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Imperialist Troops Out of Zaire!

Peru

Hugo Blanco, Hundreds of Others, Arrested

Spain

Uproar Over Jailing of Forty-Eight Trotskyists

Books

'Breakaway—The Scottish Labour Party'

NEWS ANALYSIS

Imperialist Troops Out of Zaïre!

By Ernest Harsch

Within hours of their arrival in Zaïre, hundreds of French Foreign Legionnaires were engaged in sharp fighting with rebel forces in the mining town of Kolwezi May 19, as part of a coordinated imperialist intervention to help prop up the corrupt and despotic regime of Mobutu Sese Seko.

The day before, nearly 3,000 French and Belgian troops piled into military transport planes to begin an airlift into Zaïre's strife-torn Shaba province. At the same time, Washington sent at least eighteen C-141 transports, dispatched an unspecified number of military personnel, and placed 1,500 American troops on alert in the United States.

Despite Cuban denials and an admitted complete lack of any evidence, Washington and its imperialist allies have charged Havana with responsibility for the rebel activity in Shaba. This is intended as a pretext for even greater imperialist intervention in Africa and also raises the danger of an attack against Cuba itself.

Charging that the rebel forces have killed several dozen Europeans, the sponsors of this new intervention have sought to disguise it as an "international rescue mission," with the ostensible aim of evacuating some 2,000 Europeans and Americans said to be held as "hostages" by the rebels.

This is one of the oldest justifications for imperialist aggression in the book, and is designed to hide the real aims: to save the dictatorial Mobutu regime, to protect the substantial foreign investments in the area, and to shore up the imperialist position on the continent as a whole.

The imperialists moved rapidly, following the initial reports that the Shaba rebels, who have pledged to overthrow Mobutu, resumed their activities May 11 and captured much of the important mining town of Kolwezi.

President Carter took the lead by placing the 82nd Airborne Division and the Military Airlift Command on alert May 16, ready to intervene in Zaïre if necessary. According to a report in the May 17 *Washington Post*, "The 82nd Airborne is structured to fly to trouble spots like Zaïre on short notice, usually one battalion [of] about 800 men at a time. The paratroopers land equipped to fight."

This was followed by a series of "crisis" meetings in Europe that included representatives of the American, Belgian, French, and British governments to plan out the joint intervention. The May 19 *Washington Post* reported, "A usually informed

source said that Gen. Alexander Haig, the NATO commander, is playing a role in coordinating the rescue operation."

The Belgian imperialists, the former colonial masters of Zaïre when it was known as the Congo, have provided an estimated 1,750 paratroopers.

Paris, whose pilots airlifted some 1,500 Moroccan troops into Zaïre in 1977 during a similar armed conflict in Shaba, has dispatched 1,000 of its Foreign Legion troops.

The British government has supplied planes and other logistical support, with the approval of the Zambian government, and is reportedly considering sending supplies to Mobutu.

Carter has approved the provision of \$20 million worth of military assistance to Mobutu—\$17.5 million in "nonlethal" equipment and \$2.5 million for the training of high-level Zaïrian general staff officers in the United States.

In announcing this aid, Carter declared that its provision was "in the national security interests of the United States." White House Press Secretary Jody Powell explained that the Mobutu regime was a "moderate government" that had "supported our goals" in Africa, a reference to Mobutu's participation in the joint American and South African intervention in the Angolan civil war of 1975-76.

Meanwhile, Carter has shamelessly escalated White House attacks against Cuban "interference." State Department representative Tom Reston charged May 19, "It is now our understanding that insurgents have been trained recently by Cubans in Angola and are employing Soviet weapons."

Just a few days earlier, on May 13, Carter released an interview that included his sharpest attacks on Havana thus far. In it he accused Castro of trying "to subvert other people through military means," demanded that Cuban troops be withdrawn from Angola, Ethiopia, and elsewhere, and warned Havana against providing assistance to the Zimbabwean freedom fighters.

On May 17, however, Castro categorically denied any involvement, either direct or indirect, in the fighting in Zaïre. Although the denial, which Castro conveyed personally to a U.S. diplomat in Havana, was reported in the American press, State Department officials said that they were under orders not to discuss it.

The imperialists have coupled the attacks against Havana with a hysterical

and racist publicity campaign around the so-called white "hostages" in Shaba. The French Foreign Ministry charged May 19 that more than forty Europeans had been executed by the rebels. American newspaper headlines screamed about a "massacre" of "whites" in Zaïre. Belgian Prime Minister Leo Tindemans charged that "whites are the main targets" of the rebels.

These charges are a word-for-word replay of the pretext for an earlier imperialist intervention in Zaïre. In November 1964, when the country was still known as the Congo, American planes airlifted some 800 Belgian paratroopers into Stanleyville (now called Kisangani), a stronghold of Congolese nationalist forces opposed to the imperialist-backed regime of Moïse Tshombe. They claimed they went in to rescue several hundred white "hostages." But during the operation, the Belgian paratroopers, government forces, and an array of foreign mercenaries massacred thousands of Congolese sympathetic to the insurgents, dealing a crippling blow to the freedom struggle.

In the current fighting, the rebels have denied responsibility for the deaths of the Europeans. The Front Nationale de Libération du Congo (FNLC—Congo National Liberation Front) issued a communiqué in Brussels blaming Mobutu, whose planes have been bombing Kolwezi since May 14. A few days later, on May 19, Jean-Baptiste Mpondo, a representative of the FNLC, said at a news conference in Brussels that the rebels were not opposed to the evacuation of the foreign nationals. According to a report in the May 20 *Washington Post*, "He said ground and air attacks by Mobutu's forces were meant to keep the Europeans there as essential hostages in what he termed Mobutu's efforts to attract international military aid."

In fact, some Belgian officials attempted to arrange negotiations with the rebels for evacuation, but their efforts were aborted when the French Foreign Legionnaires, followed by Belgian troops, stormed into Kolwezi. The imperialists were obviously more interested in moving against the rebels than in "safeguarding" their own citizens.

French Foreign Minister Louis de Guiringaud himself indicated the real reason for the intervention when he stated May 19 that the French troops would remain in Shaba until "the legal authorities have re-established order there."

Paris, Washington, Brussels, and the other imperialist powers have every reason to want the Shaba rebellion crushed. Strategically located in central Africa, Zaïre is rich in valuable minerals such as copper, cobalt, and uranium, most of which are in Shaba itself. Foreign companies have hundreds of millions of dollars invested in Zaïre, with American firms alone holding some \$200 million in direct foreign investments and American banks holding about \$1 billion of Zaïre's outstanding loans.

Mobutu, in addition, has been a valuable imperialist ally for many years. Discontent is extremely widespread in Zaïre, and a failure to contain the unrest in Shaba could encourage opponents of the regime throughout the country, possibly leading to Mobutu's downfall.

The situation in Zaïre, moreover, cannot be separated from the imperialists' concern over the massive ferment throughout the continent as a whole. They are especially worried by the freedom struggles now underway in southern Africa, where sizable investments and strategic political interests are at stake.

Further north, the Horn of Africa has been swept by urban uprisings, peasant revolts, wars, and national liberation struggles for more than four years now. The unrest in Chad and Western Sahara has risen sharply over the past year, prompting the French to send in planes or troops to combat guerrilla forces in both those countries.

Although the condemnations of Cuban involvement in Africa are designed partly as a justification for the imperialists' own intervention, they nevertheless have a real fear of the Cuban presence. Given the extreme instability in Africa, the Cubans have become an additional destabilizing element, complicating the maneuvers by Washington and the Western European powers. They can also present a direct obstacle to imperialist intervention, as they did in Angola. For this reason, the danger of a direct American attack on Cuba itself cannot be ruled out.

From the imperialists' point of view, a setback in Zaïre—or anywhere else for that matter—will make it that much more difficult for them to contain or crush the many struggles now erupting throughout Africa.

White House Press Secretary Powell underscored Carter's concern over the conflict in Zaïre in the context of the broader situation. "It would be an unfortunate lesson to the rest of the world," Powell said, "if we failed to respond to a reasonable request in such a situation."

According to a report in the May 19 *Washington Post*, "There were strong indications that some U.S. officials were eager for Washington to participate in rescue operations and to aid Zaïre in order to show that the U.S. maintains the capacity and will for quick action to shore up friendly governments under challenge in Africa."

Washington and its European allies obviously see their intervention in Zaïre as a crucial test. If they are allowed to get away with this aggression, they will be all the more emboldened to move against the class and national liberation struggles elsewhere.

It is the duty of all supporters of African freedom and all opponents of imperialist intervention to mobilize to demand the immediate withdrawal of American aid and European forces from Zaïre. □

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

Managing Editor: Michael Baumann.

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

Business Manager: Harvey McArthur.

Copy Editor: David Martin.

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

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Martial Law Declared in Peru



HUGO BLANCO

Oiga

Peru was placed under martial law May 20, as the military government suspended all constitutional guarantees, postponed the elections scheduled for June 4, and arrested hundreds of left and labor leaders.

Among those arrested was Hugo Blanco, a leader of the Fourth International and a candidate in the elections on the FOCEP¹ slate.

The crackdown came in the wake of massive protests against price increases in essential consumer goods and services, dictated by the International Monetary Fund. It was aimed in part at halting a two-day general strike, called for May 22-23.

Blanco was arrested at his home in Lima May 19, a few hours after he had gone on television to urge support for the general strike. According to his wife, Gunnilla Berglund, a Swedish citizen, ten members of the Peruvian secret police came to the house at 4:30 a.m., and told Blanco that the minister of the interior wanted to talk to him. They then took the Trotskyist leader away, leaving behind his wife and baby daughter.

At least one other leader of FOCEP, Genaro Ledesma, a well-known lawyer, was also arrested.

The general strike had been called May 18 by the Communist Party-led union federation CGTP to protest increases of 50

to 100 percent in the price of bread, cooking oil, bus fares, gasoline, and other essential goods and services.

The price hikes were decreed by the military regime on May 16, immediately after the finance minister had returned from a trip to Washington, where he had been meeting with representatives of the International Monetary Fund.

The same day, the regime closed down all colleges and universities for an indefinite period. But that did not prevent imme-

diated protests in a number of cities, including Cuzco, Arequipa, and Huánuco.

Blanco's family has not been able to contact him since his arrest. Meanwhile, groups in many countries have begun an emergency campaign for the release of Blanco and the other arrested leaders.

Amnesty International will soon be issuing an appeal. The U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners has mounted a campaign for letters and telegrams demanding freedom for all those arrested. These should be sent to General Francisco Morales Bermúdez, Casa de Gobierno, Lima, Peru, with copies to USLA.² □

2. 853 Broadway, Suite 414, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Spanish Cops Finish Ultrarightists' Work

Storm of Protest Over Arrest of 48 Trotskyists

An ultraright terrorist gang besieged the headquarters of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR—Revolutionary Communist League), Spanish section of the Fourth International, in Pamplona the evening of May 10.

Hooded Guerrillas of Christ the King fired more than twenty bullets into the door, while others fought in the streets with members of the LCR and other left organizations that came to defend the headquarters.

The police, who failed to arrive until two hours after they had been summoned, allowed the rightists to leave and then attacked the headquarters themselves. Using tear gas, they evacuated the offices and arrested all forty-eight LCR members inside. The headquarters was then "searched for weapons."

An immediate outcry against the arrest of the *victims* of the ultraright attack came from nationalist and left organizations throughout the Basque country. Demonstrations in several cities were scheduled for May 14, demanding the release of the jailed Trotskyists and the dismissal of the civil governor and police chief.

The rightist rampage followed the burial of two policemen assassinated by the Basque nationalists of the ETA.

After the funeral, rightist gangs tried to carry out a general pogrom against the defenders of the national rights of the Basque people. Among other things, they attacked the headquarters of the moderate Basque Nationalist Party and raised the flag of the Spanish state over it.

The LCR, along with other left and nationalist organizations, demanded police protection against the rightists. How-

ever, only the headquarters of the Workers Commissions, the largest union in Spain, was defended by police. When the police finally did come to the LCR headquarters, they did not move against the rightist gunmen, who greeted them with cheers.

In the May 12 issue of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*, G. Bengochea reported:

"The police fired several tear-gas grenades against the doors and windows of the headquarters, demanding that everyone inside come out. José María Solchaga and Valentín Prior, the leaders of the LCR in the province of Navarra . . . were immediately arrested and handcuffed, along with all the others on the premises. . . ."

"The activists arrested, all trade-unionists, were roughed up by the police, who accused them of 'violence against the forces of order.'"

Following the arrests, the trade-union organizations, as well as the nationalist and workers parties, demanded the release of those being held. A delegation went to the civil governor, who protested: "I have inherited these police forces from the Franco regime; I can't control them."

The charge of "violence against the forces of order" in fact put the victims in the place of the guilty. The only two Guerrillas of Christ the King who were arrested (they had been wounded during the melee) turned out to be policemen in plainclothes.

While the civil governor promised to release all the left activists arrested, the police insisted that they will press their charges. As of May 14, forty-seven LCR members were still in prison. Only one had been released. □

1. Frente Obrero, Campesino, Estudiantil, y Popular (Workers, Peasants, Students, and Poor People's Front).



Interphoto

Demonstration in Bern April 15 protesting government plans to establish a federal police force.

8,000 Say 'No' to a Federal Police Force in Switzerland

[The following is excerpted from the April 29 issue of *La Brèche*, the fortnightly French-language paper of the Ligue Marxiste Révolutionnaire (LMR—Revolutionary Marxist League), Swiss section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

On Friday, April 14, the so-called serious press, the TV, and the radio proclaimed that "terrorists" and Jurasians [a minority fighting for self-government] were staging a veritable march on Bern, the federal capital.

The media took advantage of a convenient terrorist attack on the UDC headquarters, associating this with the demonstration against the establishment of a federal police force that was scheduled for the following day.

Every hour, Radio Romande broadcast the position of the French-Switzerland Committee against the Federal Security Police, which called the demonstration a "strong-arm play." It was never made clear that this committee is a right-wing group that opposes the new police force only out of concern for the prerogatives of the cantonal authorities.

On Saturday, April 15, about 8,000 persons demonstrated in Bern. There were "no incidents," as the police reports put it. The press pointed up the breadth and orderliness of this demonstration. It neglected to acknowledge that its slanders had fizzled.

But that was not the most important thing. Of course, the Comité National [which organized the march], well aware

that any provocative incident would only put wind in Furgler's sails, had done everything possible to assure that there would be no clashes. But the main reason for such precautions was to make possible the most massive and most united possible demonstration against the reinforcement of the police state. That result was achieved.

Trade-unionists, antinuclear activists, women, Jurasians, and activists from the whole spectrum of left groups marched shoulder to shoulder through the streets of Bern. They showed that Furgler's demagoguery about "terrorism" is only a thin veil for his real intention—to gag all voices opposing the policy of the Swiss bourgeoisie.

Some people in the Comité National did not believe in such mobilizations. Either they hesitate to take a principled position against any strengthening of the bourgeoisie's police apparatus, or they think that unity is mainly useful for collecting signatures but not for organizing united-front mobilizations against the Federal Security Police.

The POCH,² which played no role in the concrete building of the demonstration, and the PdT,³ which played only a limited one, can now draw the balance sheet. The 8,000 demonstrators in Bern have done more than all the speeches in parliament (which, moreover, have been of a dubious character) to develop a mass opposition to Furgler's new police force.

These demonstrators created a much more favorable social and political relationship of forces for the signature cam-

paign, despite the handicap represented by the Moro affair, since they effectively upset attempts to present opponents of the new police force as a few "terrorists."

The Swiss Socialist Party, as it is obliged to do by the governmental coalition, has refused to associate itself with the united-front campaign against the federal police force.

The referendum proposed by the SP and the unions against the federal police force, as the journal of the VPOD [Verband Personal Öffentlich Dienst—Union of Public Employees] made clear, is "not a referendum against waging an effective struggle against terrorism but against an unnecessary granting of full powers to the confederation [central] government. . . ."

As if the body of 200 special police that they propose as a substitute would not represent giving additional power to the bourgeois government, which would use them as it saw fit, with or without the agreement of the two Socialists in the government! The West German special forces used in Mogadishu have been sent against striking German printers. They are carrying out a witch-hunt campaign against so-called sympathizers of the Red Army Faction.

By proposing its own referendum, the SP is leaving itself an escape hatch and in fact is rejecting a broad working-class united front to oppose police arbitrariness. So, in every city, the local committees against the Federal Security Police must work all the harder to get a campaign of mobilizations going.

Rallies, neighborhood meetings, and mobilizations to collect signatures are planned in every city in Switzerland.

Join the local committees!

Sign their referendum petitions and get others to sign them too!

2. Progressive Organizations of the Helvetic Confederation, a centrist group.—*IP/I*

3. Parti du Travail (Party of Labor, the Swiss CP).—*IP/I*

1. Federal Councillor for Justice and Police.—*IP/I*

Yuri Orlov Sentenced to Twelve-Year Term

By Marilyn Vogt

Yuri Orlov, chairman of the Helsinki Monitoring Group in Moscow, was sentenced May 18 to a twelve-year term on charges of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda," following a three-day trial in Moscow. The term—seven years in prison plus five years' internal exile—was the harshest that could have been given under the charges.

Orlov was one of eleven civil-rights activists who formed the Helsinki Monitoring Group in Moscow in May 1976 to oversee the Soviet government's implementation of the humanitarian provisions of the Helsinki accords. Subsequently, similar groups were formed in the Armenian, Georgian, Ukrainian, and Lithuanian republics. The groups collected and made public in the form of informational documents facts showing specific instances of human-rights violations in the Soviet Union.

Orlov's role in the Moscow group served as the basis for the charges against him. As "evidence," the prosecution produced the documents issued by the group.

The Soviet news agency TASS claimed Orlov's trial was open, as it should have been according to Soviet law. In reality, the courtroom was closed to the public, as it had been filled in advance each day with fifty spectators handpicked by the authorities. No one else was allowed inside except Orlov's wife, Irina, and his two sons, Dmitri and Aleksandr, all three of whom were subjected to rigorous searches upon entering and leaving the courtroom.

About twenty foreign correspondents and fifty supporters of Orlov, denied entrance to the courtroom, assembled outside every day and heard reports of the proceedings Irina Orlov gave when she emerged from inside. This group was surrounded by a crowd of secret-police agents who presented themselves as indignant "simple workers" and by uniformed militia personnel.

On May 18, the day the verdict was to be announced, seven of Orlov's supporters were arrested when they sought entrance to the courtroom. Among those arrested were Andrei Sakharov, dissident Soviet physicist and Nobel Prize winner, and his wife, Elena Bonner. Sakharov and Bonner were later freed.

According to Irina Orlov, the court refused to allow any witnesses for the defense. Testimony was heard, however, from fifteen prosecution witnesses who tried to refute the Helsinki group's documentation of human-rights violations so

as to bolster the prosecution's charge that Orlov had spread "slandorous fabrications."

Orlov, a fifty-three-year-old physicist and corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian Republic, was arrested February 10, 1977, in Moscow. His arrest came shortly after President Carter expressed his "concern" over political persecution in the USSR and the Kremlin rulers began their crackdown on Helsinki group members. Two other members of the Moscow group arrested in February and March 1977, Aleksandr Ginzburg and Anatoly Shcharansky, are still awaiting trial. Shcharansky has been charged with treason, which is punishable by death.

Orlov's first clash with Soviet authorities came in 1956. At that time he and others presented a program for democratic reforms in the Communist Party at a party meeting of the Institute of Theoretical and Experimental Physics, where he worked in Moscow.

As a result of this initiative, Orlov was expelled from the party and lost his post. He later moved to the Armenian Republic, where he continued his scientific work as a specialist in elementary particle accelerators. He earned his doctorate and was then

Massacre in Zimbabwe

"There was heavy firing, grenades, the whole place was in fire and kids scattered into the forest."

That was the description of one of the survivors of the May 14 massacre carried out by Rhodesian troops in Gutu, near Fort Victoria. According to the official Rhodesian account, about fifty Black villagers were killed in a "crossfire" between anti-government guerrillas and Rhodesian troops. But eyewitness accounts sharply disputed the racist regime's version of the incident.

Witnesses, cited by correspondent Michael T. Kaufman in the May 18 *New York Times*, said that a meeting of about 200 Blacks, most of them young, had been held at a rural outpost called Basera Store. The meeting was addressed by only one armed freedom fighter and was devoted to condemning Ian Smith's coalition regime, which now includes some prominent Zimbabwean figures.

At midnight, according to the witnesses, firing began from all around the meeting

and lasted for about five minutes. The person addressing the meeting was reported to have been killed immediately and did not have a chance to shoot back. No other guerrillas were said to be present, and all of the shooting was done by the troops. Some witnesses said that grenades were thrown into the crowd.

