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Tehran—80,000 Mourn Victims of Shah's Massacre



**BEHIND FLIGHT
FROM DOLLAR**

**Brazil: Moreno's
Life in Danger**

Nicaragua: Pentagon Ready to 'Rescue' Operation?

NEWS ANALYSIS

U.S. Hands Off Iran, Nicaragua, Zimbabwe!

By Fred Murphy

While Carter, Begin, and Sadat were holed up at Camp David, playing out an extended charade aimed at convincing the world that "substantial progress" was being made toward a Mideast settlement, three other crises facing Washington and its allies sharpened abruptly and simultaneously.

Rising mass struggles are challenging long-entrenched semicolonial regimes in Iran and Nicaragua. In Zimbabwe, the crisis of white minority rule has deepened considerably. The imperialists fear that victories by the masses could undermine stability in these areas and even directly threaten capitalist rule.

The workers and peasants of the semicolonial world suffered by far the most from the economic depression of 1974-75 and the upsurge of inflation that preceded it. Their situation has become even worse since then. But they are fighting back, and more struggles like those in Iran, Nicaragua, and Zimbabwe are on the agenda.

The imperialists must act to stave off these threats—perhaps not by preserving the current regimes in every case, but certainly by seeking ways to preserve the basis of their domination.

This in turn poses real threats of direct military intervention, which could lead—especially in Iran—to confrontation with the Soviet Union and nuclear war.

Mass mobilizations by millions in Iran have turned directly against the dictatorial rule of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi. The shah has responded by gunning down thousands in the streets, but the movement has not been broken. The stability of the shah's conscript army has been put in question, threatening the imperialists' main bastion in the key Persian Gulf region.

Full-scale civil war has erupted in Nicaragua, where the masses are fighting to bring down the forty-year-old Somoza dynasty. The war could spread to other parts of Central America, where for decades the Somozas have been Washington's closest and most reliable allies.

The Black nationalist guerrilla groups have stepped up their drive against the white-minority regime in Zimbabwe, while the bankruptcy of Smith's "internal settlement" has become obvious to all—including Smith himself. Mass meetings of tens of thousands have been held in the Black townships in support of the guerrillas, and strikes among Black workers are increasing. The survival of one of the last

two white-ruled states in southern Africa is growing more precarious.

The imperialists' response to these challenges thus far points up their weakened position and narrowing margins for maneuver.

Since the costly U.S. defeat in Indochina, and the massive rise of antiwar sentiment worldwide that contributed in large part to that defeat, direct military intervention has been a far less desirable option for the imperialists. In the present crises, Washington and its allies have sought to buy time, hoping to avoid more drastic moves. Time is running short, however, and the danger of new military adventures is increasing.

Rebellion and Massacre in Iran

Iran is of immense importance to the imperialists. Besides being a principal source of oil itself, the country is strategically located on the Persian Gulf, from which two-thirds of the capitalist world's petroleum is shipped. Iran shares a 1,000-mile border with the Soviet Union and is a key link in the military encirclement of the workers states that Washington maintains. The shah, armed to the teeth by the Pentagon, has grown more indispensable as other South Asian regimes—Afghanistan, Pakistan, India—have become less reliable.

During the past year, despite savage repression, a mass movement for democratic rights has arisen in Iran. Tens of thousands have gone into the streets time and again to demand an end to censorship, freedom of political prisoners, university autonomy, and other liberties.

In August, after the backfire of a crude attempt to pin a mass murder by arson on the opposition, the shah tried to defuse the movement with some concessions. These included allowing some opposition parties to function openly, loosening press censorship, and promising free elections. The shah also sought to divide the opposition by offering to conciliate some of the more conservative religious figures who had been playing a role in the protests.

But in lifting the lid slightly on dissent after twenty-five years of totalitarian rule, the shah touched off a rapid mobilization against the monarchy itself. Millions went into the streets across Iran on September 4 and again on September 7, this time openly chanting "Down with the shah" and appealing to the ranks of the army for sympathy and support.

On September 8, the regime declared martial law and sent troops, tanks, and helicopter gunships against the demonstrators. Thousands died. Two days later, President Carter emerged from his Camp David summit seclusion to telephone the shah personally, reaffirming his government's backing for the bloody tyrant.

Clearly, Washington is ready to provide far more than moral support if that should become necessary to keep its imperial hangman on his "Peacock Throne." The stakes in the Persian Gulf are high enough that the imperialists might well risk a direct intervention and war to preserve their control over the area and its oil.

Nicaragua—Carter's Dilemma

In Nicaragua, Washington tried to pressure dictator Anastasio Somoza into making concessions and forestalling a popular upsurge. But Somoza rejected that course, and now an insurrection against his rule has begun.

The Sandinista-led masses are putting up a stiff fight against the murderous firepower of Somoza's National Guard. Fighting has spilled into Costa Rica, and the Honduran, Guatemalan, and Salvadoran dictatorships are considering the dispatch of troops to bolster Somoza. Meanwhile, Panamanians are reported to be volunteering to join the anti-Somoza struggle. The war could thus eventually involve all Central America.

The U.S. imperialists may pay a heavy price for having clung too long to their Nicaraguan puppet. Carter will have to decide whether to make Nicaragua a "second Santo Domingo" in order to stave off what he must perceive as a potential "second Cuba" in the making. U.S. intervention in Latin America at this time would undermine the illusions Carter has so carefully built up with the Panama Canal treaties and his "human rights" rhetoric.

Zimbabwe—The Fuse Shortens

British and American efforts to work out a compromise in Zimbabwe between Ian Smith's white-settler regime and Black nationalist leaders Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe have failed to bear fruit. Smith hoped to buy time through taking some Black leaders into his cabinet as figureheads, only to see their mass support evaporate. Nkomo and Mugabe now rightly fear that they could suffer the same fate should they make a deal with Smith. At the same time, Smith is under pressure from his increasingly frenzied white supporters to escalate the war against the Black guerrillas. The whites have been steadily losing ground as thousands of Black youths have joined the freedom fighters and mass mobilizations in the Black townships have increased.

As the white-minority regime becomes more and more isolated, the danger of a

South African "rescue" operation increases. In that event, the Zimbabwean leaders might appeal for Cuban assistance, as the MPLA did when South Africa invaded Angola.

London and Washington use Cuban aid to the anti-imperialist struggle as a pretext for their intervention in Africa. They have already made a number of warnings to Havana to stay out of the Zimbabwean struggle. This raises the danger of U.S. military action against Cuba itself as the fight against white-minority rule in Africa deepens.

In Iran, Nicaragua, and Zimbabwe, the semicolonial masses are mounting new battles against imperialist domination and capitalist exploitation. Similar struggles are under way in Peru and could break out at any time in Turkey, Jamaica, or Egypt—to name only four countries where imperialist-imposed austerity is hitting the masses especially hard.

No leadership is yet evident in the three current "hot spots" of the colonial revolution with a clear perspective of what is required for victory; that is, bringing the workers to power, supported by the peasants, and taking anticapitalist measures to break the stranglehold of imperialism. But the masses of Iran and Nicaragua have already shown a capacity to go far beyond what some of the probourgeois oppositionists would want. In addition, the Cuban example shows that young revolutionary fighters can take great strides in consciousness in the course of the struggle itself.

That is what Washington fears above all. It knows that once the masses begin to move into action on their own the fight for democratic rights in the colonial world tends to become a struggle against capitalism. It is willing to use whatever measures are necessary to prevent such a development.

Staying the hand of Washington and its allies is the task of revolutionists in the imperialist countries. That is the most important contribution they can make to the fight for socialism in the colonial world.

As the danger of new imperialist military adventures increases, all supporters of the struggle for self-determination must be ready to move into action to demand:

Hands off Iran!
Hands off Nicaragua!
Hands off Zimbabwe!
Hands off Cuba! □

Fly in the Ointment

"The dispute in the Peruvian copper mines is now entering a critical stage. By ignoring last week's government order to return to work, the mine workers now face dismissal. However, it is unclear how the state-controlled and the privately-owned mining companies intend to replace up to 50,000 skilled workers."—*Latin America Commodities Report*, September 8, 1978.

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Civil War Erupts Against Somoza Dictatorship

By Fred Murphy

The fight to bring down the hated dictatorship of Gen. Anastasio Somoza Debayle in Nicaragua became a full-scale civil war during the second week of September.

Well-organized attacks on National Guard installations by guerrillas of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) turned into popular insurrections in the cities of León, Masaya, Estelí, and Chinandega on September 9.

In León, the rebels burned the jail, routed the National Guard from its command post, and distributed the arms found there to the local population.

The jail in Masaya was also burned, as was the local branch of the Nicaraguan Central Bank. The National Guard was driven out of its post in the Indian community of Monimbó—long an anti-Somoza stronghold—and arms were also handed out to local residents there.

By midday on September 10, León, Masaya, Estelí, and Chinandega were all effectively under rebel control, and the remaining National Guard troops were pinned down to the immediate surroundings of their barracks.

"While the main force of guerrillas apparently quickly withdrew following the attacks," Karen DeYoung reported from Nicaragua to the September 14 *Washington Post*, "the fight was taken up by armed youths and men with the apparent support of large percentages of the populations.

"The local rebels quickly barricaded extensive portions of the cities and street battles with the National Guard began. While in earlier fights the rebels appeared armed primarily with small-caliber weapons, they now seem to have taken possession of more substantial arms. . . ."

Somoza's forces launched a brutal counteroffensive September 11, striking first in Masaya. The city was bombed and strafed by jet fighters, and many buildings were set afire. The National Guard's elite Black Berets unit reentered the city September 14 and then "carried out a house-to-house search, arresting or shooting any men they found" (Associated Press, September 14).

Hundreds of persons were killed in the assault. The Red Cross had to begin burning bodies in the streets of Masaya to prevent the spread of disease.

The rebels in León held out against jet attacks and a heavy artillery bombardment until September 15.

As of September 16, the cities of Estelí and Chinandega and much of the northwestern part of the country remained in rebel hands. New street fighting and at-

tacks on National Guard units were reported in Diriamba, Jinotepe, Rivas, Granada, and Peñas Blancas.

The current upsurge of struggle against the Somoza dictatorship began August 22 with the seizure of the National Palace in Managua by an FSLN commando unit. Businessmen and industrialists opposed to Somoza then initiated a shutdown of commercial and industrial activity on August 24. The shutdown has continued to be almost total.

Now the masses of working people and unemployed in the cities—especially the youth—are taking a greater role in the fight. The FSLN is clearly making an increased effort to involve these masses, arming them and leading them into battle with the National Guard.

Such developments cannot help but be quite disturbing to Somoza's bourgeois opponents. Their strategy has been to use economic pressure to force Somoza's resignation, which they have viewed as crucial precisely in order to stave off the radicalization and mobilization of the masses.

The bourgeois opposition must also be alarmed at the FSLN's recent calls for the total expropriation of Somoza's hundreds of millions of dollars worth of holdings in Nicaragua and the complete dismantling of the National Guard. In the capitalists' eyes, expropriation would no doubt set a very bad precedent, while destroying the only repressive force their state has must be out of the question.

The growing uneasiness of the anti-Somoza bourgeoisie was reflected in a September 14 move by the opposition groups to set up a three-member commission authorized to "negotiate a ceasefire . . . and to link the opposition to a mediation effort by an outside government" (*Washington Post*, September 15). This falls into line with offers already made by the Costa Rican and Venezuelan regimes—with Washington's blessing—to assist in working out a compromise in Nicaragua. Unfortunately the FSLN—through its authorized spokesmen in the "Group of 12"—appeared to go along with this move by the opposition groups.

But Somoza is showing no inclination to compromise. On the contrary, besides stepping up his bloody counteroffensive, he has imposed martial law on the entire country, arrested hundreds of opposition figures and driven the rest into clandestinity or exile, and imposed tight censorship on both the domestic press and foreign news dispatches.

In addition, National Guard planes repeatedly bombed and strafed areas of northern Costa Rica during the second week of September. San José responded with a formal note of protest followed by the expropriation of Somoza's huge estate in Costa Rica. President Pérez of Venezuela then sent five military planes to Costa Rica, and General Torrijos sent four Panamanian helicopters.

Meanwhile, there are also reports that troops from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras have already been sent to assist Somoza's National Guard, indicating that the Nicaraguan civil war could spread to involve other Central American states.

Washington has become increasingly alarmed at the rebellion against Somoza's rule and its destabilizing effects on Central America as a whole. Before the FSLN launched its insurrectionary attacks on September 9, the State Department appeared to be moving toward pressing Somoza to alter his hardline stance. That remains the public U.S. position, but the overriding concern at this stage must be putting down the anti-Somoza insurrection. There are indications that the Pentagon is weighing plans to go to Somoza's aid.

The camouflage for such an operation was indicated by a report in the September 16 *Washington Post* that U.S. Ambassador Mauricio Solaun had "asked Somoza for help in evacuating a reported 1,500 Americans in the northwestern part of the country"—precisely the area that the FSLN and the popular forces still control.

"Rescue" operations have long been used by the imperialists as a cover for military intervention. Ambassador Solaun's request—and the "promises of cooperation" he reportedly received from Somoza—should serve as alarm signals. All who support the Nicaraguan people's fight against tyranny should be ready to mobilize to demand, "U.S. hands off Nicaragua!" □

Two More Victims of Hiroshima Blast

A survivor of Washington's atomic bombing of Hiroshima in 1945 committed suicide because of radiation poisoning—the second such suicide in two days—police in Hiroshima reported September 4.

Aishi Matsuoka, sixty-seven, hanged herself in her room at the Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Hospital. She had undergone an operation for radiation-related lung cancer in April and had been under intensive care since early August.

On September 3, Shigeno Tamura, seventy-five, jumped five stories from a balcony to her death. She had suffered from radiation-related lumbago.

An estimated 87,000 persons were killed when the Truman administration exploded the world's first atomic bomb over Hiroshima. Another 50,000 have perished from the lingering effects of the radiation.

80,000 in Tehran Mourn Victims of Massacre

By Parvin Najafi

With armored trucks, tanks, and soldiers armed with machine guns stationed throughout the major cities, Iran entered its second week of martial law in mid-September.

The shah's savagery, supported by Washington, knew no limits in the first week. Thousands were massacred in the streets, thousands of others were thrown into the shah's torture chambers, and a fierce manhunt has been conducted by SAVAK agents in search of thousands of other opponents of the regime.

High on SAVAK's list are the names of some 4,500 marshals who helped defend the gigantic antigovernment demonstrations of September 4 and 7. These marshals were the real leaders and organizers of those demonstrations.

Meanwhile, more detailed information about the brutal operation carried out by the shah's troops has come to light.

First of all, the figure of fifty-eight killed, cited by the capitalist media around the world, is nowhere near the truth.

By September 9 alone, 3,897 death certificates had been issued by the Behesht-e-Zahra cemetery (the largest in Tehran) for victims who had bullets in their bodies. Among the dead were at least 400 women.

Even this figure, high as it is, does not include all those killed in Tehran, as the shooting continued in the next few days, though on a smaller scale.

In addition, eyewitnesses reported that there had been cases in which several bodies were piled up and burned by army commandos.

