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USA 75¢

UK 30p

15,000 March Against Nuclear Plant



Rouge

March in Brest, France, September 23, called by 23 union, political, student, nationalist, and environmental groups.

Leslie Evans:

**Bettelheim's
'China Since Mao'**

Ernest Mandel:

**Fortieth Anniversary
of Fourth International**

Castro Takes Up Some Key Issues Facing His Government

The Escalating War in Zimbabwe

By Ernest Harsch

In the last three months, the Rhodesian armed forces have made at least seven assaults into Zambia and Mozambique, a Rhodesian military representative admitted after the most recent raid into Mozambique.

These raids reflect the Smith regime's increasing belligerence—and desperation—as it tries to hold back the struggle for Black majority rule and retain white privilege. The attacks, together with earlier ones, have claimed the lives of several thousand Africans, most of them Zimbabwean refugees.

The four-day assault into Mozambique, which ended on September 23, was said to have resulted in the deaths of “hundreds” of Zimbabwean guerrillas and the destruction of twenty-five guerrilla bases, according to the Smith regime. (The Rhodesian forces, it should be noted, also refer to refugee camps as guerrilla bases.) A Rhodesian military spokesman admitted that the regime's troops clashed with regular Mozambican forces as well.

The repression within the country has also been stepped up. Under regulations published in Salisbury September 26, large areas—at least a fifth of the country—have been placed under martial law. They include some of the Black reservations along the borders with Zambia and Mozambique,

where the fighting has been particularly sharp, as well as areas within twelve miles of the capital.

The martial law regulations give military courts the power to impose death sentences on anyone alleged to be a guerrilla or accused of aiding the freedom fighters. They also give any member of the police, army, or Ministry of Internal Affairs powers of indefinite detention without trial.

Martial law was proclaimed in the selected areas under terms of an order signed by both acting President Henry Everard and Ndabaningi Sithole, the current chairman of the Executive Council and a prominent Black collaborator of the Smith regime.

Aside from those who were slain during the Rhodesian assault into Mozambique, more than 700 persons, the vast bulk of them Africans, were killed within the country in September alone, making it the bloodiest month in the war so far.

Clearly, the continued survival of the Smith regime poses the threat of even more death and suffering, not only for the Zimbabwean masses themselves, but for all the Black peoples of southern Africa. Those forces fighting against Smith deserve full support in their struggle to bring an end to racist rule. □

Healyites Tag Along Behind Allan Bakke

By Matilde Zimmermann

Most groups in the United States calling themselves socialist have criticized the Supreme Court's decision in the *Allan Bakke* case, although few recognize the seriousness of the blow that ruling dealt to Black rights. But representatives of Healy Thought on both sides of the Atlantic have come out in unabashed support for the ruling against affirmative action. This has been expressed in articles in the July 4 *Bulletin* and the July 18 *News Line*.

In the *Bulletin* article, Workers League leader Fred Mazelis congratulates the Supreme Court for standing up against “reverse discrimination”; and bitterly attacks the Socialist Workers Party as the “foremost exponents” of the use of racial quotas to redress past discrimination.

Affirmative-action programs involving preferential treatment for minorities and

women were an important conquest of the civil rights and women's liberation movements. The strongest of these programs set up quotas to force employers or schools to hire or admit a certain fixed number of Blacks, other minorities, or women. The most important legal challenge to affirmative action has been the case of Allan Bakke, a thirty-eight-year-old white engineer who claimed he had been discriminated against by a medical school that set aside 16 percent of its places for minority students.

When the Supreme Court ruled in Bakke's favor, the door was opened to further attacks on affirmative action. The most significant involves a white steelworker named Brian Weber now suing both Kaiser Aluminum and the United Steelworkers of America to wipe out a

special training program designed to help minority steelworkers advance into skilled jobs.

Bakke and Weber are symbols of a campaign by the government and the employers to beat back the gains made by Blacks and women. The purpose of the campaign is to keep down the standard of living of workers as a whole.

But the *Bulletin* hails Bakke as a standard-bearer for the fight against “racial polarization and apartheid-type separation of the races.”

The Healyites think that apartheid and racial hatred are caused by the struggle of Black workers to close the gap between them and whites. In fact they suggest that Blacks have already caught up with whites and that racial discrimination now has begun to operate against whites. What kind of proof do they offer for this astonishing theory? “The fact that black workers make up 20 percent or more of the basic industrial unions and the percentage of black workers in the organized labor movement is significantly higher than their percentage in the population as a whole.”

The *Bulletin* argues that the Supreme Court actually wanted to vote in favor of affirmative-action quotas, but hesitated “primarily because the ruling class does not feel ready to legitimize racial separation so openly. Such a move would represent a reversal of the civil rights reforms and through the attacks on seniority and all union rights would lead to an enormous confrontation with the entire labor movement.”

The Healyites would presumably expect to lead this confrontation, seeking to mobilize “the entire labor movement” against Black rights and in defense of discriminatory practices favoring white and male workers.

The fight to defend affirmative action is one of the most important political campaigns that trade unions in the U.S. are involved in today. (Another is the struggle to advance equality for women through the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, which the Healyites do not like any better.) But the Workers League counterposes preferential programs to trade-union rights and counterposes Black nationalism and affirmative action to the fight to build a labor party. The *Bulletin* accuses the Socialist Workers Party and Communist Party of seeking “to revive nationalism in the most reactionary form of racial quotas, precisely in order to sabotage the growing political movement of the working class and the emergence of a labor party.”

In their polemic on the *Bakke* case, the Healyites refer to two earlier examples of sharp differences with the SWP on questions involving Black rights. In 1968 the SWP opposed (while the Workers League supported) a racist strike against Black community control of the schools in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville district of Brook-

lyn. In 1974 and 1975 the SWP backed (while the Workers League fought) the Boston Black community's demand for federal troops to protect their children from attacks by racist mobs.

The Healyites are correct in seeing a continuity between these earlier issues and the differences over *Bakke*. As in 1968 and 1975, they are now once again standing shoulder to shoulder with the most racist and backward white workers against the just struggle of Blacks. □

Somalia Preparing New War?

By R.D. Willis

The Somalian regime of Gen. Mohammed Siad Barre, whose regular army invaded the eastern part of the Ethiopian state last year with imperialist backing, is now claiming that Somalia is the intended target of a "war of aggression" planned by the Ethiopian, Cuban, and Soviet governments.

Speaking at a news conference in Lusaka, Zambia, Somalian Ambassador Michael Mariano charged September 26 that the strategy had been worked out earlier that month in Addis Ababa during a conference attended by Cuban President Fidel Castro and Soviet First Vice-President Vasili Kuznetsov. He said that the attack, which was expected "by the end of October," would be spearheaded by Somali dissidents and backed up by between 30,000 and 50,000 Ethiopian and Cuban troops.

The purpose of such a war, Mariano claimed, was "the domination of Somalia."

Coming in the context of General Siad's attempts to elicit more open imperialist backing, Mariano's charges could be intended as a justification for the receipt of direct Western arms aid.

The Ethiopian government denounced the charges, as a calculated attempt to camouflage Somalian preparations "for another full scale invasion of Ethiopia." □

Neto Announces Amnesty

Angolan President Agostinho Neto has announced that hundreds of political prisoners in Angola will soon be released. According to a report in the September 21 *Le Monde*, he said that they would include former supporters of the Active Revolt tendency within the ruling People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), as well as supporters of two rival nationalist groups, the Angolan National Liberation Front (FNLA) and the Cabinda Liberation Front (FLEC).

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A New Era of Rapid Growth Worldwide Has Opened Up

By Ernest Mandel

I.

The founding conference of the Fourth International was held forty years ago, in a small apartment in the Paris region. It brought together about thirty representatives from eleven sections, mainly from Europe and North America. A single comrade from a colonial country managed to overcome the obstacles of extreme poverty and severe repression that prevented participation by other activists from the southern hemisphere.

This conference was the culmination of five years of efforts on the part of activists belonging to the former Left Opposition in the Communist parties to get the international working-class vanguard to draw the necessary conclusions from the collapse of the German workers movement before Hitler in 1933. The Second and Third Internationals had been transformed into giant bureaucratic obstacles to the world socialist revolution. A new instrument essential to the victory of the revolution had to be forged—a new revolutionary international of the proletariat.

What was involved was not an impressionistic reaction by an embittered handful or by people who were overreacting to the historic defeat that Hitler's coming to power represented for the working class of Europe. What was involved was the outcome of a long process in which the consciousness of a whole generation of clear-thinking Communists matured.

The Hitler phenomenon could not be separated from the phenomenon of the degeneration of the first workers state, the USSR. Heavy blame lay with Stalin for having transformed the Communist International into a docile instrument of Soviet diplomacy, for having contributed in a decisive way to the Nazis' seizure of power, and for having thus created a mortal danger to the very existence of the Soviet Union. His counterrevolutionary policy was to culminate tragically in the massacre of a million Bolsheviks in the USSR itself, and in the smothering of the Spanish and French revolutions with the Popular Front policy in 1936 and 1937.

Among those who had realized at what turning-point world history and the destiny of the international workers movement stood were some of the most prominent Communist leaders in their respective countries, including many founders of their parties, members of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, members of central committees,

even members of political bureaus or secretariats of those parties. We need only mention Leon Trotsky, Christian Rakovsky, and Evgeny Preobrazhensky (the first general secretary of the CPSU) from the Soviet Union; Ch'en Tu-hsiu from China; James P. Cannon from the United States; Edouard van Overstraeten and Léon Lesoil from Belgium; Sneevliet from the Netherlands; Nin and Andrade from Spain; Rosmer from France; Blasco (Tresso) from Italy; Josef Frey from Austria; Pantelis Pouliopoulos from Greece; and Ta Thu Thau from Vietnam.

Not all of them had the strength to pursue the task (which seemed all but superhuman) to completion, to begin again to patiently build a new international after having devoted a decade of their lives to building the Third. Nearly all were killed by the fascist, Stalinist, or imperialist terror. Those who unwaveringly maintained the continuity of Leninist thought and action by participating in the founding of the Fourth International will appear before history as the true pioneers of the socialist world of the future, like the internationalists of 1914 or the leaders of the October socialist revolution.

The founding conference of the Fourth International met under extremely difficult conditions. The international proletariat had been crippled by a series of defeats, each one heavier than the last. The defeat in Spain, where the proletariat had shown so much heroism and revolutionary ardor, was particularly tragic. Humanity was on the eve of a new war that would inflict on it suffering beyond all comparison, even with the previous one. A more and more marked pessimism gripped people's minds. Wasn't it "midnight in the century," as Victor Serge called it in the title of one of his novels? Wouldn't that night last for centuries?

We must understand this historical context in order to grasp the importance that Trotsky and his comrades attributed to the seemingly formal question of "proclaiming" the Fourth International (which was opposed only by the Polish section, represented at the founding conference by Comrade Isaac Deutscher). In practice, the "Movement for the Fourth International" had already been functioning for many years as an international organization based on democratic centralism.

But the "proclamation" was an expression of faith in the destiny of the international proletariat and the socialist revolu-

tion. Its goal was to declare, if not before the world, at least before the vanguard and the members and activists of the movement itself: "Yes, despite the apparent victory of Stalinism and fascism, and of imperialist barbarism in the colonies, the nightmare we are living through will last for only a moment in the history of our century. Yes, in the course of and at the end of this war that is inevitably approaching, the revolution will rise again from its ashes. The toiling masses and oppressed peoples will rebel by the millions and tens of millions. Yes, the future belongs to socialism, to communism, despite all appearances to the contrary. And to forge that future it is necessary to build a world party of socialist revolution, a new revolutionary socialist international."

Today we are more than ever convinced that without this "proclamation," the political survival and cohesiveness of the revolutionary-Marxist cadres scattered around the world, more or less divided into different geographic sectors by the successive ups and downs of the Second World War, subjected to savage persecution that, in some sectors, amounted to outright annihilation, would have been infinitely more difficult, if not impossible. In this sense, the tiny handful of congress participants in 1938, and their main inspiration, Leon Trotsky, made a decisive contribution to salvaging the historical continuity of Leninism at the most difficult time in its history.

II.

Nevertheless, ten years after the founding conference, in 1948, in the wake of the Second World Congress of the Fourth International, on the threshold of the cold war, it might have seemed that the revolutionary optimism of Trotsky and his comrades in 1938 had been unfounded. The huge growth of a new revolutionary vanguard, comparable to that which had occurred after 1917-18, did not take place. Ten years after its founding, the Fourth International was hardly any stronger than in the dark hours of 1938-40, except in two semicolonial countries, Ceylon and Bolivia, where it had made a breakthrough in the workers movement. Stalinism appeared triumphant. It was spreading to a growing number of countries. Imperialism, now firmly centralized internationally by the power of the United States, seemed on the point of unleashing a third world war. The manufacture of terrifying new

weapons—above all nuclear weapons—gave this possibility proportions that were even more barbaric and heavier with consequences for the future of the human race than those of World War II.

It is now clear that, contrary to the mood which prevailed in 1938, the no less marked pessimism afflicting quite a few vanguard sectors in 1948 was much less warranted. The downturn in the world revolution was finished, and it was finished for a good long period. One by one, the working-class and peasant masses of Yugoslavia, China, and Vietnam were to inflict decisive defeats on capitalism and imperialism in their countries. The capitalist encirclement of the USSR would be broken. The revolution was to shake up the colonial empires, a chain reaction extending the victory of the Chinese revolution into Southeast Asia, the Arab world, North Africa, Latin America (Cuba), and Black Africa.

But the cumulative effects of twenty years of defeats for the working class—defeats that were neither “programmed” nor inevitable in 1923 or even in 1933, but that had become a fact by the end of that period—had caused the class consciousness of the proletariat to recede, so that the revolutionary upsurge that began in 1943-44 could, on the whole, be contained by the traditional bureaucratic apparatuses or by centrist forces, unlike what had happened at the end of World War I.

The result was the smothering of this upsurge in Western Europe by the bureaucracies of the Social Democracy and of Stalinism, both of which strove with all their might to shore up the capitalist state and restore the capitalist economy. They were never outflanked by a wave of working-class militancy capable of giving rise to a new vanguard, one that would be broad enough to keep this counterrevolutionary scheme from being put into effect for years and years. This would have created much more favorable conditions for building much more powerful revolutionary parties.

At the point where the counterrevolutionary policy of the bureaucracies in the workers movement, wedded to an internationally centralized imperialist offensive, permitted the relative stabilization of capitalism in the West and in Japan, the center of gravity of the world revolution shifted to the colonial and semicolonial countries for two decades. This fact, which necessarily reduced the relative weight of the industrial proletariat within the worldwide revolutionary process, could not help but imply in turn a much slower growth than anticipated of the Fourth International, whose program reflects proletarian class consciousness at its highest level, a level that is most easily attainable by the proletariat in big industry, which is the most conscious vanguard of all the wage-earners and oppressed.