One of the survivors said that ninety-four bodies were found after the shooting ended.

A representative of Ndabaningi Sithole, one of the Zimbabweans in the coalition regime, condemned the "abject cruelty shown at the massacre at Gutu." But there was no indication if Sithole's group would make anything beyond a verbal protest.

Another of the groups collaborating with Smith, the United African National Council, led by Abel Muzorewa, had earlier threatened to withdraw from the regime in protest over the dismissal of a Black justice minister. But Muzorewa and his colleagues eventually decided to remain at their posts.

He returned to Moscow in 1972, where he worked at the USSR Academy of Sciences' Institute of Terrestrial Magnetism and Propagation of Radio Waves. But he lost his post in 1973 after he protested the persecution of Sakharov.

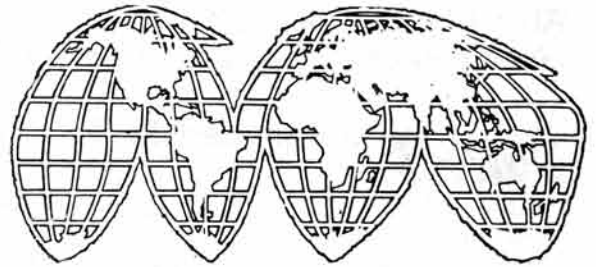
Between 1973 and his arrest Orlov, unable to find a full-time post, worked as a private tutor and continued to defend publicly persecuted civil-rights activists. He played a key role in drawing together activists from various movements, including those protesting religious persecution, those demanding the right to emigrate, those opposing Russification, and those demanding broader intellectual freedoms.

While Orlov was being sentenced in Moscow, two members of the Georgian Helsinki Group were tried and sentenced in Tbilisi, the capital of the Georgian Republic. Although few details are yet available about this trial, it is known that Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Merab Kostava both received five-year terms.

To date, nine Helsinki group members have been sentenced to terms totaling seventy-five years. Eight others are still imprisoned awaiting trial.

In addition, three members of the Working Commission to Investigate the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes have been arrested. Two of them, Felix Serebov and Kirill Podrabinek, have been sentenced. The third, Aleksandr Podrabinek, the head of the commission, was arrested May 14 in Moscow. The commission is associated with but is not officially a part of the Moscow Helsinki group. □

AROUND THE WORLD



Troops Halt Dominican Election

The Dominican army seized the national election headquarters in Santo Domingo early on the morning of May 17, halting the counting of votes from the previous day's presidential election.

The vote tally thus far had shown Antonio Guzmán, leader of the opposition Dominican Revolutionary Party, far outstripping President Joaquín Balaguer.

Guzmán went into hiding briefly, emerging later in the day to declare himself president elect and demand that Balaguer concede the election. He appealed for Washington's aid, saying, "Jimmy Carter and Joaquín Balaguer committed themselves before world public opinion to a free election that would be clean and respected."

Rumors that a military coup was in progress were denied by the armed forces minister, Lt. Gen. Juan Rene Beauchamps Javier, who said that they were being "circulated by the enemies of peace."

However, radio and television programming were halted, except for the government radio station, and most businesses and schools were closed.

Vote counting resumed on May 18. An official of Balaguer's Reform Party said in a press statement that the head of the central election committee had requested the military to interrupt the tallying.

"The armed forces possess information that groups planned to attack and go against the national interest," the official said.

In a television appearance on the evening of May 18, Balaguer said he would abide by the outcome of the election.

However, both Balaguer's and Guzmán's supporters claimed victory on the basis of their own vote counts. Figures published by the Dominican Revolutionary Party on May 19 showed Guzmán with 1.2 million votes as against 774,262 for Balaguer.

Italy—Victory for Abortion Rights

Italian women won the right to free and legal abortion on May 18, when a bill legalizing the medical procedure passed the Senate by a vote of 160 to 148. The previous law, on the books since the fascist period, banned all abortions as a "crime against the race."

The new law permits abortion in the first ninety days of pregnancy to women eighteen years of age or older who believe that childbirth would endanger their physical or mental health.

After the first three months, abortion would be permitted only to save a woman's life or if the fetus has serious birth defects.

Abortions performed in state-run hospitals are covered by national health insurance.

Both the ruling Christian Democratic Party and the Catholic Church hierarchy had strongly opposed the bill. In a statement issued after the vote, the Vatican termed abortion an "abominable crime," and a Roman Catholic group petitioned the president to veto the bill.

The new law contains some major drawbacks, which will undoubtedly be the focus of future struggles. Chief among these is the stipulation that women under eighteen years of age must have the consent of both parents, the result of a last-minute "compromise" the Communist and Socialist parties helped to arrange.

In addition, doctors and medical staff may refuse to perform abortions by registering as "conscientious objectors." While other medical personnel must be brought in to replace them, this could cause delays.

In addition, the law states that women seeking abortions must consult a doctor and wait seven days before they can have the operation. In many cities, the state-run clinics for the first consultation do not exist, and where they do exist they are overcrowded and inefficient.

Ethiopian Junta Launches Offensive

The Eritrean independence forces announced May 16 that the Ethiopian regime had begun a new offensive to try to regain control of the territory. This was confirmed by Ethiopian head of state Mengistu Haile Mariam, who said in a speech the day before that the time had come "to wage a concerted war" against the Eritrean groups.

On May 17, representatives of the two main Eritrean groups, the Eritrean Liberation Front and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, said that the offensive by some 20,000 Ethiopian troops had not been successful in breaking through the Eritrean siege around Asmara. They also said that a joint force of both groups was fighting the Ethiopians for control of the town of Barentu.

Ermias Debesai, a member of the Central Committee of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, said that he had no direct evidence that Cuban troops were participating.

Reinforcing their charges that the Ethiopians have carried out bombing raids against civilian targets, Eritrean insurgents displayed part of a cluster bomb to reporters. The bomb, which hurls thousands of tiny steel fragments over a wide area upon impact, is an antipersonnel weapon. It has previously been used by the Americans in Vietnam and most recently by the Israelis in southern Lebanon. The Ethiopians were reported to have used it in bombing near the town of Mandefera.

Ahmed Nasser, a leader of the Eritrean Liberation Front, appealed May 17 to all "peace loving nations" to "come to Eritrea's aid against the Ethiopian offensive and Ethiopia's genocide campaign."

Peking Lifts Lid on Corruption

In its continuing campaign against former associates of Mao Tsetung, the Hua regime in recent weeks has mounted a campaign in the Chinese press against corruption and high living on the part of government and party officials.

Many of the cases of embezzlement of public funds, bribery, wasteful extravagance, and abuse of power that have been exposed reportedly came to light through letters written to the main Peking daily, *Jenmin Jih Pao*. The paper said it had received 130,000 letters in five months after it began inviting readers to send in complaints last year.

In one case reported by the *New York Times* on May 7, an army general and party chief in Manchuria was dismissed from his post after he had embezzled \$70 million in state funds to build sixty-four private clubs, guest houses, and offices for himself and his friends, and 435 other illegal projects.

Other cases involved the managers of a department store who secretly distributed nearly an entire shipment of television sets to friends, and the manager of a butcher shop who enriched himself by privately selling 1.1 million pounds of pork in the last two years.

Other types of abuses concern arbitrary arrest, detention, and torture. The press agency Hsinhua said that in early 1976, followers of the "gang of four" caused 3,000 persons in Shanghai universities and research institutes to undergo "detention, arrest, isolation, criticism and struggle" for having protested attacks on Teng Hsiao-ping and insufficient mourning for Chou En-lai.

Selections From the Left

Bulletin

Publication of the Caribbean Socialist Group, an organization of West Indian militants in Britain who are sympathetic to or members of the Fourth International.

The Spring 1978 issue reports on the campaign to release political prisoners in Trinidad.

"In a press release earlier this year," the *Bulletin* notes, "a member of the National United Freedom Fighters (NUFF), a left wing grouping in Trinidad, gave the following facts:

"The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is currently holding in its prisons thirteen political prisoners and prisoners of war, all members of NUFF, who were captured by the military during clashes between them and NUFF militants in the years following the 1970 uprising. [In April 1970, a section of the Trinidad army mutinied in support of a "Black Power" demonstration that had been banned by the government. An emergency shipment of U.S. arms helped crush the uprising.]

"These militants are being held as common criminals, in contravention of the Geneva Conventions of August 1949, which gives combatant status to guerrilla partisans. . . .

"In addition to being classified as criminals, these prisoners are being subjected to constant maltreatment. Most are kept locked in cells ten feet by six feet for twenty-four hours a day. They have been beaten with staves and leather thongs, subjected to long periods of solitary confinement, and those under sentence of death are made to strip three times a day for searching. All are in need of medical attention. The one woman prisoner, Andrea Jacob, has been subjected to repeated beatings and kept for long periods on just bread and water. . . .

"The Political Prisoners Solidarity Movement in Trinidad and Tobago is campaigning for the release of the NUFF prisoners, and meanwhile for their reclassification as political prisoners and for an end to their maltreatment whilst in jail. . . .

"In Britain, solidarity work has already been extended through the Caribbean Labour Solidarity, and internationally through Amnesty International."

THE STARRY PLOUGH

Official organ of the Irish Republican Socialist Party, published monthly in Dublin.

The April issue has an article on the background to the recent murder of an IRSP leader in a predominantly Protestant town in the north of Ireland.

"Tommy Trainor, aged 29 years, was murdered on the bridge of Portadown on Wednesday March 8th at 12:50 p.m. as he walked home from signing on at the Employment Exchange. The companion he happened to be walking with, Denis Kelly, was also shot dead in the same incident. His older brother Frankie was walking ahead and so escaped the ambush, which obviously had been carefully planned.

"A motorcycle with a pillion passenger drove toward the Trainors as they approached the bridge. There was nowhere for them to run or take cover. It passed Frankie, went on for about 30 yards, stopped, the pillion passenger dismounted and fired at the two companions. A single shot through the chest murdered Tommy. Denis Kelly was then shot. . . .

"The bridge is in the centre of a town heavily patrolled by the RUC [Royal Ulster Constabulary] and on a main road near the resistance pocket [the small Catholic ghetto] in the town—the Tunnel/Obins Street area. Yet it took ten minutes before the RUC arrived at the scene, ample time to allow the murderers to make a clear getaway. This shows that there was collusion between the RUC and the British Army and the murderers of Tommy Trainor.

"Since December 15th when Ronnie [a younger brother] was murdered in a genocidal [proimperialist] attack on the family home, Tommy had been arrested and interrogated by the RUC twelve times. He was beaten, threatened, and psychologically assaulted. Attempts were made to terrorise and brutalise him. But he defied them, although they did their worst to him in spells of from four hours to three days. They tried to frame him with a series of offences but they had no evidence. They spread their net to include Tommy's five brothers and their companions, always beginning their interrogation with 'We know Tommy shot . . .', naming a number of the security forces or collaborators who had been killed in the area.

"He was interrogated by the RUC ten days before his murder and they said to him in the RUC station: 'We can't charge you now but the SAS [Special Air Services, British counterinsurgency commandos] will get you.' . . .

"The Trainors live in Ballyoran Park, which is part of a housing estate occupied by Catholics on the edge of the Tunnel/Obins Street area, which is the enclosed Catholic area of Portadown. The Employment Exchange is in Jervis Street, which is in the notorious Murder Triangle which

lies between Armagh, Dungannon and Portadown.

"Within this area, between 1972 and 1976, there were more than 30 assassinations of random Catholics by Loyalist fascist murder gangs. No one has been convicted of these murders despite overwhelming harassment of Catholic families resident in the area by the 'Security Forces.' For example, in 1975 two UDR [Ulster Defense Regiment, the local militia unit under British command; it is composed essentially of proimperialist Protestants] men were arrested and charged for driving down the Tunnel and shooting at the pedestrians and passersby.

"On February 8, four weeks to the day before Tommy was murdered, the regulations for signing on at the Employment Exchange were changed and a fixed day and time were allocated for each person according to initials. The time for the Trainors was fixed for Wednesdays between 12:30 and 1 p.m. There were six Trainor brothers unemployed because there are no job opportunities for the youth of the nationalist population in Portadown. There is only one road from the Employment Exchange to the Trainor home and there is no public transport.

"The Trainors had been in the habit of staggering their times and days for signing-on [in order to collect unemployment compensation] but the net was closed around them by the economic threat of starvation. They protested but the rule was inflexibly enforced: 'Sign on the fixed time or no pay out'. It is now clear why the RUC were so [word obscured] in their threats when they interrogated Tommy for the last time. They knew he was already set up."

Y Ddraig Goch

"The Red Dragon," Welsh-language organ of Plaid Cymru (the Welsh Nationalist Party), published monthly in Caernarfon.

The May issue has a center spread on a Plaid Cymru campaign demanding free coal for retired and laid-off miners and their widows.

"Plaid Cymru has called on the National Coal Board and the Miners Union to restore the agreement granting free coal to the miners who have had to stop working because of illness or are unemployed. They have also called for more free coal for the widows of miners.

"The party has been getting complaints regularly from people who, for various reasons, have not been getting the free coal they are entitled to.

"A memorandum is being prepared containing a list of former miners who worked in the industry the better part of their lives and are not getting their supply of coal. A demand is being raised to lower the level of disability required before former miners can receive free coal.

"The party also says that the miners of Wales should get free coal beginning at age fifty-five, as the miners in Lancashire [an English county] do. It has said that free coal should be given to those who have been forced to take jobs outside the coal industry because of illness or lack of work in the mines. At present there is no free coal for these miners, even though they may have spent forty years working underground."

QUÉ HACER?

"What Is To Be Done?" *Organ of the Socialist Workers Organization, a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International. Published fortnightly in San José, Costa Rica.*

"For a number of years there has been talk about the famous financier Robert Lee Vesco," an article in the March 20-April 9 issue began. "In 1974 thousands of signatures were gathered in support of his expulsion from the country. Later he was implicated in the financing of the National Liberation Party."

Vesco is wanted in the United States for embezzling \$224 million from a Swiss mutual fund and for making illegal contributions to Richard Nixon's presidential campaign. He fled to Costa Rica six years ago.

The National Liberation Party (PLN) government of Daniel Oduber refused to extradite Vesco. But in this year's presidential elections, Rodrigo Carazo of the bourgeois opposition defeated the PLN's candidate. Carazo's first act on taking office was to ban Vesco from the country. In his inauguration speech Carazo vowed that Costa Rica would "cease to be a haven of fugitives from justice."

"Why all the commotion about Vesco?" *Qué Hacer?* asked.

"In the first place, the Vesco case is a smokescreen for concealing the problems of the workers. It is an attempt to divert Costa Rican workers' attention. . . .

"The Socialist Workers Organization considers Vesco a capitalist linked to imperialist interests. We also think there are many Costa Rican 'Vescos' in the country—Costa Rican capitalists who exploit the workers. So we are not supporting Vesco. . . .

"On the other hand, this case also lends itself as a pretext for justifying a similar attitude toward other foreigners. And it is those foreigners that we certainly are

concerned and worried about. There are large numbers of foreign workers who find themselves in our country in the worst conditions and without documents. The most notorious case is that of Guanacaste, where the landlords hire Nicaraguan labor at a very cheap price. They pay no Social Security taxes, they give low wages, and they can dismiss the workers at any time. The same thing happens with Central American workers on the banana plantations and in the ports.

"It is these foreigners who are really threatened by the Vesco case. Using Vesco as a cover, decrees and laws can be adopted that will end up affecting the lives and working conditions of foreign workers, foreign peasants, and political exiles in our country. . . .

"It is no accident that the case against Vesco comes at precisely the same time that Public Security is installing a computer system to keep better track of foreigners entering and leaving and residing in the country. . . .

"The Costa Rican working class cannot fail to be concerned about any attack whatsoever on foreign workers or political exiles. Foreign workers and exiles are oppressed sectors, and the working class must take up all the demands and problems of all oppressed sectors, because among other things any attack on the democratic rights of anyone will always end up being turned against the working class."

CONVERGÊNCIA SOCIALISTA

"*Socialist Convergence.*" *Published every two months in São Paulo, Brazil.*

All of the articles in the March-April issue of this legal, openly distributed paper are devoted to reports on the second national meeting of Socialist Convergence, held in São Paulo March 19.

"There were 1,000 of us on that day—workers, students, political activists, professors, bank workers, professionals, intellectuals—all part of Socialist Convergence, struggling for our movement. . . .

"Delegations of socialists were present from Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, Paraná, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, Brasília, and São Paulo. Comrade Julio Tavares, one of the editors of *Versus* [a political-cultural monthly], representing the coordinating committee of Socialist Convergence, opened the meeting: 'We call on all socialists to unite, to debate, and to take up the organization of our future party. The origin of this movement must be sought in the necessity of a better future, in the maturing of the socialist and democratic forces. We do not accept the programs that fall from the sky—the workers will build their party as they will build their future.'"

Socialist Convergence was formed at a

meeting of 300 persons in São Paulo in January of this year. That meeting decided "to build a movement to centralize Brazilian socialists, one that would permit the development of common positions through systematic discussions and that would organize the common struggle for a socialist workers party." The response to this effort "exceeded the most optimistic expectations. Many letters arrived from young and old socialists from every corner of the country, offering their support and seeking to join the movement. . . . In less than a month the movement came into existence nationally."

The March 19 meeting was attended by representatives of opposition groups in the government-controlled trade unions, including metalworkers and chemical workers; student political groups such as Novo Rumor (New Course) and Ponto de Partida (Starting Point); artists; journalists; and members of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB), the only legal bourgeois opposition party.

"The workers from Santo André called for the creation of a General Confederation of Workers that would unite all Brazilian workers in the struggle for their rights. Independence of the unions from state tutelage, the fight against wage restrictions, and free collective bargaining were also points discussed by the worker delegates. . . .

"A group of artists and journalists from Brusque, Santa Catarina, expressed solidarity with Socialist Convergence and with the struggle for survival of the Blacks and Indians in Brazil. . . .

"The student tendency Novo Rumor of São Paulo called for building a socialist party truly of the workers and masses and truly democratic. For Novo Rumor, the main axis of struggle for socialists at this time is the conquest of democratic liberties. They also called for broad, general, and unrestricted amnesty. . . .

Several former members of the Socialist Party of Brazil, which was outlawed after the 1964 military coup, were present on the platform at the meeting.

The meeting adopted a program for Socialist Convergence consisting of twelve points. These include demands for total amnesty for political prisoners and exiles; for freedom of expression and the right to organize; for a democratic and sovereign constituent assembly; against wage restrictions; and against racial discrimination and the oppression of women. The program also calls for support to the struggles of Latin American workers, "especially those of Uruguay, Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, and Nicaragua"; support to the Black struggle in Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa; and support for a number of particular victims of the Geisel regime's repression, including "the women workers fired for participating in the First Congress of Metallurgical Women."

Finally, the program calls for formation

of a socialist tendency inside the MDB and for building Socialist Convergence Committees throughout the country.

rouge

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

In the May 11 issue, Alain Brossat describes the background of a trial that had just begun in Tahiti, in which seven nationalists are accused of assassinating a French businessman.

"The last political trial in [French] Polynesia was in 1972. At that time three Tahitians were charged, including Charlie Ching, one of those charged in the present case. The three had stolen French army ammunition. It was a purely symbolic act. The ammunition was unusable. The objective was to protest against atom bomb tests in the islands.

"Since that time, there have been more and more expressions of the exasperation felt by Polynesian youth, and these have taken very violent forms.

"In June and July 1977, bombs went off in a public-works concern. On August 12, 1977, the post office in Papete [the town where most of Tahiti's population is concentrated] was blown up. This happened at the time of a visit of Stirn, secretary of state for the overseas territories. . . .

"On January 14, 1978, about sixty inmates seized the Nuutania prison, shouting 'Long live independence,' 'Down with the atom bomb tests,' 'French, go home.' . . .

"Charlie Ching was accused of fomenting the prison rebellion.

"He is a well-known personality in Polynesia. He has long held intransigent nationalist positions. In the last legislative elections, while in prison, he got 2,100 votes [the population of the island group to which Tahiti belongs is about 85,000]. . . .

"The lives of four anticolonialist fighters are in danger [four of the seven are charged with first-degree murder]. Whatever we may think of the means they have chosen to use in their fight, we cannot let this trial go on without any public protests. We stand at the side of the Polynesian anticolonialists in demanding independence for those islands and an immediate halt to French atom bomb tests in the Pacific."

Hector Marroquin Defense Newsletter

Published in New York by the Héctor Marroquin Defense Committee.

"Literally thousands of letters, tele-

grams, petitions, and resolutions of support have flooded into the offices of Immigration and Naturalization Director Leonel Castillo since last fall when Héctor Marroquin initially filed his appeal for political asylum" in the United States, reports the first issue of the newsletter, dated June 1978.

