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APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA



**Interview With
Drake Koka**

page 1188

Ian Smith Promises 'Bigger and Better Raids'

By Ernest Harsch

While Ian Smith discussed possible "peace" talks with American and British officials in Washington, his racist regime once again displayed its real face.

On October 19 and 20, Rhodesian warplanes streaked across the borders of Zambia and Mozambique in an unprecedented simultaneous attack on both countries. Mozambique had previously been a target of numerous Rhodesian raids, in which several thousand Zimbabwean refugees and freedom fighters were killed. But the assaults on Zambia marked the first similar large-scale thrusts into that country.

Rhodesian jets, helicopters, and ground troops struck at least twelve Zimbabwean camps in Zambia, including a refugee camp at Chikumbi, just twelve miles north of the Zambian capital of Lusaka. The explosions could be heard in Lusaka, where windows rattled and houses shook.

A Rhodesian military communiqué said that several Zimbabwean camps in Mozambique had also been struck, but it gave no details.

Joshua Nkomo, the leader of the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), said that 226 residents of Chikumbi had been killed and 629 wounded. He charged the Rhodesian forces with dropping napalm, and added, "They have destroyed almost everything."

In addition, the Smith regime claimed that its forces had killed more than 1,500 Zimbabweans in the other camps in Zambia alone. If accurate, this would mark the single biggest terrorist operation carried out by the racist regime so far.

The Rhodesians claimed that they struck military targets and that the Chikumbi site was "the main controlling military headquarters" for ZAPU.

However, both the Zambian government and Nkomo described it as strictly a refugee camp. Nkomo's account was confirmed by United Nations officials.

In Washington, both Smith and one of his governmental colleagues, Bishop Abel Muzorewa, defended these terrorist operations. "The army is given this freedom of action . . .," Muzorewa declared. Smith struck a more arrogant note: "My guess is that there will be another raid today in Mozambique. Maybe another in Zambia tomorrow. I hope we go on having bigger and better raids every day. . . ."

The American State Department routinely "deplored" the raids, stating October 19 that they constituted a "serious extension of the Rhodesian conflict."

However, American and British officials

displayed few qualms the following day in sitting down with Smith, Muzorewa, and two other Black collaborators for yet another round of negotiations. To give the appearance of some "progress" in the talks—and to detract attention from the murderous assaults going on at that very time—Smith declared October 20 that he

Swedish Government Scorched by Nuclear Power

By Gerry Foley

The bourgeois coalition cabinet in Sweden collapsed October 5 after two years in office.

It was the country's first avowedly pro-capitalist government in more than a generation. Prior to the September 1976 elections, Sweden had been administered since the 1930s by Social Democrats.

The government of Premier Thorbjörn Fälldin was the first anywhere to fall over the question of nuclear power plants.

In 1976, Fälldin's Center Party had indicated opposition to the development of nuclear power. The other two bourgeois parties, the Liberals and the Moderates, and the Social Democrats defended the building of nuclear power plants.

When a decision had to be made in early September about the opening up of two new plants, the cabinet split and it proved impossible to bridge the gap. Fälldin was forced to resign.

Negotiations are now under way to form a caretaker government presided over by Ola Ullsten, head of the Liberal Party, which has 39 seats in a 349-seat parliament.

The bourgeois coalition won the legislative elections two years ago by a razor-thin margin. The defeat of the Social Democrats was the culmination of a long process of erosion, in which, in particular, they had lost the confidence of young voters and those most concerned with broad social issues.

The most important factor in the defeat of the Social Democrats at that time was apparently their alienation of left and ecologically minded voters by their espousal of nuclear power. Some defenders of the environment were even led to cast their ballots for the bourgeois parties by Fälldin's promises to restrict the development of nuclear plants.

was willing to attend talks with Nkomo and Robert Mugabe, the leader of the Zimbabwe African National Union.

However, Nkomo, under obvious pressure from his followers, described the American and British proposals for a "peace" conference as "nonsense" and "humbug." He vowed to continue the struggle against the Smith regime and declared that the Rhodesian raids "will not go unpunished."

Meanwhile, up to 400 students marched through Lusaka to the American and British embassies. They held Washington and London responsible for the Rhodesian bombings and shouted, "Yankees go home!" □

How explosive the issue of nuclear power plants has become is indicated by the fact that Fälldin's coalition partners would not agree to let the question be settled by a referendum, even though this was the only way the coalition could have been saved.