With the expected “breakthrough” having failed to occur in the immediate post-war period, the Fourth International experienced a series of difficulties in growth and internal crises that lasted for fifteen years. This was reflected in a succession of splits, the most painful of which occurred in 1953 and was not healed until the reunification of 1963. The immediate cause of these splits was probably the different questions, feelings, and reactions elicited from various sectors of the movement by the new, partly unforeseen developments in the objective world situation. But that was not where their fundamental causes, and especially their justification, lay. In fact, none of these international splits was programmatically justified, that is, not one reflected the historically demonstrable fact that one or another current in the Fourth International had crossed class lines or adopted positions that constituted a betrayal of the proletariat.*

The fundamental cause of all these splits was that under the conditions of extreme isolation that the Trotskyist movement still faced, and the obligation to swim against the stream, organizational sectarianism and factionalism multiplied. This was true not only because weak and relatively stagnating organizations do not produce any centripetal force that can neutralize the centrifugal tendencies inevitably radiating from the social environment. It resulted above all from the fact that, under such conditions, the temptation to “try out” each new tactical panacea, hoping that it would provide a rapid way out of isolation, and for that reason to provoke splits on purely tactical and conjunctural grounds, that is, on nonprogrammatic and unprincipled grounds, became irresistible for all who were gripped by impatience and the search for a shortcut to the difficult problem of reconstructing a revolutionary vanguard within the class and for the class, against the stream.

We should add that groups that carry out mainly propaganda activities have a tendency to lose their sense of proportion, to think that saying something makes it so, to identify a scratch with gangrene, and the beginning of a theoretical revision (or simply different interpretations of new objective phenomena) with practical political conduct that can lead to working-class defeats. They forget that Lenin and Luxemburg did not break with the Second International in 1898, when Bernstein’s revisionist book came out, but in 1914, when the Second International went over to the side of imperialism and put a decisive brake on the proletarian class struggle.

*Except for the betrayal by the majority of the LSSP (Lanka Sama Samaja Party, the former Ceylonese section of the Fourth International), that went over to the side of the bourgeoisie by participating in a coalition government with the bourgeoisie.

gle. To put an equal sign labeled “treason” between a wrong formulation in an article or resolution and collaboration with the bourgeoisie to smother or crush mass strikes and revolutions amounts in the end to rehabilitating the bureaucratic misleaders and greatly reducing their responsibility for the real (and not just ideological) defeats suffered by the proletariat.

Premature and unjustified predictions (“since” someone makes this or that theoretical error, he will “inevitably” go over to the side of the class enemy) are substituted for both a concrete analysis of a current, and the ability to bring the fruitful dialectic of internal debate and democratic centralism into play, enhancing the self-education and development of the entire organization. Only the evolution and subsequent practice of a current can determine whether what was involved were temporary, limited deviations, or definitive and practical breaks with the cause of the proletarian revolution. Those who lack the patience to wait for the verdict of history are doing themselves a disservice, not to mention the additional obstacles that they place in the way of building the Fourth International.

III.

In the mid-1960s, and especially after May 1968, the conditions for building the Fourth International began to change radically. Finally, after two decades of development (albeit deformed) of the world revolution, there appeared on the political scene a new mass vanguard with a more and more proletarian composition, which was less and less capable of being controlled, to say nothing of co-opted, by the traditional bureaucracies of the workers movement. The emergence of this vanguard, in the final analysis, reflects the growth in class consciousness ascribable to the revolutionary gains of the two previous decades, just as the ebb in class consciousness in the 1940s reflected the cumulative effects of earlier defeats for the revolution.

True, this basically working-class vanguard is still far from being politically homogeneous and capable of counterposing an overall strategic alternative to the SP and CP leaderships’ reformist strategy of class collaboration. It outflanks them only occasionally, in action, around a few key questions in the class struggle. It is true, too, that the bureaucratic apparatuses remain dominant in the organized workers movement, and that they can even make organizational and electoral gains, especially in times of mass radicalization, when previously unpoliticized layers of the proletariat go into motion. Finally, it is true that by virtue of these very factors, the generalized social crisis that has struck imperialist society since 1968 will be a long one, and will thus inevitably involve conjunctural upturns and downturns

in the mass movement. This means that we do not yet have favorable conditions at all times for building our organizations.

Nonetheless, the overall balance sheet of this decade is clear. A new era of rapid growth for the Fourth International has opened up on a world scale, relative to the previous period, albeit in an uneven way in various sectors of the international proletariat and the world revolution. The Fourth International is ten times stronger today than on the eve of May 1968 or at the time of its founding conference in numbers of members. As for its political and trade-union influence, the growth is even more emphatic in that respect.

The geographic spread of the movement is just as impressive. We now have nuclei or organized groups in more than sixty countries, on all the continents. Many of them sprang up only in the last year, and this trend is continuing for the moment. There we have a phenomenon of more than just symbolic importance, even if some of these new nuclei are still quite small. For such expansion is only rarely the result of directly oriented propaganda, or indeed, precise initiatives on the part of the international organization or a geographically adjacent section. It results most often from a process of "spontaneous generation," that is, personal initiative on the part of activists or organizations in a particular country. They come to the conclusion of joining the Fourth International on the basis of their own experience in the mass movement in their own country. There can be no better confirmation of the character of our movement as a reflection of the interests of the world proletariat, as a current that has already been historically confirmed as a universal current of the revolutionary movement, and not a tendency narrowly limited to a definite combination of circumstances in one or a few limited countries.

There are three reasons for this universality and confirmation.

First, the general validity of our program. An objective rereading of the Transitional Program adopted at the founding conference of the Fourth International, the manifesto "Imperialist War and the Proletarian World Revolution" of the Emergency Conference of May 1940 (the last programmatic document written by Trotsky), not to mention *The Revolution Betrayed* and *The Permanent Revolution*, is sufficient to perceive that in all of its fundamental statements, the program has victoriously withstood the test of forty years—and what years they were, with what tumultuous developments! The main strategic axes that the proletariat must follow in the three sectors of the world revolution to arrive at victory—the axis of transitional demands and self-organization leading to dual power in the imperialist countries; the axis of permanent revolution in the semicolonial coun-

tries; the axis of political revolution in the bureaucratized workers states—were essentially laid down by the Fourth International at its founding, and then refined by the rich theoretical and political contributions of the successive world congresses.

Second, our total identification with the proletariat and workers power. The Fourth International is the only current in the worldwide workers and revolutionary movement that clearly declares itself for the direct exercise of power by democratically elected and democratically centralized workers councils in all countries in the world. Many currents and individuals, on the "left" or on the "right," may sound off about "authoritarianism" and "oppression," which is sometimes justified and sometimes confused. But take this clear and simple question: "Must those who produce all the wealth, whose labor runs this whole marvelous intermeshing of scientific, technical, and cultural achievements, by providing everyone with both finished goods and the tools of production, must they submit to someone else's authority in organizing their work and lives? Shall they be condemned to remain at someone else's orders, for whatever reason?" Only the Fourth International answers "no," without the slightest hesitation or reluctance.

Finally, there is the uncompromising internationalism that we alone represent, both with respect to program and organization. For us, the interests of the proletarians, the exploited and the oppressed of all countries, are as one. No one sector among them should be sacrificed or neglected. Those who are most oppressed and exploited deserve a special effort of solidarity and support. We have not inherited any bacteria of "national communism" produced by the theory of "socialism in one country." We are immunized against the poison of petty-bourgeois nationalism,

chauvinism, racism, and xenophobia in all their forms, and we make no concessions to them for opportunist reasons. This is the only reason why we are today literally the only organization that exists as such on a world scale, while the Third International has in effect disappeared under the pressure of centrifugal "nationalist" forces, and the Second International does not even aspire to coordinate and unify the struggles of workers in all countries. The importance of this fact cannot escape anyone who has understood that we live in an age where everything has been internationalized, and where none of the key problems facing humanity—life-and-death problems, in literal terms—can any longer be solved except on a world scale.

Admittedly, our growth, while impressive if we look at the handicap we had to overcome in 1948 as well as in 1938, is still quite modest in light of the historic tasks we have set ourselves. Nowhere have we yet reached the stage of mass revolutionary parties. In several countries, other far-left organizations have harvested more of the main fruits of the growth of the vanguard in the last decade than our sections have. But they have generally done so at the cost of a programmatic and political eclecticism that has already taken cruel revenge in Portugal and Italy, and that makes a crisis of their own inevitable as the political consciousness of the working-class vanguard ripens.

We will still have to go through many regroupments and unifications, both with currents coming out of the traditional organizations and with those that have developed on their left, before being able to say that sufficient forces have been gathered to enable us to launch the battle to win control of the workers movement away from the traditional apparatuses. We will be able to do this by combining a maximum of tactical and organizational flexi-

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bility with a maximum of programmatic rigor. But what seemed a wild hope in 1938, a wistful dream in 1948, is beginning to take on sharper and sharper outlines in a number of countries, and not the least of them. If we can maintain our rate of growth, continue to proletarianize our organizations, build collective leadership

Wave of Attacks on Peruvian Left

The accompanying letter by Ricardo Napurí, a leader of the Revolutionary Marxist Workers Party (POMR)¹ and a deputy in the Peruvian Constituent Assembly representing the Workers, Peasants, Students, and People's Front (FOCEP), points up the growing problem of right-wing violence in Peru.

On September 3, a week after Napurí was attacked in Puerto Salaverry, two FOCEP activists and a Colombian socialist journalist, Roberto Fanjul, were kidnapped in downtown Lima by a group calling itself the Peruvian Anticommunist Alliance (AAP). Fanjul was held for a week by the AAP and brutally beaten and tortured.

Agents of the PIP—the political police—were the first to find Fanjul after his release; they claimed to have been informed of his whereabouts by an anonymous phone call. Once freed by his AAP kidnapers, Fanjul was submitted to rigorous questioning by the PIP and other police units—despite the fact that he was suffering from acute nervous exhaustion as a result of his ordeal.

There are strong indications that the AAP is linked to the military government. "It is impossible to believe that these kidnappings were carried out by groups of civilian amateurs," Manuel Tarazona wrote in the September 18 issue of the fortnightly Lima magazine *Caretas*. "Quite a large number of men and vehicles without license plates participated in the simultaneous actions of September 3—with total impunity. Moreover, when the daily papers inquired at the Sixth District Headquarters about what had happened, the Civil Guard tried to justify the disorder and gunshots by saying that a pickpocket and his gang had been captured. . . ."

The AAP has also claimed credit for terrorist bombings at the POMR's Lima headquarters and at the homes of assembly deputy Ricardo Díaz Chávez of the Democratic People's Union (UDP) and FOCEP deputy and POMR leader Magda Benavides.

Assembly deputy Antonio Meza Cuadra of the Revolutionary Socialist Party was

teams at the national and international levels, and maintain our unity, then, by the time of our fiftieth anniversary, there will be few revolutionists around who will still doubt the correctness of Leon Trotsky's prophecy. The future belongs to the Fourth International because the future belongs to the world socialist revolution. □

assaulted by four men—two wearing Civil Guard officers' uniforms—in a Lima restaurant on August 28. Written death threats have even been placed on Ricardo Napurí's desk in the Constituent Assembly chamber.

On September 9, there was another attack similar to the one Napurí describes in his letter, this time in Chimbote. During a rally of 3,000 persons sponsored by the Democratic People's Union, a gang of

thugs from the Peruvian Aprista Party² ransacked the UDP's Chimbote headquarters. Later about twenty Apristas attacked the UDP demonstration with clubs and chains.

The Apristas are the main bourgeois party in Peru; they hold 37 of the 100 seats in the Constituent Assembly. While organizing gangs of thugs to attack the left, the Apristas also strive to maintain a democratic image. Thus their deputies joined in a unanimous vote in the assembly September 12 to "condemn all forms of terrorism, wherever it may come from" and calling on the authorities "to guarantee the safety of all Peruvians and to identify and punish those found guilty with all the weight of the law."

The bourgeois majority rejected an amendment by the workers deputies to set up a commission to investigate the recent wave of attacks on the left. □

2. Also known as the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA—American People's Revolutionary Alliance).

Open Letter From Ricardo Napurí

[The following open letter, dated August 27, is being circulated internationally by POMR leader Ricardo Napurí. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

I would like to ask that you bring to the attention of your organization the following incident, which is quite serious owing to the present political situation.

1. Earlier today I was in Puerto Salaverry to attend a meeting organized by the La Libertad departmental committee of FOCEP to discuss the main problems facing the workers and residents of Puerto Salaverry and the surrounding area. The meeting was being held with the permission of the appropriate authorities, so the local police were also aware of it.

2. At 10:00 a.m., I passed by the guard post on the outskirts of Puerto Salaverry, accompanied by a small welcoming committee which included some women. At that moment, certain individuals signalled to others who were posted out of sight along the road. We were immediately approached by seventy or eighty persons carrying large stones, clubs, and steel bars. Two or three had revolvers in hand. Someone shouted "Napurí must die, death to Napurí, long live the APRA." They tried to stop our car, lying down in the road, placing obstacles in our way, and pelting the car heavily with rocks and other objects. They tried as hard as they could to overturn our car. They harassed and

pursued us, throwing rocks and firing revolvers, for ten or fifteen minutes. Only the steady nerves and skill of our driver prevented the attackers from carrying out their criminal objective.

3. I thought at the time that once we had evaded the attack that would be the end of it. But as it turned out this was not the case. Immediately after we got to the meeting, about one hundred activists chanting APRA slogans and led by a thug named Pablo Ferradas tried to force their way into the longshoremen's hall where our meeting was being held, seeking to break it up violently. Their constant shouts of "Death to Napurí, long live APRA" turned into a provocation. In view of this provocation and the attackers' determination to break up the meeting at whatever cost, the police finally had to disperse the APRA gang with the help of a big contingent of assault guards who came down from Trujillo. In the end, a squad of police had to escort us out of Puerto Salaverry, since the organized gang tried to ambush us at several points, not only within the town but all along the highway leading to Trujillo.

4. We have photographs of this criminal act, although some of them—especially the ones that could help identify the men with revolvers—are out of focus as a result of the savage attack on our car. There are hundreds of witnesses, including myself. There is the report that has been made to the police. No one can doubt that this was a case of premeditated assault, planned minute by minute, and therefore with

1. Peruvian affiliate of the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International.

leaders who bear responsibility for it. Spokesmen for the police tell us that according to the statements of some of those arrested, the orders for this attack came from the La Libertad departmental committee of the Aprista Party. All this is quite obvious, since groups posted all along the highway watched us coming into town, and the attackers were waiting, hiding in the bushes, where they had also concealed the weapons and stones with which to carry out their assault. Given the

political significance of this attack as well as its careful advance preparation, I state conclusively that they were out to physically eliminate me. This was also shown by their repeated shouts of "Death to Napuri."

5. In view of the seriousness of this incident, I plan to denounce it in the Constituent Assembly, and to notify the national and international news media. It is necessary and in fact essential that I do so because the Aprista Party goes around

claiming that they respect democratic rights and freedoms. But in fact, as this criminal attack illustrates, they have two different policies: one consisting of rhetoric and promises, and another of direct action to physically suppress their political opponents.

Sincerely,
Ricardo Napuri
Trujillo, Peru
August 27, 1978

The Constituent Assembly in Peru

What It Was Intended to Be and What It Can Become

By Jean-Pierre Riel

The June elections to the Constituent Assembly, organized by the military officers who have been in power for ten years now, were part of an overall plan. The aim was to begin with a relatively democratic opening so as to create the conditions for a transition from military dictatorship to a civilian regime by the 1980 presidential elections, a transition that would avoid the cost of a wave of mobilizations with a revolutionary character.