Marroquin, a member of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance, is fighting efforts by the American government to deport him to Mexico, where he faces frame-up charges of "terrorism" because of his student political activity at the University of Nuevo León.

He fled Mexico in 1974, fearing imprisonment, torture, and possible death. Knowing that he can't get a fair trial in Mexico, he has requested political asylum in the United States.

Among the recent national and international developments in the case reported in the newsletter are the following:

- A face-to-face meeting in Washington March 21 between INS head Castillo and Marroquin and his supporters.

- A rally in New York March 19 attended by 250 persons, at which more than \$1,000 was raised to assist in defense efforts.

- A widely publicized picket of the U.S. embassy in San José, Costa Rica, April 5 demanding Washington grant Marroquin asylum.

- A speaking tour of the United States in defense of Marroquin by Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, founder of the National Committee to Defend Political Prisoners, the Politically Persecuted, "Disappeared," and Exiled, a nonpartisan group in Mexico.

- Statements in support of Marroquin's right to asylum by U.S. Congressmen Ronald Dellums and John Conyers.

"Simone de Beauvoir, singer Joan Baez, actor Ed Asner, Rep. John Conyers and hundreds more have thrown their support behind the fight to win political asylum for Héctor Marroquin," the editors state.

"You can help too. Here's how:

"Send a telegram or letter, urging that Héctor Marroquin be granted political asylum, to: Leonel Castillo, Director, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Washington, D.C. 20536."

Copies of such protests should be sent to the New York office of the defense committee at 853 Broadway, Suite 414, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Internationalen

"The International," central organ of the Communist Workers League (Swedish section of the Fourth International). Published weekly in Stockholm.

With the weakening of the international position of Swedish capitalism, calls have

been raised for higher tariff barriers to defend the "home market." Some class-collaborationist forces within the labor movement, including the Swedish Communist Party, have echoed such proposals.

In the April 28 issue of *Internationalen*, Göte Kildén takes up the question of protectionism and in particular the CP's support for it.

"The advocates of protectionism today in the workers movement have in essence lined up behind today's Master of the Royal Household* rather than advancing a socialist program against the economic crisis. In this respect, they are also helping to split the working-class movement along national lines.

"Characteristically, the calls are loudest for tariffs against those countries most exploited by the imperialists, including the Swedish imperialists. They overlook Sweden's role in oppressing these countries and stress instead the political oppression that exists there (all too quickly forgetting that the basis of it is imperialism), and then take this as a pretext for proposing protective tariffs.

"This kind of flimsy argument can also be found in *Ny Dag*, the paper of the Swedish CP.

"Our clothes are produced abroad, largely in reactionary countries that force their textile workers to make our shirts for starvation wages."

"But the alternative for the South Korean seamstresses, for example, is not that they can make clothes for themselves if Sweden follows the CP's advice and lowers the import quotas. . . . Instead, they would be still more poorly paid or not paid at all if their plant went out of business. *Ny Dag's* kind appeal for workers' solidarity with class sisters in South Korea is thinly veiled Great Swedish imperialist chauvinism. It is not very far from the old slogan of 'Sweden for the Swedes.'

"Nor can we accept the neoprotectionist trick proposed by the big national union federations. They call for a so-called social clause in trade deals. That is, Sweden should use tariffs to press for better social conditions for workers in other countries. This is to be aimed at dependent and oppressed countries but never to protest the absence of trade-union rights in the southern United States or racism in Great Britain.

"The workers movement in Sweden can and must, when possible, carry out short-term boycotts of products from a country or enterprise in cooperation with the workers there, for example to press for better wages or economic freedoms. But

*This refers to Hovmarskalken (Master of the Royal Household) Reuterswärd, the most prominent leader of the protectionist faction in the upper house of the Swedish parliament in the 1880s. —IP/I.

this is quite a different matter than if Burenstam-Linder avail themselves of a law of the type proposed when it suits the interests of capital.

"Those who prescribe protectionism against ordinary products likewise support the confused arguments about the need for protectionism against the commodity represented by labor power, that is, the demand for a complete halt to immigration and for deportations.

"We reject this. Instead of protectionism, we must offer solutions that are really solutions and in harmony with the interests of the workers. Together with our comrades in other countries, for example, we can fight for a shorter workweek with no cut in pay.

"It is scandalous that the big wheels in the Swedish labor movement are turning a deaf ear on this demand, which is spreading rapidly through the international union movement. Achieving this demand would mean throwing a wrench into the whole logic of the capitalist system.

"Naturally our alternative is not capitalist free trade, with the oppression and often senseless exploitation of resources—or brutal plundering of resources—that this involves. Capitalism has long since ceased to be progressive. Its historic mission was ended when competitive capitalism was replaced by imperialism.

"But the remedy for the destructive spasms of its death agony is not the reactionary utopia of the Master of the Royal Household. Instead of vainly trying to turn the course of history backward, we must try to steer it forward! The alternative to protectionism is socialist planning on a world scale, in which the international division of labor can be maintained and further developed without being grotesquely distorted by the market forces as it is now."

FORWARD

Revolutionary socialist newspaper published monthly in Kingston, Jamaica, by the Revolutionary Marxist League.

The lead article in the April 27-May 26 issue reports on the recent mass protest against the "democratic socialist" Manley government:

"On April 17, thousands of people from West Kingston's ghettos—especially the youth—turned the streets of that area into a battlefield as they fought soldiers and police, looted stores of some of the things they need and cannot otherwise afford, drove and mashed up the JOS buses which they hate, and marched and demonstrated for 4 hours, demanding work.

"At the end of the day, 3 youths had been killed by the police, and 6 other people injured by gunshots, including 2

policemen. Seventeen JOS buses had been damaged.

"The rebellion of April 17 was the biggest since that of October 16, 1968. On that date, the masses of Kingston took over a march by University students protesting the JLP [Jamaican Labour Party] Government's banning of radical historian Walter Rodney, and turned the city upside down, causing \$2 million damage.

"The events of April 17 were sparked off by a police attack on a 3,000 strong JLP-led demonstration of West Kingston people, who had blocked several roads in that community as a protest against the filthy conditions in the area, and in support of demands for work. The demonstrators fought the police with bottles and stones, and shots were fired.

"The demonstration had been staged by Seaga and the JLP to embarrass the PNP [People's National Party, Manley's ruling party], and increase their own support in West Kingston. But when the battle with the beasts started, their plan backfired. The demonstrators exploded in anger and violence, and began moving on their own. They ignored Seaga's request that they remove the barricades and go home as 'the demonstration has served its purpose.' Crowds spread throughout West Kingston. . . .

"[The capitalist rulers] hastily fled the city and closed it down, moved hundreds of police and soldiers into the downtown area and declared a 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew.

"Why the ghetto masses rebelled should be clear. They want jobs, decent housing, skill-training and clean communities. *And they want them now!*"

la brèche

Twice-monthly French-language organ of the Revolutionary Marxist League, published in Lausanne, Switzerland.

A front-page editorial in the April 29 issue reports that a victory has been won in the campaign against the ban prohibiting Marxist economist Ernest Mandel from entering Switzerland. The ban, which had been in effect since January 1971, has now been lifted and Mandel, a leader of the Fourth International, is free to fill speaking engagements in Switzerland.

"Made to look ridiculous by 'telephone' meetings organized on several occasions by the Revolutionary Marxist League and confronted by a campaign that involved broad fringes of the organized workers movement (including the CP and SP in some cantons)," the editors note, the government was forced to retreat.

"It is also true," they point out, "that the banning order was a little too flagrant a violation of the 'free circulation of ideas and persons' guaranteed in the Helsinki accords signed by the Swiss bourgeoisie so

as to give themselves a Carter-type image on human rights."

marka

ACTUALIDAD Y ANALISIS

A weekly magazine of news and analysis. Published in Lima, Peru.

Among the exiled political figures who recently returned to Peru after the government decreed an amnesty were the leaders of the Revolutionary Socialist Party (PSR), a group organized in November 1976 by a number of former high officials in the Velasco Alvarado military regime.

Marka interviewed Rafael Roncagliolo, one of the exiled PSR leaders and the president of the Federation of Peruvian Journalists, in its April 27 issue.

"In a certain sense," *Marka* told Roncagliolo, "the arrival at the airport of four retired high-ranking military officers belonging to the PSR, along with the fact that another six were there to receive them, has presented observers with a different image than the other one—more peasant, generally more of the people—that we have been accustomed to seeing from your party."

Roncagliolo first responded by thanking *Marka* for providing coverage of the PSR leaders' arrival and welcoming them back to Peru. "My second expression of gratitude," he continued, "is precisely to the progressive generals and admirals that came to meet us at the airport even though they do not belong to our party. Their presence is a demonstration of solidarity and friendship toward the leaders of the party that originated in the armed forces. . . ."

Roncagliolo went on to explain that it is the PSR's conviction that "the socialist revolution will be a revolution from below or it simply will not happen," and that the party is therefore placing top priority on activity among the workers and peasants. The PSR, he said, is seeking to forge a "new historic bloc" based on the "ideological hegemony of the workers."

"This ideological hegemony means winning . . . the 'intellectual and moral leadership' of Peruvian society. Gaining that leadership presupposes securing the adherence of other sectors of the people, and the partial or total support of such important institutions as the armed forces and the Catholic church. For this reason and in this sense we are neither an antimilitarist nor an anticlerical party, although we are certainly against the antinational and antipopular policy of the present government."

Marka also reported in its April 27 issue that, according to the Lima daily *La Prensa*, ex-premier, war minister and army commander Gen. Jorge Fernández Maldonado and ex-foreign minister Gen. Angel de la Flor Valle had joined the PSR.

Behind the Student Protests in Tanzania

By John Blair

A peaceful demonstration by students of the University of Dar es Salaam protesting against the new terms of service introduced for members of Parliament was broken up by police and the Field Force Unit (paramilitary) at Manzese, Dar es Salaam, on March 5. Later the same day hundreds of students who had made their way to the offices of the government-owned newspaper, *The Daily News*, were arrested and expelled from the University "by order of the government." In the following days more students were arrested on the campus and it is believed that several student leaders are being held for questioning.

The events of March 5 had been brewing for at least a year. In February 1977 a new vice chancellor was appointed at the university, Ibrahim Kaduna, who was previously the country's foreign minister. It soon became clear that he had a mandate to attempt to discipline an institution which has long been the leading centre in the country for critical analysis of the government. Notable in that regard were the magazine *Maji-Maji* produced by the TANU Youth League* on campus and a series of publications of the Tanzania Publishing House. The best known of the latter was *The Silent Class Struggle* by Issa Shivji.

Shortly after his appointment, Kaduna called a meeting of all Tanzanian staff at which he made clear the kind of university he intended to run. His speech included references to the undesirability of "foreign ideology" (i.e., Marxism). His next move, in April 1977, was to dismiss five academic and two administrative staff members. At first it was said that these had been "transferred" to other jobs. Later, however, it became clear that they had been "retired in the public interest." No reasons were given despite letters of protest from more than seventy teachers at the university and questions in Parliament by four MPs.

In late October and early November two groups of students were expelled for alleged disciplinary offences. Despite Kaduna's ruling against them, mass meetings and a two-day class boycott were organised in response to this. When the party intervened to conduct an enquiry however, the latter upheld the vice-chancellor's decisions almost totally.

*Tanzania African National Union, the ruling party since independence. Now CCM (Chama cha Mapinduzi—Revolutionary Association) since its amalgamation with the ASP (Afro-Shirazi Party of Zanzibar) in February 1977.

Around this time the term of office of the current "government" of DUSO (Dar University Students' Organisation) came to an end. The students refused to elect a new government, preferring representation by committees elected directly at mass meetings. Since then they have continued with this policy and have been represented by a "caretaker committee" of twelve which was deeply involved in the events of March 5.

On February 27, 1978, the *Daily News* reported that new terms and conditions of service for ministers and MPs had been approved by a session of Parliament held in Wete, Pemba. It is estimated that these will double the income of MPs in real terms. They will place them on a monthly salary of about \$360. (The national minimum wage is about \$34). Big increases in fringe benefits were also involved.

On the evening of March 4 the student caretaker committee called a mass meeting. It was agreed to draft a manifesto setting out the objections to this measure, to be taken by a mass march to the offices of the *Daily News* the next day.

On March 5 an estimated 1,500 persons left from the university. The column included students from the nearby Land Institute and Water Resources Institute. As they moved through the working-class areas of Morogoro Road their chanted slogans against the new pay rises attracted unanimous sympathy and support. When they reached Manzese, half-way to the city centre, they were confronted by a group of police and the Field Force Unit. When the students refused to disperse, tear

gas was fired into the dense crowd, which now included numbers of local people. In the confusion following this, many students returned to the campus, but hundreds of others made their way by bus and taxi to the newspaper's office in the centre of town.

Outside the office a senior police officer, supported by hundreds of others, announced that they were not allowed to read their petition there but that buses were provided to take them to see the president. The students were loaded onto buses accompanied by police and taken instead to Oyster Bay Police Station. After questioning, photographing, and fingerprinting, they were told they had been expelled from the university. Issued with travel warrants and accompanied by policemen, they were then placed on buses to their home areas, where they were delivered to the local party headquarters.

On the following morning the campus itself was full of police. An attempted boycott of examinations was cowed by their presence. They remained until March 9, making additional arrests of students for whom they were specifically searching—particularly members of the caretaker committee.

On March 11 the *Daily News* announced that the DUSO had been abolished by presidential order and that students would in future be represented by the party and its affiliated organisations alone. Thus any autonomous student representation at the University was to be ended.

On campus, meetings of the staff of the faculties of Arts, Social Science, and Law have all passed resolutions condemning the expulsions and defending the actions of the protesting students. As yet however there has been no sign of a climbdown by the government. Nor has there been any news confirming the precise identity of those arrested.

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'Breakaway: The Scottish Labour Party'

Reviewed by Martin O'Leary



Professor Drucker's book is a rather thoroughly researched history of what is now a dying party. At the end of 1975 two members of parliament—John Robertson (Paisley) and Jim Sillars (South Ayrshire)—left Britain's Labour Party to found their own. The new party—the Scottish Labour Party (SLP)—was to return to the socialist principles the Labour government had abandoned. It was also intended to fight on the national question in Scotland in a way Labour had never done.

In October 1976 the party split at its first conference. Trotskyists had participated in the party almost from its foundations. At the conference, held in the oddly opulent surroundings of the Golden Lion Hotel in Stirling, the party leaders decided to debate with Trotskyism by expelling suspect individuals and branches. As a result they lost about a third of the party. They earned the congratulations of Tory MPs. Their bureaucratic proceedings were splashed all over the Scottish press and television. It is hardly surprising that the SLP now has fewer members than the Scottish branches of the far-left Socialist Workers Party.

Professor Drucker discusses in great detail and with a high degree of accuracy the course of these events. His analysis of those facts, contrariwise, leaves a lot to be desired. He attributes two faults to the party.

One is, in effect, that its initial socialist pretensions were outdated and unlikely to attract electoral support. He suggests that the party should, as the Scottish Nationalist Party has, find its social basis in what he calls the "new Scotland of public administrators, teachers and privately-owned light industries." In other words, that it should have tried to be a middle-class rather than a working-class party.

Secondly, he castigates the party leadership for its obsession with elections. This is not difficult—their reverence for parliament and attention to election results was so great as to make them exclude any other kind of political activity whatsoever. However, Professor Drucker never suggests just what campaigns the party should have undertaken.

This admittedly would be difficult, since the only proposals for *action* by the party came from its left wing. And although Professor Drucker reports the positions of

the various participants in the party's faction fights, he is loath to depict differences over political programme as of real importance. Like a good Social Democrat, he prefers to explain the death of the party in terms of personalities.

At various points in the book he deals at

Breakaway: The Scottish Labour Party, by H. M. Drucker. Edinburgh: Lindsay & Co, 1978.

great length with the character of party leader Jim Sillars. What he says about this seems fair enough. It is, in effect, that Sillars is arrogant, bad-tempered and intolerant of criticism. Undoubtedly these personality traits helped add unpleasantness to the factional disputes. Still, it was not Sillars's neuroses but his politics that destroyed the SLP.

Sillars firmly believed that there was a space in Scottish politics for a left-wing nationalist party. He also seemed to think he would be able to win "left" figures from the SNP. The name of Margot MacDonald, famous for representing the SNP on TV, was often mentioned in this connection.

It is certainly true that socialists are required to support Scotland's right to self-determination. In the referendum soon to be held on whether a Scottish Assembly should be set up, socialists should argue for a YES vote. That is one thing. To see any hope for Scottish workers in the middle-class nationalists of the SNP is quite another.

The SNP seeks to settle the national question purely by wheeling and dealing in parliament. As a party of Scottish business it has no desire to see the working class becoming active—one thing can lead to another. In this both left and right of the party are together.

In fact, the left-right distinction is rather difficult to apply to the SNP. It would be difficult to state the precise political difference between "right winger" Douglas Henderson and "left winger" Margot MacDonald. It makes more sense to say that with control of Scottish government in its sights the party is already starting to squabble over the division of the spoils.

Sillars's views set him on the road to deals and blocs with the SNP. Leaving the Labour Party did not stop his being a

Social Democrat. But now he merely sells out to a bit of the ruling class instead of to all of it. For many, perhaps a majority, of those who joined his party this sort of thing was not all desirable. These people joined because they were genuinely interested in a left-wing alternative to the Labour Party. Thus almost from the word go Sillars was at loggerheads with a substantial proportion of his members.

The Trotskyists of the IMG in Scotland saw the formation of the SLP as a step forward. We considered that if the party could be convinced of the general policy of revolutionary socialism—which, granted its membership, was by no means impossible—then it would be an enormous asset to the Scottish working class. We realised that for the party to develop that way, the political ideas of its leaders would have to be fought. We decided to join the party to aid that process—our aim was to win the party as a whole to the ideas of our programme.

When Sillars banned IMG participation in the SLP we went a step further. Our members formally resigned from the IMG so that they could continue to build the SLP and struggle to set it on a correct course.

Technically this was not entryism. But politically it was. The IMG continued to advise and assist the Trotskyists in the SLP. While we were hoping for a fusion between ourselves and at least the majority of the SLP we did not prejudge the process by winding up our own apparatus.

Unfortunately, we underestimated the pace at which the faction fight with Sillars would develop. As a result, when the split came it was over an organisational issue—party democracy—and not over political programme. To be sure, resolutions incorporating a substantial proportion of a correct programme were sent to conference, notably from the Aberdeen branch. But the leadership did not fight on the grounds of these resolutions and we were unable to prevent it.

The lessons of the "French turn" undertaken by Trotskyists in the thirties in various countries are relevant. In such circumstances you don't fight on organisational questions, but on programme. You try to hold off a clash until such a fight

can take place. Once the bureaucrats begin expulsions and exclusions you run up your own banner and fight under that.

It is also necessary to prove your political points by involving the party in practical campaigning activity. We understood this but were slow to do it. After the split the problem became particularly acute in the expelled left wing. Because the split

had been on organisational questions there was huge political confusion in the SLP-LW. It could not be resolved by debate alone—and in the absence of campaigning activity many militants were lost by the way. Some perhaps had never broken with reformism at all but by no means were they all irredeemable.

If Sillars had been able to go his way

unimpeded he would have created a huge obstacle to the political development of the working class in Scotland. As it is, his party has been gutted and is not going to be able to play that role. For us the best outcome would have been if the SLP had been made an asset for the workers. But it is by no means a defeat that a potential threat has been neutralised. □

Castro's Role in Africa

Who Are Cuba's Troops Fighting For?

By Claude Gabriel

It is no longer possible to read an article on Black Africa in the international press without running across a refrain about "Soviet-Cuban expansionism." The imperialist bourgeoisie seems to have found a philosopher's stone for explaining its policies toward Africa, claiming that its aim is to defend the African peoples from "Communist bloc" aggression. After all, isn't Giscard d'Estaing's slogan "Africa for the Africans"? Similarly, the Western countries have shouldered the burden of a new mission—to protect the African continent from a deadly and diabolical campaign of destabilization.

After three years of talk about a "new international economic order" and a "north-south dialogue," the imperialist and neocolonial authorities reached agreement on a few reforms in the system of domination. The European-African solidarity pact was launched with a great deal of publicity as a "grand new idea."

"I hope that some day," Giscard declared in the Ivory Coast, "this complementary relationship between Europe and Africa will suddenly blossom into a pact of solidarity crowning the work of decolonization and opening a new era of solidarity." Ivorian President Félix Houphouët-Boigny rejoiced "as an African and a free man" that France had decided to oppose the "ideological confrontations that set Asians and Africans against each other."

In short, the most aggressive imperialist powers, like France, are now presenting themselves as the best defenders of peace. More nationalist than the African nationalists themselves, they are making thundering declarations about situations in Africa that must be protected from foreign meddling, whether "military or ideological."

