and probably at the expense of the quality of recruitment to the CP. Without harboring illusions about the quality of recruitment prior to 1971, it is nevertheless evident that when a public comparison of socialist ideas is prohibited, and when in addition membership in the CP becomes the essential political criterion for the assignment of functions, those recruited are cynical careerists, while the more valuable Communist militants and intellectuals are repressed. Such is the case with the teachers around *Praxis*.

Moreover, it is evident that the internal structure of the CP has repercussions on the general state of political democracy in Yugoslavia. If tendencies do not have the right to openly express their views (and are not given an opportunity to organize as tendencies), this is also tantamount to prohibiting any organized expression of alternative lines within the CP to the outside. The discussion on political pluralism is very important in Yugoslavia today (several symposiums and articles have taken up this theme), especially since the Eurocommunists proclaim themselves in favor of it. This aspect of Eurocommunism has been criticized by the Yugoslav rulers, who clearly see it as a threat to their own system.

The theory in vogue in the top circles is that they are against both the one-party system on the Stalinist model and against the pluralism of bourgeois democracies, which is supposed to be an outdated form of democracy. A different kind of "pluralism" is counterposed to this—that of self-management, since it is true that this allows for the expression of many social interests. Granted. But by what means can a broad consciousness of the problems, going beyond local and community points of view, be forged among the workers? The CP stands in its stead. That is, the CP proclaims itself to be the bearer of vanguard consciousness, from a correct proletarian standpoint.

Stalinism gears in precisely here, because the social reality reflected in self-management is very heterogeneous, and because, as the Yugoslav leaders like to recall, the workers still behave too much like "wage workers," and concern themselves very little with the broad paths of development; precisely, too, because a change in attitude will not come about spontaneously—the workers must be made to feel they have a stake in the big discussions of orientation. They cannot help but feel disarmed, outside of politics, if they have no collective structures for taking

part in these debates and in the choices they will result in, and especially if a single choice is imposed on them as a matter of course.

Obviously, different viewpoints now exist within the CP on this question, which thus constitutes one of the issues for the upcoming congress. It would seem that the CP's draft statutes establish the right of minorities to express their views in the party while publicly adhering to the majority decisions, which would not solve the problem of the right to an organized, public explanation of the various orientations being considered. Several members of the Croatian leadership have found an occasion to say that they are for a public comparison—and not bureaucratic repression—of ideas. Obviously, practice will be the test of these promises, particularly the rehiring of those who were dismissed from their posts because of political differences (an open letter was recently sent to Tito on this subject by seven Yugoslav intellectuals, of whom six are teachers from *Praxis*), the halting of all repression for ideological differences, and the restoration of permission for journals like *Praxis* to publish.

Behind political pluralism, the nature of the government is also at stake, for the present monolithism inevitably leads to the merging of the state and single party, and the use of the mass organizations—first and foremost the trade unions—as transmission belts for party policy. There too, the problem seems to have come up within the CP, and the new statutes will supposedly stipulate the separation of functions (a prohibition on fulfilling functions at the head of the CP and government at the same time). There again, it will be necessary to judge on the basis of actions, but it is hard to imagine all of the present state officials resigning from their posts.

In the social sphere, most Yugoslavs, as in the East, try to supplement their incomes by moonlighting in addition to their forty-hour week. This is a basic obstacle to any kind of political democracy, and even to putting the new Yugoslav system into effect. It is not even necessary to bureaucratically appoint CP candidates to official posts in order to keep the masses of workers out of them. Participating in the management of funds supervised by the communities of interest, in administering political questions taken up at the level of the cities and republics (to cite a few examples), requires time and sufficient training. Even without taking on genuine responsibilities, the workers cannot even consider keeping an eye on their own delegates if they do not have a minimum of training, background information, and time to exert control in a meaningful way. When we know that in addition unemployment in Yugoslavia is high, a massive shortening of the workweek, both to distribute the available work to all who need

it, and to carry out the tasks of self-management, should be a central goal. We have not seen it expressed anywhere up to now. In that case, cultural inequalities can only contribute to “natural selection” of those who take part in management bodies.