Several factors converged to make this operation necessary.

One was the scope of the economic crisis Peru has been going through for several years. The combination of unchecked inflation (price increases in the first four months of 1978 point to an annual rate of inflation on the order of 65% to 70%) and a recession affecting a near totality of economic sectors is having intolerable consequences for the Peruvian masses.

It is no exaggeration to say that particularly in the last few months, unemployment, poverty, and hunger have increased daily for the working class and poor peasantry—that is, for the immense majority of the population.

In this context, the rapid growth of an already substantial foreign debt is having effects that border on the absurd. Peru is virtually in a situation of suspension of payments to its imperialist creditors. Not only can it not repay the debts that come due, but it is not even capable of paying the interest on them. Hence the constant renegotiation of loans, the search for new loans designed solely to pay the interest on earlier borrowings, and the strict supervision by imperialist financial institutions, above all the International Monetary Fund, of the government's day-to-day economic decisions.

For the military, who at the outset, during the presidency of General Velasco

Alvarado, held themselves up as the defenders of national independence, and made populist, socialist-sounding speeches about raising the masses' standard of living, it has been a total defeat.

Hence their current lack of credibility among the masses. This lack of credibility is also rooted in the present Morales Bermúdez government's policy of systematically confronting and repressing movements around wage demands, strikes, and popular mobilizations.

This policy, moreover, is ineffective, for instead of decreasing, the strikes and mobilizations have multiplied and become more radical.

The great majority of the Peruvian bourgeoisie—important sectors of which feel their interests have suffered from the disorganization of economic management in the last few years—is thus in favor of establishing a civilian regime that could send the military back to their barracks, while keeping them in close partnership with the government.

This project combines several aspects that are partly contradictory.

For the bourgeoisie, placing the military in partial reserve offers an opportunity to develop a more effective economic policy. In addition, it is also seen as a means of guaranteeing the unity of the army, which is highly politicized after ten years in power, and where, on several occasions, differences have appeared (the creation of the Revolutionary Socialist Party by a few senior officers, now retired, is one indicator of this).

Specifically, however, this project is an attempt to contain workers mobilizations by using the prestige and mass influence—eroded, but still real—of Haya de la Torre's APRA, the principal bourgeois formation.

The elections to the Constituent Assembly were the first stage of this plan.

Despite the restrictions (illiterates could not vote) and various kinds of fraud (particularly the invalidating of a large number of ballots), the elections had the opposite effect to that intended.

The size (relative to previous elections) of the vote obtained by forces on the left in this unfavorable context (about 30%), and within that vote, the weight of the ballots clearly cast in favor of class political independence—in particular, the 12% of the vote obtained by FOCEP, whose main spokesman is our comrade, Hugo Blanco—were seen by the mass of workers and exploited in Peru as a major victory.

This is especially true inasmuch as many of those who voted for APRA did so believing, after the demagogic campaign it carried out, that they were voting in a consistent way against the dictatorship and its policy, against the stranglehold of imperialism on the Peruvian economy. This sentiment of victory was rapidly reinforced by the return of the political exiles—among whom were several newly elected members of the Assembly, including Hugo Blanco—authorized soon after the official proclamation of the results.

Consequently, rather than acting as a brake on popular struggles and containing them, the elections to the Constituent Assembly on the contrary encouraged mobilizations.

In this regard, the strike by the vast majority of Peru's public high-school teachers organized in the SUTEP¹ is exemplary. After eighty-one days, the strike, which had begun during the election campaign, ended in a nearly complete victory on July 27, on the eve of the official

1. SUTEP—Sindicato Unico de Trabajadores de la Educación del Perú (United Federation of Education Workers of Peru).

opening of the Constituent Assembly, when the government agreed to satisfy the essential part of their demands.

Throughout this crucial period the teachers' struggle grew increasingly militant. The strikers defeated all the pressures and maneuvers of both the dictatorship and APRA, and fought back against all provocations and measures of intimidation.

The massive, independent, and unified mobilizations of the SUTEP teachers won the support and active solidarity of the most militant sectors of the workers movement, who saw in it a symbol and an example for their future battles.

Simultaneously, in several provincial cities, in Arequipa—the second largest city in the country—Chimbote, and Cuzco, wage struggles developed against the effects of the economic crisis and against the repression. As the great majority of the population rallied behind these struggles, local forms of organization arose such as the "people's assembly" in Chimbote, and the "fronts for defense of the people" in Cuzco and Arequipa. These were local structures, confused and ephemeral, but indicative of the desire of important sectors of the masses to organize themselves.

Even before the teachers won their victory, a strike by a majority of health and hospital workers began. Shortly afterward, it was the miners—a key sector of the Peruvian proletariat—who went on strike. This strike, too, was massive, and militant, continuing for more than a month despite the repression and the brutal occupation of the mining centers by the army.

These mobilizations, as a whole, were rooted in the struggle to counter the effects of the economic crisis and defend workers' buying power.

Given the breadth of these mobilizations, the stated determination of the military to concede nothing transformed them into confrontations with the dictatorship itself. The political dimension of these confrontations made itself felt through the considerable weight they exerted in the debate over how to get rid of the dictatorship—a debate that dominated the campaign for the Constituent Assembly elections, and that, to a much greater extent than the drafting of a new constitution, is the main preoccupation of the deputies.

On the one hand, the voting for the Constituent Assembly, a partial and distorted reflection of these mobilizations, led to the election—unforeseen by the inventors of the plan!—of deputies like those of FOCEP and the UDP. These deputies are in no way willing to accept the framework of a Constituent Assembly that is supposed to busy itself with discussing the articles of a future constitution while the military continues to rule and to repress popular mobilizations.

On the other hand, the breadth of these mobilizations is making the bourgeois

parties' role more difficult day by day. This is especially true for APRA, which is bound by its pacts with the military and at the same time forced into demagoguery against the dictatorship, at the risk of becoming rapidly discredited and doomed as a political alternative when the time comes—i.e., in 1980, according to the plan.

Intended as the basic instrument of a painless transition, the Constituent Assembly, from its opening, has become a kind of sounding board for current struggles.

The recent statements by Haya de la Torre, president of the assembly, must be understood in light of this new situation. According to him, the two years allotted for drafting the constitution could easily be compressed into a year or less, which would mean holding general elections not in 1980, but in mid-1979.

Clearly, this seems to signify that for APRA, the initial schema that served as the basis for the pact with the military must be adhered to, but at a faster tempo so as to get the Constituent Assembly out of the way as soon as possible.

However these "special" aspects of the role of the assembly—products of the growing mobilization of the Peruvian masses and of the presence in it of deputies reflecting that mobilization and struggling for its extension and independence—should not breed illusions. By virtue of its composition, the Constituent Assembly is not and cannot be a counter organ of workers power, a potential alternative organ of power to the military dictatorship.

The bourgeois majority of the Constituent Assembly, regardless of its demagogic speeches, is bound hand and foot to the military dictatorship.

It had a basic agreement with the military chiefs on what practical steps to follow to set up a civilian regime and, as for the economic crisis facing the masses, it has no distinct political alternative from that of the dictatorship.

Any illusions about the Constituent Assembly and its role inevitably lead to another illusion, that of its bourgeois majority.

Thus, to counterpose the assembly to the dictatorship, by struggling for the overturn of the dictatorship and its replacement by a "government of the Constituent Assembly," is a grave political error that sows illusions about the bourgeois APRA-PPC² majority and the alternative that it might represent.

The Constituent Assembly, on the other hand, can and should be used by revolutionists to aid in the development and deepening of mobilizations by the worker and peasant masses, thereby intensifying the crisis of the dictatorship.

As Hugo Blanco's activity in recent weeks has shown, the assembly can have a

2. PPC—Partido Popular Cristiano (Christian People's Party).

considerable impact when it is used as a platform to criticize the dictatorship and condemn its excesses and repressive policies; to demonstrate in practice, by making specific proposals and motions, the limits of the bourgeois majority's demagoguery, and particularly APRA's contradictions; to publicize and centralize ongoing struggles and solidarity actions aimed at the unity and independence of the working class, the unity of its mass organizations, and the solidifying of the worker-peasant alliance.

Steps toward utilizing the Constituent Assembly in this way worry the Peruvian bourgeoisie and its military officers far more than calls for dissolving it because it is not truly representative and cannot solve anything, and far more than the demand for "all power to the Constituent Assembly," which will inevitably create the illusion that its bourgeois majority is a real alternative to the dictatorship.

This is what Haya de la Torre was thinking of when he suggested that the Assembly's deliberations be curtailed, and what some officers were thinking of when they hinted that a coup, implying the dissolution of the Assembly, might be a solution to the current impasse.

That these alternatives are being contemplated more or less openly proves that time is short in Peru, that the bourgeoisie is seriously beginning to envision new plans for stabilizing the situation. □

Frontiers of Free Enterprise

The Italian Ministry of Health has calculated that 71.5 percent of the 1.8 billion prescriptions filled by the country's pharmacists in 1976 were "of little or no benefit." Not surprisingly, it is also reported that the Italian pharmaceutical industry spends more on advertising pills, laxatives, salves, tonics, and vitamins than on what goes into them.

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Israeli Knesset Jumps on Summit Bandwagon

By David Frankel



Forcadell/Was Tun

A major step toward the conclusion of a separate treaty between Israel and Egypt was taken September 28 when the Israeli Knesset (parliament) approved the Camp David summit accords by more than four to one.

The vote was eighty-five to nineteen, with sixteen abstentions. That just shows how favorable the Camp David agreements are from the point of view of the Zionist regime.

During his opening speech to the Knesset September 25, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin could not refrain from boasting that as soon as a treaty with Egypt was concluded, his government would resume building new settlements on the occupied West Bank and would expand existing ones.

Begin further promised that there "will be no plebiscite" in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, "and there is and will not be under any conditions or in any circumstances a Palestinian state."

During an earlier interview with the *Wall Street Journal*, Begin cynically noted the "possibility we won't find an agreement" on the issue of sovereignty over the West Bank.

"Then the result will be local autonomy for the Palestinians and our soldiers will be there in Judea and Samaria."

This is the formula for continued occupation and oppression that is being palmed off by Carter and the big-business media as the road to peace in the Middle East.

In Egypt, of course, the tightly controlled media has hailed the summit as a triumph for Egypt and the Palestinians. It has praised Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat and highlighted Israel's supposed agreement to withdraw from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

By suppressing many details of the accords, and by promising peace and quick prosperity, Sadat's propaganda apparatus has generated considerable popular support for the summit agreements. But support based on such illusions is hardly a firm foundation for Sadat's future.

Elsewhere in the Arab world, opposition to the Camp David accords has been virtually unanimous. Syrian President Hafez al-Assad summed up the reaction when he declared September 20 that Sadat gave up "not only Jerusalem but the whole Arab cause."

Washington Post correspondent Don Oberdorfer, who accompanied Secretary of State Cyrus Vance on a five-day trip to Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Syria, described Vance's failure to win support for the accords in a September 24 dispatch from Damascus.

"The dominant reaction in the Arab states he visited was not enthusiasm or even understanding," Oberdorfer reported, "but deep apprehension mixed with frustration and anger."

Not even Washington's most subservient clients in the Arab world were willing to publicly back Sadat's separate deal. Oberdorfer hints that Vance may have gone so far as to threaten to cut aid to Jordan if King Hussein refused to cooperate. "As Vance headed overseas word was out that he intended to lean hard on Hussein, and that over-all U.S.-Jordanian relations could be affected. Carter, back in Washington, said Vance was urging Hussein 'in the strongest possible way' to join the West Bank negotiations."

Carter's pressure on Jordan and Saudi Arabia reflects his desire to bolster Sadat's regime by helping to overcome its political isolation in the Arab world. At the same time, endorsement of the accords by other Arab regimes would further divide the Arab world and weaken its ability to resist imperialist domination.

Having succeeded in breaking away the largest Arab country from the military front against Israel, Carter is now attempting to reclaim the role of "honest broker" between the Arabs and Israelis. Thus, after dealing a hammerblow to the aspirations of the Arab peoples, he turns around and engages in a well-publicized dispute with Begin over the Israeli regime's intention to continue building settlements in the West Bank.

Also playing a part in this charade is Sadat. Officials in Cairo, *Washington Post* correspondent Thomas Lippman reported September 25, admit that the Camp David accords are "less than perfect." However, Lippman continues, "they say Sadat has a personal commitment from Carter that the Egyptians believe will prevent Israel from taking advantage of the accords' ambiguities or shelving the West Bank talks once an Egypt-Israel peace treaty is signed."

It is doubtful if even Sadat believes Carter's vague promises about the West Bank. However, such promises are part of the political cover that has enabled Sadat to make a separate deal with Israel while maintaining the fiction that he is negotiating a framework for an overall peace.

From the point of view of American imperialism, Carter has made substantial gains. He has strengthened the military and political position of the Zionist state and driven a wedge into the center of the Arab world.

Moreover, Washington has gained a big advantage in its competition with the USSR by effectively shutting Moscow out of the Mideast negotiations.

But the strengthening of imperialist domination in the Middle East will not advance the cause of peace. On the contrary, it will result in even harsher exploitation of the Arab peoples, new mass upsurges, and new wars. □

Castro Takes Up Some Key Issues Facing His Government

In Havana September 6, Fidel Castro granted an interview to a group of journalists made up primarily of Cuban exiles writing for the Cuban community abroad but also including several American reporters.

The discussion covered a number of topics, the main ones being whether the Cuban government was preparing to release political prisoners and whether there had been a shift in its attitude toward the exiles.

Several other questions were also discussed, ranging from Castro's assessment of the Carter administration to the Cuban role in Africa.

A translation of the transcript of the interview was published in the September 17 issue of the weekly English-language edition of *Granma*, from which the following excerpts have been taken.

Political Prisoners

When asked to comment about a rumored release of political prisoners, Castro confirmed that a decision had been made "to facilitate the departure from our country of several hundred persons and their families, people who had either completed their prison terms or were on parole, plus a few dozen persons who were still in prison."

In response to another question, he added that while there were no immediate plans to release the rest of the prisoners detained for political crimes, this was a matter that would be discussed with the Cuban community as a whole:

We have made no commitment as regards the rest of the prisoners. In our prisons we still have about 3000 imprisoned for counterrevolutionary activities and about 400, for crimes connected with the tyranny, the period prior to the Revolution. Many of these were directly connected with people's deaths. And that is a more delicate question. Well, they have been sentenced, of course, and when they have completed their sentences they will be released. But what is even more delicate for us, in our opinion—in view of the relatives of the victims, the case of those who committed crimes during Batista's period is a delicate one. It is a very complicated and very special problem.

There is also a minority, I would say they were a minority, who have affinities with the terrorist groups that are still active, and we have no intention of swelling the ranks of the terrorists. We would not be prepared to discuss this. But we are prepared to discuss the rest of the problems with the community. And I think this would have been inconceivable 15 years ago, or ten, or five, or even three years ago. New conditions have been created, both within the community and in our country, because we were never ready to consider this. In spite of the fact that many

people fought for it. In actual fact, the conditions for this did not exist, nor were we in the frame of mind for it.