To be sure, this fantastic bluff has won little credibility among the African masses, who have been able to ascertain very well, over a period of twenty years, that these beautiful principles are pure

nonsense. The intervention of Belgian forces in the Congo in 1960 and of French troops in Gabon in 1964, in Senegal in 1968, in Chad in 1970, and in Zaïre, Sahara, Chad, and Djibouti in 1977, as well as the proliferation of garrisons and military delegations, all give a good accounting of Western intentions in Africa.

As far as Soviet policy goes, it has never sparkled with clarity. The Soviet leadership's secret diplomacy, maneuvers, and eye-dropper aid to the liberation movements has hardly enhanced its credit among the new post-independence generation of politicians. China could likewise pride itself on being in a vanguard position of solidarity, having issued a few communiqués and granted some material aid. But since independence, the generalized crisis of the neocolonial states, the mounting struggles, and the radicalization of African youth have made the maneuvers of the bureaucratic leaderships in Moscow and Peking more complex.

Cuba in the Angolan Civil War

The Castroist leadership has enjoyed a certain prestige in central Africa since the time of Pierre Mulele's guerrillas in the former Belgian Congo and since the 1963 insurrection in Congo-Brazzaville, during which youth organizations appeared that explicitly claimed the mantle of Che Guevara. Nonetheless, the Cuban influence remained superficial among the nationalist factions.

During the liberation struggle in Angola, the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) appealed to Havana for supplementary military aid and medical assistance; most other aid came from the Soviet Union.

When the civil war erupted and the MPLA was challenged by a coalition of the FNLA, UNITA,¹ Zaïre, and South Africa,

1. Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola

the MPLA proved incapable of standing up to the military offensive of its adversaries. The troops of the Angolan People's Liberation Armed Forces—poorly armed, poorly organized, its regiments hastily formed from the Luanda militia—were incapable of fighting in positional warfare.

Contrary to the yarns later spun by the Western press, it was after South African troops had entered Angola that Moscow decided to increase military aid to the MPLA. Heavy armaments were sent in large quantities to help defend Luanda. But that alone could not suffice, given the extent of political disorganization within the MPLA camp. The conflicts among the neighborhood committees, the far-left groups, and the Neto leadership rendered the appeals for unity and discipline ineffective.

It was then that the first Cuban expeditionary corps arrived in Angola. It initially took charge of organizing and training the troops. But very quickly its ranks were enlarged and thousands of Cuban troops branched out into different tasks. Some went to the battle front, where they played a decisive role, and others reorganized the rear areas. The Cuban policy in Angola could give the illusion that the first aspect of its intervention seemed to be the essential one.

In face of the reactionary coalition, the masses of Luanda, Benguela, and Malange, who had mobilized in a particularly radical fashion, were in a weak position. The national leadership in which they placed their confidence had contributed greatly to their lack of preparation.

The Castroist leadership's opportunism at that time consisted of not making the slightest criticism of the MPLA leadership, and even of apologizing for it in such a

(Angolan National Liberation Front) and União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola).

way that the masses became still more firmly attached to the MPLA's coattails. Evidently, it was out of the question for the Cubans to aid in the formation of a genuine communist alternative leadership. At the very most, they maintained complex relations with different factions in the MPLA apparatus, before returning definitively to the dominant faction of Neto and Lucio Lara.²

As early as August 1975, when the MPLA leadership began to repress the far left, there was no longer any doubt that the Cuban high command supported this policy.

In late 1975 and the beginning of 1976, when the enemy began to pull back and the task of reconstructing the Angolan economy came to the fore, the Cubans took a decisive part in running enterprises and ministries. There, in the name of efficiency and under the slogan of "produce and resist," they showed no apprehension about becoming the best agents for overseeing the workforce and "national reconstruction." The Castroist leadership no longer concealed its desire to build a strong state, side by side with the MPLA.

The institutionalization of the neighborhood committees confirmed the bourgeois nature of that state. The Angolan economy, despite the nationalization of the Portuguese investments, remains dominated by the oil and diamond sectors controlled by the American and European imperialists and by the South African capitalists. It is therefore a bourgeois state and a neocolonial economy that the Cubans have helped to stabilize.

When a faction of the bureaucracy led by Nito Alves attempted an adventurist coup against the Netoist leadership of the MPLA in May 1977, it was Cuban troops who helped reestablish order.

Today, at least for the moment, Angola has dropped from the headlines. But everything indicates that it will return, placing Cuban policy in a delicate position. Without thousands of Cubans, without the Soviet and East German technicians, the Angolan state amounts to very little. With South African aid, the UNITA retains a strong position in central and southern parts of the country.

The Cuban campaign "against the foreign invasion" achieved a certain success. In face of the invasion, and to counter all the opposition forces, the Angolan leadership, with the aid and inspiration of the Soviets, Cubans, and East Germans, has created a police state worthy of classical Stalinist methods. The prisons, the politi-

cal police, and the omnipotent state bureaucracy are little by little forging a strong anticommunist sentiment among the masses. This is no small paradox in view of the radical level of consciousness among the urban workers during the civil war of 1975.

From Angola to Ethiopia

The Cuban presence in Angola, as everyone knows, became a hot item in the proimperialist press. The defenders of "Pax Americana" denounced it as a new "Prague coup"! The Cubans were everywhere, the entire continent was tilting toward the Communist camp. Such was the cartoon-strip image painted daily by those who kept silent for so many years about the imperialist plunder of the continent.

A great fear then gripped the imperialists over Zimbabwe, where an armed struggle was developing against the racist regime of Ian Smith. Western diplomats stormed about and threatened to intervene if Cuban troops ever left Angola for the Rhodesian front. It did not matter that Havana had several times denied any intention to do so.

It was, in fact, toward the Horn of Africa, in Ethiopia, that the Castroist leadership turned its attention.

Since the downfall of Emperor Haile Selassie, a series of political crises and social confrontations developed in Ethiopia. The peasants and urban masses mobilized against all that survived of the old regime and initiated, here and there, very radical struggles that threw up their own forms of organization.

The Maoist far-left grew rapidly but split into several organizations, of which the two main ones, Me'ison and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party, ended up by violently attacking each other. The old feudalists and those layers far to the right of the state apparatus joined the ranks of the EDU.³

The ruling military junta, the Dergue, split into diverse factions and experienced a series of palace coups and settlements of accounts.

The empire of Menelik⁴ is going through a process of fragmentation. The oppressed nationalities are revolting against the central power. The Eritrean liberation fronts are advancing little by little toward the regional capital of Asmara.

The arrival of the first Cubans in Ethiopia was announced at the end of 1976. The contingent was quickly strengthened as

soon as Somalian troops achieved some rapid victories in the Ogaden and advanced toward the railway between Addis Ababa and Djibouti. An extensive Soviet airlift then furnished the Dergue with heavy weapons, which Soviet and Cuban advisers put into operation before the launching of the victorious counteroffensive of March 1978.

Within a period of a few months, we have seen a spectacular shift of alliances in the region. At the beginning, Somalia served as a Soviet beachhead. Siad Barre, the Somali head of state, was considered a model "progressive" military figure. The "Somalian revolution" was regularly hailed in the Stalinist press.

In Ethiopia, within the Dergue, the contesting factions proposed very diverse international alliances.

Under constant pressure from the mass movement and confronted with a breakdown of the state apparatus and the economy, the Ethiopian officers were split over what solutions to adopt. But the petty-bourgeois nature of this leadership greatly limited its political and economic options. Against those tendencies that considered it necessary to crush the mass movement outright and rely directly on imperialism, the "radical" tendency in the Dergue, led by Mengistu, gradually imposed itself following a bloodbath conducted among the ranks of the junta.

Mengistu's policy consisted of gradually integrating the organizational forms of the mass movement within the state apparatus, transforming their character in the process. In doing so, he achieved legitimacy vis-à-vis the masses at relatively little cost, strengthened his power at the expense of the left, and presented himself as a Bonaparte. He conceded a certain number of demands, spouted populist rhetoric, and proclaimed his adherence to socialism. He finally effected a dramatic reconciliation with Moscow in hopes of obtaining Soviet economic and military aid.

In the end Mengistu hopes to rebuild the state apparatus and also be able to disarm the militias, "normalize" the unions, and rebuild the economy. Only an alliance with the Soviet bureaucracy allows him to do all that. Even more, the borrowed ideology of Stalinism gives the uniformed political adventurers a minimum degree of cohesion in order to construct a bureaucratic state, to establish an economy divided between openings toward foreign capital and nationalizations of some sectors, and to regiment the masses.

There can be no doubt that in order to prevent the Ethiopian revolution from going much further, Mengistu's solution is the best. The mass movement has already receded. Me'ison, which gave the junta "critical support," has had to go into opposition.

The recent victory against the Somalians will probably allow the Soviets and

2. For its part, the Fourth International supported the camp of the MPLA against the imperialist intervention, while continuing to make clear its criticisms of the MPLA's petty-bourgeois leadership and program. It called for the formation of a revolutionary party and expressed its solidarity with the victimized activists of the far left.

3. Ethiopian Democratic Union, an armed rightist group.

4. Emperor Menelik II, who ruled from 1889 to 1913, carried out a series of conquests of the Oromos, Somalis, and other peoples, greatly expanding the area ruled by his Amharic dynasty.—IP/I

Cubans to turn toward the task of "peaceful" reconstruction of the state apparatus.

But as compared to the case in Angola, the Cubans find themselves in a more delicate position in Ethiopia. On one hand, the Ethiopian left is far stronger than the Angolan oppositionists were. Even without a change in the relationship of forces, it is at least foreseeable that the resistance may grow considerably stiffer. On the other hand, the Cubans can no longer use the argument that what is involved is a national liberation struggle and intervention against a proimperialist bloc like the FNLA-UNITA alliance. It is intervening on the side of a *ruling* military leadership in conflict with Somalia.

In this sense, the Cuban intervention against the Eritrean people and against the Ethiopian people's committees can be seen quite clearly. Conscious of this, the Castroist leadership proposes a solution to the national question. It advocates a "socialist federation" of states in the Horn of Africa, where previously it supported the Eritreans and the Somalian regime. This proposal has no chance of being realized. But it once again permits a recognition of the old centralist theories that run counter to the democratic measures demanded by the oppressed populations.

In a way, the Cubans rely on the reactionary regimes in the region to satisfy the demands of the peoples of Eritrea and the right to self-determination of the inhabitants of the Ogaden. The struggle for the satisfaction of these demands being part and parcel of the struggle for a socialist revolution in the region, Havana and Moscow denounce it as a "proimperialist theory" aimed at balkanizing Africa. In doing so, they repeat the arguments of the charter of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

Castro Raises Revisionism to the Level of Theory

During the Angolan crisis, the Cubans had at first provided some basis for belief in their independence vis-à-vis Soviet policy. When Moscow, in unison with all the African states, displayed some sensitivity to the discussions of the OAU, Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, one of the most prominent Stalinists within the Cuban leadership, clearly explained that whether or not the Cubans would remain in Angola would be determined solely by Cuba's relationship with the MPLA leadership.

But despite these declarations, it quickly became clear that the Cuban intervention could not have taken place without the Soviet arms shipments and economic aid. The division of labor between the Cubans and Soviets (or East Germans) does not conceal a different policy. It developed for the most part as a result of contact with the masses; the Cubans were in some ways more "militant" than the Soviets, whose

behavior is traditionally detested by the population.

In March 1977, when Podgorny (at that time still the Soviet head of state) made a visit to southern Africa, Fidel Castro stopped off in several African capitals, including those in Angola, Somalia (!), and Ethiopia. The synchronization of the two trips symbolizes the broad collaboration that has been established between Havana and Moscow in this domain.

Several months later, the conflict in the Ogaden confirmed that the Cuban operation in Angola was not simply a one-shot effort. By their visits to Addis Ababa, the highest Cuban officials sought to underline the importance of their involvement in that part of the world.

In an interview given to the Paris journal *Afrique-Asie* and published in the May 16, 1977, issue, Castro outlined his views on the situation in Africa and on Cuban policy in the region.

The document is extremely important for analyzing Castro's policies. It confirms both the opportunism and the "astuteness" of the Cuban prime minister in his political characterizations of this or that regime. In carefully chosen formulations, he defends his support to bourgeois regimes by classifying them in essentially idealistic and subjective terms. His aim is both to justify the present situation, and to anticipate the future evolution of some of the states in question:

We will remain in Angola as long as necessary, in agreement with the sovereign government of that *sister* nation, in order to contribute to the defense of the country and to consolidate its independence against all threats of aggression, no matter what their source. . . .

Africa is the weakest link in the imperialist chain today. . . . There are excellent perspectives there for going directly from tribalism to socialism, without having to go through certain stages that other regions of the world had to experience. As revolutionaries, we have the duty to support the anti-imperialist, antiracist and antineocolonialist struggle.

Africa is very important today. Imperialist domination isn't as strong there as in Latin America. *Therefore*, there are real *possibilities* for the *revolution* in Africa. . . .

The struggle in Latin America continues to be a hard one, because the bourgeoisie controls everything: the economy, the universities, the press, all aspects of national life. This *phenomenon* doesn't exist in Africa, where there isn't any bourgeoisie as such. . . .

The course taken by FRELIMO⁵ is a *truly* revolutionary one. FRELIMO is clearly a very revolutionary, very serious organization that is working hard to build socialism. . . .

At first, I did not foresee going to Ethiopia. But the unexpected events of last February 3 and the eruption of the conflicts between the Ethiopian right and left, with Mengistu Mariam at the head of the revolution, led us to send a delegation to make contact with that country. . . .

5. Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Mozambique Liberation Front).

I think there are certain similarities between the Ethiopian Revolution and the French and Bolshevik Revolutions. . . . The February 3 events have been decisive. That was when the left and the true leaders of the Revolution took control and the process was directed along revolutionary lines.

I've gotten to know Mengistu very well. He is a serene, intelligent, daring and courageous man, and I think that he has exceptional qualities as a revolutionary leader. . . .

Let me repeat that I think that Mengistu is a *true* revolutionary and that the revolution now being developed in Ethiopia is a *true* revolution [emphasis added throughout].⁶

Castro thus makes an erroneous analysis of the African social formation ("there isn't any bourgeoisie as such"). He fails to make any social characterization of the regimes that he supports and remains silent on the question of petty-bourgeois nationalism and the maintenance of the laws of the market. He characterizes particular leaders as "true" revolutionaries and calls attention to "courses" leading to "true" revolutions.

In relation to Ethiopia, Castro not only repeated the official arguments of the Dergue placing all opposition in the reactionary camp, but added that it was the victory of the "left" wing of the army over the "right" wing that put the country "on the revolutionary path."

Cuba and Peaceful Coexistence

In 1977, when troops of the National Liberation Front of the Congo attacked Shaba, the major international press followed Mobutu's lead in denouncing the presence of Cubans and Soviets. At first glance, this seemed to show a lack of understanding of the difficulties Moscow and Havana encountered in their efforts to rebuild the Angolan economy and state. Destabilization of the Zaïrian regime would have created such chaos in the region that the Soviet-Cuban policy in Angola would have become unfeasible.

But more interesting in this period were the statements of Andrew Young, the American ambassador to the United Nations, who declared outright, "The only thing I'm thinking is, don't get paranoid about a few Communists—even a few thousand Communists."

So things are more political than the anti-Cuban tirades of the proimperialist press would indicate. If the choice was between socialist revolution or a Bonapartist, populist regime supported by the Soviets and Cubans, that's an easy one for any bourgeois leader.

In February 1978, Carlos Rafael Rodríguez echoed these statements. He told *Le Monde* that "Cuba does not aid subver-

6. Major excerpts from the interview in *Afrique-Asie* also appeared in the May 22, 1977, issue of the English-language weekly edition of *Granma*, the official organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba.—IP/1

sion, but on the contrary participates, as the American ambassador to the United Nations admitted, in an effort of stabilization, or struggle against subversion!"

To be sure, the policy of peaceful coexistence does not signify that either of the two camps considers the relationship of forces between imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy to be immutable. The world status quo does not mean that the diplomatic map is fixed once and for all.

On the contrary, imperialism and the Stalinist bureaucracy are engaged in a sharp battle for influence and the Soviets are perfectly capable of rushing into a breach that imperialism is incapable of filling. In the last analysis, however, such intervention is in no way aimed at aiding the rise of a socialist revolution, but to the contrary at stabilizing the situation and blocking the unfolding anticapitalist developments. The payoff for this policy is the utilization by the Soviets, for a certain length of time, of economic and diplomatic advantages gained in this way in one country or another.

But overall the Soviets are not the masters of the game. To conduct such a policy, they must tail behind the bourgeois or petty-bourgeois leaderships to whom Soviet aid is temporarily necessary. Once the indigenous leaderships have passed through their rough times, an alliance with imperialism will appear to them as a better and more secure guarantee against the mass movement. The Soviets are thus forced to continually reexamine their whole system of alliances in a continent like Africa.

Such continual shifts are not, as the Western press pretends to think, the result of calculated cynicism and crafty maneuvers on the part of the Soviets. In fact, it follows from their attachment to "peaceful coexistence."

In this sordid game, the Chinese have demonstrated their ability to compete with the Soviets in the field of opportunism. Over the past few years the Soviets have skillfully managed to milk the advantage of happening to be on the progressive side, while the Chinese, as in Angola, ended up in the same camp with the CIA and South African advisers. This does not, however, alter the identical character of their policies.

The Cuban leadership, according to the old theory that "the friends of my friends are my friends," followed this course and stuck to the twists and turns of Soviet policy.

Of course, the political nature of a working-class leadership cannot be defined simply through an examination of its foreign policy. But it is necessary to recognize that the sending of several thousand troops and civilians to Africa is no longer just a matter of foreign policy. Such a human levy must in some way correspond to internal economic or political necessities.

Consequently, discussion of the Cuban policy in Africa is part of a much larger debate on the present nature of the Castroist leadership and on the degree of bureaucratization of the Cuban state. Cuban policy already includes discussions with American imperialism aimed at lifting the economic blockade.

What we have here is very far from a policy of proletarian internationalism, even if such a policy does not exclude beforehand tactical support to nationalist leaderships against imperialism.

That is why the imperialists oscillate between anti-Cuban hysteria and more realistic assessments. What the West clearly dreads is not an anticapitalist intervention by the Cubans in Angola, Ethiopia, or elsewhere. What they fear, as in the case of Angola, is that a defeat for reaction will encourage the combativity of the African masses. They remember very well that the setbacks suffered by the South Africans preceded the Soweto uprisings.

The defeat of the MPLA in Angola would have led to the physical liquidation of the urban mass movement and upset all of Moscow's diplomatic arrangements in central and southern Africa. It would have been a big victory for imperialism.

On the other hand, the MPLA's victory, with Cuban aid, permitted the Neto leadership to integrate the people's formations and reestablish the authority of the nationalists. The social dynamic was thus checked, while at the same time reinforcing Soviet diplomacy in the region.

In the case of Ethiopia, assistance to a military junta *in power* is involved.

The Mengistu faction is threatened on all sides, even from within the Dergue itself. The instability is so great that imperialism has hesitated to directly aid Somalia. Working through Saudi Arabia, for example, the Western capitals hold other cards, such as the overthrow of Mengistu and the installation in Addis Ababa of a team more open to American

pressure. But the Dergue as a whole, including Mengistu, is not opposed to a compromise with Washington.

The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) has on several occasions published communiqués denouncing Cuban aid to the Ethiopian troops whom they are fighting. This is a significant fact since the EPLF has traditionally had good relations with Havana.

The reduction in American aid to the Dergue did not result fundamentally from the Cuban presence or from Mengistu's "socialism." It stemmed from Washington's belief that Mengistu was incapable of really opposing the masses.

Carter estimates that the nefarious relations between Addis Ababa and Moscow endanger American diplomatic dominoes in the region.

The meetings between Siad Barre, the Somalians, and imperialist officials prove once again that the number of Soviet experts who worked there previously for the "Somalian revolution" did not change the character of this type of regime or the capitalist nature of its economy.

Cuba intervened in Ethiopia at the same moment that Mengistu moved into action against the autonomy of the Ethiopian masses. To aid Mengistu is, in the final analysis, to back this political aim. It does not advance the class and national liberation struggles in the Horn of Africa by one inch. It allows the Dergue to easily adopt a "progressive" image and reinforces the most adventurist Maoist theories among the youth.

This pushes the Cuban troops toward a dangerous dynamic—to keep the Ethiopian troops from suffering the slightest defeat on any front so as to avoid giving the impression that they themselves have been beaten.

Yesterday, the Cubans confronted Somalian troops. Tomorrow it could be the Eritreans or activists of the Ethiopian left. Such a policy cannot be supported in any way. It must be condemned. □

Prisoners' Protests Spread in Brazil

Street demonstrations in support of a hunger strike by political prisoners took place in a number of cities in Brazil on May 4. Protests were reported in São Paulo, Recife, Rio de Janeiro, and Belo Horizonte.