While this horrendous massacre was being carried out, the capitalist media in the "free world" was busy prettying up the bloodthirsty regime of Mohammed Reza Pahlavi and slandering the fighters for democratic and civil rights in Iran.

This hypocrisy, taking its inspiration from the shah's brutality, knows no bounds. In article after article, the capitalist press has tried to portray the shah as the "great liberalizer" and "modernizer" of Iran.

But there are these "mad" Iranians, the press claims, who prefer to stand in front of bullets rather than accept the "progress" according to them by their benevolent imperialist masters and the latter's stooge, the shah.

The imperialist propaganda about the "progressive" role of the shah's regime is merely a dressed-up version of nineteenth century propaganda about the "white

man's burden." The ruling classes of the "free world" have always sought to present the plunder, exploitation, and oppression of their colonies as bringing "progress and civilization" to the "barbarians" of the East. Any revolt against their rule or their puppets was of course the reaction of the Dark Ages.

Despite the high-pitched campaign to present the heroic fighters for democratic and civil rights in Iran as "ultraconservative, reactionary Muslim fanatics," voices have already been raised against the brutal rule of the shah and the support given to him by the imperialist powers.

In Paris, 15,000 persons took part in a march September 12 to protest the bloodbath in Iran. The march was sponsored by the major trade unions in France, the Communist and Socialist parties, and many smaller left groups and civil-rights organizations.

In front of the procession were two big banners calling for "Respect for human rights in Iran," and "Down with the dictatorship in Iran." Among the most popular chants at the demonstration were "Freedom for Iranians," and "The shah has killed 10,000 Iranians."

The action was also sponsored by several Iranian student organizations and was attended by a large contingent of Iranian students.

Similar protest actions also took place in Britain and Italy.

In the United States, the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran (CAIFI) held a press conference in Washington, D.C., September 13 to launch a campaign in defense of the victims of the shah's most recent crackdown and demand immediate suspension of martial law (see following page).

Inside Iran, protests against the shah's regime have continued despite the fierce repression.

For two days after the September 8 bloodbath in Tehran, demonstrators kept coming out into the streets. On September 14, more than 80,000 persons took part in a march to Behesht-e-Zahra cemetery for the funeral of those killed September 8.

Army troops tried to stop the procession, but the demonstrators kept marching, chanting "Death to the Pahlavi dynasty." Addressing the soldiers, they chanted, "We gave you flowers, you gave us bullets."

Demonstrations and protest actions were also reported in Mashed, Qum, and Tabriz.

With the imposition of martial law the

shah's regime has dealt a stiff blow to the mass movement. The shah's victory, however, has not crushed the vanquished but only welded them more closely together, deepened their hatred, and brought them closer to the practical tasks of a serious struggle. It is one of those victories that cannot fail to introduce fissures in the ranks of the victors.

The shah's army, 700,000 strong, is young. Most of the troops are between the ages of eighteen and twenty, and nearly all have been drafted from the peasantry and the impoverished urban population. They are therefore greatly susceptible to the germs of revolutionary fever in the highly "contaminated" atmosphere of present-day Iran.

By mobilizing the army against the indignant population, day in and day out, for six months, the monarchy has bought itself time, but only at the price of extending the field of battle and rendering the struggle more acute.

The mobilization of ever newer units to wage war against their own brothers and sisters will inevitably draw the army into political life. The revolutionary fever will penetrate even the tightly locked doors of the army barracks and will awaken even the most ignorant and backward.

The longer the present mobilization of the army lasts, the more inevitably a large number of the champions of the revolution will be drawn from its ranks.

No state is able to withstand such a protracted, stubborn struggle of the sort that has been waged throughout Iran in the last year, introducing demoralization into the bureaucracy and the army and spreading dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs among all sections of the population. Even less will the utterly corrupt regime of Mohammed Reza Pahlavi be able to endure such an onslaught.

The entire course of events throughout the past year points to the fact that the peak of the movement is not behind us, but in the months and years to come.

All through the last year, beginning with the first protest letters sent to the prime minister in June 1977, the movement has steadily gained in sweep and intensity, involving ever newer sections of Iranian society in the struggle against the Pahlavi autocracy.

The massive protests and subsequent massacre of the first week of September were only the opening phase in which the forces of revolution and counterrevolution for the first time sized up each other's strength. □

Sign of the Times

The Hillside Golf Course in Umtali, Zimbabwe, near the border with Mozambique, has posted a new rule: If a golfer's ball lands in a mortar-shell hole, it may be moved without penalty.

Statement by Babak Zahraie

Lift the Martial Law in Iran!

[The following statement was issued at the news conference in Washington, D.C., September 13 sponsored by the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran. Babak Zahraie is a national field secretary of CAIFI.]

* * *

On Friday, September 8, an extensive state of martial law was imposed in Iran and its provisions strictly enforced. This assault is a full-scale military operation, involving tanks, armored cars, helicopters, thousands of troops, and special squads armed with machine guns. Its implications are of great importance to world public opinion as well as to the Iranian people.

The statistics of the official massacre are horrendous. One cemetery alone, in Tehran, on the second day of martial law, received 3,810 bodies! All were murdered by the shah's troops. Six hospitals have issued death certificates for 789 other victims, and many more have not been recorded.

In addition to the thousands already slain, the agents of the military government have spread a dragnet to apprehend an estimated 4,500 persons who have dared to challenge the shah's reign of terror during the huge peaceful demonstrations preceding martial law. Most of these served as marshals in the huge protest march on September 7 in Tehran.

A sweeping search for those who bore oppositional banners saying "Down With The Shah" is also being conducted by the military's special armed squads.

A host of prominent figures, writers, law-

yers, journalists, religious leaders, civil libertarians, and human rights activists have also been arrested. Mehdi Bazargan, Karim Sanjabi, Ayatollah Nuri, Rahmatollah Moghaddam-Maraghei, Hadji Manian and Dr. Mofatteh were among the first to fall into the hands of the shah's bloodhounds.

Orders have been issued to shoot on the spot the distinguished Iranian social thinker and journalist, Dr. Ali-Asghar Haj-Sayyed-Javadi. He has been the most outspoken critic of the shah's tyranny since the insurgent movement began early this year. He has been the vice president of the recently established Iranian Society for the Defense of Freedom and Human Rights. Earlier this year Dr. Haj-Sayyed-Javadi was invited by the International League for Human Rights to come to the U.S. His request for a passport was denied by the Iranian government to prevent his views from being heard abroad. Dr. Haj-Sayyed-Javadi is now in hiding somewhere in Iran. But given the brutality with which the shah's henchmen deal with dissidents, his life is in great danger. We raise this alarm to safeguard his security.

Most of the media in this country portray the shah as a benevolent leader trying to "liberalize" Iran in the teeth of "fanatic" religious opposition. This is a false representation of the actual situation.

The shah's government is one of the most brutal dictatorships on this planet. World public opinion has been informed about the torture chambers, burned bodies, and barbaric methods of his SAVAK torturers. His jails hold and have held tens of thousands of political prisoners.

Since returning to power through the 1953 CIA coup, the shah has inflicted fierce repression upon millions of Iranians.

Is it any wonder that the majority of the people of Iran are clamoring for freedom and democracy—and taking action to achieve their goals? The outpouring of millions, peacefully demonstrating in the streets of Tehran and all the major cities of the country just a week ago, has made this crystal clear. The only response of the regime—apart from hollow promises of future reform—has been bullets, bayonets, and tanks. There was a demonstration of several thousand in the city of Mashhad which took place after the shooting of innocent people by the troops. A popular slogan chanted by the crowd was: "We gave you love, You gave us coffins."

The imposition of the martial law in response to the gigantic antishah demonstrations proves the inability of the hated tyrant to tolerate the most limited freedom. He is tenaciously holding on to power against the will of the majority of Iranians.

The American public has a special interest in what is happening in Iran. The U.S. government keeps a force of 40,000 military and civilian advisers to the shah. It has equipped his army and trained his secret police. It is thereby complicit in the bloodbath soaking Iran today. At the present time Washington is doing its utmost to uphold the tottering dictatorship; President Carter has called the shah with condolences from Camp David.

For their own sake the American people should back up the demands being raised in Tehran and throughout Iran today:

Lift the martial law!

Free all those arrested since the imposition of the martial law!

Save the lives of Dr. Ali-Asghar Haj-Sayyed-Javadi and all the endangered oppositionists!

Statement by Reza Baraheni

'The Shah Must Go or 35 Million Will Die to Oust Him!'

[The following statement was issued at the news conference in Washington, D.C., September 13, sponsored by the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran. Reza Baraheni, the exiled Iranian poet, is honorary chairperson of CAIFI. He himself is a former political prisoner of the shah, having been imprisoned and tortured for 102 days in 1973.]

* * *

A note scribbled on the wall of a small street leading to the Sepah Square in

Tehran says: "Fifteen hundred people were shot down in the first hours of martial law in Jaleh Square."

Fifteen hundred people! A prominent human-rights activist in Iran told me on the phone a few hours after the declaration of martial law: "This is not a state of emergency! This is not martial law! It is a bloody coup made by the shah against the constitution and the people of Iran!"

Call it by any name you may wish, the bloody massacre came in the aftermath of more than ten months of popular demon-

strations in all Iranian cities against the repressive regime of the shah.

These demonstrations reached their climax on Monday, September 4, and on Thursday, September 7. More than three million people demonstrated in all major cities on the first day, and more than a million people marched peacefully in Tehran alone on the second day. It was also on this last day that the soldiers of the Iranian army embraced the demonstrators and wept regretfully, admitting that they had been deceived by their superiors.

Opponents of Shah Hold News Conference in Washington

Exiled Iranian poet Reza Baraheni, former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, and U.S. Congressmen Fortney Stark and Tom Harkin spoke out at a news conference in Washington, D.C., September 13, appealing to world public opinion to protest the massacre of thousands of men, women, and children in the streets of Tehran September 8.

"The people of Iran are clamoring for freedom and democracy," said Babak Zahraie, national field secretary of the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran (CAIFI), the sponsor of the news conference.

"The only response of the regime—apart from hollow promises of future reform—has been bullets, bayonets, and tanks."

Zahraie urged supporters of civil liberties all over the world to send messages of protest to Iranian embassies, with copies to CAIFI, 853 Broadway, Suite 414, New York, New York 10003.



Diane Wang/Militant

Ramsey Clark and Reza Baraheni at news conference.

The shah's soldiery, drafted mostly from among Iran's starving peasantry, came to the point of defection in the actual interests of Iran's workers, peasants, the lower middle class of shopkeepers and bazaari tradesmen, university and secondary-school students and their teachers, lower-echelon employees of government offices, oppressed nationalities, and last but not least the poverty-stricken students from Iran's Islamic Shi'a seminaries. The slogan was, "Either the shah should step down or thirty-five million Iranians will die to oust him."

To call such a majority of the population "Muslim fanatics," as the American news media have chosen to do, is as absurd as to call the people of Washington "Christian fanatics."

To call the huge masses of demonstrators "reactionary and traditionalist mobs of Muslims rising against the shah's liberalizing policies" is as stupid as calling Martin Luther King and his fellow demonstrators a decade ago a bunch of racist lunatics fighting against white civil libertarians in the South.

To call the shah "the liberator of Iranian women" is as absurd as calling Betty Friedan, the author of *The Feminine Mystique*, a male chauvinist.

The truth of the matter is that the Iranian people, young and old, men and women, have risen against the shah and his dictatorial military regime for reasons that are very simple: The shah has devastated the country's economy. He has bartered Iranian oil for arms, filling the pocketbooks of arms manufacturers and oil companies, with large kickbacks and

bribes for his relatives and generals.

He has destroyed the country's agriculture, as a result of which almost all food items for Iran are imported from abroad. He has had an annual increase of 150,000 people on the illiteracy rolls, through malfeasance and a colonialist education policy.

Last but not least, he has gagged liberty, destroyed human dignity, and throttled all human rights by sophisticated means of torture, modern prisons and concentration camps, and a record high of 100,000 political prisoners for almost any given year during the last decade.

To call this man a "reformer" or a "modernizer" is as absurd as calling Hitler a human-rights advocate or Stalin a civil libertarian.

The new cabinet the shah appointed by decree two weeks ago is headed by Jaafar Sharif-Emami, who is also the president of the Pahlavi Foundation, a tax-exempt institution that has offices in both Tehran and New York and is owned by none other than the shah himself. No wonder that Dr. Ali-Asghar Haj-Sayyed-Javadi, the country's foremost civil- and human-rights activist, has called this cabinet, which began the massacre of innocent people on Friday, "illegal and unconstitutional."

The Iranian government has given the number of those slain in the period since martial law as a maximum of 100. The Iranian press, tightly controlled by the SAVAK [political police] now, has put the number at 150. But the figures on the walls reach 1,500.

There is a widespread rumor that more than 9,000 people have been killed during

the last five days. Professor Hamid Algar, interviewed on the [American TV news program] "MacNeil-Lehrer Report," put the figure at 4,500.

One report from Tehran gives the number of dead in some of the city's hospitals as follows: Pazargani Hospital, 600; Sevvom-e Shaaban, 20; Sina Hospital, 140; Pahadori, 100; Pist-e-Panje Shahrivar, 13; and Jaleh Emergency, 6. Another report, originating from sources closer to the clergy, says that 2,965 men, 600 women, and 70 children were buried from September 9 to noon September 11.

Through the mediation efforts of a clergyman influential in government circles, namely Pehbahanian, the bodies of those cut down by government gunfire have been delivered to their relatives. It is estimated by those in religious circles performing the funeral rites that the number of those who have fallen from bullets will each at least 5,000.

Among those arrested are engineer Mehdi Bazaragan, president of the Iranian Society for Liberty and Human Rights; engineer Rahmatollah Moqhaddam Maraghei, a member of the Executive Board of the Society for Liberty and Human Rights; Maraghei's son Nader and three of his friends—Mortazavi and the lawyers Ali and Hossein Zarrineh-baf.

Also arrested were short-story writer Fereydoon Tonokaboni, a board member of the Writers Association of Iran; Ayatollah Nuri, Dr. Pahonar, and Dr. Mofatteh, three leading priests; and the sons of Ayatollah Najafi Mar'ashi and Ayatollah Golpayegani.

In addition, there are rumors that more

than a thousand student and labor leaders are under arrest, as well as many people from the bazaar, whose financial contributions have helped make organizing the recent demonstrations possible.

The lives of all opposition leaders are in danger. The homes of most of them have been ransacked, their families harassed. Some of these leaders are in hiding. Among those are Abdol-Karim Lahiji, a well-known lawyer; the writers Shams Al-Ahmad and Eslam Kazemiyeh; and the journalists Safari and Haydari.

All dissidents and human-rights organizations in the country are concerned about the life and safety of Dr. Ali-Asghar Haj-Sayyed-Javadi, whose letter to the shah's personal secretary two and a half years ago opened the new phase of the battle for democracy and human rights. He is in hiding and his life is in immediate danger.

The Carter administration has extended full support to the shah, turning its advocacy of human rights into a mockery. Our men, women, and children have been massacred by troops trained by American military advisers. The guns in the hands of these troops were provided by the American government. The hands of Iranian generals and American advisers are equally soaked in the blood of the thousands of victims who have fallen during the last twenty-five years since the CIA-triggered coup in 1953.