Shift by Carter?

When asked whether the decision to release some of the prisoners represented a gesture toward Carter's "human rights policy," Castro answered as follows:

No, I could not agree with that characterization.

The Government of the United States might have had some indirect influence on this, but not due to its verbal human rights policy, but rather because there's no question that this administration put an end to the policy of supporting terrorist activities against Cuba, terrorist and counter-revolutionary activities regarding Cuba. And that policy created the conditions enabling us to take some of these steps.

In this sense, one can say that the Government of the United States had some influence on our attitude, since, needless to say, nothing could be said or even thought about any of these questions as long as the Government of the United States maintained a policy of supporting terrorism and counterrevolution against our country. Now, that policy of the Government of the United States no longer exists. The blockade and other hostile policies continue, as do such other things as espionage and some CIA activities, but we cannot say that at present the Government of the United States is giving its support to terrorism or to armed counterrevolutionary actions against Cuba. And I believe that this has had some influence.

Differences Among the Exiles

On the question of Havana's attitude toward those Cubans living abroad, Castro said that owing to the heat of the struggle against counterrevolutionary terror, the Cuban government had tended in the past to view the exiles as a "single group," paying insufficient attention to the political differentiations among them.

This attitude has changed, he said:

Perhaps it would be convenient to explain that—and this is my opinion—there has been a certain change in attitude within the Cuban community abroad and in the opinion of our own people and the Revolution in general as well. I believe that hostility has diminished. Several factors—in fact many factors—have contributed to this. We mentioned some of them. The United States has made some gestures towards Cuba and a certain détente has been brought about between the Government of the United States and Cuba. This has created a particular climate. But there is another essential thing. The Revolution will be 20 years old soon. From our point of view, it is absolutely consolidated and irreversible. We know it, the Government of the United States knows it, and I think that the Cuban community abroad knows it, too. This is an important factor.

I believe that the conditions have been created—conditions which did not exist before—for us to meditate a little on each of these problems. It is quite possible that more years would have passed without us even having given any thought to this, but it must be said that there are many people who have made an effort in this direction. For example, I'd say that something that helped make us conscious of this, and which made a great impact on Cuban public opinion, was the visit of the Antonio Maceo Brigade. Those young people, who had nothing to do with these problems and who are not to be blamed for these problems, who visited Cuba with an attitude of peace, with a friendly attitude, made a great impact on our country. That is one example.

There are people from diverse groups in the United States who have opposed the blockade, who have been in favor of lifting the blockade and of a policy of peace towards our country. I'll give you an example: Reverend Manuel Espinosa. He's not the only one. For many years, many people have been talking about a change in policy, both on our part and on the part of the community. It seemed as if they were preaching in the desert, and, really, the conditions did not exist for such a change.

The men and women of the Casa de las Américas in New York have also made efforts for many years.

I've mentioned several examples that helped us realize that we couldn't have a narrow-minded attitude toward the Cuban community abroad, in the United States, in Venezuela, in Spain. It seems that in the heat of this long struggle between the United States and Cuba, we had even forgotten that there were many emigrés living in the United States who had left Cuba before the Revolution, who had, in fact, supported the Revolution before its triumph; that there were tens—maybe hundreds—of thousands in the Cuban community who had never taken part in counterrevolutionary activities, who had never carried out hostile actions against Cuba. And yet, we tended to look upon them all as a single group. I would say that time, experience, a number of new factors and the efforts of many people—including, of course, some figures of the Cuban community who had no connection with counterrevolutionary groups—who talked with us, took an interest in these problems and made us think over these problems within this new current situation have made us become aware of these things.

As a result of all these factors, we have come to realize that there are a number of problems of concern to the Cuban community. There are many, but we could name some: the Cuban community has an interest in the question of those prisoners who remain in Cuba; it's interested in the problems that you mentioned concerning the reunion of families; it's concerned with having the same rights as U.S. citizens, that is, the right to visit Cuba, a right that is not shared at present by the members of the Cuban community—whether of Cuban or U.S. nationality—who left Cuba after the Revolution. In conclusion, there is a whole series of questions that concern that community. And we've gradu-

ally become aware of these problems.

Now then, these problems are internal problems which we are not willing to discuss with the Government of the United States because they are matters internal to Cuba, and we do not discuss nor will we ever discuss with the Government of the United States questions referring to Cuba's internal affairs or to Cuba's sovereignty.

However, we're willing to discuss these particular problems with the Cubans abroad. In other words, we're willing to discuss, to talk over these questions that concern the Cuban community with the Cuban community—but not with the Government of the United States. But the fact remains that these are problems to be analyzed and discussed. I would simply like to express our willingness to discuss them with the Cuban community.

Cuban Nationalism in the United States

In response to a question about the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a volunteer work unit made up of young people from Cuban families living abroad, Castro returned to the topic of relations with the Cuban exile community, expressing support for their efforts to maintain their culture and language. He began by discussing the impact of the visit by the brigade:

Look, there have always been some contacts, relations, groups that have worked. That is, we could single out some people in the United States, and we started to realize that they were not our enemies, that they weren't making war on us, nor were they involved in terrorism. That is why I said there were many factors that had contributed, which helped us to become aware of this. But we had never gone so far as to have here a brigade made up of children of Cuban emigrés. How and when the idea first came up, I couldn't tell you because I don't remember. I recall that one day some comrades told us there was the possibility that a brigade of children of emigrés might come. We might say it was a strange thing. And we even wondered whether such a thing would be understood—that was the first thing we asked ourselves. Some comrades felt they should come. But, would the people understand? How would the people react? Because I want you to know there was a climate of hostility and struggle, a very difficult atmosphere. One of the things we were concerned about was whether the people would understand such a brigade coming following so much hostility and antagonism.

Well, it proved to be a test. We might say it was a test. Later, they went everywhere and met with everyone from the very first moment they arrived. And they met with many leaders as well. I also met with them near the end of their visit. But I had noticed that all the people, the political cadres and leaders who had met with them, were all very favorably impressed and deeply touched. The meetings were very moving. And just a few days after their arrival they were working well, and their gesture of helping to build a project of value to society helped create a very favorable feeling towards them, very favorable.

Well, at the end, it became an event, and one of the things that has really made an impact on people.

Let me tell you: the World Festival of Youth and Students has just been held. Nearly 20,000 young people from various countries came to Cuba. And representatives of the Brigade also came, returning once again. But they had al-

ready won the recognition and sympathy of the people as a whole. I think this was very important for us as well, since we were able to see these problems and realities. Because these young people are in no way to blame for the drama their parents lived through, for the drama of the Revolution. When they were children—five, two or three years old—they were taken to the United States, and not all of them were able to adjust.

There is something else: they have helped us to understand to a certain degree the problems of what we call the community. Some have been struck by the fact that we use this new expression: the community. And yes, we're going to use a new expression. Because we have always used expressions—all of us have used them—that were unjustly generic references to people who had emigrated, unjust generalizations. We generalized and used terms such as traitors and *gusanos* and the like. I was the first, I used them, and I don't deny it. I think they established unjust generalizations. They were in a way based on the idea that all Cubans were involved in counterrevolution and terrorism. I think these expressions resulted from the heat and the passion of the struggle. And I have been the first to use the term "community," and I plan to continue doing so, because I think it makes no sense to continue using a generic term for an entire community, one which is derogatory and over generalizes. These young people helped us. If we were to use derogatory terms we would be including the young people of the Brigade, all of them. We would be placing all Cubans in the same bag.

They also helped us become aware of the problems of the community. Because there is something which we have started to realize, the fact that, as I see it, the Cuban community, like all other communities in another environment, in another country, tries to maintain its national identity. They try to hold on to their language, want their children to speak the language; they try to maintain their beliefs, customs, culture, traditions and celebrations. We realized that among the Cuban community abroad—especially those in the United States, because those in Latin areas speak the same language and don't have this problem—there is an effort to maintain their national identity. Actually, we view this sympathetically. Regardless of what they might be, whether a Cuban millionaire or a worker in the emigré community. Because there are many workers who have emigrated; many Cubans abroad work hard at earning a living in factories, and others gain their livelihood by other means, all kinds of ways. But it is a national and not a class question. We have noticed that the community has tried to maintain its national identity.

This, logically, arouses our solidarity. I mean just that: it arouses our solidarity and appreciation. The fact that they do not support the Revolution doesn't matter, but we are pleased to see—we have taken note of and confirmed this—that the Cuban community tries to maintain its language, customs and Cuban national identity. And, I repeat, this arouses our solidarity and appreciation, even if they don't support the Revolution.

Because we support all communities which try to maintain their identity. We support the Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Latin Americans, blacks and Indians as well—in short, all the minorities who struggle for their interests. We support them. Why not view the Cubans in the same light? Why should we only generalize and view them as one hostile counterrevolutionary bloc?

In our contacts we were able to note this angle of the problem. But our contacts have been made primarily with these young people, because it had a great impact on us. There is even a documentary film about the Brigade, and I know that many people cry when they see it. There is no doubt that national feeling is very strong.

To sum it up, we have seen the Cuban community trying to defend its national identity, and we sympathize with this. It is not something we need, but, logically enough, it has its effect; it makes an impression on us. And these young people made a great impression on all the people.

Cuban Troops in Africa

Replying to a question by Associated Press correspondent Peter A. Arnett, Castro reaffirmed Cuba's right as a sovereign nation to conduct its own foreign policy free of any interference from the imperialist colossus ninety miles to the north. Arnett began by asking whether Cuba's African policy had "harmed the possibility of developing Cuban-American relations." The following exchange ensued:

Commander in Chief Fidel Castro: Well, aren't U.S. relations with us harmed by the presence of U.S. troops in Panama, for example, and the presence of U.S. troops in Greece, in Western Europe, in Japan? Don't the U.S. bases in dozens of countries harm their relations with us?

The United States for example—I'm not going to talk about NATO—has thousands of military specialists in Saudi Arabia; it has thousands of military specialists in Iran. Imagine if we were to adopt a policy of saying to the United States: if you want your relations with us to improve, you have to withdraw the military personnel and troops you have in those countries.

What's more, the United States has troops in a place where it should not have them, and where it has no right to have them: that is to say, on Cuban territory, at the naval base of Guantánamo. Think about that! And they have never talked about withdrawing those troops.

But, of course, we are not going to make one thing conditional on another. We categorically refuse to discuss the question of our solidarity with Africa. These questions cannot be discussed or negotiated with the U.S. Government, and we will never negotiate them. We will withdraw our personnel when, in our judgment, their presence is no longer needed there, and always with the complete agreement of the governments of those countries where our military personnel is located. Because they are the only ones we will discuss these problems with. Because our military personnel is where it is by virtue of agreements with these governments, and the government of this country is not going to default on its commitments or tear up its agreements. And the Cuban Government does not negotiate the country's honor.

Peter A. Arnett (Associated Press): I've just one followup question, and that is, the United States, as we all know, had troops in Vietnam and had them in Korea. Now, they did begin to withdraw these troops after pressure from outside and inside, and they're also planning to pull all their forces out of South Korea. These were specific military commitments to the local governments. And I was just wondering if maybe in Angola or Ethiopia you feel enough advances have been made for you to be able to bring back some troops.

Commander in Chief Fidel Castro: Well, I don't know. There is no comparison. I remember when the Korean War and all that business began, that the U.S. Government decided unilaterally to send troops to Korea. And, moreover, the United States was defeated in the two places: in Korea and in Vietnam.

Now, if the United States decided to withdraw the troops it has kept in South Korea, we would welcome and applaud the development. But we would never dream of saying to the United States: listen, if you want relations with us to improve, you've got to pull your troops out of South Korea. Moreover, the United States does not discuss with us the decision to withdraw troops from South Korea. I imagine that it discusses that with the Government of South Korea. But it does not discuss it with us; it does not give us an explanation. So, why should we have to give the U.S. Government an explanation of our agreements with the governments of Africa or any other country? What we are doing is completely legitimate according to international law and in keeping with the sovereignty of peoples.

What's more, the United States is the country which has sent most troops abroad, and to the greatest number of countries. I do not understand why they think they can preach "do as I say, and not as I do." Who gave the United States the right to play supreme arbiter of the universe, to tell other governments what they must do and what they can do, to pronounce legitimate what they themselves do, but illegitimate when others do it? Why should we accept this philosophy? Because the United States is powerful? We have known that for 20 years. We have been struggling against the United States for 20 years. We know what they are like, and they should know what we are like, too.

Blockade—'A Dagger at Cuba's Throat'

On the question of the continuing U.S. economic blockade against Cuba, Castro restated his government's demand for a total lifting of the embargo as a precondition

for any further improvement in relations with Washington:

The United States is maintaining a strict economic blockade against Cuba. I don't want to use adjectives to characterize the blockade because I would be forced to use some fairly strong ones. Using the best terms, the blockade runs counter to the United States' liberal economic conception that upholds the principle of free trade; it runs counter to international standards. It is a discriminatory, severe, aggressive policy against us; it is an attempt to prevent the development of a people; an attempt to create difficulties and problems for us. It is a highly discriminatory and highly irritating policy. The United States trades with China, for instance; it trades with many socialist countries, but not with Cuba. Perhaps this is so because Cuba is small and would not provide a very important market. How would I know what the moral reasons for this might be? But it appears that the reasons are not simply ideological but instead that the United States has a special preference for us, perhaps because we are a country in this hemisphere, perhaps because we were the first country to liberate ourselves from United States tutelage, perhaps because they think we set a bad example for other countries that must be discouraged from making their own revolutions. Perhaps today the blockade has become a tool to exert pressure; perhaps we would be entitled to think that it has become a tool for blackmail, a sort of dagger at our throat to demand that Cuba adhere to certain conditions.

We have declared no blockade against the United States. If tomorrow the United States wants to buy sugar, we'll sell them sugar—tobacco, nickel, whatever they want. We have no blockade against the United States; and the United States has quite a blockade against us.

I think that the fundamental obstacle to relations between Cuba and the United States is the economic blockade.

There's also the base at Guantánamo, which is a base kept there by force. And this problem must be discussed, and a solution will have to be found. But, fundamentally, the blockade is the

obstacle to relations between the United States and Cuba.

Relations between our two countries can't be improved or go beyond a certain point, let's say further than they have gone up to now, if the blockade is not completely lifted. Nor does it make any sense to us. . . . Even when they talked about selling us some medicines, they made a ridiculously short list of medicines. Do you know what it means for a technologically developed country to prohibit the sale of medicines to another country, medicines of any kind, to save a life? How can they speak of human rights? That's why some of the slogans used by the United States seem like a joke to me. They talk about human rights and yet refuse to sell medicines to Cuba to save the lives of sick people or mitigate a person's pain. It is absolutely absurd and as I said, I don't want to start using adjectives to describe it.

It's not a question of lifting a bit of the blockade today, and a bit more tomorrow. The irritation will only persist. The blockade must be lifted totally and radically or else no improvement in relations can take place.

But it is fair to say that since the Carter administration took office things have improved to this limit where we are today. Carter made some gestures; he restored the right of U.S. citizens to travel to Cuba, revoking the former prohibition; he also called off the U-2 flights. Unquestionably, there have been some gestures. And I'd say he put a stop to the policy of support for terrorism and counterrevolutionary activities.