Furthermore, although they remain the largest single party in parliament, the Social Democrats seem anxious to avoid having to take political responsibility at this time, either by trying to form a new government or forcing new elections.

The nuclear power question is only the cutting edge of the growing political crisis in Sweden. The deteriorating world economic situation is rapidly undermining the exceptional stability that Sweden capitalism has enjoyed for several decades. That is what underlies the sharpening political conflicts.

The Swedish Trotskyists responded to the fall of the Fälldin cabinet by raising the slogans of "Bourgeois parties out of the government," "New elections," and "Down with nuclear power." They are campaigning for a referendum on the nuclear issue.

In the October 13 issue of its weekly newspaper, *Internationalen*, the Communist Workers League, Swedish section of the Fourth International, issued the following statement:

"The bourgeois government was able to stay in office for two years. For two years it led the capitalists' offensive against the Swedish workers. A week ago, it fell.

"The differences were not over the question of unemployment, or rising prices and rents, or cutbacks in social services. On these questions, the coalition parties worked together rather smoothly in conducting an antilabor policy.

"Nuclear power was the apparent cause of the government's fall. But Fälldin had

agreed to a continuation of the program of building nuclear power plants, with certain conditions. It was his fear of losing credibility with the voters and his own supporters that forced Fällidin on a collision course with Ullsten and Bohman [leader of the Moderate Party]

"Since the fall of the government, wheeling and dealing that went on in backrooms before has come out into the open as a public farce. Attempts to cobble together a new government out of the splinters of the old have followed in rapid succession.

"At the same time, the Social Democrats are trying to avoid the question of new elections. The Social Democratic Party has suggested that an all-Liberal Party government with the backing of 10 percent of the parliament would be an acceptable alternative.

"So, the Social Democratic Opposition has shown how much it is worth. Even when the bourgeois parties themselves abdicate, the workers are supposed to wait to 1979 [the next scheduled elections] before they can express their opinion about the policies that have been followed.

"The Communist Workers League demands new elections. In this way, the bourgeois parties can be made to answer for their attacks on the workers. But it is also a way to demand that the Social Democrats make good on the promises they made in the Opposition to offer a way out of the crisis.

"We have no confidence in the policy of the Social Democrats. We will use new elections to campaign on the issues raised in their struggles by workers, women, youth, and immigrants. We will campaign for a struggle against unemployment and cutbacks. We will fight for the right to strike, the right to asylum in Sweden, and other democratic rights, and for a socialist policy."

Internationalen explained that there was no contradiction between the call for new parliamentary elections and the demand for a referendum on nuclear power:

"To the contrary, new elections offer the best opportunity for opponents of nuclear power to force the various parties to commit themselves to holding a referendum, and one that will offer real possibilities for them to present their views and put forward alternatives." □

Just Like the Real Thing

Twenty-three persons were killed and 198 wounded in this year's NATO maneuvers in West Germany, according to a report by Andreas von Bulow, West German secretary of state for defense.

Last year's toll came to seventeen killed and 120 wounded.

At least five of those killed this year were civilians.

In addition, the *Frankfurter Rundschau* reported that U.S. soldiers taking part in the war games raped or attempted to rape four German women in the Frankfurt area.

In This Issue

Closing News Date: October 21, 1978

FEATURES	1200	For an End to All Restrictions on Women's Right to Abortion! —by Jacqueline Heinen
SOUTH AFRICA	1188	Interview With Drake Koka
POLAND	1190	CP Sends "Heartfelt Congratulations" to New Pontiff
MEXICO	1191	50,000 in Mexico City Commemorate 1968 Massacre—by Roberto Flores
IRAN	1192	The Economic Crisis Underlying Mass Movement Against Shah —by Saber Nickbin
JAPAN	1196	Shuji Sugawara—1949-1978
INDIA	1197	Is India Really on the Verge of Revolution?—by Sharad Jhaveri
ITALY	1198	"Panorama" Features Articles on Trotskyism
CAMBODIA	1198	Pnompenh Tries to Break International Isolation—by Matilde Zimmermann
ROMANIA	1199	Dissenter Paul Goma Begins Tour of United States—by Gerry Foley
IRELAND	1202	Derry—5,000 March in Support of Irish Freedom Struggle—by Gerry Foley
EAST GERMANY	1203	A 635-Mile Monument to Stalinist Rule
WEST GERMANY	1203	6,000 March in Antinuclear Action
EASTERN EUROPE	1205	"Labour Focus on Eastern Europe"
NEWS ANALYSIS	1186	Smith Promises "Bigger and Better Raids" —by Ernest Harsch
	1186	Swedish Government Scorched by Nuclear Power—by Gerry Foley
BOOKS	1204	An Open Letter to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union —reviewed by Marilyn Vogt
SELECTIONS FROM THE LEFT	1206	
COVER PHOTO	1185	Life under the whip of apartheid —by Peter Magubane/Rand Daily Mail