I appeal to world public opinion to listen to the demands of our people. These demands are simple:

1. Stop the bloodbath in Iran!
2. Lift the martial law!
3. Free all those arrested during martial law and all those arrested before!
4. Guarantee the safety of those who are in hiding!
5. Send medical help to Iran as soon as possible!
6. Let all those in exile return to Iran and join the advocates of democracy in the country!
7. Send an international investigating commission to Iran to determine the causes of the massacres!

First Things First

Commenting on the case of twelve workers at the Aldermaston nuclear weapons plant in Britain who were exposed to possibly lethal amounts of plutonium dust, Anthony Tucker writes in the September 3 *Manchester Guardian Weekly*:

"If the Aldermaston workers turn out to be more contaminated than the Ministry statement implies then, instead of work being 'resumed as soon as possible,' other plants may have to close down for investigation. This could seriously disrupt research and the industrial processing of nuclear fuels. . . ."

"If the closure lasts more than a few months it could begin to affect the efficiency of Britain's nuclear contribution to NATO."

Kidnapped Socialist Released in Peru

Socialist journalist Roberto Famjul was released by his captors September 10 and left on a beach near Lima. He was reported to be in relatively good physical condition.

Famjul, a reporter for the Colombian socialist magazine *Revista de América*, had been kidnapped September 3 near a Lima office of the Workers, Peasants, Students, and People's Front (FOCEP) by three men brandishing pistols and a machine gun.

Two FOCEP activists were also kidnapped on September 3, but were released several hours later. The two activists said their assailants had claimed to be from the Peruvian Anti-communist Alliance (AAP).

In a note left with Famjul, the AAP also claimed credit for his kidnapping. The Lima daily *El Comercio* reported September 11 that the note "warned the Peruvian authorities that they should take security measures against communists like Hugo Blanco and that if this was not done [the AAP] would proceed to eliminate them."

There are strong indications that the AAP is linked to the military government. Further evidence was provided by the fact that agents of the PIP—the political police—were the first to find Famjul after his release. They claimed to have received an anonymous phone call informing them of Famjul's whereabouts.

How to Answer Capitalist Bankruptcies in Peru

[The following article appeared in the September 1 issue of *Revolución*, a newspaper published in Lima, Peru, by the Comisión de Unificación Trotskista (CUT—Commission for Trotskyist Unification). The CUT includes the majority of the Trotskyist organizations in Peru and is preparing for a unification congress to be held October 8. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

Since July 19 of last year, the capitalist owners of the Moraveco complex¹ (an enterprise given special privileges by the military dictatorship ever since 1968), have fired more than 80 workers, forced 70 others to resign, kept more than 100 workers on "forced vacations" for three or four months at a time, and have proposed to the government plans to "reduce" their personnel at Moraveco by another 100 workers (i.e., to legally fire them).²

Of the eleven plants that were operating a few years ago, today there are only five. The country's economic recession has severely affected Moraveco (which until recently was a prosperous enterprise). The capitalists (Drassinower and Company) are struggling desperately to save their capital by trampling on the rights of the

workers. What is happening at Moraveco is a warning of what is going to happen in many other enterprises in other branches of production.

Layoffs Are Not the Answer

The management at Moraveco is trying to divide the workers, saying that reorganization of the enterprise and reduction of the work force will permit better earnings "for everybody" within a short time. Workers at Moraveco should not only defend their jobs to the death, but also they should not have the slightest illusions about a "return to prosperity." The capitalist crisis is too severe to allow that. The capitalists are doomed to compete like crazy to obtain the biggest profits, shifting their capital from one enterprise to another in search of economic sectors that for the moment are the most profitable. This will mean the closing of factories, the continual floundering of many enterprises, and a fierce attack on workers' struggles. The battle that has broken out at Moraveco is only the beginning.

The Working Class Rises Up

In direct negotiations over the workers' demands, the management at Moraveco has stuck to their antilabor positions. The response of the union ranks was not long in coming, at all levels: the union, the plant delegates, the leadership, and the committee of struggle have all come out in favor of the indefinite general strike that began August 18. The workers are demanding withdrawal of the application for a reduction in personnel, rehiring of all the fired workers, reinstatement of the 100 compañeros "on vacation," and fulfillment of their list of demands.

1. A group of factories in Lima that produce consumer appliances such as washing machines, refrigerators, and so on.

2. Under Peruvian law, employers must apply for government permission in order to fire or lay off workers. A March 1978 decree by the military government removed many of the restrictions on this and gave the employers a virtual blank check for layoffs.

In reply, Mr. Drassinower and his cronies have made contingency plans to break the strike, and have called on the police to attack the strikers' picket lines with bombs and bullets (as happened on August 24 and 25 at Plant No. 10, where numerous workers were arrested and compañero Sedano was shot). These attacks have been answered courageously by the Moraveco workers. The strike is holding completely firm, extending to all 900 workers. Every day there are marches and impromptu rallies involving all the unions involved in struggle (the unions at the LGO and Rayón plants, the miners, and others).

Out With the Bosses—Workers Control!

The FETIMP³ has called a forty-eight-hour strike for September 5 and 6 in defense of the metalworkers unions involved in disputes. This is an important step. It will help draw the metalworkers' struggles together around a unified list of demands and make them part of the mass movement, which is seeking a vehicle for unified, nationwide struggle against the government.

Nevertheless, faced with the situation at Moraveco and the threats of layoffs and shutdowns in other sectors, it is necessary to present a clear political response. For us, this can only be: *workers' control of production*. What does that mean? That when confronted with management's arguments about "falling profits," "the danger of bankruptcy," and so on, the workers must have control over the company's financial records as well as veto power over all management decisions. Only in this way can we prevent the employers from dividing up their shares in the enterprise, transferring their capital to other enterprises, and running this one into the ground. Factory committees in every shop must take control of the plants!

And what if the Drassinowers don't want workers' control? What if they sabotage it and try to ruin the enterprise so that they can abandon it later? If that happens, the workers will have every right to begin a struggle for nationalization of the enterprise without compensation, to safeguard all the interests of the workers and formalize our control over production. We should reject any offers of "self-management" or "social property,"⁴ under which we would be forced to assume the company's debts, compensate the owners, and compete in the market against the big

capitalist enterprises without any kind of security. "Social property" schemes force the workers to exploit themselves, to give up their trade-union and social rights.

'Fraser Out!'

Thousands in Australia Score Austerity Budget

Chanting, "Fraser out!" 10,000 unionists, students, and others rallied in Sydney's Town Hall Square August 21 to protest the austerity policies contained in the Fraser government's new federal budget.

Organized by the New South Wales Labor Council and the state chapter of the Australian Labor Party (ALP), the rally won extremely broad backing from the labor movement. Building workers, railway workers, waterfront workers, metalworkers and dockworkers stopped work on the day of the protest. Many plants were shut down for up to twenty-four hours. Separate contingents of dockyard and waterfront workers, building laborers, printers, and meatworkers marched to join the central rally. Jim McLroy reported in the August 24 issue of the Australian Trotskyist weekly *Direct Action*.

Mass rallies and demonstrations occurred almost daily throughout the country after the budget was unveiled August 15.

On August 16, 500 people demonstrated outside the Hilton Hotel in Melbourne where Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser was scheduled to speak. Three days later, Fraser was jeered at a football game and pelted with tin cans.

An antibudget rally organized by the United Trades and Labor Council and ALP in Adelaide August 19 drew 7,000 persons. Two days later, 4,000 persons attended a rally in Brisbane organized by the Trades and Labor Council.

The Liberal government's budget has aroused such strong and vocal opposition because it represents a frontal attack on real wages through whopping increases in direct and indirect taxes and huge cuts in public spending. At the same time, the budget calls for a staggering \$2.5 billion in military outlays—nearly \$1 billion more than all the additional revenue raised by the new taxes.

In addition, the budget contains what is by far the biggest blow to Australian workers—the government's demand that they "give back" the system of universal, free health care won under the previous Labor government. In his budget speech, Treasurer John Howard announced that, as of November 1, Medibank Standard, the health plan based on small weekly premi-

Nationalization without compensation and workers' control is the only solution. Full implementation of this control requires that the workers take power. □

ums paid by wage earners, would be abolished, and "free enterprise" reintroduced into health care.

Pressure is mounting inside the labor movement for a vigorous response to these attacks. The New South Wales branch of the Australian Railways Union has urged the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) executive to call a general strike. The Victoria branch of the Amalgamated Metal Workers and Shipwrights Union has proposed that the ACTU call a special nationwide conference of labor to plan further action. Similar resolutions have been passed by other unions.

The Australian Trotskyists of the Socialist Workers Party urge full support to this campaign. *Direct Action* wrote August 24:

"Clearly, the momentum now being built up by the rallies, marches, strikes, and demonstrations since the budget has massive potential.

"The Fraser government can be brought down if this upsurge of popular feeling against the government can be organized and focussed around clear objectives.

"The ALP and the ACTU now have a responsibility to the entire working people to show leadership: to call a congress of the unions and the labor movement to plan a concerted campaign of national strikes and further demonstrations until this reactionary, unpopular government is thrown out of office." □

Sort of Like Night and Day

A Japanese diplomat recently explained the difference between "a capitalist society" and "a communist one":

"... we have found in our dealings with Vietnam, for example, that it took them a long time to understand even the most fundamental rules on which we work.

"For instance, we offered to lend Vietnam money to help with reconstruction, on condition that they shouldered the debts of the old Thieu regime in the South. It took us 18 months to explain our point of view, which was, among other things, that they would pay interest on our loans.

"'Why should we do that?' they asked. 'You are a rich country, and we are very poor.'"—*International Herald Tribune*, September 5, 1978

3. Federación de Trabajadores de la Industria Metalúrgica del Perú (Federation of Metalworkers of Peru).

4. "Social property"—name given to enterprises nationalized by the Velasco regime in the early 1970s. In most cases, full compensation was paid to the former owners, and a portion of the shares in the enterprise was distributed to the workers.

Smith Vows to 'Liquidate' Zimbabwe Rebels

By Ernest Harsch

Reflecting the growing desperation of his racist regime, Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith declared during a September 10 radio and television broadcast that he and the rest of the 230,000 whites in the country face "the greatest crisis of our lives."

His only immediate response to the escalating struggle for Black majority rule, however, was to announce yet more repression. He stated that martial law would be imposed in parts of the country, leading "to tougher, stronger measures against our enemies"—the guerrilla forces and political activists of the main Black nationalist groups opposed to the regime, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU).

Smith continued, "The next step is to liquidate the internal working of those organizations. . . ."

Josiah Chinamano, a top leader of ZAPU who was based within the country, revealed that this crackdown had already begun the day before with the arrest of some twenty leaders of ZAPU's internal apparatus. Within a few days the number climbed to 320, including district, provincial, and national officials of ZAPU, among them ten members of its National Executive Council. (Chinamano managed to escape abroad.) At least five members of the People's Movement, the internal wing of ZANU, were also reported to have been detained. On September 14, Smith officially banned the internal wings of both ZAPU and ZANU.

Hundreds of other ZAPU and ZANU activists were already in jail, but this was the largest single round-up since Smith brought several prominent Black figures into the government in March.

Smith likewise warned neighboring Black regimes that he would not tolerate their continued provision of sanctuary and aid to the ZAPU and ZANU guerrillas. He threatened further armed strikes into those countries, on the pattern of the earlier attacks that have already claimed the lives of hundreds of Zimbabwean refugees, especially in Mozambique. Just before Smith's speech, the government in neighboring Botswana accused the white supremacists of precipitating two cross-border clashes with Botswanan troops in the previous forty-eight hours.

Despite the intensity of Smith's repression, his regime's control over the situation has weakened considerably over the past few months. The guerrillas have estab-

lished their influence over wide areas of the country, tens of thousands of Blacks have demonstrated in the streets, and Smith's "internal settlement" with Abel Muzorewa, Ndabaningi Sithole, and Jeremiah Chirau has failed to win any appreciable support from the increasingly militant Black majority. Whites, moreover, are leaving the country in greater and greater numbers.

In this light, some of Smith's statements sounded a particularly desperate note. "We will continue with our policy of fighting the enemy with all our energy, our resources, our well-known and well-acclaimed valor," he declared. "And as there is no end to our reserves of these qualities, we will go on and on until final victory is achieved."

Many whites, however, remained unconvinced. In reaction to Smith's speech, an

increasing number of them have criticized his inability to assure the maintenance of white prosperity and privilege.

The Black nationalist leaders, for their part, condemned Smith's stepped-up repression. At a news conference in Lusaka, Zambia, September 11, Joshua Nkomo, the main leader of ZAPU, declared, "Smith means war." He continued, "If he means war, we are ready to fight and to remove the regime. That regime is dead."

Although Nkomo acknowledged that his forces had shot down an Air Rhodesia plane September 3, he termed Smith's charges that several of the survivors of the crash were massacred by his guerrillas as a "blatant lie."

Nkomo also adopted a harder stance toward an American and British proposal for a conference of all the participants in the Zimbabwe conflict, stating that the plan for such a conference is "dead now and buried." Although Nkomo is a co-leader with ZANU's Robert Mugabe of the Patriotic Front, he made it clear that he was speaking only for himself. A day after Nkomo's declaration, ZANU Secretary General Edgar Tekere stated that the Patriotic Front still favored the holding of an all-parties conference. □

How Labour, Tories Smuggled Oil to Rhodesia

For at least twelve years, the two major British oil companies illegally shipped oil to the racist Rhodesian regime of Ian Smith with the knowledge of the British government itself. The revelations came through public admissions by some of those involved and through official documents that were leaked to the press.

Just a few weeks before Smith declared Rhodesia's unilateral "independence" from Britain in 1965, a top official of the British-and-Dutch-owned Shell oil company assured the white supremacist regime that it would continue to receive oil "whatever happens," according to one document.

In subsequent years, even though the British government passed legislation making trade with the Smith regime illegal, both Shell and the government-controlled British Petroleum continued to supply oil to Smith, providing about half of the country's total oil needs (the rest was supplied by two American companies, Caltex and Mobil, and by the French company Total). The oil was supplied both directly and through a "swap" arrangement with other companies, in which they would sell Smith their own oil on the understanding that their supplies were replenished by Shell and BP.

High government officials in both the Labour and Conservative governments

were fully aware of the sanctions breaking, according to oil officials. Lord George Thomson, the Commonwealth secretary under the Labour government of Harold Wilson, admitted that he knew of the "swap" arrangement that Shell and BP made with Total to supply oil to Rhodesia. He added further, "I conveyed in writing to the prime minister [Wilson] and other ministers most directly concerned a full account of all that passed at my meetings on behalf of the government with the oil companies." The current prime minister, James Callaghan, may also be implicated.

Despite their knowledge of the sanctions busting, the various British governments maintained the fiction that they were doing all they could to stop the supply of oil to Smith. In fact, it was a very expensive fiction. In the late 1960s, the Wilson government actually maintained a naval blockade of the Mozambican port of Beira costing hundreds of millions of dollars, ostensibly to halt the flow of oil to Smith. At the same time, British companies were shipping oil to Rhodesia via both South Africa and Mozambique.