The actions were organized by relatives of prisoners, student and religious organizations, and pro-amnesty groups to demand the release from solitary confinement of Rholine Sonde Cavalcanti and Carlos Alberto Soares. The two have been held in isolation at the Professor Barreto Campelo Penitentiary in Itamaracá since September 1975. They are serving life sentences.

Political prisoners at Itamaracá began a hunger strike April 17 in support of Cavalcanti and Soares. The strike spread to involve some eighty-one prisoners in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Recife, São Salvador, and Fortaleza. All fifteen prisoners at Itamaracá have been transferred to a military hospital, where they are refusing medical treatment and accepting only sugar and water.

Amnesty International sent a cable to Brazilian President Geisel on May 4 demanding that he act to meet the demands of the hunger strike. Federal officials have maintained that the matter is up to authorities in the state of Pernambuco.

The National People's Congress and the New Constitution

By Kai Chang

[The following article appeared in the April 1 issue of *October Review*, a Chinese-language Trotskyist monthly magazine published in Hong Kong. The translation is by Reed.]

* * *

The first session of the Fifth National People's Congress of China was held from February 26 to March 5. The congress, according to its usual practice, fulfilled its task of providing its seal of approval. This time it was to adopt a new constitution and the "Report on the Work of the Government," given by Hua Kuo-feng; confirm Hua's appointment as premier of the State Council; and "endorse" the list of members of the State Council proposed by the CCP [Chinese Communist Party]. All of these documents and proposals were submitted by the Central Committee of the CCP, after they had been decided on by the Second Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee, called three days before the People's Congress. The congress "unanimously adopted" these measures.

Thus the decisions of the National People's Congress—and even those of the Central Committee plenum—were purely formal "endorsements" of the decisions made by the CCP Politburo.

The CCP leadership even spoke frankly of such a role for the National People's Congress. Hua Kuo-feng, at the Second Plenary Session of the party Central Committee, said it was the "historic duty" of the Fifth National People's Congress to "hold high the great banner of Chairman Mao, [and] implement the party line formulated at its Eleventh National Congress."¹

This means that the only duty of the National People's Congress, which is defined in the constitution as the "highest organ of state power," is to carry out the CCP's line.

The People's Congress this time was different from previous ones, in that it was announced to the people beforehand, not after it was over. The deputies were said to have been elected by the people on a proportional basis [i.e., each deputy representing a fixed number in the population] and democratically, but how this was carried out was not announced. As in the past, these deputies were "elected" after local CCP power-holders had held consultations, in accord with directives from the center.

Official reports said the congress deputies were elected by People's Congresses in the provinces, municipalities, and autonomous regions, but they did not reveal how the delegates to these meetings were elected.

One point is more definite. It was reported that 26.7 percent of the congress deputies were workers. This does not mean that these deputies were elected by the workers in the basic units (factories and mines) in proportion to the workers' numbers. In fact, those included by the CCP in this category of "worker deputies" needed only to have a factory, mine, or enterprise as their work unit. The majority of them were actually cadres. It is probable that a minority were model workers, but not ordinary workers.

The army was represented by 503 deputies. The units on whose behalf they voted were composed of troops, but it was not reported whether or not they had been elected democratically by soldiers at the grass-roots level. (Indeed, if they had been directly elected the

official newspaper would have loudly propagandized the fact.)

The PLA [People's Liberation Army], with 4 million members, comprises about 0.5 percent of the country's population. But it received 14.4 percent of the deputies.

Shanghai is the largest industrial city in the country, with a population of 10.82 million; it had 184 deputies, which amounted to 5.2 percent of the total. This comes to one deputy for every 59,000 people. Peking has a population of 7.57 million.² But it had 217 deputies, or one for every 35,000 people. What was the numerical basis of representation on which the deputies were elected to the congress? Why isn't this spelled out in black and white and announced to the people, as was done with the deputies to the soviets in the USSR in Lenin's days? (As for the People's Congress in China, it has a completely different content from the soviets of Lenin's time. That fact is clear: there is abundant evidence that China lacks a system of proletarian democracy. As for the USSR, its democratic soviet system was also transformed into a bureaucratic system by Stalin after Lenin's death.)

Report on the Work of the Government

The "Report on the Work of the Government" given by Hua Kuo-feng, though lengthy (35,000 words, which took three and a half hours to read to the congress), was mostly party formulas and contained no concrete report at all on what the government has done for the last three years. Not only did it not reveal any statistics for industrial and agricultural production today, it did not even give percentages compared to three years ago.

But Hua did give some startling figures: between 1974 and 1976 "the nation lost about 100 billion yuan [US\$52 billion] in total value of industrial output, 28 million tons of steel, and 40 billion yuan [US\$20.8 billion] in state revenues, and the whole economy was on the brink of collapse."

These things, however, were not taken as showing mistakes in the government's work, but instead the blame was put entirely on the "interference and sabotage of the gang of four."

Let us take a look at the official reports during the above period. At the Fourth National People's Congress in January 1975, Chou En-lai reported:

We . . . will successfully fulfill the Fourth Five-Year Plan in 1975. Our country has won good harvests for thirteen years running. The total value of agricultural output for 1974 is estimated to be 51 percent higher than that for 1964. . . . Gross industrial output for 1974 is estimated to be 190 per cent more than 1964, and the output of major products has greatly increased. Steel has increased 120 per cent.³

If this report is truthful, then the "destruction" did not happen in 1974.

In October 1975, at the National Conference on Learning from Tachai in Agriculture, Hua Kuo-feng, as a member of the Politburo and vice-premier, reported:

As a result of . . . the destroying of the two bourgeois headquarters of Liu Shao-chi and Lin Biao, Chairman Mao's revolutionary line has achieved brilliant successes on all fronts and the consciousness of the cadres and

1. "Communiqué of the Second Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China," *People's Daily*, February 24, 1978.

2. The population figures for the two cities are cited from *Maps of China*, Xin Hua Bookstore, 1973.

3. *Peking Review*, January 24, 1975.

people in class struggle and the two-line struggle has risen to unprecedented heights.⁴

He then gave a number of concrete figures. If this report is also truthful, then up to October 1975, the national economy was still in a "very favorable" situation.

Three months later (January 1976), Hua Kuo-feng was promoted from vice-premier to acting premier; and after four more months, he was even promoted to the first vice-chairmanship of the party and the post of premier. If the "gang of four" had caused such extraordinary destruction in the first ten months of 1976, then how could Hua Kuo-feng, the chief person responsible in the party and the government at the time, shift the entire responsibility to them and spare himself from any self-examination before the National People's Congress?

And how is it that the majority of the Politburo members, who were also the majority of the Politburo during the previous three years, and who were, with the exception of those who have died, or been liquidated, all present at today's National People's Congress, also escaped from bearing responsibility or making a self-criticism? Did they strenuously object to all the Politburo resolutions of those days; and were those resolutions, then, adopted only by the "gang of four," which was a minority?

Moreover, it has been sixteen months since the "gang of four" was overthrown. But the work of the government during this period was explained to the people in only a few vague words. This leniency to the highest leadership is in striking contrast to the harsh requirements placed on the people.

Hua's report elaborated all of the country's tasks in detail and everyone was required to achieve greater, faster, better, and more economical results in fulfilling them.

In October 1976, Hua Kuo-feng announced that the struggle to expose and criticize the "gang of four" was to be the central task of the country and its people in 1977. But, sixteen months later, i.e., sixteen months after Hua centralized all the power of the party and the government in his own hands, he still made the exposure and criticism of the "gang of four" "the primary task for the people of our country at present and for some time to come" and a "more arduous and long-term task."

This means that the task is far from being fulfilled after the one year he had set earlier. This is also an admission that the "great, glorious, and correct Communist Party of China," under his "wise" leadership, after such a long time has still proven ineffective in exposing and criticizing four notorious, unpopular persons.

One reason for this is that today's leaders do not dare to criticize and expose openly the patron and soul of the "gang of four"—Mao Tsetung and his wrong policies.

Another reason is that after the Cultural Revolution and the long-term factional struggles, the basis of the CCP's rule has been severely impaired and its prestige among the people has been withering.

The party is divided by opposing factions. The discontented masses demand democratic rights and improvements in their living conditions. They reject the oppression by the bureaucracy and thus come into continuous clashes with it. The power-holders combat opposition from all sides by labeling people "followers of the 'gang of four.'" As a result, the purge cannot get rid of them all, so the criticism has to continue. The fact that the power-holders continue to consider these struggles "the primary task" suggests that the struggles are seething; the ruling power is challenged and its position is far from secure.

The General Task and the Ten-Year Plan

In his report, Hua stressed the rapid development of the economy. The general task for the new period is to make China "a modern, powerful socialist country by the end of the century." The aim is:

By the end of this century, the output per unit of major agricultural products is expected to reach or surpass advanced world levels and the output of major industrial products to approach, equal or outstrip that of the most developed capitalist countries.

To achieve this, Hua put forward the Ten-Year Plan. By 1985, grain production will reach 400 million metric tons, and the value of agriculture is to increase by 4 to 5 percent each year; the value of industrial output is to increase by over 10 percent a year, and the increase in the output of major industrial products in the eight years will far exceed that in the past twenty-eight years; by 1985 there will be 60 million tons of steel produced.

Hua called the Fifth National People's Congress two years ahead of schedule mainly to make use of the national "democratic" form to issue the order for starting a new "long march" in economic construction.

The plan's targets are very inspiring (although they do not take account of average figures for population growth. With the superiority of the new social system built in China after the revolution, and, in addition, with such favorable conditions as a large population, a big country, and rich natural resources, the plan could be realized, if carried out under a correct policy. The projected growth rate is high, but it is nothing like the flamboyant and highly impractical figures of the 1958 Great Leap Forward period (such as annual increases of several tenths or even 100 percent).

But what are the concrete results of the past twenty years of industrial and agricultural production? Since 1960, the government, in contrast to its practice for the first decade of New China, has not published any overall statistics. Thus the people of China are prevented from knowing the exact rate of development of the national economy. However, judging from fragmentary figures and estimates, the development for the past twenty years has been very disappointing.

Take, for example, the production of grain. In 1957 it was 185 million metric tons; in 1958 it was reported to be 250 million tons. Chou En-lai estimated to Edgar Snow that the 1970 harvest was 240 million tons. In 1975 it was reported to be 280 million tons, but in 1977, official estimates gave a figure of about 250 million tons. Thus in comparison with 1957, the total increase for the twenty years was about 50 percent, i.e., an average annual rate of increase of about 2 percent, which was behind the rate of increase of the population for the same period.

As for the production of steel, it was 13.35 million tons in 1959 and 18 million tons in 1970, an increase of one-third in nine years. The estimated figure for 1977 was 25 million tons, an increase of about 40 percent in seven years. The increase in these two major products is not high, particularly for grain.

In 1959, the CCP put forward the slogan of "catching up with Britain in ten years," and at that time it was projected that this could be accomplished. In reality, twenty years later, this goal has not yet been reached. What caused the failure? What impeded high-speed development? Have these causes been overcome, or will they cease to operate in the future?

The report [by Hua] seemed to contend that these failures had all been caused by the "interference and sabotage" of Liu Shao-ch'i, Lin Piao, and the "gang of four." Now that they have been purged, the national economy can proceed to develop at high speed in the future. In fact, the problem does not lie in the individual leaders. During the period from 1960 to 1965 when he was in power, Liu Shao-ch'i had obviously healed the wounds left by the Three Red Flags policy⁵ and had gradually developed the economy. Therefore he should not be equated with Lin Piao and the "gang of four."

The problem lies in the faults and mistakes in the entire policy

5. The "Three Red Flags" were "building socialism," the Great Leap Forward, and the "people's communes." These were the central slogans under which the adventurist campaign of 1958-59 was carried out in which the Mao regime sought to drastically increase the pace of industrial production and to organize the peasantry into enormous, party-led, rural collectives—IP/I

4. *Peking Review*, October 31, 1975.

for economic development, and the entire bureaucratic system. Precisely because the bureaucratic system exists, leaders such as the "gang of four" can act arbitrarily, spend lavishly, and interfere and sabotage. Precisely because the bureaucrats compel working people to achieve "greater, faster, better and more economical" results in their work, yet refuse to improve their low living standard, the people's initiative and enthusiasm for work is severely stifled and production is consequently affected.

Hua Kuo-feng and the others realize today that in order to promote the national economy it is "imperative to bring into full play the socialist initiative of our peasant masses. Otherwise, the measures for increasing production will come to naught." Therefore, he promised in the report that "the livelihood of the people will be improved step by step," "moral encouragement and material reward must go hand in hand," and reforms of the wage system will be considered, so that "in normal harvest years 90 percent of the commune members can receive a bigger income every year, and staff members and workers can have their wages increased step by step, provided that the state plan is fulfilled."

But the amount and date of this postdated check have not been entered. How much will the increase in income be? Will the state plan aim too high and thus be difficult to fulfill? These factors are still unknown. Will the policy of maximum accumulation and minimum distribution be maintained in order to modernize equipment for national defense, to give priority to steel as the key link in heavy industry, or to increase state revenues in the coming eight years to maintain the level of the past twenty-eight years? This is very probable. Therefore, the people of China may welcome this announcement, which is a change from the past eleven years, but they will still adopt a wait-and-see attitude, and they will insist that these promises be brought to fruition.

The Revised Constitution

To indicate its difference from the period of the unscrupulous "gang of four," to present a stance of openness so as to win the people and overcome the present severe difficulties, the present leadership has made quite a number of revisions in the constitution. Some articles from the 1954 constitution are reinstated and some concrete provisions are added to the people's democratic rights. The despotic line, "under the leadership of the Communist Party of China," has been removed from the article in the old constitution that specified, "The National People's Congress is the highest organ of state power under the leadership of the Communist Party of China." Deputies to the People's Congresses at the national, county, and city level are to be elected by People's Congresses at the next lower level "by secret ballot." Representatives of the masses are to participate as assessors in the People's Courts, the cases are to be heard in public, and the accused has the right to defense. Citizens have the right to work, to rest, to education. Men and women have equal rights and they shall marry of their own free will. Citizens have the freedom to engage in scientific research, literary and artistic creation.

If these concrete articles can in fact be put into practice, the new constitution will certainly be welcomed by the people as better than the previous one. It reflects some concessions made by the rulers in face of the people's discontent.

The new provisions in fact screen the still unchanged reality of the CCP's one-party bureaucratic dictatorship. For these new provisions to be actualized, the masses still have to continue their struggle.

In the constitution, although "under the leadership of the Communist Party of China" has been canceled [in reference to specific governmental bodies such as the National People's Council], articles are retained such as, "The working class exercises leadership over the state through its vanguard, the Communist Party of China," "The guiding ideology of the People's Republic of China is Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought," "The chairman of the Central Committee of the

Communist Party of China commands the armed forces of the People's Republic of China," etc.

Furthermore, where [the old constitution] said that it is "the obligation of the citizen to support the leadership of the Communist Party of China," it now reads "must support the leadership."

On the other hand, there are no articles to safeguard the rights that other workers' parties should be entitled to. Though the election of deputies is to be by "secret ballot," it is after "democratic consultation," i.e., there must be consultation with, or even consent from, the CCP cadres. There are provisions in black and white about justice and people's democratic rights; but so long as the party cadres retain their infinite political privileges, the new provisions will, as with the many provisions for citizen's rights in the old constitution, not do any good. They simply function as a mask for bureaucratic dictatorship.

Even in the past, especially in the days of the lawless "gang of four"—Mao's protégés—such citizen's rights as "to speak out freely, air one's views fully, hold great debates, and write big-character posters," as well as many others, were written into the constitution and continually published in the newspapers. But they were shown to be merely an irony of the bureaucracy's harsh rule.

At that time, some Maoist propagandists strove to argue that these "four great freedoms" were the manifestation of the existence of socialist democracy in China. After the revelations of the ruthless deeds of the "gang of four," history has already punished those Maoist litterateurs.

As for the last ironic facts, on the first day of the Fifth National People's Congress, the Agence France-Presse reported from Peking, quoting a report by the Hanchow Public Security Office: "In the city of Hangehow, thirteen counterrevolutionary gangs formed by politically hostile elements have been disbanded. Eight of the leaders have been executed. Other counterrevolutionary elements have been sentenced to long-term imprisonment."⁶

Just one day before the National People's Congress closed, the AFP again reported from Peking: "A 'counterrevolutionary element' was executed last month in Canton on the charge of editing and publishing 'reactionary' pamphlets, distributing them locally, and even sending them abroad."⁷

From the above two—and many other similar—pieces of news in recent years, one really doubts the practical value of what is written in the constitution, such as, "citizens enjoy freedom of speech, correspondence, the press, assembly," etc. How these rights have been trampled on by the rulers!

The rulers can arbitrarily label dissidents "counterrevolutionary," and arbitrarily execute "politically hostile elements" (people with different political views), and even at a time when they are putting on a show of being democratic!

The newly added Article 52 in the new constitution provides that "Citizens have the freedom to engage in scientific research, literary and artistic creation and other cultural activities." But in his report, Hua Kuo-feng, while talking of these freedoms, added the precondition of "adhering to the six political criteria," and said that "As long as works of literature and art conform to the six political criteria and pass muster artistically, they should be allowed to appear."

Of these six criteria, it goes without saying that the most important is accepting the leadership of the CCP. So, what he boasted of as "letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend" is basically still "letting one flower blossom and one school of thought be heard."

While Article 17, newly added in the constitution says, "The state adheres to the principle of socialist democracy, and ensures to the people the right to participate in the management of state affairs and of all economic and cultural undertakings," and while

6. *Tai Kun Pao*, Hong Kong, February 27, 1978.

7. *Ming Pao*, Hong Kong, March 5, 1978.

Hua was still bragging of giving "full play to popular democracy," he followed with this announcement:

... factories, production brigades, schools and colleges, shops, party and government organizations and other enterprises and establishments will no longer set up revolutionary committees. . . . In lieu of revolutionary committees, a system of division of responsibility should be adopted with factory directors, production brigade leaders, school principals, college presidents and managers taking charge under the leadership of party committees.

Under the screen of democracy, the right of the masses from the lower levels to exercise control is openly forfeited. Control is formally held in the hands of individual bureaucrats. This is a crude manifestation of the "democracy" of the new leadership.

* * *

The past twenty years have shown that the main obstacles to a stable and speedy development of China's economy are not only the CCP's wrong policies but also the frequent factional struggles within the CCP, which cause great disturbances in the political situation and severely damage the national economy. (This was most clearly shown at the time of the Cultural Revolution.)

The masses today desire a correct economic policy, and the termination of the factional struggle among the leaders, so that modernization can be smoothly realized.

In the past year, Hua Kuo-feng has been gradually and increasingly abandoning Mao's rash policies, which had been implemented since the Cultural Revolution. Hua has been resuming many policies from before the Cultural Revolution. These are, for example, stressing the development of the national economy; slightly improving the people's livelihood; readopting the system of material incentives; taking note of the principle of "to each according to his work"; importing foreign technical knowledge and equipment; respecting scientists, technicians, and intellectuals; attaching importance to the fostering and training of scientific and technical personnel; improving the quality of education, including by resuming the system of entrance examinations. All of these are favorable developments for the economy.

But the leadership will never practice the most effective reforms: to do away with all bureaucratic privileges, to end the rule of the bureaucracy, to let the laboring masses be the real master and control the state and production.

Today's leaders have in their practice corrected some of the

mistakes committed by Mao Tsetung and his diehard followers. But they still put great stress on praising in words Mao's "correctness for all times." Even when certain policies are obviously wrong, the present leadership still does not dare to overturn them if they have been proposed by Mao. For example, in his report, Hua still would not explicitly affirm that good secondary school students be selected to enter university directly [without spending several years working], or change the policy of compelling all school graduates to go to the countryside.

Hua has emerged from the factional struggles after Mao's death, having succeeded in concentrating in his hands the positions of chairman of the party, chairman of the Military Commission of the CCP, and premier of the State Council. Such a concentration of power in one person is unprecedented since 1949. But Hua's power is not founded on his prestige and authority in the party or in the country, or on his outstanding and correct ideology, line, and policies. Rather, it is the product of contradictions and temporary agreements among the various factions within the party. Thus, Hua's supreme power will be continually challenged and his inadequate, compromising policies will have to stand continual pressure and opposition from all sides.

Not long before the National People's Congress, the PLA newspaper published a series of articles attacking the "parrot faction," the "evasive faction," the "trouble-making faction," while the *People's Daily* attacked the "cover-up faction."⁸

These are indications that factional struggle still continues within the party, and that there is still a political crisis in China. The outcome of the People's Congress shows that no effective solution has been reached. It is difficult to predict how long the present relative stability can last. All of this is a further obstacle to China's realizing the plan of "four modernizations" by the end of this century. The obstacles are inseparable from the existence of the bureaucracy as a whole.