In other words, in our opinion, Carter's action has been positive concerning Cuba. We have always said this and we freely acknowledge it.

But there's one point, like a dagger at Cuba's throat, which is called the economic blockade. And that dagger must be withdrawn, because otherwise not even negotiations can take place. You can't negotiate with someone who has a dagger at your throat. And we are not willing to negotiate like that.

Ethiopia, Eritrea, and the Ogaden

Commenting on the conflict in the Horn

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of Africa, Castro gave the following summary of the Cuban government's views:

We look upon the Eritrean problem as an internal problem of Ethiopia. We have publicly stated our position on this, at the time of Mengistu's visit here. We are in favor of a political solution to the problem of nationalities in Ethiopia; we are in favor of a political solution, in keeping with the principles of Marxism-Leninism, preserving Ethiopia's territorial integrity. We oppose everything aimed at breaking up Ethiopia. And thus, we support the Ethiopian Revolution, Ethiopian unity and Ethiopian territorial integrity. Furthermore, I'm not the only one to think this way. All the African countries also agree on that; because one of the OAU resolutions was to maintain the borders inherited from colonialism; for to start reexamining the borders in Africa would be catastrophic, disastrous, for Africa. Because there are many countries in Africa that still have tribal situations, where a tribe lives right on the border: one part of the tribe lives inside the country, and the other part on the other side of the border. Were all these borders to be reexamined, there would be endless conflict. Quite wisely, the African countries were in agreement that a fundamental principle of the Organization of African Unity should be to maintain the borders inherited from colonialism.

That's why, in the case of Ethiopia, we oppose the breaking up of Ethiopia and its occupation by virtue of the invasion by the regular army of a neighboring country, in order to snatch one third of the country's territory.

Besides, Ogaden has belonged to Ethiopia for hundreds of years.

Now, there are other cases. You have, for instance, the case of the border between the United States and Mexico. As you all know, the United States took over half of Mexico's territory by force, by war. There are now millions of people of Mexican descent living there. And I'm telling you, the Mexicans are far more entitled to claim the territory that the United States took from them than Somalia is to claim Ogaden. And I can't help but wonder what the United States would have done if the Mexicans had invaded Texas and Arizona and all those states to get their land back. Do you think they would have taken the same stand as with Ethiopia?

Yet it was the United States that encouraged aggression against Ethiopia, because on July 15, 1977—and this is public knowledge—the U.S. Government advised the Somalian Government that it would supply Somalia with arms, and on July 23 the Somalian army, the regular army, launched its attack on Ethiopia.

In the case of Eritrea, when the Eritreans were fighting against the emperor, nobody helped them; when there was a revolution in Ethiopia, a thoroughgoing, radical revolution, then the reactionary Arab countries, and many people who had never taken an interest in Eritrea, started to help the Eritrean movement in order to break up Ethiopia.

José Ovidio Rodríguez (Radio Aeropuerto, Venezuela): Major, pardon me, but hasn't the Soviet Union helped the Eritrean movement?

Commander in Chief Fidel Castro: I don't know. I don't know whether the Soviet Union has helped. We gave the movement some help when it was objectively playing a revolutionary role; the movement it started playing a counter-revolutionary role we couldn't go on helping, because the moment there was a revolution in

Ethiopia what should have mattered to all Ethiopians and all Eritreans was developing the revolutionary process and consolidating the Revolution. But then what mattered to them, what they were trying to do, was to destroy the Ethiopian Revolution. The nature of the movement changed.

But we have taken no part whatsoever in that problem.

Nicaraguan Dictator Somoza

The interview concluded with the following exchange about Havana's attitude toward the struggle to overthrow the Somoza dictatorship:

Peter A. Arnett (Associated Press): You have frequently expressed your distaste for the Government of Nicaragua. What form of help could Cuba offer the troops attempting to overthrow the Somoza regime?

Commander in Chief Fidel Castro: I think that is an internal matter concerning Somoza and the Nicaraguan people. And I don't think that they need any help either; they know quite well how to get what they need, weapons and everything. They are doing that quite well.

It's true we are not friends of the Somoza

government. Don't forget that the famous expedition to Playa Girón left from Puerto Cabezas. Somoza has even been involved in planning assassination attempts against us. That's nothing new. We have no sympathy for the Somoza government, nor do we give it much longer to live.

Peter A. Arnett (Associated Press): But you have given refuge to some exiles.

Commander in Chief Fidel Castro: Well, I remember that once, when a group of revolutionaries occupied the house of a minister, or I don't know who, it was the Government of Nicaragua that asked us to accept the revolutionaries in Cuba, as a solution to the problem. An agreement was reached with the revolutionaries, as another agreement was reached now, and we were asked if we would be willing to receive them; and we helped solve the problem by taking them in. It would have been the same now, in the situation when they attacked and took the Palace of the Legislature; if, as a solution to the problem they had asked Cuba to accept the prisoners and revolutionaries, we would have done so, too. It wasn't necessary, however, because other Latin-American governments offered a solution, and we didn't participate at all.

Later, some said that they wanted to come to Cuba, and we authorized them to come. □

The Case of Kristina Berster

German Woman Framed as 'Terrorist' by FBI

When twenty-eight-year-old Kristina Berster was arrested near the U.S.-Canada border July 16, she was charged with attempting to enter the United States illegally. But the newspaper headlines indicted her for something more serious than passport violations.

"Terrorist Held After Attempt to Enter U.S." screamed the *Rutland [Vermont] Herald*. Other newspapers accused her of being a member of the Baader-Meinhof "gang," and an FBI press officer bragged that her arrest "marked the first time a member of the notorious urban gang has been apprehended trying to enter this country." The U.S. Attorney in Burlington, Vermont, called Berster one of the thirty-four most wanted people in the world.

Even though the West German embassy denied that Berster was a member of the Baader-Meinhof group, the FBI continued to make the most of having captured a "terrorist." After all, the fight against international "terrorism" is one of the bureau's few remaining rationalizations for its infiltration and harassment of political dissidents.

Berster is being held in an Albany, New York, jail. Her bail was originally set at half a million dollars, the largest ever for a border charge.

If convicted, Berster could be sentenced to twenty years in prison. If extradited back to West Germany she could suffer the same fate as other alleged "terrorists." She has applied for political asylum in the United States.

In 1971 Kristina Berster was active in the student movement in Heidelberg, West Germany, helping to build demonstrations for prison reform. A police informer, pressed to provide the name of everyone involved in radical activity, fingered her to the cops. She was charged with having "built up a criminal association" and spent six months in pretrial detention.

In the witch-hunt atmosphere that prevailed, Berster and some of her friends became convinced they could never get a fair trial. In 1973 she went underground, a step she now thinks might have been a mistake.

A Berster Defense Committee has been formed in Burlington and is attempting to show that the terrorist smears in the press have made it impossible for Berster to receive a fair trial. Local feminists have also come to her defense. Her supporters are fighting not only a hostile press but also an FBI that wants to use Berster's attempt to enter the U.S. to whip up a "terrorist" scare. □

Capitalism Fouls Things Up



15,000 in Brest March Against Nuclear Power

Between fifteen and twenty thousand persons marched through Brest, France, on September 23 to protest plans for construction of a nuclear power plant in Plogoff, a small village nearby.

The demonstration had been planned for some time by the *Comités Locaux d'Information sur le Nucleaire* (CLIN—Local Nuclear Information Committees) to protest a reactor under construction at Ploumouguet. When the regional government announced in early September that Plogoff had been chosen for another nuclear plant, the two struggles were combined and organizing efforts picked up.

On September 17, 5,000 persons rallied at Feunteul Aod against the Plogoff plant.

Soon thereafter, a coalition of twenty-three organizations was initiated by the Unified Socialist Party to help build support for the CLIN's September 23 march.

The coalition included the union federations CGT and CFDT, the teachers union FEN, the student organization UNEF, the Communist and Socialist parties, and the Revolutionary Communist League. Also participating were the Breton-nationalist organization, the Democratic Union of Brittany; and ecology groups such as *Amis de la Terre* (Friends of the Earth) and the Anti-Black Tide Committees. The latter group was set up after the *Amoco Cadiz* oil-spill disaster struck Brittany in March of this year.

their tailings by offering them free to contractors for use as sand in construction sites.

In Salt Lake City, for example, 22,000 tons of tailings were carted off from one mill and used this way. Eight hundred tons were compacted into the foundation of the city's main fire station.

Since the danger of radiation from tailings became known, health inspectors have discovered seventeen other locations in the city where some of the tailings were used. But much of the 22,000 tons remains unaccounted for. The *Los Angeles Times* quoted city-county health director Dr. Harry Gibbons as admitting that "for all we know, there may be kids playing with it in sand boxes."

Uranium 'Tailings'—26 Million Tons Nobody Wants

The U.S. Congress is grappling with a long-ignored problem that has come back to haunt the American nuclear industry—What to do with 26 million tons of radioactive uranium ore wastes currently piled up at 22 sites throughout the western United States?

According to a report in the August 24 *Los Angeles Times*, Congress is considering legislation to spend more than \$100 million to either transport the accumulated waste material to uninhabited desert sites or else bury it again.

Since World War II, the U.S. government has mined and processed vast quantities of uranium ore to produce "yellow cake," the raw material for nuclear reactor fuel and atomic weapons.

Uranium ore is ground into small particles, from which concentrated uranium oxide is extracted, leaving the other components of the ore behind. The discarded "tailings" contain radium, thorium, and other elements that account for 85 percent of the radioactivity in the original uranium ore.

Enormous mounds of tailings surround the uranium mills. The sand-like waste stands exposed to wind and rain. In Durango, Colorado, wind-blown dust from a pile of tailings 230 feet high now covers the roofs of nearby houses.

In recent years it has been discovered that these wastes pose a serious health

hazard. The main radioactive component of these tailings is radium. Gamma rays from the radioactive decay of radium can cause leukemia and other types of cancer.

In addition, as radium decays, it turns into radon, a highly radioactive gas. Radon from exposed tailings enters the air, where it rapidly decays to form other radioactive substances that can be deposited in the lungs. Continued exposure to these radon decay products increases the risk of lung cancer.

A report on nuclear waste disposal issued by the U.S. Department of Energy concluded that for people living near the tailings, "the risk of incurring lung cancer is about double the normal."

But the disposal of mountains of accumulated tailings—huge task that it is—is not the most difficult part of the problem. Large amounts of tailings have been used over the years as construction materials in the buildings and streets of a number of western cities.

As with many other aspects of the nuclear industry, the processing of uranium ore and disposal of the tailings began on a large scale before the hazards involved were fully understood.

During the 1940s and 1950s, people living near uranium mills were assured that the piles of tailings were harmless. In some cases, mills even got rid of part of

Worse yet is the situation in Grand Junction, Colorado, another uranium milling site. An estimated 300,000 tons of tailings were used there in the construction of over 700 homes, businesses, churches, and schools. Although \$7 million has been spent to date in a special government program to remove the tailings, the program is only half completed after six years of work.

According to the Colorado Health Department, recent studies show that residents of Grand Junction and the surrounding area have an acute leukemia rate which is twice the average for the state of Colorado as a whole.

These are only two of the cases that have come to light so far. The full extent of lung cancer, leukemia and related diseases caused by exposure to dust and radon gas from uranium tailings may never be known.

Dr. Lyman Olson, chief health officer for the state of Utah, noted that "It is significant to us, and a continual worry, that each time new and better scientific information becomes available, as in the case of our new technique for measuring radon, the extent of the hazard is concluded to be worse than previously thought" (*Los Angeles Times*).

Uranium tailings are classified as "low-level" radioactive waste, as distinct from the far more highly radioactive wastes produced by nuclear reactors. No safe method of permanently disposing of reactor wastes has yet been devised. □

China Since Mao

Reviewed by Leslie Evans



Charles Bettelheim has been director of studies at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes in Paris since 1948 and is the author of numerous scholarly works on the Soviet and Chinese economies. The significance of this latest work of his does not lie, however, in his academic credentials, but in his standing as perhaps the best-known European Maoist intellectual (until May of last year he was chairman of the Franco-Chinese Friendship Association). *China Since Mao* is a polemical manifesto in defense of the fallen "gang of four" and an indictment of China's present leaders for having betrayed Mao Tsetung.

Of Mao's successor as chairman of the Chinese Communist Party, Bettelheim writes:

"Hua Kuo-feng's accession to power resulted from a *coup d'état*. This *coup d'état* began a political turn leading to the substitution of a revisionist and bourgeois line for the previous revolutionary and proletarian line."

Bettelheim's break with Peking is not an isolated case. The purge of Mao's widow, Chiang Ch'ing, and three other central leaders of the Chinese Communist Party after Mao's death in 1976 sent shock waves through the already splintered Maoist movement around the world. The new government's *de facto* repudiation of all of the central campaigns of the Cultural Revolution that Mao led in 1966-69, combined with the restoration to positions of power of disgraced "capitalist-roaders" such as Teng Hsiao-p'ing, forced foreign Maoists to choose between the ideology that they had known as Maoism and support to the current governmental heads of the People's Republic of China.

The Communist League of West Germany and the Revolution group in France, each with several thousand members, were among the first of the Maoist groups in Europe to conclude that a rightist coup had taken place in China. They were followed by the Revolutionary Communist Party, the largest Maoist organization in the United States, which has recently organized large public meetings in defense of Chiang Ch'ing.

Charles Bettelheim occupied an exceptional place in the Western Maoist movement. He sought to take the diffuse and ambiguous slogans of Mao's Cultural Revolution—which were never elaborated into a coherent theory inside of China—and develop them into a general theoretical conception of the transition to socialism. He was joined midway in this ambitious enterprise by American Marxist economist Paul Sweezy, editor of *Monthly Review* magazine and one of the owners of Monthly Review Press. (Monthly Review has announced a campaign to circulate Bettelheim's new book as widely as possible, so it may be taken that it accords with Sweezy's thinking as well.)

Bettelheim—and later Sweezy—accepted at face value Mao's claim that his opponents in the Chinese CP leadership aimed at the restoration of capitalism in China; that the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe had undergone capitalist counterrevolutions in the 1950s when Khrushchev was in power; and that the Mao faction, under the slogan of placing "proletarian politics in command," had succeeded in saving socialism through the creation of new institutions of mass participation and workers control.

There are grave problems with this theory, apart from the most obvious one of misrepresenting the actual social nature and interests of the bureaucracy at the head of the Chinese workers state, its Maoist wing included. For Mao, the terms *capitalist* and

proletariat were defined subjectively, by who supported or opposed Mao Tsetung. Such labels could be applied or removed at will, and sometimes with a dizzying speed that belied any possible correspondence to actual programs, social classes, or modes of production. As an example, in Mao's time, Yugoslavia several times went through sociological shifts from capitalism to socialism and vice versa, depending not at all on any changes among the classes in Yugoslavia but purely on the current status of Yugoslavia's diplomatic relations with Peking.