According to a report in the September 10 London *Sunday Times*, both Shell and BP are *still* arranging for oil to reach Rhodesia through a "swap" arrangement with the South African oil company, Sasol. □

Argentine Socialist Leader's Life in Danger

By Russell Morse

International defense efforts have been stepped up on behalf of a number of socialist activists arrested in July and August by the Brazilian political police.

Two of those jailed—Hugo Bressano and Rita Strasberg—are leading members of the Argentine Trotskyist organization the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers Party). It is feared that the Brazilian authorities may decide to deliver Bressano and Strasberg into the hands of the Argentine military regime.

The Argentine PST's leadership in exile released a statement on the case September 6. It read, in part:

"Besides being the founder of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores of Argentina, Bressano—whose pen-name is Nahuel Moreno—is an intellectual of recognized stature. His works on history, sociology, and philosophy are well known in Latin America, Europe, and the United States. . . . On the political level, his more than thirty years of activity have been at the constant service of building a workers party firmly rooted in the organizations of the workers movement. . . .

"Bressano's life, as well as that of Rita Lucia Strasberg, would be in grave danger should the Brazilian police or government decide to hand them over to the Argentine authorities—who, besides having banned the PST as part of the suppression of all political parties in the country, are responsible for the imprisonment of 50 PST members and the possible murder of almost 100."

Bressano and Strasberg were among twenty-two persons arrested in São Paulo August 22. All were accused of violating the National Security Law, which bans political parties deemed "subversive" by the military dictatorship.

The arrests came only two days after Bressano, Strasberg, and the others had attended a public rally of 1,100 persons in São Paulo sponsored by Socialist Convergence, a legal group. The Brazilians detained are all activists in Socialist Convergence, which was formed in January and has been holding public meetings and distributing literature with the aim of organizing a new socialist party in Brazil.

The Brazilian cops claim that the imprisoned activists are part of "a subversive organization of a Trotskyist line" that has "infiltrated" Socialist Convergence. But the national leadership of Socialist Convergence has rejected this charge and

denounced the arrests as "without any legal basis."

Twenty-nine Socialist Convergence members carried out a hunger strike in São Paulo from September 1 to September 13, demanding safe passage for Bressano and Strasberg to Colombia (where they have been living since fleeing Argentina after the 1976 coup) and the release of the other jailed activists.

Four persons were released in the course of the hunger strike, including Antônio Maria Sá Leal, a leader of the Portuguese Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers Party). The PRT leader was deported from Brazil to Portugal September 6 after the Portuguese parliament had passed a motion condemning the "arbitrary and unjustified detention" of Sá Leal, Bressano, and Strasberg.

There have been other international protests as well:

The international secretariat of the French Socialist Party has sent a telegram to President Geisel, urging that Bressano and Strasberg not be deported to Argentina. The French SP's parliamentary fraction released a similar statement.

International Secretary Luis Yanez of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) sent a telegram to the Brazilian embassy in Madrid asking "liberation of those detained August 22" and "special protection for the Argentine citizen Nahuel Moreno." PSOE General Secretary Felipe González also sent a personal protest message to the Brazilian authorities.

Forty-five members of the Italian parliament have sent telegrams to Brasília. Protests have also been registered by the Swedish Communist Party, the Swedish Social Democratic youth organization, and the Belgian Socialist Party.

In Venezuela, members of parliament from the MAS (Movement Toward Socialism) and the MIR (Revolutionary Left Movement) have sent protest messages, as has the radio and television workers union.

Ten members of the Constituent Assembly in Peru have sent a protest.

In Bolivia, protest letters have been sent by the Trade Union Federation of Mine Workers of Bolivia (FSTMB), signed by FSTMB President Juan Lechín Oquendo; and by the Assembly for Human Rights, signed by Rev. Fr. Julio Tumiri.

Trade unionists from the French union federations CGT and CFTD visited the Brazilian embassy in Paris September 1 to

deliver a message of protest. In Strasbourg, a delegation made up of representatives from the Communist, Socialist, and United Socialist parties, the Revolutionary Communist League, the International Communist Organization, and other groups paid a similar visit to the Brazilian consulate.

In Brazil itself, there have been street demonstrations by students in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Pôrto Alegre, and other cities. Deputies in the Congress and in state legislative assemblies have protested the arrests.

When the hunger strike ended September 13, a joint statement was issued by Socialist Convergence, the Peace and Justice Commission of the Catholic Church, the Feminist Movement for Amnesty, and two student organizations, condemning "the imprisonment of persons for so-called crimes of ideas, which violates the recognized right of each individual to make known his ideals and defend them in a free society." The statement also received the support of the Catholic archbishop of São Paulo, Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns.

Eleven of those arrested August 22 (besides Antônio Sá Leal) have been released. It is not known, however, whether the charges against them have been dropped.

As of September 13, those still being held—in addition to Bressano and Strasberg—were José Welmowick, Bernardo Cerdeira, Edson da Silva Coelho, José Aziz Creton, Maria José Lourenço, Reinaldo de Almeida, Waldo Mermelstein, and Arnaldo Schelinger (listed in some news reports as Schreiner or Scheling).

Six other Socialist Convergence activists arrested in mid-July also are still detained, so far as is known. They are Mário Gonçalves, Beliza Maria Gonçalves, Vera Lúcia, Alcides Bartolomeu de Faria, Flávio Lúcio de Faria and Edilson.

The U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners is urging that letters and telegrams demanding the dropping of charges and the immediate release of all these victims of the Geisel dictatorship—and safe passage for Bressano and Strasberg to a country of their choice—be sent to Brazilian embassies or to President Ernesto Geisel, Palacio Presidencial, Brasília, Brazil.

Please send copies to USLA, 853 Broadway, Suite 414, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Sentenced for Telling Truth About Soviet Psychiatric Hospitals

By Marilyn Vogt

Soviet civil-rights activist Aleksandr Podrabinek was sentenced to a term of five years' internal exile August 15 following a one-day trial in Elektrostal, forty miles east of Moscow.

In a courtroom closed to the public, he was sentenced on a charge of "anti-Soviet slander." Of his relatives and supporters, only his father and stepmother were allowed inside.

Podrabinek, twenty-five years old, formerly a medical assistant in Moscow's public ambulance service, had compiled case histories of more than 200 persons who had been committed to psychiatric hospitals because of their criticism of some aspect of the ruling Stalinists' policies. The public ambulance service is frequently used to forcibly convey people to psychiatric hospitals.

He compiled this data in the samizdat book *Punitive Medicine*, a translation of which has been issued by Amnesty International.*

Punitive Medicine contains a "black list" of 102 Soviet psychiatrists who have collaborated in implementing this form of repression. It also describes different types of psychiatric hospitals and psychiatric prison hospitals—from the at least twelve Special Psychiatric Hospitals (SPH), which confine about 600 "especially dangerous" inmates each, to the general hospitals that also house political dissidents.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and its security police directly oversee the SPHs. The political prisoners in these and other hospitals are diagnosed to be suffering from "mania for the reconstruction of society," "mania for Marxism and truth-seeking," "nervous exhaustion brought on by . . . quest for justice," "delirium of litigation [persistently demanding a lawyer or one's legal rights]," and other such dangerous "mental diseases." Podrabinek estimates that there are at least 1,000 persons in the SPHs for political rather than medical reasons.

The book recounts the history of the development of this method of political repression. During the first decade of Soviet power, he says, there were only a few cases of this method being used against political opponents. It was in the 1930s under Stalin that it became more widely used and in the late 1940s that it became common.

*Available from Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF, England.

But even in the 1940s, Podrabinek says, confinement in a SPH was primarily used as a means of isolating oppositionists rather than as an opportunity to "treat" them with drugs to force them to submit to the regime.

In 1955, after Stalin's death, a commission was established by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to investigate charges that political prisoners were being confined in psychiatric hospitals. While the investigation led to the release of some prisoners, the commission's findings were suppressed.

In 1961, Stalin's heirs added further authority to this method of repression through a civil "Directive on Urgent Hospitalization of Mentally Ill Persons Who Represent a Danger to Society." This directive was distributed to officials and psychiatrists.

Reaffirmed in 1970 and still in effect, the decree states that no charges need be raised against the victim. A local psychiatrist simply orders the person picked up and confined, solely because the rulers deem the individual "dangerous."

Punitive Medicine has played an important part in publicizing the facts about such abuses and helped convince the dele-

gates at the 1977 World Psychiatric Association to censure them.

Podrabinek's role in documenting the Kremlin's misuse of psychiatric treatment and his public activities within the USSR around this issue made his name well known and may have helped prevent the Kremlin rulers from giving him a stiffer sentence.

In January 1977 Podrabinek became a founding member of the Working Commission to Investigate the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes, a committee attached to the Moscow Helsinki Monitoring Group. He directly intervened in several cases and forced the bureaucrats to release political prisoners in psychiatric hospitals. He did this by personally visiting hospitals and threatening the administrators with international publicity if the prisoners were not released.

The Stalinist rulers have repeatedly tried to silence Podrabinek by harassing both him and his family. His brother Kirill was arrested and sentenced in March 1978 to a two-and-a-half-year term because Podrabinek refused to emigrate.

Podrabinek himself was arrested May 14, 1978. □

On Anniversary of Black Leader's Death

Vorster Jails Biko's Relatives and Friends

September 12 was the first anniversary of the murder of Black liberation fighter Steve Biko at the hands of the South African security police. A number of public gatherings were scheduled to commemorate his death and to pay tribute to his central role in the struggle for Black majority rule.

The racist Vorster regime, on the other hand, chose to mark the occasion by arresting more than a dozen of Biko's relatives and associates. The arrests began on September 10 and were announced the following day by Niseiki Biko, Biko's widow. On September 12, the actual anniversary, the police confirmed that a number of persons had been seized under the Internal Security Act, which allows indefinite detention without trial.

Among those known to have been detained are Nobandile Mvovo (Biko's sister

and her husband, Mxolosi. Biko's brother Kaya was likewise picked up. Also caught up in the dragnet were several of Biko's former political associates, including Silumko Sokupa, a former leader of the now-banned South African Students Organisation (SASO), and Tenjiwe Ethel Mtintso, a former journalist and member of the now-outlawed Black Community Programmes (BCP). Biko had been a key leader of both SASO and the BCP, as well as of the Black People's Convention.

These arrests, coming on the anniversary of Biko's murder, were clearly intended as a reminder that the white supremacists are determined to suppress all struggles for Black liberation. At the same time, however, they can only harden the determination of the Black majority to rid their country once and for all of the hated apartheid system. □

Selections From the Left



"Sekai Kakumei" (World Revolution), central organ of the Japan Revolutionary Communist League, Japanese section of the Fourth International. Published weekly in Tokyo.

The August 14 issue reports on a rally of 1,500 persons held in Tokyo August 8 to demand the release of imprisoned South Korean opposition leader Kim Dae Jung.

"The rally was sponsored by a coalition of over sixty groups. These included organizations of Koreans in Japan who have been fighting for the democratization of their homeland, defense committees for South Korean political prisoners, and other Korean solidarity groups from around the country. The rally was part of a series of actions on that day in Japan and South Korea."

Another article in the same issue traces the history of Kim's case.

"On August 8, 1973, South Korean former presidential candidate Kim Dae Jung was kidnapped from a Tokyo hotel in broad daylight, only to turn up in Seoul a few days later. The kidnapping was obviously the work of the KCIA, acting under orders from dictator Park Chung Hee, who was out to eliminate his political opposition. . . . The [Japanese] minister of justice was kept informed about the whole KCIA operation by 'American diplomatic sources' . . .

"Because of rising international criticism, the Park regime could not get away with killing Kim Dae Jung. Instead, Kim was prevented from leaving South Korea, placed under house arrest, and in June 1974 was indicted on frame-up charges of election law violations. . . .

"In March 1976, Kim joined with other dissidents to publish the 'Declaration of Democratic National Salvation' and was subsequently indicted for violating Park's Emergency Decree No. 9. In March 1977 Kim was sentenced to five years in prison. He is presently confined in the hospital of Seoul National University."

The article notes that the August 8 actions occurred in the context of ongoing protests within South Korea.

"On July 26 in Seoul, thousands of people demonstrated, calling for the resignation of President Park. This shows that the people of South Korea are more and more boldly confronting the Park regime. The political prisoners have carried on a courageous struggle in the courtrooms and in prison, and have evoked a response outside the prison walls.

"International solidarity actions have also played a key role in this process. Winning the release of all political prisoners is crucially important for the further

development of the struggle to bring down the Park dictatorship. And the struggle against Park is at the same time a struggle against the Liberal Democratic Party government in Japan that backs Park's repressive regime."

The editors of *Sekai Kakumei* called for protest demonstrations on September 3, the date of the annual conference of Japanese and South Korean cabinet ministers in Tokyo.

rouge

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

"The picture of women soldiers parading with weapons on Israeli Independence Day has contributed in no small way to the widely held idea that Israeli women are really liberated," Lea Tsemel and Michel Warshawsky write in the August 12-15 issue. "This common conception of Israeli women is one of the many myths surrounding the Zionist state, like the kibbutz, Israeli democracy, or the 'liberal' occupation."

The truth is that the oppression of Israeli women is "a necessity for the Jewish state, in the same way as the strengthening of all factors of stability—the family, religion, and militarist, chauvinist, and male-supremacist ideology."

The issues of contraception and abortion show most clearly the special nature of women's oppression within the Zionist state. "Isolated amidst an Arab world that it rejects, the Zionist state has a vital need to constantly increase the number of Jews living within it. Immigration of Jews from the Diaspora is one means; 'internal immigration'—the official term for an out-and-out policy of raising the Jewish birth rate—is another.

"Abortion is prohibited, although doctors do practice it, in return for hefty sums of course. Nothing serious has been done to make contraceptive methods widely known. On the other hand, every effort is made to lower the birth rate of Arab women, in order to reduce the number of Arabs living in the Jewish state."

When the extreme right-wing Begin regime came to power, the situation of women in Israel deteriorated even further. "The stranglehold of the religious authorities on questions of marriage and divorce has been further reinforced, and the number of women who have been prevented from marrying the man of their choice owing to various biblical laws reaches into the thousands. As to the vague reforms that the Labor Party had managed to get passed in parliament, which permitted abortion under certain circumstances, the government has sworn

before the different religious parties to abolish them."

In short, "the situation of Israeli women has nothing in common with the image of liberation exported by Zionist propaganda. In fact, in many ways, their situation is worse than that of women in most of the developed capitalist countries."

Internationalen

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

The September 1 issue reports on the end-of-summer antinuclear demonstrations in Sweden and Denmark:

"Some 8,000 persons demonstrated in Sweden, and 36,000 in Denmark on Saturday [August 26]. In Sweden, demonstrations were held in several places; and in Denmark, two big marches were held, one on Jutland and the other on Zealand. The Danish marches were held over a three-day period and grew continually larger as time passed.

"Don't fuel Forsmark and Ringhals 3" was one of the main demands of the five demonstrations held in Sweden. Another prominent demand was 'No to uranium mining,' a demand that is specially important in Skövde.