March 8, 1978

8. Several articles in the *Liberation Army Daily* in January attacked unnamed party leaders who now opposed the "gang of four," but who had opportunistically supported the Mao group during the Cultural Revolution and retained their posts, as contrasted to others who spent the last decade in disgrace or detention. One article, cited in the January 26 *New York Times*, referred to such officials as "slippery" people who "steer their boats according to the direction of the wind."—IP/I

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What Role for Latin America?

By Livio Maitan

To analyze the situation in Latin America, we must consider the knotty problem of long-term economic trends, of what bourgeois politicians have christened "the new worldwide economic order," and which we regard as the new international division of labor. There can be no doubt that the capitalists will carry out extensive restructuring of their system on a world scale in their attempts to overcome its present crisis.

What Economic Prospects?

According to many economists—including Samir Amin and André Gunder Frank—the capitalists will proceed in accordance with the following schema: A number of underdeveloped countries will continue to be relegated to a traditional role as producers of raw materials. Others will carve out a special place in industries that require an abundant supply of labor (automobile industry, consumer durables industries in general, and even the steel industry). The most advanced countries will develop industries with a heavy concentration of capital and the most up-to-date technology, and will further and further expand the industries of the so-called tertiary sector.

We might observe that this schema is already being applied, to the extent that the most modern industries (electronics, nuclear power, and others) remain the nearly exclusive prerogative of a small number of countries, while the engineering industries, steel and so on—and not merely textiles or other consumer goods industries—have developed in Latin America, Iran, and South Korea. Theoretically, there are still possibilities for further development. This is true, for instance, for those Latin American countries that offer favorable conditions for investment (cheap labor power, special political safeguards, norms favoring the transfer of profits abroad, and so on).

At best, however, such a plan can be put into effect on the scale required by the depth of the crisis only if the West European, American, and Japanese workers accept vast shakeups with grave social implications. A more realistic projection would involve chronic unemployment on a hitherto unprecedented scale, a drastic decline in the standard of living, and a rapid buildup of permanently semiemployed layers.

The least that can be said is that the conditions for undertaking such an operation exist nowhere at present, and that they cannot be achieved without major upheavals, which right now are very unlikely. As a matter of fact, the industrialized countries are compelled to defend existing economic structures, including by means of more and more intensive protectionist measures. Far from being able to contemplate a boom in new sectors, the underdeveloped countries—the industrialized ones, at least—are facing serious counterattacks that threaten not only their new industries, but the most traditional ones as well (i.e., textiles).

Thus, under the best of circumstances for the capitalists, the projected "new economic order" remains music of the future, and a fairly distant future at that. In the short and medium term, there is no chance of regenerating the kind of economic growth in Latin America that could compare with what Mexico experienced for two decades after the Second World War, or with Brazil at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s. The question that arises is of much more limited scope: What opportunities will the Latin American bourgeoisie and the imperialists have to exploit the favorable combination of circumstances that may arise from time to time in one or another country?

It would be wrong from the standpoint of methodology, and impossible from a practical standpoint, to seek a conclusive answer. It is common knowledge that in the purely economic realm there is considerable variation. In Venezuela—thanks to its energy resources, the bourgeoisie still has substantial elbow room. But in Peru, the rulers seem incapable of halting a downward trend of more and more disastrous proportions. And this is to take only the most important countries. Specific and detailed analyses will be necessary at each step. It is sufficient here to caution against drawing simplistic conclusions from the structural contradictions and long-term prospects we have outlined, overgeneralizations that lead to underestimating the short-term possibilities or the chances of unusually favorable circumstances.

To come back to Brazil: Although it was in very serious straits around the end of 1973 (the oil crisis), it showed an 8.8% growth rate in 1976. (In 1977 the situation was more uneven, with the consumer durables industries in trouble, while growth rates went as high as 15% for some

branches of basic industry.) Following the coffee price rises and a growth of exports, Brazil's trade balance, which had suffered seriously since 1973 from the increasing outlays for imported oil, underwent a substantial improvement. In these circumstances, a steady influx of foreign capital was assured.

As for Argentina, its balance of payments improved in 1977. This was, of course, in part owing to a drop in imports related to the recession that affected a whole sector of industry. But it was also owing to an unusually good market for grain (the 1976-77 campaign). Concurrently, after two years of decline, the gross national product grew by around 5% last year (regaining its 1974 level), while inflation fell between May 1976 and July 1977 from nearly 800% to around 130% (nevertheless, it stood at 200% by the end of 1977).

Thus, in conditions of underlying stagnation or very limited growth, some countries may be able to make gains in particular sectors or in specific conjunctures. In this way, they may be able to avoid being thrown in the short run into a catastrophic crisis. (It goes without saying that any such gains that may be made can be abruptly placed in jeopardy by international factors, both economic and political).

Social Trends and Their Implications

If the hypotheses I have put forward are sound, they lead to the conclusion that in most countries, even if the process of capital accumulation picks up somewhat, this is not going to be enough to assure the incorporation in the productive process of the broad masses that have been excluded from it as a consequence of increased unemployment or a semi-unemployment that has now become chronic. Increases in production will be obtained essentially through stepped-up exploitation. Some stability—in terms of prices, national and foreign debts—will be sought through further lowering, or at best failing to improve, the tragically low living standards for the overwhelming majority of the masses.

It follows that in the political arena, the general tendency will be toward maintaining or reestablishing authoritarian regimes. The goal of such regimes, whatever their specific form at any given moment, is insofar as possible to prevent the masses from asserting their needs, from democratically choosing their representatives, and from having the freedom to develop any effective organization for their struggles. "Strong" regimes more than ever correspond to the built-in needs of the native ruling classes and imperialism.

Such tendencies may exacerbate a whole series of contradictions and lead to spec-

tacular explosions. Political factors, both long-term and conjunctural, will obviously intertwine with economic ones. But in order to draw the most concrete possible conclusions, it will be necessary to answer the following two questions: How much have the structural changes of the last four or five years affected the dynamic and attitudes of social classes? To what extent have the sweeping repressive crackdowns been able to tear apart the fabric of leaders and activists essential for reorganizing and reactivating the workers movement?

Generally speaking, as we have seen, the economic crisis has brought with it a structural weakening of the working class or at least a halt to its growth as a social force. In some countries, even before the crisis, or starting in its initial phases, there was a marked evolution in this direction. Chile is the most tragic example. In the wake of massive layoffs and the thinning out of the administrative apparatus itself, unemployment reached record levels (around 30%, with even higher percentages in some industries).

The Uruguayan case is no less grave. The country's entire socioeconomic equilibrium was shattered, and for economic as well as political reasons emigration took on massive proportions. In Argentina as well, the process of economic dismantlement was extensive, involving an unemployment rate such as the country had not seen in decades and perhaps never in its history (there are almost no statistics, but the figure must be close to 20%).

It would be a grave error to minimize the consequences that such conditions have had, or will have, on the social cohesion of the working class and still more on the morale of broad sectors of the masses. To take but one example: Are the new sections of the Argentine proletariat, whose coming of age in the 1960s underlay the working class upsurge of 1969, going to remain unaffected by the setbacks and instability of the automobile industry? (As against a productive capacity of 500,000 units per year, 140,000 units were produced in 1976—as many as in 1965—compared with 300,000 in 1973. There was a slight recovery in 1977, but new difficulties appeared at the beginning of this year.)

The downward trend in the rural population has not been halted by the economic crisis either.¹ On the contrary, it has gone hand in hand with adopting more typically capitalist forms of exploitation on a wider and wider scale (i.e., not only in Brazil, but in Bolivia as well). And since the industrial labor market is shrinking,

this continuing reduction of the population on the land brings about even more dramatic forms of social disintegration than in the 1950s and 1960s.

This is still more likely inasmuch as the tertiary sector cannot continue to expand artificially. Overwhelmed by staggering budget deficits, civil-service administrations are much more inclined to reduce their staffs than to increase them. It is sufficient to note the substantial layoffs in the Chilean administration and the firing of tens of thousands of workers in two years' time from the state-owned sector of industry and from the railroads in Argentina.² All of these hardships as well as the "austerity" measures have already hit large layers of the least well-off petty bourgeoisie, and will continue to do so.

The structural changes within the working class and other oppressed layers do not necessarily involve negative political consequences. Marxists have analyzed the complex dialectical interrelationship between economic crises, mass movements, and political crises too thoroughly—starting with the recession that preceded World War I—to come up with simplistic conclusions about this today. But we cannot be unaware either of the impact that such phenomena must inevitably have.

In the final analysis, everything depends on the forms and the tempo of the interaction between socioeconomic and political factors. Hence the importance of answering the second question I raised. And this is possible only on the basis of carefully and realistically tallying up the forces that have been able to withstand the worst blows and are capable of going into action on however modest a scale, either in the present stage or the immediate future. Along with this, we have to assess any new forces that may emerge from the experiences of recent years, as well as the chances for reintegration in struggle of thousands of activists subjected to the attrition of prolonged exile.

The events that occurred during 1977 and in the first few weeks of this year offer some encouraging signs.

Reawakening of Mass Movements and Troubles of Dictatorships

On July 19, Peru was rocked by a powerful general strike. On September 14, Colombia was the scene of a *paro cívico nacional* (i.e., a national work stoppage) organized jointly by the four trade-union federations. In October and November, Argentina experienced a significant strike wave in which automobile, electric, and transportation workers mobilized on a

wide scale. It resulted finally in some partial victories.

In Brazil, the student movement took to the streets, for the first time in a long while, setting an example that gave impetus to the struggle for democratic rights. In Chile, there was a succession of economic struggles, work stoppages, and examples of working-class resistance over a period of months. And, at the time of Pinochet's referendum farce, street demonstrations also broke out.

At the beginning of January, following the assassination of a representative of the moderate opposition, Nicaragua was swept by unprecedented mobilizations in which urban workers and peasants stood side by side.

Finally, in Bolivia, powerful mobilizations and dramatic hunger strikes forced Banzer to grant a general amnesty.

The question arises, Has Latin America entered, or is it entering, a new phase?

Elements on which to base an answer have emerged on three levels. The first level is that of the mass movement, which we have just looked at. Recent events seem to indicate that even in those countries that have suffered the harshest repression, there has been a recovery of strength and morale by some sections of the working class. This process was unquestionably aided by the appearance of more and more open conflicts among the bourgeoisie and ruling military groups themselves.

So here we come to the second level of elements for our answer: The ruling classes have begun to reexamine their political options, and sections of the military factions have begun to develop differences among themselves and come into conflict with each other.

It is undeniable that some of the dictatorships have undergone serious wear and tear, if only because they have lasted so long (the Brazilian dictatorship has already outlasted Hitler's regime in Germany; in Peru, in spite of numerous ups and downs, the military government has been in power for nine years).

The most conscious sections of the bourgeoisie are aware of the danger that the armed forces can no longer offer a last resort, since they have become a constantly used political weapon. Thus there is a danger that the effectiveness of the military may be profoundly compromised, while no alternative to it exists. This is the reason for the attempts at, or plans for, "institutionalization." These range from a partial loosening up of the Brazilian regime and a promise to restore civilian rule in Bolivia, to the calling of a constituent assembly in Peru and to a promise to legalize the traditional bourgeois parties in Uruguay.

On the third and final level, while they played a prominent role in installing the dictatorships, the U.S. rulers have rediscovered "human rights" and criticized

1. Mexico is a significant example. Despite the fact that the rural population is still large, the percentage that it represents dropped, according to the official census, from 54.2% in 1960 to 42.5% in 1970, and it has diminished even more since then.

2. Four thousand railroad workers were already laid off between March 1976 and the end of 1977, and 9,000 more are slated to suffer the same fate in 1978.

some of their puppets. After the defeat in Vietnam, after Watergate, Washington needed to spruce up its image at least somewhat, and the Carter administration wanted to give the impression of turning over a new leaf. Regaining credibility in Latin America was a necessary ingredient in this operation.

Washington was also motivated by a desire to counteract the moves of the West European and Japanese imperialists, and to reestablish its ties with those sectors of the native bourgeoisie whose interests had suffered the most from the course adopted in the previous period.

The convergence of all these factors unquestionably brought about changes in the situation. To try to determine at this point whether what we are witnessing is the first signs of a new upsurge, or of an interlude on the way to a readjustment of ruling groups and political structures, or even a mere flash in the pan, would be idle speculation.

We find that even among revolutionary Marxists there are marked differences in interpretation. These include very "optimistic" assessments of the tendencies of the mass movement (such as in Argentina) or of the scope of the institutionalization that some bourgeoisies will be led to promote (i.e., in Brazil). Some go so far as to minimize the changes that have occurred, which leads them to place more emphasis on the disagreements among the bourgeoisie than on what is ripening among the proletariat and other oppressed layers.

For my part, I lean toward the interpretation given in the article by Jorge A. Valdes (see *Inprecor*, No. 15, October 27, 1977). Even if the new political plan of some Latin American bourgeoisies is put into effect through installing governments based on elections that are rigged to varying degrees, it will nevertheless involve "strong," fundamentally authoritarian regimes. The working-class organizations will either remain illegal or will be subject to severe restrictions. The military will hold the key positions of control, while reserving the right to intervene when they consider it necessary.

The "democratization" measures will serve mainly to permit some room for expression and adjustments within the privileged classes. It is significant, in this respect, that among those in line to replace the present rulers are figures who bear responsibility for these regimes. Some had a direct hand in bringing the dictatorships to power, such as Pinto in Brazil. Others paved the way for coups, like Frei in Chile. Still others have long embraced reactionary positions, such as the leaders of the Peruvian APRA, or Balbin in Argentina.

The goal of such "democratization" will be to give a new impetus to mechanisms of capital accumulation that can give a boost to the internal market and provide room for the survival of the crisis-ridden sectors

of the industrial and agricultural bourgeoisie. To a large extent, this will depend on the world economic and political context. That is, it will depend on the possibility of regearing the capitalist economy before—and above all after—the new recession that is at hand. It will depend on the ability of some countries to raise trade barriers, as well as on whether or not growth can be stimulated in certain specific industries, and on other such factors.

Whether or not the bourgeoisie and the imperialists can carry out their plans to patch up the dictatorships or replace them by other authoritarian regimes is bound up largely with the development of the world economic and political situation. But the outcome of the new phase that is shaping up will depend ultimately on the ability of the broad masses to take up their struggles anew, even under the most difficult circumstances, as well as on their capacity to take advantage of all the cracks that open up in the repressive apparatus of the ruling classes.

There is no need here to dwell on the vital role economic struggles, even those with very modest goals, can play in reviving a mass movement after a long period of prostration or stagnation and decay. It is likewise clear what an important role such struggles play in promoting regroupment of the working class. The trickiest sort of questions have arisen and will continue to arise when it comes to choosing the means of organizing struggles. In dealing with such questions, we should not let ourselves be bound by rigid schemas based on overgeneralizations. The difficulty lies in the need both to develop structures that can ensure the independence of the working class—even, I repeat, on a very modest level at first—and to utilize every possible legal opportunity or cover.

Up to now the Brazilian experience has been the most instructive. It has ranged from an exploitation of openings by groups not clearly political in character (i.e., religious or semireligious associations), to the formation of organs of the workers commission type that combine work within and outside the trade unions.

The central role that democratic demands play at the present stage in a number of countries needs no demonstration. It is absolutely clear that a struggle for democratic goals and real freedoms for the broad masses would blow up the plans of the national bourgeoisies and the imperialists. Bringing down the dictatorships would mean challenging the precise forms of accumulation and exploitation that currently exist in many countries in a thoroughgoing way.

There is a danger that the "gorilla" dictatorships will be replaced by supposedly democratic regimes in which freedom of organization and expression and the right of the workers to choose their

own representatives will either be denied or seriously curtailed. In order to prevent this and to assure the free exercise of democratic rights without any restrictions, it is necessary to undercut right from the beginning the conservative or reactionary alternatives that the national and imperialist bourgeoisies are trying to bring forward.

Obviously all these points about the struggle for democratic rights hold true for the countries of the Southern Cone. But the issue of democratic rights has also come to the fore in countries such as Mexico, Colombia, and Peru.

In Mexico, winning unrestricted democratic rights would drive a deep wedge into the political structure established by the ruling classes decades ago. At the same time, this would encourage the struggle for political and organizational independence of the working class, which is still the main problem that has to be solved in order to unleash a revolutionary dynamic. In Colombia, a struggle for similar objectives could throw a monkey wrench into the attempt to renew the "historic compromise" between the two bourgeois parties. In Peru, it could wreck the operation designed to raise the old traditional political framework from the ashes.

The slogan of a constituent assembly is the centerpiece of democratic demands in several countries. Revolutionary Marxists correctly fight to expose the deceptions of some bourgeois currents and even some military groups that offer "constituent assemblies" whose framework and composition would be predetermined by the current regimes and whose functioning would be strictly supervised, if not rigged outright. They also combat any possible confusion between propaganda for a constituent assembly and accepting bourgeois plans for institutionalization.

At the same time, revolutionary Marxists avoid using sectarian and maximalist formulations—i.e., for a constituent assembly convoked by the oppressed masses or by a revolutionary government—that are liable to limit the response to this slogan among the broadest layers of the masses. They point up the simple idea—which has an explosive potential in the present context—that a constituent assembly means a direct, secret election, without any restrictions, and election of representatives on a proportional basis.

The necessary differentiation of revolutionists from bourgeois or petty-bourgeois groups is not a matter of using more or less rigid formulations but requires meshing democratic demands and demands corresponding to the direct needs of the exploited masses in the logic of the transitional program.

In order to achieve such a task, it is necessary to have a clear strategic outlook. From the fact that democratic demands are on the agenda, reformists of every stripe draw the conclusion that what has

to be done is to prepare for a "democratic" stage of the revolution, and to achieve an alliance with the "national" or "progressive" bourgeoisie. This is an old refrain. But it still poses problems for revolutionists. They have simultaneously to avoid the danger of falling into propagandism (in reaction against the capitulation of the traditional parties) and that of letting themselves be drawn into de facto coalitions with bourgeois formations or into "institutionalization" maneuvers.

We should not underestimate the pressures that may arise from certain sectors of the masses. Under conditions of savage repression, the need people feel to find some way out of the nightmare may lead them to clutch at the slightest hope, to cherish illusions, to let themselves be thrown off balance by an indiscriminating urge toward unity. The opportunistic wavering and lurches of organizations like the Chilean MIR and the Argentina PRT stem, in the last analysis, from pressures of this kind, which in their cases were not counterbalanced by theoretical and political clarity.

Once again, it is necessary to avoid any kind of confusion between democratic rights and bourgeois-democratic institutions, as well as between convergences on specific questions having to do with solidarity, defense of prisoners, and technical requirements, and formal or de facto pacts with bourgeois formations on the level of political strategy. It should also be understood that rejecting any "antifascist" unity or a popular-front line does not mean accepting the simplistic schema that the only alternative is "either a proimperialist military dictatorship or a dictatorship of the proletariat."

The essential thing is to assure that the masses' struggle does not stop midway, but that, starting from democratic and anti-imperialist goals, it takes on a dynamic of permanent revolution, i.e., attacks the very framework of the capitalist regime. This does not exclude the possibility that in some situations the bourgeoisie may still have sufficient resources to maintain its domination through some kind of institutionalization that suits its ends.

However, even if such institutionalization is achieved, two very different types of situations may ensue. If this institutionalization takes place on the basis of collaboration by the workers organizations with the parties of the ruling class, the mass movement will be paralyzed. On the other hand, by winning all its democratic rights and creating its own organizations, and by continually mobilizing in a dynamic of

offensive struggles, the working class can block attempts at stabilization. A reformist strategy leads to the first possibility. A revolutionary strategy must try to achieve the second.

Finally, the experiences of 1977—the repression and slaughter that took place in countries like Peru, Colombia, and Ecuador—confirm the fact that the ruling classes will not give up resorting to violence even while carrying out "institutionalization" operations. That is why the question of self-defense is objectively posed, and why broad sectors of the masses have become concerned about it or will be. Revolutionary Marxists should not forget about this.

Does Populist Nationalism Have a Future?

It is very difficult from this vantage point to answer the question of what solutions the bourgeoisies will try to impose if the regimes that exist in a number of Latin American countries should collapse. In any case, it is unlikely, in the context that has been described, that we will see on a major scale the sort of developments that took place during the 1930s, World War II, or even the prolonged boom of the 1950s and 1960s. While not ruling out exceptional cases, objectively there is no room for a new rise of any big or medium-sized industrial bourgeoisie that would have a degree of autonomy vis-à-vis imperialism and be capable of imposing "new" solutions in economic life as well as regards general political orientation. Here we also touch on the question of whether there may be a resurgence of nationalist or nationalist-populist currents.