The Cultural Revolution, although it set great masses into

China Since Mao, by Charles Bettelheim and Neil G. Burton, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978. 130 pp. \$2.50.

motion, was initially and essentially a struggle within the bureaucracy over alternative methods of preserving its rule. Mao's opponents in the leadership, following the example of Moscow, staked their fortunes on a policy of technical modernization and industrial construction, contemptuously dismissed by Bettelheim as "productionism." Mao countered with a strategy that placed priority on maintaining the party's ideological hold on the masses through an enormous investment of time and energy in indoctrination campaigns, party-led criticism meetings aimed at the regime's enemies, and the inculcation of personal loyalty toward Mao himself as the prime criterion of a proletarian outlook.

At the time, Mao presented this dispute over secondary and tactical questions as a momentous class struggle. Accepting that judgment, Bettelheim not illogically concludes that the scrapping of the Cultural Revolution campaigns in Hua Kuo-feng's China represents no less than the overthrow of the Chinese workers state and a historic victory for world capitalism. It is precisely here, however, that the Mao-Bettelheim explanation of the Cultural Revolution breaks down. This so-called class struggle does not correspond to any actual class demarcations or overturns. That leaves Bettelheim with the unenviable task of demonstrating how the overthrow of the Chinese workers state was possible without a single factory or farm changing hands, without any struggle by the Chinese masses—the opposite in fact, as every report indicates that the arrest of the "gang of four" was celebrated from one end of China to the other—and without even so much as a change of the ruling party. Compared to every previous known social revolution or counterrevolution, including China's own anticapitalist revolution, this is indeed a "transition" that holds more mysteries than the transmutation of lead into gold.

China Since Mao consists of three documents: Bettelheim's May 11, 1977, letter of resignation as head of the Franco-Chinese Friendship Association; a reply, "In Defense of the New Regime," by Neil Burton, a Canadian employee of the Chinese government living in Peking; and Bettelheim's answer to Burton, written in March 1978, under the title "The Great Leap Backward."

Burton writes with all the political acuity of a sleepy provincial official for whom it is always the best of all possible worlds. He notices nothing and is therefore surprised by nothing. He assures Bettelheim that the new government could not be anti-Mao because in Mao's last year of rule, "The most dangerous of the rightists had already been taken care of through the campaign

against Teng Hsiao-p'ing and his 'right deviationist wind.'" But hasn't Teng Hsiao-p'ing been restored to power at the head of the whole group Burton labels "rightists," and haven't they in turn "taken care of" the whole central leadership of the Cultural Revolution?

Pangloss Burton is vaguely aware that acceptance of the new government's charges against the "gang of four" is tantamount to accepting that China was a monstrous police state for the last ten years, and that this raises the question of what Mao Tsetung was doing all that time. He tries to have it both ways, by arguing that it is indefensible for Bettelheim to support such proven criminals as Chiang Ch'ing, while at the same time defending his own and Mao's support of them for a decade by maintaining that their crimes took place "imperceptibly."

For example, the four are accused of censoring the mass media, using it to frame up and discredit political opponents, stifle even the slightest criticism, and ban outright the study of history, culture, or science. Burton suggests that perhaps Chairman Mao had stopped reading the newspapers and therefore failed to notice any of this. As for the editors and writers charged with production of such material, he proposes that it was not, after all, very different from true proletarian journalism anyway:

"Let me suggest that the line between overt manipulation for planned ends and the unintentional distortion in which the media people were already engaged was a rather fine one, one quite susceptible of being crossed unnoticed."

But a few pages further on, he himself discredits these soothing reassurances. When his point is to exonerate Mao from blame for the crimes of the four, the misdeeds of the Mao regime are reduced to the unnoticeable crossing of fine lines. But when he reaches the point in his argument where he must refute Bettelheim's claim that the new government's charges against the four are all "slander and scandal," he tells a very different story. If Bettelheim would only interview some of the people Burton has spoken to on the streets in China, he would discover for himself what scoundrels everyone knew the Maoist hierarchy to be:

"Some of your informants would tell you that they had indeed spoken out and had suffered because of it. Others, probably a small minority, would tell you that they too had spoken out, but had been protected by their comrades and organizations from retaliation by the Four. *But perhaps the majority would tell you that fear of repression had stilled their tongues.*" (Emphasis added.)

The one point of interest in Burton's self-justification for remaining on Hua's payroll is his timely reminder to Bettelheim that many of the practices of the new regime that Bettelheim singles out as proof of a counterrevolution are in fact simply a continuation of longstanding features of the Mao period. Thus when Bettelheim points to the falsification of the photographs of Mao's funeral, which now delete the fallen four, Burton urges him to "look back at the photos in your *China Reconstructs* issues of 1967 and 1968. You'd certainly be hard-pressed to blame the practice of falsification on any single group of leaders."

On China's current proimperialist foreign policy, Burton writes, "not only was Chairman Mao a participant in what you describe as prestige-damaging practices; he was also the main architect of their underlying revolutionary strategy." And where Bettelheim points out that the new government has abandoned the propaganda campaign against special privilege, Burton notes the previous government's "lack of interest" in any "practical steps toward solution" of the problem of social inequality in China.

This less-than-inspiring defense of Hua-Teng evokes a rather elaborate theoretical treatise from Bettelheim in reply. Bettelheim seeks to accomplish three things: (1) to demonstrate that all the distinctive innovations of the Cultural Revolution have been repudiated by the Hua-Teng leadership; (2) that these innovations represented a proletarian and revolutionary position and their abandonment constitutes the restoration of capitalism in China; and (3) that this alleged historic failure for socialism was made possible by important "mistakes" made by Mao Tsetung and his chief representatives, the "gang of four."

Bettelheim succeeds easily in establishing his first point. In particular he documents the abolition of workers management groups in the factories along with the Revolutionary Committees set up after the Cultural Revolution to replace party and government organs at all levels of social life. He cites the campaign to tighten factory regulations and discipline, the reinstatement of one-man or two-man management, the revival of piecework and individual bonuses, and the reemergence of "profit" as the criterion of successful enterprise management.

In agriculture he makes an argument that is somewhat more obscure, holding that the present campaign for rapid mechanization and more state planning of agricultural goals is an example of "lack of confidence in the peasants." This smacks of the general Maoist distrust of technology, but it does qualify as a departure from Mao's policy.

In education, he cites the reinstatement of examinations and the stress on mathematics and science as a repudiation of what he portrays as Mao's more egalitarian policy of admitting students from worker-peasant backgrounds on the basis of political and not academic criteria.

Finally, in the political field, he castigates "the return *en masse* of the right-wingers who had been eliminated by the Cultural Revolution," the campaign against the "gang of four" itself, and the new government's renewed praise for the CCP's pre-1965 methods of organization. On this last point, he calls attention to the virtual disappearance of Mao's post-1965 writings and the extensive use of quotations from Mao before he had developed the line of the Cultural Revolution. Even these early writings of Mao have been doctored by the new government, as Bettelheim shows by a textual comparison of a recently published edition of Mao's 1956 speech "On the Ten Major Relationships" which has mysteriously acquired an appeal by Mao to learn from "the advanced sciences and technologies of capitalist countries" that was not present in earlier versions of the speech circulated in Mao's lifetime.

That these policy changes constitute a repudiation of the ideology of Maoism is not to be doubted. Nor is Bettelheim wrong to add that the new policy is a revival of a line that Mao branded as procapitalist. And its reintroduction has been carried out, moreover, by the very people Mao drove from the CCP leadership as "capitalist restorationists" in 1966-67.

But Bettelheim is unable to show that Mao's characterizations of himself and of his opponents conformed to social reality. He is not even able to present a convincing case that the Hua-Teng regime represents a move to the right compared to its predecessor.

In order to grasp what Bettelheim is getting at, it is necessary to summarize his theory of the transition to socialism. If he was to accept Mao's claim that the Soviet Union had restored capitalism while China had not, he was compelled to seek for some criterion for determining the class character of states that did not rest on economic or property relations. This was necessary because China and the Soviet Union both have nationalized, planned economies in which there is no private ownership of the means of production, no stock market, no individual inheritance of land or factories. In both countries the historic capitalist class was expropriated in thoroughgoing social revolutions. The distinctions between China and the USSR had to be sought elsewhere: in governmental forms and practices, in the relations between the leaders and the masses, and, ultimately, in political line.

Bettelheim and Sweezy professed to find the crucial distinction in the respective level of mass "participation" in the two countries: in China, Mao mobilized the masses around political slogans; in the Soviet Union, Brezhnev did not. This Maoist mobilization was taken to be synonymous with genuine workers control and proletarian democracy.

Bettelheim is correct that the achievement of a socialist society is impossible without placing democratic control over society in the hands of the associated producers. But the converse does not follow: the absence of political democracy in a postcapitalist regime is not a sufficient criterion to prove the reappearance of capitalism.

If Bettelheim were able to limit his analysis to the Soviet Union alone, his theory would be little more than a restatement of the wellworn thesis of "state capitalism." This was first elaborated by the Mensheviks after the Russian October revolution to disparage Lenin's Bolshevik Party as merely the representatives of an aspiring state bourgeoisie. This theory can be proven false by a comparison of the economic laws of motion of Soviet society since 1917 with those of capitalism in those countries where private property in the principal means of production remains intact. The old Menshevik theory at least had the consistency of assuming a coherent law of motion for Soviet society and an identifiable class character for its ruling party.

Following Mao, however, Bettelheim tries to prove that the Soviet Union was a workers state under Stalin but became a capitalist state under Khrushchev, although he can demonstrate no significant change in property ownership or economic life following this "transition." Likewise for China: Mao branded his factional opponents within the CCP hierarchy as representatives of the "bourgeoisie." To conform to these assumptions, Bettelheim must postulate that capitalism and socialism coexisted *simultaneously* in these societies, and at every level, from local factory management to the highest councils of government, over many years' time. Thus, in *China Since Mao* he writes:

... Mao Tse-tung and those who are today being vilified by the present leadership of the party [in the course of the Cultural Revolution came] to recognize in practice the difference between changing the juridical ownership of enterprises and changing the relations of production and distribution, so that a series of statements appeared which pointed out that it was possible for capitalist enterprises to exist "behind a socialist signboard," that the wage system prevailing in China was not very different from capitalism, that the bourgeoisie was present in the party, and so on.

Bettelheim tries to dignify this fantastic construct through the use of the Marxist term "relations of production." He makes a correct generalization when he argues that "relations of production" are a deeper and more significant determinant of a mode of production than property ownership, which is a juridical reflection of actual relations between people in the course of their social labors. This gives a materialist ring to his attempt to dispose of the problem of the absence of private ownership of the means of production in China and the USSR while still claiming the existence—and even the rulership—of a capitalist class.

But for him, relations of production seem to be reduced to only one particular relationship: the relation of command and subordination between rulers and ruled. The existence of such "commandism" proves the existence of capitalism, while conversely, only its disappearance can qualify a society as having overthrown capitalism. This criterion is so simplistic that it applies to every form of class society in human history, all of which were and are characterized by relations of domination and submission between the toilers and the ruling class.

Bettelheim's construct breaks down precisely at the point where he employs it to try to prove the central contention of his new book: that the factional differences between Mao and his bureaucratic rivals represent a struggle between opposing classes. If we follow Bettelheim in going beyond mere property ownership and define classes by their place in the network of relations of production in a socioeconomic formation, then it is necessary to prove that the Hua-Teng group do in fact have a different relationship to the classes of Chinese society than the Maoists and play a different role in the economic system.

But isn't it true that these are groupings in the same party? Moreover, in a monolithic party holding state power and fused integrally with the state machine? In such a party, individuals and groups have no distinctive relationship to the productive process or classes distinct from that of the party machine as a totality. They can be transferred at will from one administrative assignment to another by decision of the party high command. No factions are permitted within the Stalinized CCP, so that not even programmatic differences—relations of ideological production?—can be shown to exist.

Where in the real world do the actual representatives of hostile

social classes belong to the same political party, stand on the same political program, and rule jointly in such perfect fusion that no one outside of the inner circle knows which class any given political figure represents until this is pointed out, after the fact, by the great leader?

Fundamentally, such a theory defines membership in social classes, as well as the class character of states, subjectively, in an idealist manner, from the ideas in people's heads and according to the factional needs of the clique on top rather than from independently verifiable social facts. Moreover, in the case of those branded capitalists, not even the ideas exist in their heads but must be imputed to exist there on the say-so of the equally self-appointed representative of the proletariat.

If these notions have little coherence on the level of Marxist theory, Bettelheim's effort to offer an empirical proof of their validity is also unsuccessful. This brings us back to the significance of the differences between the Mao faction and its "productionist" rivals. Before there is any point in even discussing whether these factions represent different social classes, Bettelheim must at least demonstrate significant differences between them on the questions of workers democracy, the well-being and standard of living of the masses, and the privileges of the bureaucratic hierarchy.

Bettelheim begins his case by assuming what he has yet to prove: namely, that there is a direct connection between Mao's mass ideological campaigns and actual mass participation and control over Chinese society by working people. Yet he is honest enough that his own descriptions of the "mistakes" of the Mao faction confirm that the various ad hoc workers councils and Revolutionary Committees had been stripped of any democratic content while Mao was in power, long before they were finally laid to rest by the post-Mao leadership. Writing of the Mao period, Bettelheim says:

I have already mentioned the dropping of the political form of the Shanghai Commune, which was replaced by the revolutionary committees, set up after 1967 [i.e., *nine years* before Mao's death.—L.E.]. But these committees themselves gradually withered. This withering proceeded in several ways: the principle of revocability of the committee members by the masses, and their periodic re-election, was respected less and less. . . .

The same process of withering affected other organs that issued from the first years of the Cultural Revolution. Thus the workers' management groups I wrote about in *Cultural Revolution and Industrial Organization in China* went to sleep. When I returned to China in the autumn of 1975, there was only one factory where I heard anything about these groups . . . and what I was told left me with the impression that they were there only as ghosts, while everywhere else they seemed to have vanished completely.

He admits that the Mao leadership "tended to substitute coercion for political leadership" and inflicted "one measure of coercion and repression after another." On the right to free access of the masses to information, an elementary prerequisite for the possibility of mass control over society, Bettelheim recounts:

The right to read foreign periodicals and books was narrowly restricted. . . . On the pretext of exercising strict supervision of publications and of all literary, cinematic, theatrical, and similar activities, the number of new works allowed to appear was kept small. In the scientific domain the number of works published was drastically reduced and most scientific journals ceased to appear. Even access to libraries was severely restricted.

The central hallmark of what was supposed to be different and revolutionary about the Mao faction was its involvement of the masses in direct political discussion of the issues facing China. Bettelheim now concedes that these were not real discussions after all. Of the anti-Confucius campaign in 1974, the last big "mass mobilization" by the Mao faction, he writes:

Only a few people, though, could make out the meaning of a "discussion" such as this: for the rest, its pursuit and the obligation to "take part" could only, in the end, become unbearable. . . . These struggles were waged between the leaders, who "appealed to the masses" in order to obtain their support; but the content of what was at stake was seldom clearly explained.