"In Oskarshamn, where there was also a demonstration, the demand was: 'Down with radioactive dumping grounds.' This area is one of those under consideration for a dumping ground.

"All the demonstrations also raised the demand for a society that would conserve resources. Despite the fact that the press did not say very much about the actions before the demonstrations were held, a large number came out. Last year in Barsebäck, an intensive debate was carried on in the press about whether 'German terrorists' would come or not. This year, the press maintained a dead silence. . . . Afterward, it jeered at 'protesters' who were dressed in light summer clothes. But it didn't say much about what we stood for and what we want.

"All the demonstrations in Sweden adopted a resolution including the following points.

"The government should rescind its plan for developing nuclear energy.

"No more reactors should be fueled.

"No more money should be allocated to the nuclear industry. . . .

"No uranium mining in Sweden.

"All plans for a dumping ground are unnecessary.

"There should be an extensive effort to conserve resources and develop alternatives and renewable energy sources."

Behind the Flight From the Dollar

By Jon Britton

Near panic gripped the employing class in mid-August as the dollar plunged to new lows against stronger foreign currencies and against gold.

Time magazine called it "the worst dollar disaster yet."

The editors of the *Wall Street Journal* warned: "Through the chaos of the last few weeks, the foreign exchange markets have been trying to tell us that the United States is well on its way toward wrecking the international monetary system for the second time in a decade. This time the results may be even more dire."

A similar assessment was expressed by the chief economist for one big Wall Street firm: "There is an eerie aspect to this. With the dollar going down, you have an international monetary system without a rudder."

And Daniel Yergin, of the Harvard Business School, suggested that "the turbulence in the money markets poses a basic threat not only to the well-being of the United States, but to the functioning of the world economy."

The dollar, which had been sinking for more than a year, stabilized for a few weeks after Carter launched his "anti-inflation program" in mid-April.¹ But beginning in mid-July, large-scale dumping of dollars resumed. By the third week of August the U.S. currency had plunged another 7% against the Japanese yen, 3.5% against the West German mark, 10.5% against the Swiss franc, and 3% against the British pound. On August 15 gold soared to a record \$215.90 an ounce on the London market, compared to \$195 in mid-July and less than \$145 a year earlier.

The Carter administration's initial response to the new dollar dive was to let it be known that it was actively working on a "second phase" of the "anti-inflation program."

Robert Strauss, Carter's inflation counselor, told a group of legislators in late July that the existing plan was too timid to do the job: "We started with a modest program. It has substance, but not enough. It has credibility, but not enough. We've got to keep the pressure on."

These reassuring words had virtually no effect, however, and the dollar's fall accelerated.

Finally, on August 16, Carter issued a statement expressing "deep concern"

about the dollar and asked his top monetary advisers to consider actions "to deal with the situation."

In the following days, the Federal Reserve, the U.S. central bank, raised interest rates, the Treasury Department announced that the monthly gold sales that were begun in May would be more than doubled, and regulations were changed to encourage U.S. banks to borrow dollars held abroad. There was also evidence that the Federal Reserve was intervening more actively to support the dollar in foreign-exchange markets.

After these actions were taken, the dollar again steadied temporarily as large holders adopted an attitude of watchful waiting to see what Carter would do next.

Administration officials announced that other actions could be expected in coming weeks. Harry B. Ellis, writing in the August 31 *Christian Science Monitor*, quoted one official as saying that new proposals would soon be on Carter's desk, probably setting "more precise guidelines" on wages and prices.

Ellis added that "the task force putting together these proposals, comprising senior officials from several agencies, finds labor the toughest nut to crack."

Indeed, the organized trade-union movement in the United States is the biggest obstacle to Carter's schemes for propping the dollar by driving down living standards.

This was shown most recently by the postal workers' rejection of a contract negotiated with the U.S. Postal Service in July that fell within Carter's "wage deceleration" guidelines announced in April.

Even AFL-CIO chief George Meany felt constrained to criticize the contract. "I didn't think it was a good settlement," he told reporters at an August 8 news conference, and he predicted that it would be voted down.

Carter's problems with a powerful and undefeated labor movement on the one hand and a rapidly depreciating dollar on the other are nothing new. The same dilemma has faced the U.S. rulers through most of the 1970s, though it is now becoming much more acute.

Since the long post-World War II boom ended around the turn of the decade, the governments of the major imperialist countries have had to contend with intensified competition on the world market and the threat of a major economic collapse brought on by a falling rate of profit and growing overproduction. Their response,

essentially, has been twofold: (1) inflationary deficit spending; and (2) an antilabor offensive that aims to boost the rate of profit by driving down real wages, cutting government social spending, and shifting more of the tax burden from big business onto working people.

The two sides of this policy are complementary and antagonistic at the same time.

A third, so far subordinate, element of capitalist economic policy in the 1970s has been protectionism—the erection of trade barriers against imported goods that threaten the profits of less-efficient domestic industries. Protectionist pressures have risen in the course of the 1970s as international competition has intensified.

Shifting Emphasis

A brief review of how the capitalist governments have applied the overall policy outlined above will shed light on the present dollar crisis as well as the underlying economic and political trends. As we shall see, the emphasis on one or another aspect of this general policy has shifted in accordance with the business cycle, rate of inflation, and intensity of the class struggle.

The first decisive move in applying this policy in the United States was Nixon's New Economic Policy (NEP), launched in August 1971. In the preceding period Nixon had been faced with an incipient crisis of overproduction (signaled by, among other things, the bankruptcy of the Penn Central railroad), the first United States trade deficit in the twentieth century, and a flight from the dollar in world money markets.

Nixon's NEP, therefore, included (1) inflationary deficit spending to forestall the crisis of overproduction (Republican Nixon now declared himself to be a Keynesian); (2) a wage freeze to hold down the employers' wage costs and thereby boost profits; and (3) a surcharge on imports to immediately cut down the trade deficit. As a sop to labor, Nixon also imposed a ban on price increases, which was not enforced.

These measures succeeded admirably, for a time. A new expansion of the economy got under way, capitalist profits soared, and the dollar steadied.

But as the business cycle approached a peak in 1973, the dollar again depreciated rapidly, producing another monetary crisis internationally and double-digit inflation at home. Nixon then quickly moved toward a balanced budget. At the same time, the Federal Reserve slowed the creation of new money, triggering a "credit crunch" (an extreme shortage of credit), which precipitated the 1974-75 slump.

The downturn, the first worldwide recession since 1937-38, partially liquidated the overproduction that had preceded it and improved profit prospects as labor was weakened owing to high unemployment. It

1. See *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, June 19, 1978, p. 736.

thus laid the basis for a worldwide recovery, which was facilitated by a loosening of monetary policy by the Federal Reserve and other central banks and by expanded government deficits.

The initial rebound was so strong, in fact, that the "big seven" imperialist governments, meeting in an economic summit held in Puerto Rico in June 1976, approved a "go-slow" policy aimed at avoiding a new wave of rapid inflation.

Fears of a New Slump

By the beginning of 1977, however, it was apparent that the recovery had slackened, and this gave rise to fears by the capitalists of a new downturn, which would worsen an already high level of unemployment and add to growing political instability in Europe and elsewhere.

Consequently, at the "big seven" May economic summit in London, the United States, Japan, and West Germany were designated as "locomotives" to keep the recovery going while other governments concentrated on "fighting inflation." Carter, Fukuda, and Schmidt agreed to try to meet specific growth targets for 1977 in furtherance of this strategy. (Carter was unable to convince Fukuda and Schmidt to commit their governments to new stimulative measures, however.)

A few months later, it became clear that West Germany and Japan were not going to achieve their growth targets. West Germany was hardly growing at all in the last half of 1977, and Japan was falling far short of the 6-7% rate pledged. Italy actually experienced a downturn, while U.S. growth was roughly on target.

A communiqué issued by the Board of Governors of the International Monetary Fund a few days before that organization's annual meeting in September expressed "concern about the faltering of economic activity during recent months in a number of industrial countries." It also noted "a deceleration in the growth of world trade" and "the persistence of high unemployment."

The hesitant and uneven recovery threatened to turn into another worldwide slump. Once again overproduction had made its appearance, forcing the capitalists of Europe and Japan to step up their exports to the big, still expanding American market. U.S. capitalists, at the same time, were having a tough time increasing their exports, owing to economic stagnation abroad.

The result was a massive imbalance in world commerce, epitomized by a huge U.S. trade deficit on the one hand and Japanese and West German surpluses on the other. This, combined with more rapid inflation in the United States, put increasing pressure on the dollar. The flood of imports into the U.S. caused the Carter administration to adopt a series of protectionist measures to keep out foreign-

produced color television sets, shoes, steel, and other goods, raising the specter of an all-out trade war.

In response to this threatening situation,

DUNAGIN'S PEOPLE / by Ralph Dunagin



"The value of the dollar is soaring!... it's up to thirty-eight cents!"

the IMF communiqué recommended that "all countries in relatively strong [financial] positions should make every effort to ensure adequate growth of domestic demand compatible with containing inflation." This was a call for more governments to join the effort to stave off a new downturn and for the three "locomotives" to build up more steam.

Actually, the IMF appeal reflected decisions that had already been made. In the weeks leading up to the IMF meeting, the governments of Japan, West Germany, and France all announced "reflationary" measures, later to be followed by Britain, Canada, and the United States.²

New Dollar Crisis

The new measures were quite modest, however, and were partly offset by a stepped-up austerity drive in many countries. The assessment of the financial markets was that inflation would be made worse by the increased government deficits in prospect, and that the threat of a new slump remained very real. This was reflected in an accelerating depreciation of the dollar and other paper currencies beginning in October and a pronounced sinking of stock markets at the same time.

By early January of this year the dollar price of gold had soared to over \$170 an ounce. On Wall Street, the Dow Jones industrial average closed below the 800 mark for the first time since 1975. In France, support continued to grow for the Union of the Left despite the divisive actions of the Communist and Socialist parties. In response, French capitalists stepped up their hoarding of gold.

2. See *Intercontinental Press*, November 7, 1977, p. 1218.

On January 4 the Federal Reserve moved to buy up dollars in international money markets, utilizing its "swap" lines of credit with foreign governments. Two days later the "Fed" announced that it was raising the discount rate, the interest rate it charges member banks for loans.

In mid-January, U.S. and Japanese representatives, after months of tough bargaining, announced a trade agreement calling for stepped-up imports of U.S. goods into Japan—through faster growth of the Japanese economy, lowered barriers to U.S. goods, and other measures.

Then on January 20, Carter presented his economic message to Congress, in which he proposed a wage-and-price deceleration program (with details to come later). And on January 23, he introduced his "lean and tight" budget for fiscal year 1979, which projected an increase in spending of only 2% in real terms.

All this failed to halt the dollar's slide, however. In fact, the decline accelerated as the U.S. trade deficit worsened month by month and inflation once again headed toward double-digit levels. The stubborn resistance of the coal miners to Carter's efforts to break their strike further eroded capitalist confidence.

By early March, gold had climbed to \$190 an ounce on the London market and the Dow Jones industrial average had fallen to new lows.

Hopes for Turnabout

But just as the gloom on Wall Street and in the other financial capitals seemed thickest, a number of developments raised new hopes that the economic situation might take a qualitative turn for the better. Among these were the following:

- In late February high economic officials from the major imperialist powers met in Paris to discuss new proposals for a "Coordinated Reflation Action Program." On March 1, it was reported that the representatives had reached "broad agreement on a general program to spread the burden of economic stimulation among more countries" (*Wall Street Journal*, March 1).

Subsequently, the staff of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD),³ sponsor of the Paris meeting, came up with a detailed "scenario for coordinated growth" as a guide for what the various governments should aim for. It projected a slowdown in the U.S. rate of growth to 4.5% in 1978 (compared to 5% projected by Carter in his budget message) and to 4% in 1979. On the other hand, faster growth was projected for Europe and Japan.

Such a "scenario," if it could be achieved, promised continued expansion of the world capitalist economy, with at

3. Its membership consists of twenty-four industrialized capitalist countries.

worst a minor downturn in the United States, and a reduction of the giant U.S. trade deficit as Europe and Japan grew faster. This in turn would take pressure off the U.S. dollar.

The "scenario" seemed realizable at the time in view of the fact that actual growth trends in the first three months of 1978, if extended, roughly corresponded to the OECD projections.

• In mid-April Carter launched his "anti-inflation program."⁴ It included wage-and-price deceleration guidelines, further cutbacks in projected social spending, a reduction and deferral of Carter's promised "tax cut," and monthly sales of Fort Knox gold.

Carter's moves to impose greater austerity and reduce the government's budgetary red ink fit right in with the OECD game plan, which assured both efforts greater credibility than they might otherwise have had. The gold sales "punished" those who had dumped dollars in favor of the yellow metal, by driving the price down temporarily.

• The dollar was also aided by a drop in U.S. oil imports and the announcement on April 21 that a congressional committee had arrived at a compromise on deregulation of natural gas prices. The compromise improved chances for passage of Carter's whole energy package, which supposedly would lead to further reductions in U.S. oil imports.

• In March, the U.S. coal strike was settled, narrowly averting what could have been a serious political crisis resulting from the miners' defiance of the Taft-Hartley "slave-labor" law, invoked by Carter in an attempt to break the strike; and the Union of the Left went down to defeat in France.

The net result of these and other developments was to sweep away the capitalists' gloom. This was reflected in the financial markets by a significant strengthening of the dollar and an explosive stock market rally.

Game Plan Goes Awry

Not many weeks went by, however, before it became apparent that the game plan that looked so promising in April wasn't working out.

One of the first signs of trouble was an abrupt slowing of the Japanese economy from the relatively fast pace of the first three months of 1978.

This was at least partially attributable to a fall in exports owing to the decline of the dollar relative to the yen, which forced Japanese capitalists to sharply raise prices on goods sold in the U.S. Japanese exports were also adversely affected by the erection of new protectionist barriers in the United States and Europe.

4. See *IP/I*, June 19, 1978, p. 736.



MacNelly/Washington Post

Then, in June, only two months after presenting a mildly expansionist budget, British Prime Minister James Callaghan found it necessary to reverse economic gears in order to prop up the pound and the government bond market. The consequent rise in taxes and interest rates threw cold water on hopes for speeded-up economic growth in Britain.

During the same period, it became clear that the U.S. economy was rapidly rebounding from its winter slowdown, with prices rising apace, a further departure from the OECD game plan.

Another worry for the international bankers was a mass upsurge in Peru in response to extremely harsh austerity measures imposed by the military regime at the behest of the International Monetary Fund. This situation was particularly worrisome in light of the more than \$8 billion in debts owed by Peru to the U.S. and other imperialist banks and in light of the evident inability of the Morales Bermúdez government to hold the masses in check.

Another government the international bankers were getting more and more exasperated with and worried about was the Carter administration. Carter's popularity had been falling like a stone almost from the day he was inaugurated as president. And for months, the big-business press had been complaining about the "ineptness," "incompetency," and "amateurishness" of the Carter White House.

By April 1978, Carter's approval rating, as recorded by the Gallup Poll, had plummeted to 39% from 48% just one month earlier and from 55% in January. According to Gallup, a major factor in the decline was soaring inflation.