The facts are there to illustrate these data:

The statistics supplied by the May 1977 issue of *Yugoslav Survey*, concerning the makeup of the municipal bodies, are very revealing: in practice, 66% of their members had to be put on salary (while at the outset they were supposed to keep their jobs). In the poorest and most culturally backward regions (Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia), the percentage of paid officials is 80% and more. In these same regions, not a single worker sits on these bodies. The OBTA are in fact most often represented by their managers. The total proportion of women is 4.5% (there again, it is higher in the rich regions, and lower—0.5%—in poor Kosovo). Yet these are some of the more positive figures, compared to what the results would be at the higher levels of administration.

In the economic sphere, it seems that the 1977 results partly correspond to some of the goals set (particularly in accelerating the development of the backward regions and exploiting natural resources). On the other hand, several high officials have had to issue solemn appeals against certain “negative tendencies.” Specifically, Berislav Sefer, vice-president of Yugoslavia, pointed out in an interview with *Borba* on February 25, 1977, the “lack of discipline in the plants.” As a matter of fact, this can make the whole plan fall through at the level of determining incomes and prices on the basis of social pacts. According to Sefer, the industries are raising their prices above the levels set to cover their debts (often especially important inasmuch as, until recent laws on credit were put into effect, nothing obliged the plants to pay these debts). Labor productivity remains low; according to the same interview, workers do not work more than four or five hours out of the eight hours they are supposed to work each day (and it is true that production speeds are famous for their slackness). A large proportion (25%-30%) of the means of production is underutilized. Nor has the rise in wages been in keeping with the plans, and several observers have noted wage increases even in the case of industries in debt. Sefer points this out and adds that the expenses for education, health, and culture have risen at a higher rate than the rate of growth of the economy as a whole. He bemoans the proliferation of universities and other educational institutions as a luxury that the country cannot afford.

In the banking sector, where the greatest uncontrolled accumulation of funds had taken place in the preceding period, the new regulations are far from being imple-

mented. The journal of the trade unions of July-August 1977 refers to “tacit resistance” in banking circles, and goes so far as to say to what extent “financial reality is removed from the policy proclaimed.”

In other words, it is hard to see how this new system of halfway measures could defuse the significant social pressures in Yugoslavia. By retaining a monopoly on political centralization, the Titoist leadership has drained away the content of the institutions it set up. Just as the people's committees in the liberation were headed and centralized solely by the party, self-management basically remains the creation of the CP. It is therefore normal and legitimate that the workers use the few powers they are granted on the level they are granted, and that they should try to upgrade their individual and collective standard of living to the extent that they can. And we know that in fact, this standard is far from being satisfactory, and that even “self-managed” decisions regarding the incomes plan are not always adhered to, and are forcing more and more frequent strikes.⁴

At the same time, the rights formally conferred on Yugoslav workers by the new system have not been granted anywhere else in the world. They demonstrate the existence of a real republic of workers councils, of a real integrated system of self-management, democratically centralized, as the basis of power of a workers state. We are quite convinced that the original, and even the current, economic and social levels of postwar Yugoslavia are among the obstacles to bringing about such a system of socialist democracy. We are also convinced that the apprenticeship of power, of responsibilities at the highest level, does not occur spontaneously, and that the cultural heritage of past systems is a heavy handicap to forging a new class consciousness.

One does not defend the interests of the workers in their place. One does not transform the interests of the workers outside of the endeavor of managing society as a whole. And socialism cannot be built while prohibiting the most fruitful exchange of views and without giving the workers the cultural, social, and political means to finally go beyond their condition of wage workers. □

4. A one-day strike broke out at the end of February, in a rank-and-file unit in a Slovenian steel plant. The workers demanded wage parity with other work units in the plant complex. The administrators opposed this on grounds of modernizing the plant.

It appears that in one day, the strike resulted in satisfaction of the workers' demands. The Yugoslav press gave it a lot of coverage, which indicates the leaderships' current approach—better to allow the right to strike in practice, which makes it possible to keep up with—and spread out—conflicts rather than wind up in “Polish-style” explosions for lack of a safety valve.

Capitalism Fouls Things Up



A Brazilian Minamata?

Authorities in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, established a crisis center April 18 and warned of an "ecological disaster" resulting from chemical pollution of the state's coastal waters.

During the first week of April a strong odor of ammonia gas began permeating areas of the Atlantic coast near the site of a 1971 shipwreck. A number of persons were hospitalized and several coastal villages were evacuated. Thousands of dead sea animals washed onto the beaches.

In April 1971 the Brazilian cargo vessel *Taquari* went down near the Uruguay-Brazil border with 173 tons of sodium carbonate, 24 tons of mercury compounds, and a number of containers of propylene and iminoethane.