Not only were the real issues of the intrabureaucratic disputes never revealed to the masses, by Mao any more than by Liu Shao-

ch'i and Teng Hsiao-p'ing, but the standard operating procedure of both factions was the political frame-up, which Bettelheim delicately refers to as the use of "stereotypes":

When former cadres removed from office for having acted in an "incorrect" way are denounced, the recourse to *stereotypes* is also normal. They are almost all accused of being "spies" or "secret agents" It was in these terms that Chiang Ching attacked a number of writers and artists during the Cultural Revolution, and it is in these terms that she is now being attacked in turn. . . . The repetition of this method implies that, instead of matters being explained to the masses, they are being refused any explanation. In this way their own history is *obscured*, and an attempt is made to *destroy their historical memory*, and so to *disarm* them, by the use of mutilated or forged documents and falsified photographs. When that happens, it is no longer a question of mere lack of analysis but of contempt for the masses. [Emphasis in original.]

Finally, and here we come to the actual relations of production that explain the social role of the various agents in Chinese politics today, Bettelheim comes to the question of special privilege. Here we have the material interest that defines a social grouping within the Chinese workers state: the privileged bureaucratic caste that requires all the methods of falsification, deception, and repression described above to maintain its rule. And here, significantly, Bettelheim's evidence does not concern the alleged bourgeoisie in particular but points directly to the Mao faction itself. He writes:

The existence of these privileges can be clearly seen in Roxane Witke's biography of Chiang Ching (*Comrade Chiang Ch'ing* [Boston: Little, Brown, 1977]). These were not privileges peculiar to a particular individual. All leaders of the same rank enjoyed them, although today the new leadership is trying to make out that only the Four possessed them.

Early in his essay, Bettelheim denies categorically that the new regime's charges against the "gang of four" are true. He asks rhetorically, "Besides, if this campaign were not made up of lies, what sort of a party would it be whose leaders had done all that is alleged against the Four, without anybody every knowing or protesting?"

Yet as he writes further he himself confirms the substance of the charges, and in the process answers his own question. Insofar as mass democracy came into existence at all in the course of the Cultural Revolution, this was an unwanted by-product of the Mao faction's need to go outside of normal party and government channels and "appeal to the masses" to defeat its entrenched opponents in the bureaucracy. The rapid suppression of such expressions of working-class aspirations as the Shanghai Commune (which Bettelheim cites as the only developed example of workers control in the Cultural Revolution, adding that it was dissolved after twenty days and replaced by an army-dominated committee!) indicate the essential course, interests, and objectives of the Mao faction.

In the end, it was not the egalitarianism or democratism of the diehard Maoists that provoked the palace revolt in the hierarchy, but their obscurantism, their incompetence, and their cavalier disdain for economic construction. What was egalitarian about Mao's ten-year wage freeze, based on maintaining a wage system in which, by Bettelheim's own figures, high state officials received more than ten times the pay of a worker entering industry?

The Cultural Revolution, except for a brief period at the end of 1966 and the beginning of 1967, when it escaped from the control of the various CCP factions, resulted not in an expansion of workers political and economic rights but in their severe restriction, even compared to what went before in China of the 1960s. It was *this* intolerable leap backwards that spurred the remainder of the bureaucracy to try to save their own necks by throwing the Maoist high command to the wolves. The telltale signs of the erosion of Mao's authority among the masses were there for all to see in the last years of his reign. The most significant were the Hangchow strikes in mid-1975 and the massive Tien An Men demonstrations in April 1976.

Mao Tsetung, and, following his lead, Charles Bettelheim, sought to discount the "mere" increase in the productive forces as

a legitimate goal of the socialist revolution.* This disparaging of what is in reality the material needs of the oppressed flowed inexorably from the bureaucratic perspective of constructing an isolated socialist society within the confines of a single nation-state. Socialism is possible only as a world society, while the perspective of the bureaucratic caste is tied to maintenance of the nation-state in perpetuity. Within these national confines no real solution can be found to the problem of eliminating poverty and achieving rapid economic modernization.

But if Mao sought to dismiss the importance for the masses of raising their standard of living, material realities in the end took their revenge on Mao. It is here that the explanations for the great turnabout in Peking must be sought, not in the ideological phantoms of bourgeois and proletarian classes located in the offices of contending bureaucratic cliques.

Read in this way, the overturn of the unreconstructed Maoists can be seen not as a leap backward but as a sign of the enormous pressures on the bureaucracy to produce on its promises. As soon as the Great Helmsman died, they had to throw overboard much of the ballast he put there, if they were to keep the ship of state from foundering. In doing so, Hua and Teng are not leading a capitalist counterrevolution. They are functionaries on the defensive, seeking to hold onto their power by a series of economic and cultural *concessions* to a disgruntled populace. It is difficult to make any other convincing explanation of the new regime's wage raises, the release of tens of thousands of political prisoners, republication of hundreds of classical works of Chinese and world literature, and, examinations or not, a significant expansion of the numbers of Chinese who will be able to get a higher education.

The Maoist zealots with their thought-control campaigns and witch-hunts against "capitalist-roaders" sought to push ahead toward a confrontation with the Chinese masses, as previewed by the suppression at Tien An Men. The majority of the bureaucracy came to view them, and Mao's economic and ideological nostrums as well, as a dangerous liability. Today Hua and Teng are trying to pick up the pieces. And all of Bettelheim's fallacious arguments cannot put the Mao mythology together again. □

*Bettelheim dismisses as a "flagrant falsehood" the claim that Mao's orientation to ideological control at the expense of economic work inflicted particular damage on China's economy—that is, above and beyond the price extracted from China's workers for the very existence of the bureaucratic system. In taking this stand, which is consistent with his and Mao's general nonmaterialist approach, he discounts one of the central problems that confronts the impoverished masses of China and of the rest of the nonindustrialized world. Bettelheim offers us a handful of figures to prove that the Maoist model of development had been successful. He chooses the production of electric power, steel, coal, oil, and machinery. His figures for machinery production come from a CIA source, and are flattering to China. But it does not necessarily follow that because the CIA could be expected to *politically* desire to put China in an unfavorable light that when it does not do so its figure are accurate. This is one area where the Chinese government has issued virtually no statistics for so long that any such estimates are little more than speculation.

Of the remaining sectors, two are extractive industries, coal and oil. They should not be discounted, but it would be more than unwise to judge the pace of development of any oil-producing nation on the basis of that figure alone. The two remaining sectors, electric power generation and steel production, are of prime significance. Electric power production grew from 42 to 108 billion kwh between 1965 and 1974, for an annual rate of growth of 11.1 percent, a respectable performance. In steel, Bettelheim tells us, the comparable period saw a growth from 12.5 to 32.8 million tons. This would represent an 11-percent-per-year growth rate. Steel is perhaps the most important industrial indicator, and if this figure were accurate it would bolster Bettelheim's position. Unfortunately, the source he gives for this figure does not substantiate it. He refers us to the *China Quarterly* for June 1977. This publication does offer the figure of 12.5 million tons for China's 1965 steel production. It contains no figures for 1974. But it does give figures for steel output in 1973, 1975, and 1976; these are respectively: 25.5, 25, and 21 million tons (pp. 363 and 382). With these figures in front of him, Bettelheim writes:

"To speak of a *protracted* period of stagnation, and even of regression, is in complete conflict with reality, and is aimed merely at slandering the Cultural Revolution itself."

Questionnaires About Workers by Marx and Trotsky

Karl Marx's questionnaire, "A Workers' Inquiry," originally published in France in 1880, was first translated into English in the December 1938 issue of *The New Internationalist*, predecessor of *International Socialist Review*. Also reprinted here is an introductory note by the editors of that magazine explaining the significance of that document.

Leon Trotsky's questionnaire, "What

A Workers' Inquiry

This little work, a product of Marx's last years, first appeared in France, in 1880. It attained a comparatively wide circulation at that time, but subsequently disappeared from sight for fifty years. It has never before been published in this country. It retains, we believe, a variety of interests for us today. In the first place, it is a convincing commentary upon the neo-revisionists now flourishing who try to tell us and the world that Marx was a rabbinical metaphysician spinning out a deductive picture of society from the depths of an Hegelian imagination. We see from this series of questions how Marx's decisive point of reference was not a set of abstract categories but the concrete incidents in the daily lives of the workers. "Exploitation," "surplus value," "rate of profit," are here traced to their living source. Secondly, we may observe the simplicity and directness of Marx's approach to the actual problems confronted by the workers; again, a comment upon those who today find Marx a "great theorist" but so lacking in "an understanding of psychology". Thirdly, the indirect effect of the questions indicates what Marx meant when he said that the emancipation of the workers must come from the workers themselves. The whole aim of the questions is to make the worker aware of his own predicament in capitalist society, to cut through the fog of illusions and habitual responses and fictions which prevent the worker from understanding his social world, and by thus making the worker conscious of his predicament giving him a chance to solve it. With the changes in industrial production during the past half-century, certain of these questions in their given form have, of course, become archaic. But no one would find difficulty in modifying them in such a manner as to bring them up to date. And no one will doubt what the truthful answer to them would reveal,

Are the Workers Reading and Thinking?" was originally published in Moscow in 1923 in an appendix to his pamphlet *Problems of Everyday Life*. Its first English translation is by Russell Block from *Les Questions du mode de vie* (Union Générale d'Éditions, Paris, 1976). Its background is discussed in an introductory note by George Breitman.

more shockingly and brutally today by far than fifty years ago: the incalculable, hideous cost that the masses of humanity pay for the continuance of the rule of capitalism.—THE EDITORS.

* * *

Not a single government, whether monarchy or bourgeois republic, has yet ventured to undertake a serious inquiry into the position of the French working class. But what a number of investigations have been undertaken into crises—agricultural, financial, industrial, commercial, political!

The blackguardly features of capitalist exploitation which were exposed by the official investigation organized by the English government, and the legislation which was necessitated there as a result of these revelations (legal limitation of the working day to ten hours, the law concerning female and child labor, etc.), have forced the French bourgeoisie to tremble even more before the dangers which an impartial and systematic investigation might represent.

In the hope that maybe we shall induce a republican government to follow the example of the monarchical government of England, by likewise organizing a far-reaching investigation into the facts and crimes of capitalist exploitation, we shall attempt to initiate an inquiry of this kind with those poor resources which are at our disposal. We hope to meet in this work with the support of all workers in town and country who understand that they alone can describe with full knowledge the misfortunes from which they suffer, and that only they, and not saviors sent by Providence, can energetically apply the healing remedies for the social ills to which they are a prey. We also rely upon socialists of all schools who, being wishful

for social reform, must wish for an *exact and positive* knowledge of the conditions in which the working class—the class to whom the future belongs—works and moves.

These statements of Labor's grievances are the first act which socialist democracy must perform, in order to prepare the way for social regeneration.

The following hundred questions are the most important. In replies the number of the corresponding question should be given. It is not essential to reply to every question, but our recommendation is that replies should be as detailed and comprehensive as possible. The name of the working man or woman who is replying will not be published without special permission, but the name and address should be given, so that if necessary we can send a communication.

Replies should be sent to the Secretary of the *Revue Socialiste*, M. Lecluse, 28, Rue Royale, Saint-Cloud, nr. Paris.

The replies will be classified and will serve as material for special studies, which will be published in the *Revue* and will later be reprinted as a separate volume.

I.

1. What is your trade?
2. Does the shop in which you work belong to a capitalist or to a limited company? State the names of the capitalist owners or directors of the company.
3. State the number of persons employed.
4. State their age and sex.
5. What is the youngest age at which children are taken on (boys or girls)?
6. State the number of overseers and other employees who are not rank-and-file hired workers.
7. Are there apprentices? How many?
8. Apart from the usual and regularly employed workers, are there others who come in at definite seasons?
9. Does your employer's undertaking work exclusively or chiefly for local orders, or for the home market generally, or for export abroad?
10. Is the shop in a village, or in a town? State the locality.
11. If your shop is in the country, is there sufficient work in the factory for your existence, or are you obliged to combine it with agricultural labor?
12. Do you work with your hands or with the help of machinery?
13. State details as to the division of labor in your factory.
14. Is steam used as motive power?

15. State the number of rooms in which the various branches of production are carried on. Describe the specialty in which you are engaged. Describe not only the technical side, but the muscular and nervous strain required, and its general effect on the health of the workers.

16. Describe the hygienic conditions in the workshop; size of the rooms, space allotted to every worker, ventilation, temperature, plastering, lavatories, general cleanliness, noise of machinery, metallic dust, dampness, *etc.*

17. Is there any municipal or government supervision of hygienic conditions in the workshops?

18. Are there in your industry particular effluvia which are harmful for the health and produce specific diseases among the workers?

19. Is the shop over-crowded with machinery?

20. Are safety measures to prevent accidents applied to the engine, transmission and machinery?

21. Mention the accidents which have taken place to your personal knowledge.

22. If you work in a mine, state the safety measures adopted by your employer to ensure ventilation and prevent explosions and other accidents.

23. If you work in a chemical factory, at an iron works, at a factory producing metal goods, or in any other industry involving specific dangers to health, describe the safety measures adopted by your employer.

24. What is your workshop lit up by (gas, oil, *etc.*)?

25. Are there sufficient safety appliances against fire?

26. Is the employer *legally* bound to compensate the worker or his family in case of accident?

27. If not, has he ever compensated those who suffered accidents while working for his enrichment?

28. Is first-aid organized in your workshop?

29. If you work at home, describe the conditions of your work room. Do you use only working tools or small machines? Do you have recourse to the help of your children or other persons (adult or children, male or female)? Do you work for private clients or for an employer? Do you deal with him direct or through an agent?

II.

30. State the number of hours you work daily, and the number of working days during the week.

31. State the number of holidays in the course of a year.

32. What breaks are there during the working day?

33. Do you take meals at definite intervals, or irregularly? Do you eat in the workshop or outside?

34. Does work go on during meal times?

35. If steam is used, when is it started and when stopped?

36. Does work go on at night?

37. State the number of hours of work of children and young people under sixteen.

38. Are there shifts of children and young people replacing each other alternately during working hours?

39. Has the government or municipality applied the laws regulating child labor? Do the employers submit to these laws?

40. Do schools exist for the children and young people employed in your trade? If they exist, in what hours do the lessons take place? Who manages the schools? What is taught in them?

41. If work takes place both night and day, what is the order of the shifts?

42. What is the usual lengthening of the working day at times of good trade?

43. Are the machines cleaned by workers specially hired for the purpose, or do the workers employed on these machines clean them free, during their working day?

44. What rules and fines exist for late-comers? When does the working day begin, when is it resumed after the dinner-hour break?

45. How much time do you lose in coming to the workshop and returning home?

III.

46. What agreements have you with your employer? Are you engaged by the day, week, month, *etc.*?

47. What conditions are laid down regarding dismissals or leaving employment?

48. In the event of a breach of agreement, what penalty can be inflicted on the employer, if he is the cause of the breach?

49. What penalty can be inflicted on the worker if he is the cause of the breach?

50. If there are apprentices, what are their conditions of contract?

51. Is your work permanent or casual?

52. Does work in your trade take place only at particular seasons, or is the work usually distributed more or less equally throughout the year? If you work only at definite seasons, how do you live in the intervals?

53. Are you paid time or piece rate?

54. If you are paid time rate, is it by the hour or by the day?

55. Do you receive additions to your wages for overtime? How much?

56. If you receive piece-rates, how are they fixed? If you are employed in industries in which the work done is measured by quantity or weight, as in the mines, don't your employers or their clerks resort to trickery, in order to swindle you out of part of your wages?

57. If you are paid piece-rate, isn't the quality of the goods used as a pretext for wrongful deductions from your wages?