When his poll ratings failed to recover

despite, or more likely because of, his highly publicized "anti-inflation program," Carter decided to hire Gerald Rafshoon, an Atlanta advertising man, to polish up his image—without notable success it turns out, after two months on the job.

Carter's political fortunes have fallen not because of his personal "ineptness" but because his job requires that he carry out the unpopular policies at home and abroad required by American imperialism and its allies. On the other hand, the more his popularity falls, the more difficult it is for him to carry out these policies. Thus Carter simply symbolizes, and gives expression to, the deepening crisis of leadership and weakened position of the ruling class as a whole.

A key function of the Bonn economic summit in July was to bolster Carter and to prop up waning public confidence in the ability of the participating capitalist governments to deal effectively with the developing economic crisis.⁵

The effort was so transparent, however, and the results of the "deliberations" so meager that the impact was the opposite of what was intended. Instead of confidence, especially capitalist confidence, being strengthened, it was further undermined.

Renewed Plunge of Dollar

No sooner were the heads of state winging home than dumping of dollars in favor of stronger currencies and gold began again.

The flight from the dollar speeded up as

5. See *IP/I*, July 31, 1978, p. 906.

it became increasingly apparent that Carter, out of political weakness, was retreating on the "anti-inflation fight."

As *Business Week* put it August 14, "A new mood of pessimism is beginning to grip the Carter Administration's sagging anti-inflation program. After months of upbeat talk, the White House is being forced to shift its emphasis from cutting the inflation rate to containing it."

Business Week concluded that the Carter administration had resigned itself to a significantly higher rate of inflation. Moreover, the financial magazine pointed out, the Federal Reserve under William Miller seemed equally resigned, judging from the continued rapid growth of the money supply.

Inflation abroad may speed up in the coming months as well. Just prior to the Bonn summit, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, who had been dragging his feet previously, agreed to propose new stimulative measures for the West German economy, which will widen an already sizable government deficit.

More recently, on September 2, the government of Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda adopted a \$14 billion stimulus package to coax more growth out of the sluggish Japanese economy.

There is little reason to believe that these moves will be any more successful than previous efforts to take some of the burden off the U.S. "locomotive." Deferral of a new international downturn will continue to depend on keeping the vast U.S. economy expanding, providing outlets for the overproduction of Europe, Japan, and the industrializing semicolonial countries.

But keeping up U.S. growth in the face of continued stagnation abroad means no real improvement in the massive U.S. trade deficit. And it means continued heavy deficit spending by the Carter administration. These two factors, along with increased gold hoarding by the wealthy as profit prospects wane, spell accelerating depreciation of the dollar in the period ahead.

The alternative, which only a minority of the ruling class favors at this point, is to tighten monetary and fiscal policy sufficiently to precipitate a slump. Such a downturn would in all probability bring even more massive unemployment and more political instability than did the 1974-75 recession, and it might well turn into a major depression.

In view of the growing militancy and organized strength of the working class and its allies in many countries, including the United States, this is not a welcome prospect for the capitalists either.

Thus, Carter's room for maneuver has narrowed considerably since he came into office. As world overproduction grows, as inflation speeds up, and as the working masses fight back with increasing strength, Carter will have still less of a chance to evade the basic issues. □

In Search of 'Forbidden Books'

Israeli Censors Prowl West Bank Libraries

A total of 319 books in Arabic are to be "completely banned in the occupied territories, forbidden to be printed, forbidden to be imported, forbidden to be held in public libraries," according to a statement by the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, published in the June issue of the *Palestine Human Rights Bulletin*.

Officials of the military government are already inspecting libraries to check whether the "forbidden books" are on the shelves, the league said.

Since the titles of the proscribed books have not been made public, librarians and booksellers are required, under threat of severe penalties, to turn over lists of their books to the military authorities, who then check to see whether any of the prohibited items are included.

The league reports that the official reason for outlawing the books is not that they pose a danger to "military security"—since some have already been passed by military censors in Israel—but that they

contain "slanders about the Jews and the State of Israel."

Although the list includes titles on many subjects, the most common ones appear to be Arabic poetry and books on contemporary Arab society. They include works by two of the most famous living Arab poets, Nizar El-Kabani and Fadwa Tukan. Other banned writers are Anis Mansure, editor of the Egyptian weekly *October*, and Yusuph A-Suba'i, the late chairman of the Association of Egyptian Writers.

The civil-liberties organization is demanding "complete freedom of press and of publication of books and periodicals in the occupied territories." As the first step toward this, it urges that "all material which is allowed to circulate in Israel, whether in Hebrew or in Arabic or in any other language . . . be allowed to circulate . . . in the occupied territories as well. . . ."

"We likewise call on every individual or organization in every country to help us in this matter, which we regard as of utmost importance." □

'We Have Too Many of Those Kind of People'

University of Maryland Bars Marxist Professor

When a Marxist professor was nominated to chair the Department of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland, state officials and members of the university Board of Regents saw red.

One Regent was Samuel Hoover, brother of departed FBI boss J. Edgar. He complained: "I'm not for it. I just don't think a Marxist should be at a state institution in a position of that caliber. He'll never get on there. We've got the final say. We have too many of those kind of people from up in New York down here now."

The acting governor of Maryland pointedly reminded the president of the university that he was "dealing with a state supported university" and questioned the wisdom of the appointment.

The controversial professor is Bertell Ollman, author of *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society* and inventor of the popular board game "Class Struggle." His appointment as department head had been recommended by a ten-person search committee and approved by the university chancellor. Final approval by university President John Toll was

expected to be automatic until the right-wing protests began.

On July 19, Toll rejected the appointment, claiming that his decision had nothing to do with Ollman's Marxist views.

Ollman has initiated a lawsuit against the university for denying him a job on the basis of his political views. The American Association of University Professors is investigating the incident to determine whether the university should be censured. The Ad Hoc Committee in Defense of Bertell Ollman has begun publicizing the case and collecting statements of support from influential academics and teacher unions. □

Pentagon's Favorite Dove

When the Appropriations Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives approved the Pentagon's largest arms budget in history—\$119.4 billion—in late July, committee Chairman George Mahon justified the measure as an "antiwar bill."

He added that it was both "appalling and exciting" that Washington would spend so much on armaments when no war was being fought.

The Threat to Trade-Union Rights in Sri Lanka

[In its September 1 issue, *Internationalen*, the Swedish Trotskyist weekly, published an interview with Bala Tampoe, obtained by Benny Asman. The text follows. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

Since it came to power a year ago, the United National Party government has mounted a major offensive against the working class and the unions in Sri Lanka. Its aim is to smash the trade-union movement altogether.

Bala Tampoe was able to tell about this on his recent visit to Sweden.

Tampoe is the chairman of the Ceylon Mercantile Union and one of the government's main opponents. He is also a member of the Revolutionary Marxist Party, the Ceylonese section of the Fourth International.

* * *

In January of this year, the new government introduced a bill showing its real views about workers rights and the unions.

The bill, which has become known as "the White Paper," would force the election of so-called workers committees, and they would be the only bodies authorized to negotiate with management. The bill would also abolish the arbitration boards and give management the right to fire workers on the slightest pretext.

But the government ran into more opposition than it expected. The CMU was able to initiate the formation of a trade-union united front. Sixteen unions joined together in a common front to fight the bill.

"We were able to develop very good collaboration among the various unions and decided to mount a campaign of demonstrations March 2-15 under the slogan: 'Hands off the unions!' The idea was that the demonstrations would give the workers a chance to do something themselves and not just stand by and let the union leaders issue statements and make protests.

In the beginning, it was only the CMU's members that took part in the demonstrations, but very quickly the members of the other unions began to join in. Every day the number of demonstrators grew.

"The government mobilized goons and more or less criminal elements to crush the opposition to the bill. In places where the unions were weak, they wanted to block the demonstrations, and in two state-owned companies, an oil refinery and a paper mill, they staged violent attacks on

the demonstrators. At the oil refinery, the attack was successful and they established a real system of terror inside the enterprise. But at the paper mill, the attack was beaten back, the goons were driven out, and the whole thing led to a still larger mobilization.

"Our demonstrations made it clear to the government that the working class was ready to fight the bill, and so it was forced to carry out a retreat. The premier was obliged to say that the bill was only a proposal, and he claimed that we had been hasty in demonstrating against it. Our trade-union united front declared that it would oppose the bill by every means necessary, including a general strike. The government was forced to retreat, and the workers had won an initial victory."

But the government was not ready to give up its plans so easily.

"After this retreat, the government tried to apply the bill in practice in the public sector. There are a number of examples of the strong-arm methods it used. In the state-owned textile industry, where there are 6,000 workers, all of them were locked out on March 18. The army and the police were brought in, and all the workers were driven out. The workers who came to the factories the next day were not allowed in and were forced to go home. In this way, the workers were dispersed and could not meet to discuss what they should do.

"Then the management sent letters to the workers, saying that they could return to the factories one by one. But they turned first to the roughly one thousand workers who were members of the UNP-controlled union."

After the UNP's victory in the elections last year, the party began systematically building unions in various factories, first of all in the state sector. In the fight over the White Paper, the UNP used its unions as a battering ram against the working class.

"The other workers [those that were not members of the UNP union] were asked to accept two conditions in writing before they could return. One was that they should pledge to do nothing to obstruct the course of production. The second was that if they struck or did anything like that, they could be fired without any further ado. In this way, the workers were obliged to accept the White Paper as individuals, along with its antilabor provisions.

"The workers in the textile mills were not able to organize resistance, and many of them signed statements accepting the two conditions. Altogether, about 3,000 went back to work. But when they resumed

work, they were presented with a third condition. They had to join the UNP union. Many accepted this condition as well, since they had already been beaten and had accepted the two previous conditions. The other workers were thrown on the street completely on their own."

The government used the same tactic in several other factories. In another textile mill, 2,000 workers—the entire work force—were locked out. Of these, only the 800 UNP workers who had gotten jobs in the factory in the last year were taken back. But in this mill, the trade-union united front was able to organize resistance, and it is still not clear whether the government is going to be successful in using this terror tactic. Bala Tampoe also mentioned a factory partly owned by Swedish capitalists:

"In Sri Lanka's match factory, in which the Swedish Tändsticksaktiebolag holds stock, they hire workers on a daily basis, although in almost all cases these are not temporary jobs. In this way, they deprive the workers of all their rights. In March, the management provoked a strike, and then locked out and fired all the workers. An entirely new work force has been hired."

The examples Bala Tampoe gave show clearly what tactic the government has decided on. The White Paper's proposals are to be carried out in practice. This is to be done first in the public sector, where the unions are weakest, and if they succeed there, they intend to override the workers' resistance in the private sector. Bala Tampoe wanted to point out an important lesson of the struggle that was conducted in the spring.

"Under the previous government, all the parties in the ruling coalition had their own unions. This led to a situation where the workers looked to the parties to satisfy their demands in parliament. As a result, after the UNP's electoral victory, the workers were demoralized and did not know how they should defend themselves. That shows how important it is for the unions to maintain their independence from the political parties and not to look to the government or the parliament to defend the workers' interests.

"The fact that we were able to form a trade-union united front is important. The struggle against the government has to be waged in a united way by all the unions. The union leaders of the old government parties have no greater credibility among the workers than before, but the fact that the CMU took the lead in the struggle inspired class solidarity and strengthened the workers' fighting spirit.

"It is not yet clear how far the government can go in its attack to crush the unions in Sri Lanka. That will depend on the resistance of the working class and on the help that we get from the international working class." □

The Social Upheaval That Ended Haile Selassie's Regime

By Ernest Harsch

[First of a series of two articles]

As anyone can tell by just glancing at the papers these days, the African revolution is on the rise. And it has the American ruling class worried as hell.

On one side are the African masses—the workers and peasants—moving to get rid of foreign domination and reactionary regimes. On the other, are the imperialists and their local allies, desperately trying to hold the fort, attempting to beat back the upsurge, hoping to preserve Africa's fabulous riches and oppressed labor force for continued exploitation. Powerful social forces are involved. And the stakes are enormous.

After southern Africa, the region known as the Horn of Africa has been the scene of the most intense conflict between these two opposed trends—revolution and reaction. What is involved is not just a momentary upsurge, but an ongoing process that has been under way at least since 1974 and that is dominated by two interrelated developments, the Ethiopian revolution and the Eritrean national liberation struggle. Their outcome can have a major impact on the course of the African revolution as a whole.

* * *

Ethiopia has a population of about 30 million, the largest in



Haile Selassie

Africa after Nigeria and Egypt. It does not have many known resources that the imperialists would be interested in exploiting, but from their point of view it does have a certain strategic importance, since it is near both the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean and has traditionally been a cultural bridge between the Middle East and Black Africa.

Unlike virtually every other African country, Ethiopia was never really colonized. The Italian conquest just before the Second World War lasted for only a few years. Ethiopia managed to retain its formal independence throughout most of its existence, but it still fell under foreign domination. It became a *semicolony* of imperialism, especially of American imperialism.

The Ethiopian monarchy was based on the most reactionary social forces around. The economy remained dominated by feudal property relations. Peasants were tied to the land and were obligated to provide labor or to pay taxes, tribute, and other levies to the aristocratic lords and church officials who ruled over them. In the north, the land holdings were generally small and the peasants had at least some security of tenure. But in the south, in particular, the landowning aristocracy ruled over huge estates, some of them covering millions of acres. The payments required of the peasants in the south often amounted to between one-half and three-quarters of their crops, forcing the peasants themselves to live at bare subsistence levels, if that. Slavery itself was not really abolished until about 1950.

The state was dominated almost entirely by these feudal aristocrats, with Emperor Haile Selassie as their supreme representative. He ruled as an absolute monarch, without even the fiction of a parliament. He happened to be the biggest landlord in the country, to boot.

On top of all this, Ethiopia is a prison house of oppressed peoples. The Ethiopian state as it now exists is a relatively recent creation. The regime tries to trace its origins back a couple of thousand years, but for the most part it was limited historically to the highlands in the center and north, where the Amhara and Tigre peoples live. In the last few decades of the nineteenth century, the ruling Amharas from Shoa conquered several neighboring peoples, including the Oromos and Sidamos in the south, the Nilo-Saharans along the western fringes, the nomadic Somalis and Afars in the east, and others. Some of these peoples, especially the Oromos, were deprived of their original lands and were forced to work for the Amhara feudal barons. This gave the situation in the south an especially explosive character, since the peasants were oppressed both as a class and as a conquered people.

Eritrea was a more recent victim of Amhara expansionism. Eritrea had been an Italian colony since the end of the last century and after the Italian defeat in the Second World War strong sentiments for independence developed among many Eritreans. But the imperialists feared that an independent Eritrea could become a destabilizing factor in the region, and as they saw it the safest thing was to hand Eritrea over to their protégé in Addis Ababa. So in the early 1950s, the British and Americans pushed a resolution through the United Nations federating Eritrea with Ethiopia. The federation was just a pretense, since the Eritreans were not consulted. But even this pretense had barely begun when Selassie moved in, with American blessing, to seize complete control. Newspapers were shut down, most political parties were banned, and Amharic, the language of the oppressor nationality in Ethiopia, was imposed as the sole official language.