The answer to this question is clear on the basis of the following considerations: Any notion that nationalist movements are the direct result of increased imperialist exploitation is simplistic and must be rejected. There were objective preconditions for the rise of the populist movements, and these cannot be lost sight of. These preconditions no longer exist and cannot reappear at any time in the future near enough to be relevant for our political conclusions.

The most modern and vigorous sections of the Latin American bourgeoisie have maintained their vitality mainly insofar as they have organic ties with international capital and are therefore more enmeshed in the imperialist system than in the past. There is no indication of any reversal of this trend, which already goes back twenty years.

No less important is the fact that the populist nationalist movements have been undergoing a profound process of attrition for decades, and can no longer appear to offer any solution, even in those countries where such movements have been most deeply rooted.

If all these considerations are accepted, the only possible conclusion is that nationalists or populist nationalists will not be able to play a leading role in the stage now opening up. At most they may be able to undertake short-lived operations involving economically marginalized sections of the population rather than any section, however small, of the working class or peasantry.

In the most recent period, a theory has been put forward by some that in certain Latin American countries we may see the emergence of Social Democratic parties with a broad mass following that will be able to play an important or decisive role in the political operations now taking form. The Socialist International is in fact engaged in maneuvers in Brazil, Venezuela, and even Argentina. That is a question that should be discussed elsewhere. Here I would warn against impressionistic analogies. When all is said and done, it should not be forgotten that objective conditions for the rise and renewal of Social Democracy in Western Europe and in other parts of the world do not exist in Latin America, and it is very hard to believe that they will develop in the period ahead.

The analysis we have outlined has explained the constrictive framework that limits the scope of any possible conflicts between Latin American bourgeoisies and the imperialists. This does not rule out the possibility of confrontations between ruling groups or bourgeois governments on the continent and foreign capital or imperialist governments. Such confrontations do not, in principle, pose any major problem for revolutionists.

If a bourgeois government, whatever the motives for its action, expropriates a multinational company, a capitalist enterprise of some kind, or eliminates an imperialist outpost from its territory, revolutionists will support such measures. At the same time, they would maintain their political independence. (This might, for example, be expressed concretely by a mobilization to oppose paying any form of compensation or for establishing workers control.)

But revolutionists should be careful not to introduce into their programs ambiguous concepts, such as that of an anti-imperialist front. I do not want to provoke any sterile arguments over terminology. But it should not be forgotten that the concept of a "front" has often been expanded to include a possibility of long-range agreements with bourgeois sectors. And this goes far beyond the concept of support in specific circumstances for concrete measures, or of convergences with other exploited layers. From this to adopting a policy of collaboration with layers of the ruling class is but a step. Under no circumstances should we run the risk of being in that position.

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RSP Draws Balance Sheet on Indian Elections

By Sharad Jhaveri

JAMNAGAR—The Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP) claims to be a Marxist-Leninist party. It is opposed to Stalinism. It rejects the theory of a two-stage revolution. It thinks that the future Indian revolution will be socialist in character and will take place under the leadership of the proletariat.

Nevertheless, the RSP does not explicitly accept the theory of the permanent revolution elaborated by Leon Trotsky. It does not provide an overall or comprehensive analysis of Stalinism as a social phenomenon. It does not adopt clear positions on such international questions as Eurocommunism, détente, or the Sino-Soviet dispute. It does not explain how to restore workers democracy in such bureaucratically deformed or degenerated workers states as those in China or the Soviet Union. Nor is it clear on the precise social characterization of those states.

On the question of the international organization of the proletariat and on the world revolutionary process in general, the RSP is quite ambiguous. Despite recent overtures to some Trotskyist groups belonging to the International Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, it has not joined any international organization, whether Trotskyist or otherwise. Thus the RSP's overall approach on Indian questions lacks a definite proletarian internationalist thrust.

The limitations of the RSP's politics are nowhere more evident than in its feeble attempt, in the March issue of its monthly organ, the *Call*, to provide a rationale for its political support to the bourgeois Janata Party during the March 1977 general elections.

The RSP's overall perspective is far superior to those of any of the Indian Stalinist parties. According to the RSP, the "political tasks of revolutionary Socialists remain unchanged: overthrow of capitalism and replacement of capitalism by Socialism."

Unlike the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)), the RSP evaluates the results of the March 1977 general elections as only a partial restoration of bourgeois-democratic rights. It says that authoritarianism has not disappeared. According to the RSP, "March 1977 did not result in any radical transformation of the economic structure of the country or the class character of the Indian state." The state system under Janata rule "remains and continues to be a system of bourgeois or capitalist class rule."

In contrast to the CPI(M), therefore, the RSP does not find any "democratic potentialities" in the Janata Party. To the contrary, it finds "potentially repressive and coercive aspects of Janata Party vis-à-vis the toiling people."

But then the RSP's trouble begins. In trying to justify its opportunistic political support to the Janata Party during the elections, it begins to provide a non-Marxist analysis of events in India since 1975. This shows that even a major non-Stalinist party like the RSP is not free from the virus of class collaboration. This was also shown when the RSP unconditionally backed the anticorruption movement of Jaya Prakash Narayan, when it ran a candidate for president of India with the support of bourgeois parties,* and now when it participates in the popular-front regime led by the CPI(M) in West Bengal.

The RSP does not provide a Marxist analysis of the underlying social and economic factors behind the imposition of Gandhi's state of emergency and of its eventual withdrawal. Its analyses of the emergency are descriptive, not analytical. The RSP views it largely in terms of authoritarian proclivities on the part of Gandhi and her coterie.

Such an analysis led the RSP into a trap. Since the Janata Party had promised to restore bourgeois democracy in India, the RSP hailed "the progressive leftist and democratic elements in the country," welcoming and supporting the Janata Party's campaign.

The RSP says, "Because democracy and elementary democratic rights are vital for the toilers' struggle for socialism, along with other leftist parties, we were fully justified in giving political support to the Janata Party in fighting against and overthrowing the authoritarian dictatorship of Indira Gandhi and her emergency rule" (emphasis added).

Let us consider this argument.

Democratic rights are vital for the growth of the revolutionary movement. But Marxists do not make a fetish of them. If these democratic rights are won by the mass movement itself through proletarian methods of struggle such as strikes, demonstrations, and pickets they help considerably in the toilers' struggle for socialism.

This obviously is not the case when the

*Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri, the general secretary of the RSP and a member of Parliament, ran for president of India in 1974 as a candidate of most of the parliamentary opposition parties.

proletariat is asked to rely on bourgeois political formations for the securing of such rights. Such an approach, however critical or conditional, does not enhance the self-confidence of the proletariat. It miseducates the working class to look hopefully to a bourgeois party to throw out a few democratic crumbs. It does not bolster the working class's political independence and militancy. Even more harmful is its effect of reinforcing and spreading illusions in the real nature of bourgeois democracy, bourgeois parties, and the bourgeois state apparatus.

Because the RSP does not have a genuinely proletarian internationalist outlook, it cannot pose the model of socialist democracy as a higher form of democracy.

The limitations of its approach become clearer when the RSP tries to pinpoint the nature of the inevitable clashes between the Janata regime and the workers movement. The RSP thinks that the task of restoring bourgeois democracy has been partially accomplished and that this democracy should serve as a stepping-stone for the struggle for socialism. An implicit two-stage theory seems to be lurking here: first restore bourgeois democracy, then think about socialist revolution.

Apart from this, what if the bourgeoisie, through the Janata regime, once again decides to throw out bourgeois democracy? The RSP has no answer. It thinks that the development of a renewed threat to democracy is predicated upon a failure to "lift quickly [the] national economy out of the morass of stagnation." The presumption is that it is possible to do so. Perhaps sincere efforts on the part of the bourgeoisie and its regime are required? In the entire analysis, there is not a single reference to the current state of the world capitalist economy, the framework within which the Indian economy functions.

The RSP has yet to evolve an independent proletarian perspective on the problems currently confronting the Indian working class movement. □

High Finance

"According to the *San Francisco Examiner*, marijuana is now the biggest cash crop in Hawaii, surpassing sugar. According to Associated Press, drug smuggling is a bigger business than tourism in Florida. And according to CBS, Colombia earns as many dollars from cocaine as from coffee." —*The Progressive*, June 1978.

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How to Build a Massive Movement for British Withdrawal?

[The following interview with northern Irish leaders of People's Democracy (PD) and the Movement for a Socialist Republic (MSR), Irish section of the Fourth International, was obtained by Gerry Foley in Belfast in mid-April.]

* * *

Question. The conference of antirepression groups in Coalisland this February was the largest united-front meeting in Northern Ireland in a number of years. Most of the people I have talked to say that it was the most concrete expression of the turn developing in the situation in the Six Counties [the part of Ireland under direct British rule]. How was the conference built and what do you think were its lessons?

John McGeown (MSR). The idea of an antirepression conference was first mooted some eighteen months ago by the PD and the MSR and was spread around the other left groups and republican organizations.

Before the call for a conference in Coalisland was decided on, there were a number of attempts to get meetings together of republican organizations, far-left organizations, community organizations, tenants organizations, and so forth. The idea was to establish a set of demands around which protest activity could be organized.

The actual decision to call a conference in Coalisland was taken in response to the detention of an old-age pensioner in the Coalisland area, Peter McGrath, who was taken to Castlereagh [the British torture center]. Then, after signing a statement, he was admitted to a mental institution in a very serious condition of shock. He was unable to recall his experience at Castlereagh or even identify members of his family.

The McGrath case shocked a lot of people in Coalisland, where there had been very little activity in opposition to the British occupation or even to the intensification of repression. In fact there had been very little activity since the immediate aftermath of Bloody Sunday [January 30, 1972].

But in response to this blatant example of British army terrorism, a lot of people got together to protest, mainly with the encouragement of Bernadette Devlin McAliskey. They invited representatives of the Belfast Relatives Action Committee (RAC) to come down and speak to them about the possibility of setting up a branch there.

One problem that came up immediately

was that a place like Coalisland, as opposed to the major centers such as Belfast or Derry, did not have a fully representative group of political prisoners yet, that is, prisoners from all sections of the community who had experienced all aspects of the repressive system. Therefore, the issue of political prisoners was perhaps not as direct as it would be in Belfast, Derry, or Newry.

So, in Coalisland they wanted to consider the possibility of focusing on demands other than those centering around the prisoners, such as political status. They established their RAC around demands for an end to repression and for the withdrawal of British troops, in addition to the demand for political status.

The conference then received the support of a wide range of organizations, ranging from individuals in the Irish Independence Party and the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) to the RAC in Belfast and antirepression committees in various parts of the north of Ireland and some organizations in the Twenty-Six Counties [the formally independent part of the country] such as the Irish Civil Rights Association.

PD and the MSR contributed to the building of the conference, particularly in getting the support of the Belfast RAC, where some opposition had been voiced by groups such as the Provisionals, the IRSP [Irish Republican Socialist Party], and to a lesser extent, the Red Republican Party (RRP).

So, this is essentially where the idea for the conference came from, and the way in which it was built. There was not actually a great deal of work put into building it, and this makes the breadth of representation and the numbers who attended, somewhere around 800 people, so much more significant.

John McAnulty (PD). To some extent, the breadth of representation was a surprise to the organizers and to some extent it caught our organizations by surprise. We were not fully prepared for it. As a result, there was a certain amount of euphoria at the conference and a tendency to go for the most united posture and downplay any differences.

We had come prepared for a sharp debate, since it had been clear that elements of Provisional Sinn Féin were doubtful, and even suspicious, about the idea of forming a broad independent movement against repression. We came prepared to fight a battle around the question of the

need for drawing in support from elements of the SDLP and the Irish Independence Party around the whole question of involving people who were not revolutionaries in the structure. This need may seem obvious on the basis of international experience but we have to work hard to get it generally understood and accepted in the north of Ireland at the present time.

In fact, a direct confrontation did not occur on the issue of the need for a broad, independent movement. Rather than challenge this directly, the Provisionals, who doubted the value of such a movement chose to make an issue of the supremacy of the armed struggle. They made a number of recruiting speeches, generally suggesting that there was no point in people being involved in political activity.

To a certain extent, we failed to clarify these questions in the Coalisland conference. The spirit of unity tended to inhibit discussion on broad political questions, both on our part and that of the Provisionals, who do not really understand the need for a broad mass movement.

We were slightly better prepared for the debate when the delegate conference called at Coalisland took place. However, this delegate conference itself was somewhat disappointing in that it was badly organized and did not allow for the attendance of large numbers of people from outside the Belfast area.

Moreover, the fact that the conference was held in one of the main Provisional centers in Andersonstown made it difficult to make it clear that this was a broad movement not under the control of any political party.

Nonetheless, we were better able to argue the question of the Provos' position of the supremacy of the military struggle. There was a fairly sharp debate that did produce some clarity. At the beginning, some of the militants thought that we were attacking the whole basis of the struggle against imperialism, and there was a hostile reaction. But as the debate progressed, a large section did accept the idea of the need for drawing broader layers of the population into the struggle.

It was not possible to get complete clarity at that conference, but the debate was joined. And a number of militants began to see our point of view. Discussion developed and progressed among the Provisionals.

One of the weaknesses of the anti-imperialist movement shown by the conference was the lack of understanding of the need for calling mobilizations on a united basis. Sinn Féin announced that

they could not accept a motion on united activity from PD and the MSR. One of the reasons they gave was that they were already organizing key demonstrations as Sinn Féin demonstrations. So, clearly, they have not come around to accepting the idea that there is a need to organize these mobilizations as united-front demonstrations.

Because of this ambiguous attitude on the part of the Provisionals, the conference did not agree to united activity. But it did clarify some points in the political debate. A committee was elected, which has since met and continued the debate, drawing in to some extent representatives of different political groups. This is the National Resistance Campaign Committee (NRCC), whose purpose is to organize activity on an all-Ireland basis. There has already been agreement on some forms of activity. What we hope is that once united activity is begun, the necessity for involving broader layers will become clear, and that this will bring the debate forward and produce a greater interest in the anti-imperialist community as a whole in organizing on the basis of broad unity.

McGeown. The attendance at Coalisland showed the potential that exists for developing broad support in the fight-back against repression. However, we face a number of problems in actually realizing that potential. Many of these problems can be traced to the failures to build the Coalisland conference in the best possible way. The conference was called in a rather short period of time, a matter of months.

However, as interest built up in the conference, we failed to organize support committees for it, committees that could have discussed what they wanted to see come out of it, and at the same time, at the end of the conference, structures would have already existed that could then have gone about implementing the resolutions that were passed, and taken up the initiatives that were suggested at the conference.

The fact that such committees did not exist meant that once the conference was over there were no organizational structures. The task of doing what the eight hundred or so people who turned up at Coalisland wanted to see done, that is, organizing united, broad activity on the streets against repression, had to be left up to a delegate conference that was not as representative as the one in Coalisland. The delegate conference also faced the really impossible task of taking the twenty-odd resolutions that were passed at Coalisland and trying to make some kind of coherent composite out of them.

In order to carry out such tasks, we need as representative a structure as possible. And the NRCC just plainly is not representative enough. And so, what has come out of Coalisland, in some ways, runs counter to what Coalisland was all about. What

the NRCC represents is those forces that are already committed to the anti-imperialist struggle, already committed to the fight for national liberation, who see the struggle of the military organizations as a legitimate response by the Irish people to British aggression.

The NRCC does not represent any of those forces that were at Coalisland that are for British withdrawal, against the torture of the prisoners, or against the sort of conditions in which the prisoners are being held, but who draw the line at recognizing the right of the Irish people, in particular the right of the minority in the Six Counties, to oppose these things.

In my view, the narrowness of the NRCC is a very serious obstacle to developing the sort of potential that was shown at Coalisland. We still face the problem of finding a way to mobilize the forces that recognize that Britain does not have a solution to the Irish question, that the southern government doesn't have a solution, and who doubt whether the SDLP, the Irish Independence Party, or any other organization on its own, has a solution.

We still face the task of bringing these forces into activity around those demands we are all agreed on and united on, such as the demands for British withdrawal and defense of the prisoners. In our view, these are the key questions that most effectively highlight the nature of Britain's role in Ireland and most effectively highlight the impossibility of Britain playing any progressive role in Ireland. Mobilizing the potential support that exists on these issues is a task that has still barely been taken up.

McAnulty. The main demands to come out of Coalisland were for an end to repression and torture, for political status, and British troops out. These are the sort of immediate demands that can mobilize activity. They are not in themselves a solution to the problem of imperialist occupation. What we believe is that they are enough to mobilize broad forces. The debate generated among the forces engaged in the actual struggle would clarify the other questions involved.

In the context of our debate with some elements of the Provisionals and some of their left allies about the need for mass action, we in the PD-MSR, and to some extent the Independent Socialist Party, have been accused of wanting to turn the clock back and take up again the struggle for the reform of the Six Counties that began in 1968. Lying behind this accusation is the belief that certain methods of struggle have their day and that, once the first shot is fired, you have to keep on shooting forever, that there is no way to back down from that.

The debate is not simply about the need for action by masses of people, the working class, against imperialism. There is the problem of how those masses of people are

to be mobilized to achieve their aims. It's pretty obvious that the demands of the CRA [Civil Rights Association] cannot be reactivated. We cannot go about mobilizing the masses in the same way we did then. For example, the demand for the withdrawal of British troops was never seriously brought up in the days of the CRA. Irish independence wasn't a demand of the civil-rights struggle. But these are central demands now.

To a certain extent, the struggle for civil rights was a fight against the Unionists and did not directly oppose imperialism. But now imperialist troops have been on the streets for a long time. The struggle has long ago become a direct confrontation with British imperialism.

Moreover, it has become obvious in the course of the struggle that even a mass movement, as long as it is confined to the six northeastern counties of our country, is not going to defeat imperialism. What we have to do is mobilize people throughout the thirty-two counties. This involves mobilizing the working class and beginning to take up the questions of economic oppression in a mass movement. All these things are going to be very difficult to achieve, but we will never be able to do it if we don't take the first steps toward building the unity that will make possible a thirty-two county mass movement of the Irish working class.

Q. There have been some polemics against the PD and the MSR recently in the Belfast Provisional press and in statements by local leaders of the IRSP. Among other things, you are accused of wanting the republican organizations to "dump arms," and some writers in the Provisional press argue that there is a danger of the platforms of antirepression united fronts being used to oppose the armed struggle. What do you think is the reason for this sort of thing?

McAnulty. It has been said that we in the PD and the MSR have taken up the question of mass action versus militarism and made it an issue in the anti-imperialist movement. That is actually not so. It is sections of the Provos, of the IRSP, and of the RRP who have made this an issue. Never before at any stage in the struggle has anyone attempted to make unconditional support for military campaigns part of the platform of a united front. This is a question that has never arisen before.

I think that the reason forces in the Provos, the IRSP, and the RRP are demanding explicit support for armed struggle now is that it is becoming clear in the course of the struggle that a pure military strategy doesn't offer a solution, and those people who are emotionally wedded to a military approach feel the need to put more emphasis on defending this form of action.

McGeown. The issue that confronts the broad mass of Irish people is the presence

of the British troops and the role that they are now clearly seen to be playing. From this it flows that this is the issue around which we have the best opportunities for mobilizing people. We have a situation now in which all the major political forces in Ireland, except the Loyalists, are calling for a British withdrawal. We have Jack Lynch [premier of the Dublin government] coming out and saying that Britain must go, the archbishop saying that Britain must go. The Fine Gael Party in the south [traditionally the most pro-imperialist of the Irish bourgeois parties] feels it necessary to criticize British policy very strongly. The Irish Independence Party says that Britain must go. The SDLP says that there can be no solution to the problem of violence in the north except in an all-Ireland context.

Of course, in this situation, two things can actually happen. One is that such a stand by the bourgeois forces may give people the idea that it is not necessary for the broad mass of the Irish people to mobilize on the streets themselves and thus divert them away from action toward leaving things up to the bourgeois politicians. On the other hand, such statements can be utilized to broaden active opposition to the occupation and repression. It is the task of all the organizations of the resistance, both republicans and socialists, to assure that it is this last possibility that actually comes about.

We in the PD-MSR believe that we can convince the broad masses of the Irish people that the British must withdraw and that they can be forced to withdraw. We think that we can convince them that in order to force the British to withdraw that they are going to have to come out in the streets and show resistance in many different ways.

We think that the other organizations, in particular the republican ones, should have the same confidence in the power of demands for British withdrawal, the same confidence in the ability of the Irish working class and the oppressed people of Ireland to bring that about. The question is whether the republican organizations do have that confidence in their own demands and in the ability of the Irish people to realize those demands. That's a very big question mark. What we can say is that some of our experiences in joint work with the republican organizations, with people from the IRSP in particular, leaves us with some doubts as to whether they do share that confidence.