58. Whatever wages you get, whether

piece or time rate, when is it paid to you: in other words, how long is the credit you give your employer before receiving payment for the work you have already carried out? Are you paid a week later, month, *etc.*?

59. Have you noticed that delay in the payment of your wages forces you often to resort to the pawnshops, paying high rates of interest there, and depriving yourself of things you need: or incurring debts with the shopkeepers, and becoming their victim because you are their debtor? Do you know of cases when workers have lost their wages owing to the ruin or bankruptcy of their employers?

60. Are wages paid direct by the employer, or by his agents (contractors, *etc.*)?

61. If wages are paid by contractors or other intermediaries, what are the conditions of your contract?

62. What is the amount of your money wages by the day and week?

63. What are the wages of the women and children employed together with you in the same shop?

64. What was the highest daily wage last month in your shop?

65. What was the highest piece wage last month?

66. What was your own wage during the same time, and if you have a family, what were the wages of your wife and children?

67. Are wages paid entirely in money, or in some other form?

68. If you rent a lodging from your employer, on what conditions? Does he not deduct the rent from your wages?

69. What are the prices of necessary commodities, for example:

(a) Rent of your lodging, conditions of lease, number of rooms, persons living in them, repair, insurance, buying and repairing furniture, heating, lighting, water, *etc.*

(b) Food—bread, meat, vegetables, potatoes, *etc.*, dairy produce, eggs, fish, butter, vegetable, oil, lard, sugar, salt, groceries, coffee, chicory, beer, wine, *etc.*, tobacco.

(c) Clothing for parents and children, laundry, keeping clean, baths, soap, *etc.*

(d) Various expenses, such as correspondence, loans, payments to pawnbroker, children's schooling and teaching a trade, newspapers, books, *etc.*, contributions to friendly societies,

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strikes, unions, resistance associations, etc.

(e) Expenses, if any, necessitated by your duties.

(f) Taxes.

70. Try and draw up a weekly and yearly budget of your income and expenditure for self and family.

IV.

71. Have you noticed, in your personal experience, a bigger rise in the price of immediate necessities, e.g., rent, food, etc., than in wages?

72. State the changes in wages which you know of.

73. Describe wage reductions during bad trade and industrial crises.

74. Describe wage increases during so-called prosperity periods.

75. Describe any interruptions in employment caused by changes in fashions and partial and general crises. Describe your own involuntary rest periods.

76. Compare the price of the commodities you manufacture or the services you render with the price of your labor.

77. Quote any cases known to you of workers being driven out as a result of introduction of machinery or other improvements.

78. In connection with the development of machinery and the growth of the productivity of labor, has its intensity and duration increased or decreased?

79. Do you know of any cases of increases in wages as a result of improvements in production?

80. Have you ever known any rank-and-file workers who could retire from employment at the age of fifty, and live on the

money earned by them as wage workers?

81. How many years can a worker of average health be employed in your trade?

82. Do any resistance associations exist in your trade, and how are they led? Send us their rules and regulations.

83. How many strikes have taken place in your trade that you are aware of?

84. How long did these strikes last?

85. Were they general or partial strikes?

86. Were they for the object of increasing wages, or were they organized to resist a reduction of wages, or connected with the length of the working day, or prompted by other motives?

87. What were their results?

88. Tell us of the activity of courts of arbitration.

89. Were strikes in your trade ever supported by strikes of workers belonging to other trades?

90. Describe the rules and fines laid down by your employer for the management of his hired workers.

91. Have there ever existed associations among the employers with the object of imposing a reduction of wages, a longer working day, of hindering strikes and generally imposing their own wishes?

92. Do you know of cases when the government made unfair use of the armed forces, to place them at the disposal of employers against their wage workers?

93. Are you aware of any cases when the government intervened to protect the workers from the extortions of the employers and their illegal associations?

94. Does the government strive to secure the observance of the existing factory laws against the interests of the employers? Do its inspectors do their duty?

95. Are there in your workshop or trade

any friendly societies to provide for accidents, sickness, death, temporary incapacity, old age, etc.? Send us their rules and regulations.

96. Is membership of these societies voluntary or compulsory? Are their funds exclusively controlled by the workers?

97. If the contributions are compulsory, and are under the employers' control, are they deducted from wages? Do the employers pay interest for this deduction? Do they return the amounts deducted to the worker when he leaves employment or is dismissed? Do you know of any cases when the workers have benefited from the so-called pension schemes, which are controlled by the employers, but the initial capital of which is deducted beforehand from the workers' wages?

98. Are there coöperative guilds in your trade? How are they controlled? Do they hire workers for wages in the same way as the capitalists? Send us their rules and regulations.

99. Are there any workshops in your trade in which payment is made to the workers partly in the form of wages and partly in the form of so-called profit sharing? Compare the sums received by these workers and the sums received by other workers who don't take part in so-called profit sharing. State the obligations of workers living under this system. May they go on strike, etc., or are they only permitted to be devoted servants of their employers?

100. What are the general physical, intellectual and moral conditions of life of the working men and women employed in your trade?

101. General remarks.

Karl Marx

What Are the Workers Reading and Thinking

To win a breathing spell, revive production, and reconsolidate popular support, the government instituted the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1921. This was a temporary measure allowing a limited introduction of capitalist production and foreign concessions alongside the nationalized and state-controlled sectors of the economy. The Bolshevik leaders viewed the NEPmen as a potential base for the restoration of capitalism, and two years later, in the third part of his questionnaire, Trotsky wanted to know what the workers were thinking about the NEP.

Believing that there was a gap in the Communist literature of that period, Trotsky decided in 1923 to write "for the average worker and peasant" a pamphlet clarifying the connections between their current conditions and tasks (seemingly

humdrum and unheroic) and the perspectives of the overall struggle for socialism. To write this effectively, he needed the most accurate information about the concerns, opinions, and moods of the masses. That he sought by arranging through the Moscow Committee of the CP a meeting with twenty-five party "agitators and propagandists," most of whom were factory workers and union leaders.

The first meeting was so successful and productive that it was followed by two others, lasting about ten to twelve hours altogether. Trotsky's questionnaire was written between the first and second meetings; answers were written by other participants, or were taken down in shorthand when given orally. But the discussions went far beyond the bounds of Trotsky's initial project; in particular, he noted,

"problems relative to the family and our way of life caught the imagination of all the participants."

Trotsky never did write the pamphlet he had originally intended to. Instead, he wrote a remarkable series of newspaper articles about the cultural problems of the Soviet workers, collected in the pamphlet *Problems of Everyday Life*. Almost half of this pamphlet consisted of an appendix containing Trotsky's questions and long excerpts from replies by other participants in the three discussions.

Unfortunately, this appendix was omitted when the pamphlet was later incorporated into a book of Trotsky's writings on cultural problems, and therefore is not included in the current English translation of the pamphlet, which is the first part of the book *Problems of Everyday Life and*

Other Writings on Culture and Science (Monad Press, 1973, distributed by Pathfinder Press). But there readers of English can see the most important result of the 1923 questionnaire.

—GEORGE BREITMAN

I.

What sort of books and pamphlets are most in demand?

What are the most important books missing from factory libraries?

Do the workers read the literature?

Which authors are most popular?

Are there enough literary works?

II.

Which newspapers do the workers like to read most?

What do the workers read primarily?

What kind of columns should be developed?

Do the workers have access to ROSTA dispatches?*

Isn't it necessary here to radically transform the character of our wire service news?

How is the specialized press being developed?

Do the workers read it?

III.

How are the workers reacting to aspects of the NEP?

Is there much talk about a new bourgeoisie?

Do workers express fears about a possible reestablishment of bourgeois rule?

IV.

Do the masses display a lively interest in the revolutionary movements in the West?

Don't the masses lack the elementary geographic knowledge necessary to understand news from abroad?

Are there maps in the factories adapted to our political education work in the area of international politics and the revolutionary movements in other countries?

Are the readers satisfied with the information provided to them about strikes and the revolutionary movement abroad?

Has the need for such specialized maps made itself felt?

V.

What are basic causes preventing the nonparty worker from joining the Communist Party?

What are the principal arguments the workers put forward?

Is it possible, relying on a series of

observations, to make the following deduction: we have succeeded in getting those workers to join the party who, as a matter of personal preference, are interested above all in political action; but there are still numerous workers who are interested only in their work, in technology, family life, or questions of a purely scientific or philosophical nature; with respect to these workers, we have not yet found the way to approach them, that is to say, we do not yet know how to relate the technical, economic, familial, and scientific interests of these workers to socialism, to communism. Is this deduction valid or not?

VI.

Has the revolution brought about transformations in the family life of the workers as well as in their way of looking at the family?

Are these problems discussed? Where and how?

What solutions do the Communists propose for these problems?

Where do they get their solutions?

Why aren't these problems discussed in the newspapers?

VII.

In former times life was organized around three central events: birth, marriage, and death.

Has this way of looking at life been changed among those workers who have broken with the church? How?

Are there new forms of ceremony for celebrating a birth, a marriage, or for paying final homage to someone who has died?

VIII.

Do you notice an interest among the workers in the minor problems of everyday life, one which testifies to a desire to raise their cultural level: more politeness, greater sense of propriety, respect for the rules of elementary hygiene, etc.?

IX.

Do the unions play an important role in everyday life? How precisely is this role manifested?

X.

What importance does prejudice—religious, national, and other forms—have among the workers?

How are these prejudices manifested?

XI.

What do the workers do on Sunday and on holidays in general?

XII.

Aren't there too many official holidays? Aren't too many flags displayed?

Wouldn't it be better to replace the flags with something more practical, for example, with a Moscow municipal fund for the construction of a rest home or a home for heroes of labor, etc.? □

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*Rossiyskoe Telegraficheskoe Agentsvo (Russian Wire Service).

Socialist Political Prisoners Still Behind Bars in Argentina

By Laura Montes

The following article appeared in the August issue of *Opción*, a monthly newspaper published in Argentina. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

The minister of the interior has asserted that there are no political prisoners, since all those in custody are imprisoned for "subversion" or "corruption," and he challenged anyone to name a political prisoner.

For our part, last month we published a list of fifty-eight socialists who had been kidnapped (to which four more names could now be added, although their cases have not yet been fully documented), and we promised to publish a complete list of the socialist prisoners.

Thus as it turns out, we will be fulfilling the interior minister's request.

All the imprisoned socialists are political prisoners. They are in prison because of their ideas. This can be seen from the fact that not one of them has been accused of "subversion," "corruption," or anything else.

This is true not only of the most prominent prisoners, such as José Francisco Páez, the former vice-presidential candidate of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores,¹ but even of the youngest rank-and-file activist in custody. They are all being held at the discretion of the executive power.²

At this point we would like to focus on the cases of two prisoners on the list. One is Asdrúbal Levato, a well-known physician in San Nicolás, who comes originally from the outskirts of General Rojo. He has just been arrested again, after being released following almost two years in jail.

During his prolonged detention, Levato was thoroughly interrogated and investigated. Since of course they could not find any information about him other than his many years of activity as a socialist, his respected and well-known professional work, and his active participation in local community groups, they finally had to release him in the face of the appeals made on his behalf by a very broad range of individuals and organizations.

1. PST (Socialist Workers Party).

2. Under Argentine law, the executive branch of the federal government has the power to arrest and detain persons indefinitely without pressing charges or bringing them to trial.

His most recent arrest could only be for clearly ideological reasons—namely, the fact that Levato has not given up his life-long convictions.

The other case is that of Juan Carlos Herrero, one of the longest-held prisoners. Herrero was denied the option of going to France (just as they prevented our comrade Laura Enda Marrone from going to Italy).³

Herrero was a member of the Communist Party when he participated in the occupation of the administration building at Southern University in 1970. In 1973 he joined the PST, and participated in its electoral campaign. He also ran for vice-president of the engineering and surveying students center as the candidate of a PST student group.

In September of that year he was one of the organizers of the joint student action called by the PST and the CP in solidarity with the Chilean people, and he led the socialist contingent in that demonstration. It should be noted that that was a peaceful demonstration, organized in opposition to the actions being carried out by the guerrilla groups—in particular the Montoneros⁴—to advance their own political ends.

As the manager of the "Avanzada" bookstore and an active seller of the newspaper *Avanzada Socialista*,⁵ Herrero introduced his ideas and publications to faculty members at the university, where he was a full-time student in the civil engineering program. Various professors can testify to this, including Walter Daub, the director of the Physics Department and a rocket researcher for NASA;⁶ Luis Monteiro, professor of algebra; and Dr. Obvol of the Physics Department.

In July 1974, as Herrero was selling

3. Under the Peronist regime (1973-76), Argentine political prisoners were given the choice of going into exile rather than remaining in jail. Until the last month before the March 1976 military coup, all imprisoned PST members refused to apply to leave the country. Some of those who applied to leave were still in prison when the coup occurred.

4. A left Peronist guerrilla group that came increasingly under attack from the official Peronist movement after Perón's return to Argentina in 1973.

5. "Socialist Vanguard," the newspaper published by the PST before the 1976 coup.

6. National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the American space research agency.

Avanzada Socialista in Colonel Suárez, he was arrested, but was released after twenty-four hours. On October 21, 1975, he was arrested again, and this time kept in custody. The police forced Herrero's brother to make an emergency phone call, asking him to return to the family home in Carlos Tejedor, where supposedly his father was seriously ill. When Herrero got there, they arrested him.

Since then he has passed through the Federal Police Station, the Villa Devoto jail, finally reaching the Rawson jail, where he has been since September 1976—all without any hearing or trial.

It is with great satisfaction that we erase from the list of socialist prisoners the names of three who have regained their freedom: Otilia Raquel Israel, Dionisio Puz, and César Eduardo Labayrú. We send our very warmest greetings to the forty who remain: José Francisco Páez, Juan Carlos López Osornio, Rosendo López, Juan Carlos Herrero, Héctor Osvaldo Morales, Osvaldo Caldú, Analía Di Giovanni de Sprovieri, Víctor Aranguren, María Celia Brieba de Moreno, Juan Carlos Sosa, Héctor Ramón Duck, Rubén Chila, Eduardo Raúl Marchelli.

Also, Humberto Honorio Acosta, Horacio García, Laura Enda Marrone, José Héctor Páez, Adolfo Romero, Jorge Bolontini, María Teresa Bonzano, Manuel Villafañe, Viviana Allerbó, Ana María Esteban, María Gabriella Villar, Susana Aumann, Mónica Leunda, Samuel Kremer.

Also, Pedro Lencinas, Osvaldo Ríos, Alejandro Flores, Norma Romero, Ricardo Rodríguez Anido, Guillermo Hugo Poggi, Ana María Miniello, Mirta de Demichellis, José Ramón Rusconi, Alicia Susana Cap, and Lina Capdevilla. □

High-Octane Diet

In findings that have presumably been forwarded to White House "inflation fighters" for further study, two University of Illinois scientists have calculated that if the energy required to maintain the fat on overweight Americans was used to generate electricity, it could supply the annual residential needs of four large U.S. cities.

If all overweight adults in the United States simultaneously went on diets to reach their optimum weight, it is estimated the energy saved during a period of three to four months would be equivalent to 1.3 billion gallons of gasoline.