Scores of Eritrean workers were massacred in 1958 during a general strike. The Eritrean unions were crushed. The economy was plundered and entire industries were dismantled and taken off to Ethiopia. Finally, in 1962, Selassie annexed Eritrea directly to Ethiopia as a province. It is more like a colony.

The American government backed this whole process. From the early 1950s, Washington poured hundreds of millions of dollars in economic and military aid into Ethiopia to help strengthen the regime. It supplied Selassie with more than half of the total U.S. military aid handed out in all of Black Africa. Virtually the entire Ethiopian military was an American creation. The officers were trained by Americans. The troops carried American guns. The pilots flew American planes. At one point during the 1960s, around 3-4,000 Americans were stationed at Kagnaw, a spy center in Eritrea, and hundreds more were "advising" the army elsewhere. The Israelis also sent Selassie some military instructors.

When the Eritreans began to fight against the annexation in the early 1960s, when they began to demand their independence from Ethiopia, Washington stepped up its aid to Selassie. It also signed a secret agreement with the emperor reaffirming Washington's "continuing interest in the security of Ethiopia and its opposition to any activities threatening the territorial integrity of Ethiopia." In this context, "territorial integrity" was simply a euphemism for maintaining Ethiopian domination over Eritrea.

* * *

Since the Second World War, capitalism began to make a few inroads into Ethiopia's socially backward system. Some small industries (largely foreign owned) began to emerge in the cities, and commerce developed. Petty-bourgeois layers, who aspired to become capitalists, arose too. In the south, the aristocrats were transformed into a landlord class. They acquired ownership of the land outright, as their private property. Some of them got into trade or became capitalist farmers. Coffee was grown as the main export crop, with the United States as its principal market.

These emerging classes in Ethiopia managed to achieve some adjustments within the regime. But unlike bourgeois forces in the early days of capitalism in Europe, they were unable and unwilling to break with feudalism itself, overthrow the monarchy, and establish a bourgeois-democratic regime. They were especially afraid of mobilizing the other classes in Ethiopia—the small but growing working class, and the peasants—so that they could sweep away the feudal restrictions on economic development. Like similar classes in other colonial and semicolonial countries today, they saw a danger to their own interests. Once the masses were mobilized, they might not stop at just overthrowing feudalism, but might go on to take power into their own hands.

So Ethiopia, under Selassie, is another example of how today, in the age of imperialism, capitalist forces are generally incapable of carrying through some of the most basic bourgeois democratic tasks, such as land reform and national liberation. It shows how imperialism allies itself with the most reactionary forces and retards even those social, economic, and political reforms that are historically part of the bourgeois revolution itself. This is another confirmation of Trotsky's theory of the permanent revolution, which explains that these basic democratic tasks can be fully completed only by the toiling masses themselves, through revolutionary mobilizations that lead toward socialist revolution.

It was this historical dynamic that accounted for the tremendous social force of the Ethiopian revolution when it finally got under way.

* * *

The beginning of the Ethiopian revolution is usually given as February 1974. But there were a number of developments that foreshadowed its outbreak.

First of all, there was the independence struggle in Eritrea. Despite the severe setback of the 1950s, when the urban upsurge was crushed, the struggle reemerged in 1961 with the formation of

the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF). It was a rural-based nationalist group, with the central aim of winning Eritrea's independence. The methods of struggle that it used were those of guerrilla warfare. Throughout the 1960s and into the early 1970s, the struggle went through ups and downs, suffering from internal disputes that eventually led to a major split in the ELF and the formation in 1970 of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF). Nevertheless, the struggle won increasing support from the Eritrean population over the years. Selassie's failure to crush it, or even to contain it very well, was an inspiration to opponents of the regime inside Ethiopia itself.

Signs of deep unrest in Ethiopia began to emerge in the 1960s. There were a few peasant revolts, which were put down with great difficulty. Workers carried out a wave of strikes despite the bureaucratic leadership of the Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Unions, the main union federation. Students staged a series of militant demonstrations.

It was the famine in 1973 and 1974 that brought everything to a head. While Selassie tried to cover up the very existence of the famine, between 100,000 and 250,000 peasants starved to death. It was soon evident what was going on, and the massive suffering spurred widespread anger against the landlords and feudalists—and against the regime that represented those classes. At that stage, all that was needed was a spark to set things off.

The revolution began among the urban masses of Addis Ababa, which is the capital and the largest city in the country. In February 1974, taxi drivers went out on strike to protest higher fuel costs. Teachers went on strike against proposed changes in the educational system. Students went out into the streets in support of the taxi drivers and teachers and got into serious clashes with the police. A number of them were killed. Some 10,000 troops in Eritrea mutinied, seized Asmara, and demanded higher pay. Other mutinies erupted in Addis Ababa.

Selassie was forced to make a number of concessions and to meet many of the protesters demands. His unpopular cabinet resigned and was replaced with a new one. But nobody was satisfied with new faces or minor concessions. They began to want basic changes, and Selassie's concessions only encouraged them to raise new demands.

The ferment spread to every major sector of the population opposed to the aristocracy and the landlords. It is difficult to exaggerate the scope of this revolutionary upheaval. The actions carried out during it were among the most massive that have ever been held on the continent as a whole.

Students carried out new demonstrations, calling for democracy and land reform. They raised the traditional slogan, "Land to the tiller." In that way, they tried to establish a link between the urban struggles and the peasantry. University teachers released a statement calling for an elected government, for abolition of censorship and the political police, for land reform, for civil liberties, and for the punishment of former officials. Leaflets began to circulate raising all sorts of other demands.

The young Ethiopian working class soon threw itself into the struggle. It only numbers several hundred thousand, but it has a significant social weight. It is concentrated in the urban areas and in the key capitalist sectors of the economy. Unlike the peasantry, which is dispersed throughout the countryside, the working class has the cohesiveness to lead a revolutionary upsurge—that is, if it has a clear political leadership of its own. Unfortunately, that was missing.

Nevertheless, the bureaucratic leadership of the Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Unions came under considerable pressure from its ranks, and in early March it raised a series of demands against the government. It called for a minimum wage, pensions, freedom of organization, and other things. It expressed solidarity with the peasantry by demanding a more equitable distribution of land. When the regime tried to stall, the confederation called its 100,000 members out on strike, the first general strike in Ethiopia's history. The strike paralyzed much of the economy for four full days, and forced the regime to promise to meet the demands. As the upsurge developed, the leadership of the confed-

eration was transformed and began to reflect the interests of the ranks more directly.

This strike encouraged unorganized workers to launch their own actions, especially in the public sector. A series of spontaneous strikes swept most of the major cities in Ethiopia and some in Eritrea too. The example of the workers' militant actions quickly spread.

Several thousand women demonstrated in Addis Ababa to demand equal rights and equal pay for equal work. Considering the degree of oppression of women in Ethiopia, this was especially significant. In April, a gigantic demonstration of 100,000 Muslims and their Christian sympathizers marched through the streets of the capital to demand an end to discrimination against Muslims.

All this reinforced the Eritrean independence struggle, which continued to gain strength.

One of the most decisive elements of the upsurge was its extension to the countryside, the economic base of the ruling classes. Peasants revolted in the southern areas, precisely where capitalist agriculture had begun to make some inroads and where national oppression was strong. They refused to pay taxes. They seized the crops. They burned down the homes of landlords and even strung up a few. The upheaval spread throughout a 250-mile stretch of the Rift Valley as peasants seized the land and began to implement a radical land reform of their own. This was one of the most important aspects of the Ethiopian revolution.

The revolution had begun spontaneously, with no central leadership. But there were signs that it was already throwing up new forms of mass organization. Reporters described the formation of what they called "revolutionary committees" and "people's tribunals" in some provincial towns. In Jimma, southwest of Addis Ababa, almost the entire population rose up in a mammoth demonstration. They overwhelmed the police, kicked out the provincial government, and set up their own popularly elected council. It remained in power for weeks. In other places, the provincial administrations just collapsed as officials fled to the capital.

A similar process was under way in the military itself, which reflected the class divisions of society as a whole. The very top officers tended to be aristocrats, or had close ties to the aristocracy and the landlords. The ranks and many of the noncommissioned officers were of peasant origin, including a good number from the south. Like everyone else, they were affected by the upsurge. In unit after unit, the troops and junior officers arrested their superiors. In their place they elected committees to represent them, as the soldiers during the Russian Revolution had done. Sympathizing with the unfolding revolution, they issued leaflets demanding democratic rights, land reform, and the ouster of government officials. In Eritrea, some Ethiopian troops even called for the legalization of the Eritrean independence groups, an especially radical step for troops involved in such a war.

The demands raised by the many different sectors of the population during the early stages of the revolution were mostly of a democratic character. But the demands, and especially the mass mobilizations behind them, directly threatened the survival of the monarchy and the economic position of the feudal barons and landlords. Unlike Russia in 1917, however, no revolutionary party existed that could offer a coherent program, coordinate the struggles in various parts of the country and among different sectors of the population, move them forward on clear class lines, and lead the revolution to a victorious conclusion. In fact, there were no real parties at all.

So there was a situation where Selassie's feudal administration was collapsing, but the revolution was without a real leadership. A vacuum existed. This gave an opportunity to a group of young officers to step into the vacuum. They formed the Armed Forces Coordinating Committee, commonly known as the Dergue, in April 1974. The representatives on it were initially elected by the various units. Since they were largely of petty-bourgeois origin, either from the peasantry or the more educated urban layers, they shared many of the hopes raised by the upsurge. In general, they were for some degree of bourgeois democracy—or at least for the



Eritrean freedom fighters.

removal of the existing aristocratic state. They were for land reform. They resented Ethiopia's domination by imperialism (to an extent). In essence, they reflected a petty-bourgeois nationalist current whose main orientation was to develop Ethiopia—as they saw it, to bring it into the twentieth century.

Also, the Dergue was without a clear direction of its own in its early days. It was riddled with disputes. This left it susceptible to pressure, both from the masses themselves and from those in Ethiopia and abroad who were afraid that things could snowball even further.

In general, the Dergue members were themselves afraid of the mass mobilizations. They wanted some changes, but they also wanted control over them. After all, they were military men. So from the early days of the Dergue, it tried to gain control of the upsurge, to channel it in a direction that was considered acceptable. The Dergue as a whole was not all too clear on that direction at first. But over time, its position hardened around opposition to advancing the revolution, around keeping the revolution within a broadly capitalist framework. The democratic aspect of the Dergue also broke down, as the members of it no longer stood for election by the military ranks.

The Dergue finally removed Selassie from his throne on September 12, 1974. The ouster of the old monarch was a big victory for the revolution. But the Dergue did everything it could to keep that victory from spurring a continued upheaval and radicalization. It immediately tried to ban all demonstrations and strikes and arrested a number of activists. The most radical students and workers, for their part, called for the establishment of a popularly elected regime.

The Dergue's ouster of Selassie was widely called a coup. But it was much more than that. The mass pressure on the young military officers was tremendous, and pushed them further than they themselves had wanted to go. If they had tried to resist the pressures up and down the line, they probably would not have lasted too long. As a result, the Dergue was forced to enact a series of far-reaching and revolutionary measures, measures that led to the destruction of the old feudal system.

In December 1974, the Dergue claimed that it was for socialism.

From a Marxist standpoint, this was pure demagogy. But it did reflect a growing sentiment among the Ethiopian masses, a sentiment that the Dergue was compelled to ride with.

In January 1975, the regime announced the nationalization of all banks, insurance companies, and credit institutions. Imperialist interests were heavily involved in some of these, especially American, British, and Italian. The regime also took over a series of companies and enterprises that had been owned by the royal family.

The following month, it declared an even more sweeping series of nationalizations, involving a total takeover of seventy-two concerns and the seizure of a controlling share in twenty-nine others. These included gold and silver mining, major utilities and transport, and such basic industries as iron, steel, cement, and oil refining.

In March, the Dergue carried out its most radical measure, a land reform that went beyond anything like it in the rest of Africa. It nationalized all rural land, cancelled all debts and obligations by tenant farmers and sharecroppers, and placed a twenty-five acre ceiling on the size of farms cultivated by individual peasant families. The capitalist farms that existed under Selassie, like the coffee plantations, were brought under direct state control. The establishment of farming cooperatives was encouraged. The announcement of the land reform was greeted with mammoth demonstrations of support in Addis Ababa and other cities.

To a certain degree, the Dergue was only responding to an accomplished fact, since the peasants had already begun to expropriate the landlords on their own. Nevertheless, the legal recognition of what the peasants had done—and also its extension and systemization throughout the country—marked a major step forward for the peasantry and for the Ethiopian masses in general. It marked the definitive overthrow of the stagnant system of feudal relations that had existed for centuries. It was far and away the biggest gain of the Ethiopian revolution.

There are some other gains that should be noted too: the separation of church and state and a virtual end to institutionalized discrimination against Muslims; the beginnings of a basic literacy campaign; efforts to improve the wretched health-care system; recognition of some of the languages of the oppressed nationalities; and nationalization of urban land and surplus housing, which eliminated the big slumlords in the cities.

Of course, all this does not mean that there has been a socialist revolution in Ethiopia. That may yet happen. But so far the process has been kept more or less within the confines of capitalist relations. Still, it is a real revolution and deserves full support. The gains that have already been made could serve as stepping stones toward a socialist revolution, and it is important to stress that this revolutionary process is still alive and could make further leaps forward.

However, it is also important to distinguish between the revolution and the Dergue itself. Initially, the Dergue was part of the revolution and came to power on the crest of it. But they are not the same thing. Revolutionists support the mobilizations of the masses and the concrete measures undertaken, but can place no political confidence whatsoever in the military demagogues of the Dergue. The progressive measures that it enacted were a result of mass pressure. Its overall position in relation to the mass struggle is now a counterrevolutionary one—not in the same sense as the feudal remnants who want to turn things back to the way they were, but as a brake on the continuing development of the Ethiopian revolution.

One of the most obvious aspects of this has been the Dergue's policy on the national question. As *Ethiopian* nationalists, the Dergue members favor a unitary state. They give lip service to the right to self-determination of the oppressed nationalities, and have made some concessions, such as allowing radio programs in Galligna, the language of the Oromos. But in every case where an oppressed nationality has carried out their own struggles, the Dergue has opposed them. A real revolutionary socialist leadership, on the other hand, would have immediately granted the

oppressed nationalities their right to self-determination, up to and including the establishment of an independent state if that was what they wanted. That is the only real way to begin to erode the national animosities that have been fostered over the past century and build up a broader unity of the oppressed classes and nationalities on a voluntary basis. That will make it possible to more effectively advance the class struggle and to stand up to imperialism and its agents. But the Dergue has done nothing of the kind.

The Dergue has also tried to keep the economic changes brought about by the revolution within a basically capitalist framework. This is despite all the talk about "socialism." The nationalizations in Ethiopia are similar to those carried out in many other semicolonial countries. They give the authorities a greater degree of bargaining power with the imperialists, but they do little to actually break the grip of imperialist domination. Capitalist relations still exist in Ethiopia, and the economy remains tied to the world capitalist market. As long as that is the case, the much stronger imperialist powers will inevitably dominate.