In our view, if these republicans did hold such confidence they would not be so worried about ensuring that the program of the RAC or of the NRCC covered every possibility, covered every demand that needs to be raised some time in the future or was raised at some time in the past. They would then see more clearly what needs to be done at the moment to mobilize people and not let themselves be diverted

by other issues or fears of where the movement might be going. They would see the necessity of broadening the active forces that are protesting and resisting the treatment being given to the prisoners and showing active resistance to the oppression being carried out by the British troops.

Unfortunately, many republicans do not have such a confident and constructive attitude. In the case of the Provisionals, this is more than unfortunate. It represents a lack of responsibility on the part of an organization that has hegemony over the forces engaged in the struggle at the present time. The Provisionals are the majority organization, the one to which people look for a lead in dealing with the problems they confront as a result of the presence of the British troops and the repressive setup in the Six Counties.

Q. Is this attitude of the Provisionals shown concretely in other things besides a reluctance to work with forces not committed to armed struggle for national liberation and the tendency to demand that every united front adopt their full program?

McGeown. We had a particularly bad example of irresponsibility on the part of the Provisionals last summer. The British marines were on a continual rampage in the Turf Lodge housing estate [one of the Catholic neighborhoods in Belfast]. The people began to organize, and in fact succeeded at certain times in forcing the marines to withdraw from that estate through united and overwhelming opposition to their presence. But how did the Provisionals respond to that fight-back by the people in Turf Lodge? Well, one incident in particular shows how they responded.

When there was a particularly fierce attack by the British marines on the Turf Lodge estate, some hundred or so women gathered in the neighboring Ballymurphy estate. They held a meeting in the community center and talked about organizing and going across to Turf Lodge to join the people there in their fight. What was the response of the Provisionals to that spontaneous solidarity by the women of Ballymurphy? It was to tell them to go home, to tell them that going and joining the fight in Turf Lodge would be exploiting the problems of Turf Lodge. That attitude showed a failure to understand the role that the people themselves can and must play in the struggle, in a successful campaign to get the British army out of Ireland. Because what Turf Lodge showed is that the people are ready and willing to come out onto the street in active opposition to the British troops.

The type of fight that the Turf Lodge people put up is also the best way to show that the prisoners, the resistance fighters who continue to take up arms, are not

isolated but do reflect a mass sentiment amongst the people. It is also the best way to show that the Provisionals remain at this point in time a genuine expression of Irish resistance. It's up to the Provisionals to show that they're prepared to seize the opportunities, to show the correctness of their program. If they don't do that, we can only conclude that just as many people who are part of the resistance lack confidence in their program, they themselves lack full confidence in it.

Q. How do you see the sort of broad mass movement you want developing from where you actually are now?

McAnulty. The question of the treatment of political prisoners, of political status for political prisoners, is the central one in the present phase of struggle. It is so because this is the issue the imperialists themselves have picked as the main battleground. They decided to take away political status and to try to bring about a situation in which they could label all acts of resistance as common crimes. They wanted to reduce the direct role of the British army, and make the RUC [Royal Ulster Constabulary] the main force in the battle against the resistance.

The anti-imperialist forces were rather slow to take up this challenge. In the PD-MSR we began to agitate on these questions as soon as the British threw down the gauntlet. But at that time there was very little in the way of anti-imperialist unity, and few of the organizations were prepared to take up this work.

It was the people most directly affected by the British moves, the prisoners, their relatives and friends, who formed the nucleus of the hard-core resistance. They saw the need to mobilize, and it was they who formed the Relatives Action Committee. This committee has been in existence for eighteen months. In that period, it has not succeeded in winning on the issue of the prisoners. But it has pulled together the hard core of the militants, and it has given impetus to the process of general regroupment. It has popularized the idea of anti-imperialist unity, and been the most consistent and open example of what can be achieved in that regard.

The issue of fighting for political status has a lot of impact. Resistance fighters in Ireland have had political status in general since 1916. I think that the British underestimated what was involved when they tried to end political status.

The prisoners were able to start the process of building opposition by refusing to accept criminalization, by refusing to wear prison clothes and to participate in prison work. As a result, they are kept naked and locked up twenty-three hours a day. But they have held firm and given an inspiring example.

The protests over the prisoners being denied political status have not been

enough yet to force the British to retreat. But this issue has become a running sore. The central objectives of British strategy are threatened by the protests around this question. The anti-imperialist movement itself has a major stake in the fight in defense of the prisoners. If the prisoners voluntarily accept such privations to drive on the struggle, those involved in the resistance outside cannot fail to fight effectively to win their demands.

The Provisionals have responded to this challenge by saying that the military struggle and only the military struggle will win freedom for the prisoners, and that victory is coming fairly soon. But there is no sign of military victory on the horizon.

In fact, a couple of military campaigns have been launched in association with the issue of the prisoners, for example a campaign of shooting warders [guards]. And they failed to make a dent.

The RAC has been able to make progress in mobilizing people on the issue of the prisoners. But it has not been able yet to mobilize sufficient forces to win the demands of the prisoners. The reason for this seems to be that for those who do not have relatives and friends in prison this does not seem to be the central issue. Such people are hit much harder by the repression and intimidation that is directed against the entire community.

One of the failures of the RAC is that it has not broadened its demands, not taken up the issue of repression generally. It has not organized around the general issue of repression and linked the fight for political status to that and to the demand for the withdrawal of the British troops. In our opinion that is what has to be done.

Moreover, we have already said that the fight cannot be confined to the Six Counties. There have been some demonstrations in the Twenty-Six Counties on the question of repression. There has been a fair bit of use of slogans around the question of H-Block [where prisoners refused political status are kept]. But very few organizations in the Twenty-Six Counties, in particular not Sinn Féin, have been doing the work of patiently explaining what is involved in the prisoners' fight.

A lot of people in the Twenty-Six Counties do not know exactly what the prisoners' struggle is about, what H-Block is, what the blanket protest is [those who refuse to wear prison clothes have only blankets to cover themselves with]. These questions aren't clear for them. And the work is not being done to explain these things. Work is not being done to organize united protests by the forces that would support the demand for political status. Moreover, there has been no attempt to link the question of repression in the north and the denial of political status to prisoners with the day-to-day struggles of the working class in the Twenty-Six Counties.

As a beginning, we would like to see the expansion of the Coalisland movement

and its extension into an all-Ireland movement. We think that is possible on the basis of unity of the anti-imperialist forces that are at present active. That would, of course, not be enough to win these demands, but it would be a beginning, an essential beginning. Once any sort of a united thirty-two county movement was launched, then it would be possible to integrate into this a number of different struggles, to bring up in a much more consistent way the question of repression in the trade-union organizations in the Twenty-Six Counties. In fact this question has been raised spontaneously in the unions in a number of instances. But no ongoing work is being done in this area. If that were done, it would be possible to make a link with specifically anti-working-class repression in the Twenty-Six Counties.

If the working class were first drawn into the fight against repression, first made aware of the need to fight against repression, it would be possible to take up all the questions of economic imperialism.

Q. Where does the support movement abroad fit into your perspectives for rebuilding a mass movement in Ireland against imperialist repression?

McGeown. In order to rebuild the mass resistance movement in Ireland, the forces involved have to agree on open, clear demands. That is also necessary to rebuild the support movements in Britain, the United States, and other countries. That is, from Ireland there must come a number of clear, open demands, so that there is no doubt whatsoever about what the resistance in Ireland sees as the central question of the day.

If there is any confusion in the Irish movement, it's all the more difficult for people abroad to actually build effective support. For instance, there must be one position on the question of the British troops. There is no point in having six or seven positions on that, ranging from demands for the British to declare their intent to withdraw, to carry out a phased withdrawal, and all the rest.

The key question is that the British army must get out of Ireland. That is the message that must go out from Ireland to the solidarity movements. That's the key question for them to take up.

Likewise, on the question of the prisoners there must be a clear and open demand that can be taken up by the solidarity movement. The question then comes as to how we can actually aid the taking up of such demands. There are a number of initiatives already under way that have the greatest importance, not only for the solidarity movement but also for the resistance in Ireland.

One of these initiatives is the movement to set up an international tribunal to investigate Britain's role in Ireland. This

project is based in London. We see this as having very great potential. But what we see as crucial to it is that it reach out beyond the small forces that to the best of their ability already support our struggle here. We want to see that movement broaden, we want to see more and new forces brought into the solidarity movement. That means we have to reach out to these new forces, not just proclaim the importance of the Irish struggle. We have to go out and explain in what way our struggle can be aided.

The important thing is to explain to people, to get them to understand how participating in a specific project can concretely take the struggle in Ireland a step forward. Failure to do this has been the big problem with previous solidarity movements in Britain. It's all right for people to go out and proclaim their solidarity with the armed struggle and with the general resistance in Ireland. But people have marched up and down the streets in various parts of the world, demanding solidarity with this force and that force, and at the end of the day it does not seem to have helped us here in Ireland make one step closer to achieving our central demands.

The International Tribunal, if it is a broad initiative, in our view, will be a great aid in exposing the role of British imperialism here in Ireland, the role that the British army actually plays here, in exposing the lies of the British and capitalist press throughout the world.

International activity has another importance for the struggle in Ireland. Historically our struggle has been a rather isolated one. The Irish people do not have confidence that their fight against imperialism is understood in the rest of the world. There are of course complex historical reasons for this. People do look with considerable interest for any manifestation of solidarity, of support, whether it's for the struggle in general, or much more importantly, for the specific campaigns waged here in Ireland in defense of the prisoners or against the actions of the crown forces.

What people here look for is some indication that after ten years of resistance to the British army, the RUC, the Loyalist terrorist gangs, a resistance that in its duration and fierceness is unparalleled in Europe, that we are not forgotten.

We think that we can win some real victories in our struggle, and our confidence and effectiveness is greatly aided by seeing the Irish struggle taken seriously in other countries, by seeing practical support being given to the struggle in Ireland. The best kind of support of course is for people in their own country to bring the issue of Ireland to the center of attention of the working class and all those forces in society that can be interested in the fight against oppression. We want to see Ireland

becoming as immediate and popular an issue for those forces as Vietnam was in the past.

McAnulty. To see the possibilities of the situation in Ireland now, it is necessary to put it in the context of the development of the struggle over the last ten years. Things have not remained on the same level during that whole time. There have been many shifts. There was a shift from a struggle that did not raise the question of partition as such to one directly against it. There have been ups and downs.

In the period from 1972 to 1976-77, things were going very much in favor of the British. Very few victories were won in that period. And in a situation where the forces of resistance were not able to win immediate victories, there was a great deal of demoralization and a great deal of factionalism within the resistance movement.

As we have already pointed out, the RAC played a major role in regrouping the militants and showing them that united action was possible and could win victories.

Other factors have changed the situation. The British have openly stated that they are no longer trying to reform the Six Counties. All this has shown the Irish people that the British are not able to put forward any solution. And this has put the bourgeois nationalist forces such as Fianna Fáil and the SDLP here in the north in an awkward position. It has forced them to take a slightly more militant tone on the national question. This has opened up the possibility for revolutionaries to push for united action that would oblige people to translate these sentiments into deeds.

Also, the international publicity around the Strasbourg court finding Britain guilty of abuses and the Amnesty International inquiry into brutality in the Twenty-Six Counties, as well as various inquiries into torture and repression in the Six Counties, have led in Britain to the movement to form an international tribunal to investigate Britain's presence in Ireland.

All of these things are very much in embryo at the moment. There is not a mass movement in either the Six or the Twenty-Six Counties. The solidarity movement in Britain involves at the moment only those who have supported Ireland consistently and this is only a small section of the potential support.

Q. What role do you expect the fusion between the PD and MSR to play in the present process of rebuilding united-front activity, political debate, and regroupment?

McAnulty. Regroupment is not just a question of getting more people involved in struggle. It also involves a change in the forces in struggle. This is true especially in the Marxist movement. The PD-MSR fusion is the major sign of regroupment on

the left. It has two aspects. One is political agreement, that is, the PD-MSR agree on their political approach to Marxism. But it has also become clear that we agree quite closely as well about what's actually happening, and about what should be done about it. This is the result of the experience of ten years of struggle and a common practice and orientation toward the national struggle in Ireland. We come up with markedly similar answers.

Our convergence is also a reflection of the intensity of the struggle. The left are under tremendous pressure. They more than any other section of the resistance have to have a clear position, have to be able to explain their actions politically. They have to have a scientific basis for their activities, to be able to relate them to the history of the struggle. And for the forces that have come through the period of downturn, this has become more and more difficult. And so, if the left is to provide leadership in the next period of the struggle, it has to be as united as possible.

I am not talking about an opportunist gathering together of everyone who expresses even a vague interest in socialism. In order for a real Marxist movement to be built, it must be built on principle.

However, the PD-MSR fusion shows that the possibility for unity of revolutionaries exists. The level of interest that we have found in this fusion among left republicans and other forces shows that the lessons are being carefully studied by the Irish left.

There are some obvious lessons that can be drawn from the past ten years. The most immediate is that the Six County state set up by Britain in Ireland cannot be reformed; it must be destroyed. That is the lesson we have learned from the victories of the anti-imperialist forces. The second obvious lesson, which we have learned from the defeats, is that a movement confined to the Six Counties cannot win; it must be built in all thirty-two counties of our country.

So, it has become clear that the weapon we need is a mass movement of the Irish people in all thirty-two counties. And that will be built only by taking up the demands of the working class in that movement. The direction can only come from a Marxist movement strongly rooted in the Irish working class. I would not say that it has become clear how to build such a movement. But there are certain lessons that have come out of the struggle. One is that the Marxist movement must be independent, not just an appendage of nationalism. Another is you have to be flexible when you are dealing with masses of people.

We have learned the need for strategy, to be able to gauge the ebb and flow among the masses of people. We have learned how political questions arise and are resolved in debate within organizations. We have learned the need for a thoroughgoing

revolutionary program and strategy to win the struggle.

If you look at People's Democracy as a representative of the Irish socialist movement in 1968-69, you can see that we made all the mistakes that were possible. But we were very much a movement of youth, of the inexperienced. We did not understand the national question. We did not understand the struggle against imperialism. We did not understand the need for a party. The only thing that we had in our favor was that we were willing to learn from experience.

We did not repeat our mistakes. People's Democracy was not a Marxist organization in 1969. It is now. And, what we have learned that I think may be of value to other socialist movements that may have a more developed program than we is the way that actual experience transforms theory into reality. What many people see as the abstractions of Marxism hit you over the head in the actual struggle, when you have to fight for the survival of your own politics, working-class politics.

McGeown. We in the MSR did not approach the fusion with PD on our own. The MSR is the Irish section of the Fourth International. And we would hope that within the fused organization we will be able to convince all the comrades of the necessity of belonging to the world Trotskyist movement.

We think that many of the comrades of PD already realize that some of our strengths are indivisible from our membership in the Fourth International. The fact that we participate in an international socialist movement, learning from and contributing to the experience of that movement, is reflected in the way we have approached the Irish struggle since our formation in 1972, and indeed in the history of our tendency before we existed as a separate organization.

We have confidence in the internationalism of the comrades of People's Democracy, and are hopeful that it will not be too long before the greater forces within the fused organization find their rightful place within the international movement.

McAnulty. We in the People's Democracy think that internationalism is a central question. We haven't had a great deal of discussion about the Fourth International as an organization. We have to learn more about its history in the discussion with the MSR. We recognize that one of our great weaknesses has been the lack of an international orientation. But we see the discussions with the Fourth International as being a two-way process. We need to clarify where we stand internationally and on a whole series of questions of Marxism. But the Fourth International also has to prove the relevance of its program to the Irish people, to show how that program will lead to the victory of socialism in Ireland. □

'One of the Most Inhuman and Repressive in the World'

By Christine Beresford

[The following article appeared in the May 11 issue of *Direct Action*, a revolutionary-socialist newsweekly published in Sydney, Australia.]

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Only 15 women in Auckland have been able to obtain legal abortions since the repressive anti-abortion legislation passed by the NZ Parliament came into effect on April 1, reports the April 19 issue of the *New Zealand Herald*. Dr. J.H. Taylor, a consulting gynaecologist at National Women's Hospital, is quoted as saying the women were "desperate and deserving cases."

They also, fortunately, qualified under the terms of the new law. Taylor pointed out that he was able to deal with "only the tip of the iceberg" in granting abortions to women.

In other parts of the country, the situation women face is even worse. No abortion "service" under the terms of the new law exists at all in Wanganui, Taranaki, Nelson, Marlborough, North Otago, or Timaru, as no doctors have sought appointment as consultants.

According to the Abortion Supervisory Committee, only in Wellington and Christchurch have an adequate number of consultants been appointed.

Sisters Overseas Service (SOS), which arranges abortions for women in Australia, is still sending between 30 and 40 every week to Australia.

For those women who cannot afford to go to Australia, and who now have no hope of obtaining legal abortions there are few alternatives—back-street abortions at the risk of their lives, enforced pregnancy, or an attempt at self-abortion at the risk of up to 14 years imprisonment.

The new law is one of the most inhuman and repressive in the whole world. The grounds for legal abortion are extremely narrow. Abortion is now legal only if continuation of pregnancy would result in serious danger to the life or to the physical and mental health of the woman.

To make matters worse, an amendment was added that abortion is legal only when such danger "cannot be averted by other means." Such a provision presumably means that if a woman faced the prospect of mental illness as a result of childbirth, and if this could be "cured" by a stay in a mental institution, then abortion is illegal.

The only other grounds for abortion are incest, or pregnancy in a woman who is

"severely subnormal" or "a girl under care and protection as defined by the Crimes Act."

Rape, possible foetal deformity, social and economic factors (such as poverty) are not grounds for abortion and, with the exception of rape, are also excluded as matters to be taken into account when deciding if abortion is permissible.

The new law requires certifying consultants, but few doctors have applied. The reason for this is that under the law a majority of doctors are "pro-abortion extremists."

The General Practitioners Society conducted a survey of its members in December 1977 and found that 55 per cent thought abortion should be a decision between a woman and her doctor. However, doctors cannot become certifying consultants if they hold "extreme" views on abortion. Extreme views are defined as either (a) the belief that abortions must never be performed or (b) the belief that a woman and her doctor should have the right to make the decision.

Since nearly all anti-abortionists are prepared to see at least some abortions, the effect of this provision is to ensure that only anti-abortionists can become consultants. In fact, a large number of the consultants so far appointed are or have been members of the anti-abortion "Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child" (SPUC).

In addition to the lack of certifying consultants, women face an additional barrier in seeking abortion. The procedure they must follow is designed to make it as difficult as possible to obtain one.

A woman must first gain approval of a doctor, who refers her to two certifying consultants, one of whom must be an obstetrician and gynaecologist. After these two have "certified" the woman, the operating doctor must also agree to do the procedure. A total of four doctors are to make the decision for each woman.

The severity of the abortion law is out of step with what most New Zealanders think about abortion. For the past four or five years, public opinion polls have shown 65 per cent of the population favoring a liberalisation of the abortion laws.

In the last year New Zealand has seen the largest pro-abortion marches ever. Opposition to the law is widespread, and women angered by this attack on their rights have been increasingly taking part in actions opposing the law and demand-

ing the right to choose.

An abortion conference organised by the Women's National Abortion Action Campaign (WONAAC) held in March drew 180 women. The women there decided to make 1978 "Abortion Action Year" and will continue to campaign for the repeal of restrictive abortion laws and for legislation which will safeguard a woman's right to choose. The conference has planned nationwide marches for September 15 (the anniversary of the day NZ women won the vote).

The weak position of the NZ Labour Party on the abortion question is being challenged at this year's conference, with delegates being called on to vote for the repeal of the existing abortion laws and to throw the issue open to a referendum. The Labour leadership has consistently ducked taking a pro-abortion stand, leaving the issue as a "conscience" matter.

Another indication of the growth of opposition to the law is that some unions are beginning to take pro-abortion positions. The National Abortion Conference was endorsed by the Wellington Insurance Union and the Auckland Public Service Association.

The attack on abortion rights in NZ should be seen in the context of attempts to cut back the gains made by women internationally. In countries where abortion laws were liberalised in the late '60s and early '70s (USA, Britain, France) attempts are being made to interfere with women's access to safe, legal abortion. Such attacks are made through both legal restrictions and cutbacks in funding and abortion facilities. It is possible here, in Australia, that attempts will be made to limit the availability of abortion by taking it off Medibank.

Any attack on the right of women to abortion anywhere in the world is an attack on all women. The fight of NZ women to repeal the repressive abortion legislation and win the right to choose must be supported here in any way possible. □

How's That Again?

Arlington House, the American right-wing publisher, has announced the following two titles as part of its 1978 list—*Thou Shalt Not Kill: The Christian Case Against Abortion*, and *Neither Cruel Nor Unusual: The Case for Capital Punishment*.