The U.S. corporation Dow Chemical, which owned the propylene and iminoethane shipment, warned authorities after the accident that these were dangerous substances. But the ship's owners, Lloyd Brasileiro, gave assurances that the drums and containers had been recovered.

It now appears that some or perhaps all of the iminoethane containers remained submerged and after seven years have been corroded by sea water. As the iminoethane escapes, gaseous ammonia is given off.

What is of most concern, however, is the twenty-four tons of mercury compounds that may also have been lost in the *Taquari* wreck. Biological action transforms mercury into methyl mercury and other highly toxic organomercury compounds. As these substances enter the marine food chain they are concentrated and can do serious harm to persons consuming sea-food products. A similar situation gave rise to the tragic cases of mercury poisoning in Minamata, Japan, which have killed or severely crippled hundreds of persons.

Sales of fin- and shellfish have been banned throughout Rio Grande do Sul. Four thousand persons who depend on fishing for a living have been thrown out of work.

No Fishing

State officials in Wisconsin have posted signs along 129 miles of rivers in the eastern part of the state warning that fish taken from the rivers should not be eaten.

Researchers have discovered that the Sheboygan River and two of its tributaries have "the worst chemical contamination of fish and river water ever recorded in the United States," according to the April 22 *Washington Post*.

Tests on fish from the waterways showed concentrations of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) as much as 150 times greater than that considered acceptable by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Wisconsin officials said the source of the pollution was unknown.

PCBs have been manufactured in the United States since 1929 and were once widely used in electric wiring, insulation, plasticizers, hydraulic fluids, lubricants, paints, and other products. Their use is now limited to sealed electrical equipment.

PCBs can cause skin eruptions, excessive eye discharges, swelling of eyelids, and possibly cancer. They are not biodegradable and remain in the environment indefinitely once discharged.

CIA's Plutonium Caper Had New Delhi's OK

Prime Minister Morarji Desai disclosed April 17 that his three predecessors—Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, and Indira Gandhi—all cooperated with the CIA's "Operation Blue Mountain" and similar projects in the mid-1960s. The secret operations involved placing nuclear-powered devices high in the Himalayas to monitor missile experiments in China.

Desai said in a speech to the Lok Sabha (the lower house of parliament) that the Indian government had been fully consulted "at the highest level" and that the projects were "done with the best of intentions, in the national interest."

In "Operation Blue Mountain" in 1965, a CIA mountaineering team carried a device to within 400 feet of the summit of Nanda Devi, India's highest mountain. But inclement weather forced them to abandon their gear at 23,000 feet. An expedition a year later discovered that an avalanche had covered the site where the nuclear device had been left.

The operation was planned under Nehru and carried out after Shastri took over. Gandhi had taken the latter's place by the time of the recovery expedition.

Gandhi gave permission for a second, successful, attempt in 1967. The device was removed by a 1968 expedition.

The instrument that was lost contained almost three pounds of plutonium 238, a highly carcinogenic isotope that remains radioactive for up to 500 years. It was reportedly encased in twenty pounds of graphite and tantalum metal, and covered with aluminum. But if this container should corrode, the headwaters of the Ganges River in the Himalayas could be polluted by plutonium.

Desai said that investigations have shown "no cause for alarm on grounds of health or environmental health." But he also said he "would never have done it . . . because of the ever-present risk of something like this happening."

The U.S. State Department refused to confirm or deny Desai's statements. Gandhi denied April 22 that she had known of the expeditions when they occurred. She said when she found out about them "much later . . . there was nothing I could do about it."

Australia—Thousands Rally Against Uranium Mining

Marches and rallies were held across Australia March 31-April 1 to protest the Fraser government's efforts to step up mining and export of the country's vast deposits of uranium.

The largest action was held in Melbourne, where 15,000 persons braved inclement weather to demonstrate. Seven thousand marched in pouring rain in Sydney, and in Perth, 6,000 protested in one of the largest such mobilizations held in the city.

Three thousand persons rallied throughout Queensland, including 1,000 to 1,500 in Brisbane. The Queensland state government has imposed a ban on protest marches.

Defense of the land rights of Black Aborigines was a major focus of the protests, and Black leaders spoke at most of the rallies. Much of the uranium to be mined lies under lands held by Aboriginal tribes.

Other actions included a rally of 250 in Hobart, Tasmania, a march of 2,500 in Adelaide, and a march and rally of 200 in Newcastle.