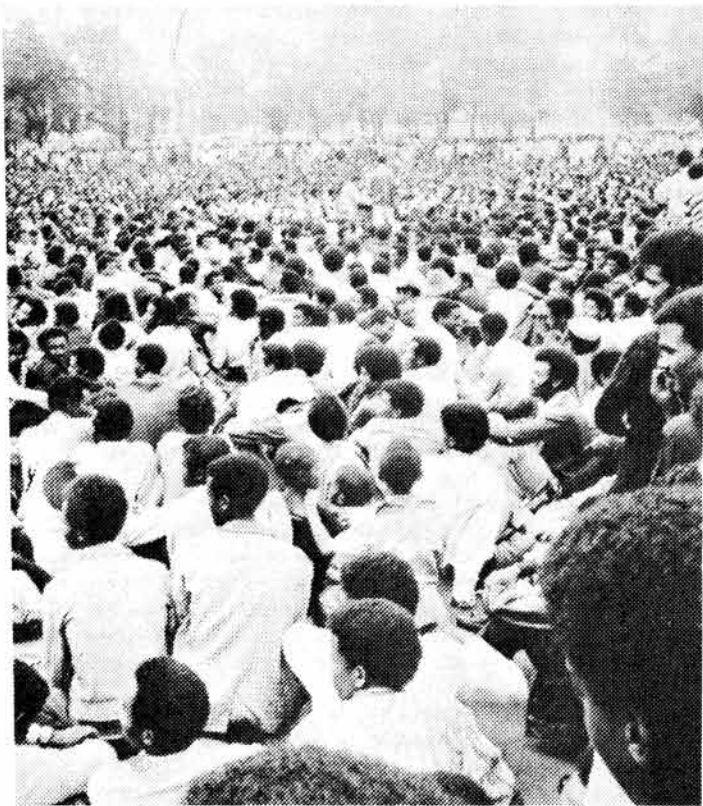
At least from the Dergue's perspective, what the economic reforms amount to are an effort to foster capitalist economic growth, partly through the apparatus of the state. That is what they mean by "modernizing" the country. Like similar regimes elsewhere, it is characterized by a strong strain of nationalism. The regime seeks to encourage the growth of an *indigenous* capitalist class, protecting it as much as possible from the competition of the imperialist concerns—as well as from its own workers. The petty-bourgeois officers and state administrators often try to become members of this emerging national bourgeoisie themselves. That is what is meant by "development."

These aims are evident from the Dergue's economic program. The economy was divided into three sectors. One in which the state owns basic industries, resources, and utilities. A second, joint sector, in which foreign capital will play a significant role, including in the exploration and exploitation of oil and coal, the mining of a wide range of minerals, large-scale construction, and some other industries. The third sector, which is quite extensive, is to be dominated by private capital, especially local Ethiopian capital wherever possible. This includes import and export trade, wholesale and retail trade, surface transport (except for the railroads), food processing, hotels, small-scale manufacturing and construction, and other enterprises. The large state sector makes it possible for the regime to directly assist these local Ethiopian businesses.

From the point of view of the petty-bourgeois nationalists now in power in Addis Ababa, this can be attempted only if the masses are demobilized and reduced to the role of passive spectators. Above all, the Dergue needs a degree of "stability" to consolidate its position. But that is precisely what it lacks. After Selassie's overthrow, students, peasants, workers, and the oppressed nationalities continued to press forward with their own demands.

Among students, and to an extent among young workers, the radical left continued to make headway. A number of underground journals were published and groups were formed. Demonstrations and strikes were still held. The Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Unions called for the setting up of a democratically elected civilian regime and for workers control of the nationalized industries. In the rural areas, the peasants, with student encouragement, frequently went beyond the provisions of the land reform program by confiscating outright all the property of the former landlords and by refusing to pay rent for the previous season. When students and peasant activists were attacked by rightist bands in the south, they mobilized to defend themselves and to crush the threat from the old landlords. This was despite the Dergue's refusal to provide them with arms. As one Dergue member commented, "Today they get guns, tomorrow they refuse to pay taxes."

The Dergue responded to these continued actions with widespread repression. All opponents of the regime, including leftists, were labeled as "counterrevolutionaries" and became fair game. Known dissidents were arrested or summarily executed. Torture



Student rally against Selassie in Addis Ababa in 1974.

became routine. And at times the repression became so severe that hundreds of persons were massacred within a period of a few days. From the time the Dergue came to power to the present, literally thousands have been killed. Some were undoubtedly reactionaries, but many, if not most, were students, workers, and activists of the various leftist groups, such as the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party, a Maoist-influenced group that had significant support for a period.

But despite the repression—and this is important to stress—the Dergue was still forced to make political concessions and to ride with the radical and prosocialist sentiments of the population. To hide its counterrevolutionary aims, it claims that it represents the interests of all Ethiopians, but stresses especially that it favors the working class and the peasantry. It has even talked about establishing a “workers party” to lead the revolution. Through this ploy, it has tried to institutionalize the revolution, to freeze it by official proclamation, to lead it into controllable channels. This has meant a policy of combining repression with concessions.

Just to take the example of the labor movement: A wage freeze was imposed, strikes were virtually outlawed, and some trade unionists were imprisoned and killed. But the Dergue at the same time confirmed the right of workers in the public sector to organize. The Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Unions was dissolved and a new body set up, the All-Ethiopia Trade Union. The new body is bureaucratically controlled from the top down, but at the same time is larger, including many more workers than the older federation did. Despite its limitations, this is an important gain and under different circumstances can provide the workers with a powerful weapon. But even within this new body, the Dergue has had trouble imposing its control over the local unions.

In a somewhat similar manner, the Dergue set up urban residents associations, called *kebeles*, under pressure from the urban population for some form of self-organization. The same is true of the peasant associations and the various militias. They are bureaucratically controlled and the regime has tried to use them

against its leftist opponents. But the class struggles in Ethiopia are at the same time reflected within them, though in a very distorted manner. The Dergue has had problems keeping its grip on these bodies, and there are continuous purges.

Another sign of the Dergue's problems in bringing things under firm control was its need, for a whole period, to ally itself with one of the main leftist groups in the country, the All-Ethiopia Socialist Movement, known as Me'isone. Me'isone is strongly influenced by Stalinist conceptions and was willing to collaborate politically with the so-called “progressive” military officers. This gave the Dergue a chance to use it for a left cover at a time when it badly needed one.

The other main leftist group, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party, refused to collaborate with the regime. But at the same time, it was influenced by Maoism and followed an ultraleft course, incorrectly dismissing the Dergue as “fascist” and adopting an adventurist policy of terrorism against it. The EPRP also isolated itself by refusing to work within the existing trade unions, *kebeles*, and peasant associations. This gave the Dergue an opportunity to crack down on it, and many of the EPRP's supporters or suspected sympathizers were killed.

Whatever the Dergue's subjective intentions, its policies endanger the very gains already made by the Ethiopian revolution. By trying to demobilize the masses, by refusing to recognize the right to self-determination of the oppressed nationalities, it is opening the way for imperialism to move in to overturn the radical economic measures, such as the nationalizations and the land reform.

There are basically only two roads open for the Ethiopian revolution: Either forward to a socialist revolution, which will mean the extension of the present gains, the further mobilization of the masses, and the liberation of the oppressed nationalities. Or stagnation and retreat, a sure prescription for social stratification, more poverty and oppression, and continued imperialist domination.

But the direction is not yet certain. The Dergue has so far been unsuccessful in stopping the revolutionary process. Despite the massive repression, it does not look like the oppressed classes have yet been dealt a decisive defeat, although the mobilizations have certainly gone into an ebb since early 1977. The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party has suffered serious losses, but it may not yet be an entirely spent force. And in mid-1977, the other main group, Me'isone, broke with the Dergue and went into opposition. As recently as May 1978, the Dergue felt compelled to purge the entire leadership of the All-Ethiopia Trade Union, the very leadership that it helped install in the first place. They were accused of having been infiltrated by Me'isone. According to some reports, a few Dergue members also got axed.

The most obvious indication of the Dergue's lack of success at this point is the Eritrean liberation struggle. Because of the traditional interaction between the upsurges in Eritrea and Ethiopia, an Eritrean victory could prompt a massive resurgence of the Ethiopian revolution.

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Beginning in 1974, the Eritrean struggle for national independence received a big boost from the Ethiopian revolution and the overthrow of Selassie.

Workers strikes swept the Eritrean cities, drawing the urban masses into active struggle for the first time since the late 1950s. Students, young workers, and other Eritreans began to join the two main Eritrean liberation groups in greater numbers. Even Eritrean police, civil servants, and officials began to openly voice demands for independence, or at least for Ethiopian recognition of the proindependence organizations.

This upsurge put tremendous pressure on the Eritrean groups to unify. The Eritrean Liberation Front and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front had waged a bloody factional war against each other for more than two years, claiming hundreds of lives and greatly weakening their struggle against Ethiopian rule. But in

January 1975 they finally agreed to stop fighting each other, although frictions still continued.

At first, the Dergue tried to entice the Eritrean groups to the negotiating table, offering vague promises of internal autonomy. But the mass sentiment in Eritrea was swinging decisively toward independence. So when the Dergue realized that its ploy was not going to work, it sent more bombers and more troops against the Eritreans.

Under the threat of an imminent Ethiopian offensive—and under pressure from the Eritrean masses—the two Eritrean groups launched a coordinated and preemptive attack on Asmara itself in late January and early February 1975. The Dergue responded in the most brutal manner, directing most of its fire against the civilian population. Outlying villages were bombed and burned to the ground. Some massacres were carried out in Asmara to terrorize the population. Eritreans who were working in Ethiopia were rounded up and taken to internment camps. And suspected supporters of the liberation movements were hunted down and killed by special terror squads.

The net effect of all this was to drive even more Eritreans toward the ELF and EPLF. Literally thousands of Eritreans from the cities and villages flocked to join up. The situation in Eritrea polarized sharply. It became increasingly difficult for virtually any Eritrean to collaborate with the Ethiopian authorities. As a *New York Times* reporter commented in the February 3, 1975, issue, "During a five-day visit to Asmara . . . this correspondent could not find one Eritrean who favored anything short of full independence."

During 1975 and 1976, the Eritrean groups consolidated their positions and trained new recruits. The military relationship between the Ethiopians and Eritreans remained more or less static, with the Ethiopians restricted to the cities and the independence forces having virtual free reign in the countryside. In 1976, the Dergue tried to break the deadlock by conscripting some 100,000 Ethiopian peasants into what was called a "red march" on Eritrea. The peasant force was poorly armed, trained, and motivated. In its first clashes with the Eritrean fighters it simply disintegrated.

By early 1977, the Eritreans were strong enough to go onto the offensive. Within just a few months, the ELF and EPLF captured the cities of Nacfa, Karora, Agordat, Tessenei, Decamere, and Keren. In December 1977, the EPLF launched a major assault on Massawa, Eritrea's main port, capturing most of the city but failing to dislodge the Ethiopians. At that point, the two groups held sway over all of Eritrea but for a few major Ethiopian garrisons, and the areas they controlled were inhabited by the vast bulk of Eritrea's population.

The Dergue accused the Eritrean freedom fighters of being counterrevolutionary, of being tools of the reactionary Arab states, of acting on behalf of the imperialist powers to undermine the Ethiopian revolution. The Western bourgeois press, for the most part, calls the two main groups Marxist. Neither description is accurate.

Despite some differences in verbiage and policy, both the ELF and EPLF are nationalist groups, with their main aim being the liberation of Eritrea. Both have mass support, although the EPLF now appears to have a slight edge over the ELF. Both use radical-sounding anti-imperialist rhetoric. The leaderships are largely of petty-bourgeois origin and outlook.

There is also a third Eritrean group, called the Eritrean Liberation Front-People's Liberation Forces (ELF-PLF). It is a splinter from the EPLF and is quite right wing in its statements. Its leader, Osman Saleh Sabbe, has openly sought American backing, and has even hinted that the U.S. should intervene. Its actual influence within Eritrea is limited, but it does have large sums of money that it gets from some of the oil-rich Arab states.

As for the ELF and EPLF, their programs and policies sound surprisingly similar. They are both for full independence. They both call for widespread nationalizations of foreign holdings, but leave room for collaboration with bourgeois Eritrean layers. In the cities they controlled, both imposed price controls and tried to

regulate the market to an extent. They restricted the profits of merchants somewhat and urged the formation of cooperative stores. In the countryside, they took over the big landed estates and have tried to bring them back into production. The ELF says that it will eventually redistribute the land to the peasants, while the EPLF claims that it has already begun a land reform. Both groups have set up various mass organizations of workers, peasants, students, women, and youth. These bodies appear to have no real policymaking powers and are generally given routine administrative tasks. In the cities it controls, the EPLF has set up "class associations" of workers, peasants, petty-bourgeois, and capitalists. All were given a part in the urban administration.

The limited aims of the Eritrean groups—to establish an independent Eritrea, without mobilizing the masses against capitalist property relations (the only assurance of achieving real independence)—has been a factor in how they approach the liberation struggle. Despite their overwhelming support in the cities, neither group has sought to directly mobilize the urban masses against their Ethiopian oppressors.

Another recurrent problem has been the factionalism between the two groups. But the mass pressure for unity has been great, and the ELF and EPLF have signed a series of agreements toward that end. Recently they have begun to cooperate more closely on the diplomatic level and have launched some joint military actions, although the frictions between them could again flare up.

While strongly supporting the Eritrean right to self-determination, revolutionary socialists place no political confidence in the current leaderships of either of the two groups. They call for a united front of all real national liberation organizations against the Ethiopian regime, while at the same time trying to maintain the political independence of the Eritrean working class, so that it is not hamstrung by the procapitalist tendencies within the nationalist movements.

Solidarity with the Eritrean struggle becomes particularly important in the face of Mengistu's continued drive to crush it with military force. Beginning in late June 1978, the Dergue launched a massive offensive against the Eritreans, recapturing the cities of Agordat, Tessenei, and Decamere, among others. Given the strength of the Eritrean struggle, the Dergue will find it extremely difficult to suppress it outright. But the offensive could presage a drawn-out war that will result in even more suffering for the Eritrean population.

Mengistu's war drive could also seriously endanger the big gains made by the Ethiopian masses themselves. It could breed more demoralization among Ethiopians, further undermine the revolutionary process, and provide openings for imperialism to move in against the Ethiopian revolution.

[Next week: Meaning of the Somalian Military Attack]

Argentine Trotskyist Arrested and Tortured

Roberto Omar Ramírez, a leader of the Revolutionary Workers Group (GOR), a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Argentina, was arrested June 27 in downtown Buenos Aires. His apartment was subsequently broken into and thoroughly demolished. He has been brutally tortured.

Omar Ramírez, an architect, taught for many years in the school of architecture at the University of La Plata. Because he joined with students in participating in many struggles over the past decade, he was victimized and forced to go underground in 1975. He is forty-six years old and married with three children.

The GOR is launching a campaign to demand the reappearance in good health of Omar Ramírez and other worker and student activists who have disappeared, and win their release. It is urging that messages be sent to the Argentine government and Argentine embassies around the world.