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'Our Priority Is to Break the Spine of Apartheid'

[Drake Koka is general secretary of the Black Allied Workers Union of South Africa. He was also a cofounder and first general secretary of the Black People's Convention, which was banned along with other major Black political organizations in October 1977.

[In February 1973, the apartheid authorities placed Koka under a five-year banning order, which in effect subjected him to house arrest. He was detained for eight months during 1974-75. He participated in the Soweto rebellions that began in June 1976. To avoid further arrest, he escaped to Botswana later that year.

[At the Beginning of October, Koka started a seven-week tour of the United States to speak out in defense of South African political prisoners and the struggle for the Black majority rule. The following interview was obtained in New York City October 13 by correspondents of *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor* and the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist news-weekly.]

* * *

Question. How did you originally become politically active?

Answer. We find that most of the Black youth, right from childhood, have got elements of becoming political. They are born into a situation that is politically determined, a situation of being oppressed and having their personal dignity undermined. So I must say that right from school I had to become politically conscious.

Then I got into the teaching field, as a teacher of history, which really plunged me into political developments. But I did not formally sign up with any of the political movements. In 1954 we organized a bus boycott in Evaton. I played a role in issuing the weekly boycott paper.

Upon leaving teaching, I became politically active full-time, and in the early 1970s I became the convener of the Black People's Convention.

Q. Could you give us some idea of the goals of the Black Consciousness movement, what it is fighting for, how it sees this fight being waged?

A. At first, the people who participated were mainly from the South African Students Organisation (SASO). They were the first people to come out with printed matter, which was the expression of the Black Consciousness movement. In 1971 I was chosen as organizing secretary to call other organizations together to be involved

in the formation of the Black People's Convention. Originally, we thought we were just going to create another cultural organization. But there was a very hot argument at the December 1971 conference, where they said there was no need for us to create another cultural movement. What was essential was a political movement.

We said we had to look at the whole South African situation, at the political, social, and economic situations, to see how it affects our lives. Then we said with this movement we must organize all the people, in all spheres of our lives.

What we really wanted to do was create a certain degree of consciousness. We had to find a sort of an ideology, a philosophy, that Black people could cling to. So the Black Consciousness movement became a process of introspection. We looked into ourselves, to see the potential power in us, to see our abilities and disabilities, and how we could face the situation.

The perpetual subservience of a people depends on the condition of the people's minds. The success of the oppressor does not lie in the power of the oppressor, but in the mental conditioning of the oppressed. That's why we said, "We are prepared to liberate our people psychologically and physically."

We also examined the physical shackles, the laws that cover us, the laws that restrict us. When the white man legislates, instead of executing the law himself, he puts it to us and we execute the law, we tend to police ourselves. So we decided that we were no longer going to be police over ourselves.

We decided that for a period of three years we were going to propagate the Black Consciousness movement and philosophy. After three years, we said, there was bound to be confrontation. The people would dictate the means they would resort to in their fight against the oppressive regime. If the people say, we are going to have civil disobedience, they are free to choose. If they say, we are going to have armed struggle, they are free to choose. We left it open.

In short, the Black Consciousness movement aimed at solidifying all Black people into a power bloc, to break the white apartheid power bloc.

Q. Last October, then-Prime Minister John Vorster banned most of the Black Consciousness organizations. What has happened to the movement since then?

A. In 1973, within six months of the

formation of the Black People's Convention, the government set banning orders on what we called the eight "apostles" of the Black Consciousness movement. But the movement went on. In 1974 they arrested forty-nine leaders and detained us an average of between eight months and more than a year. Some were brought to trial, the Soweto Nine, and are now serving sentences. But the movement went on.

After the 1976 outburst, the government became more and more repressive. They took everybody and put them into prison. Some of us left the country in 1976. But they found that the movement was still going on. So the best thing they could do was just ban the movement.

Now, we had a plan. In the 1972 conference, we decided to embark on a process of decentralization of leadership. And this is the process that is going on now, decentralization of leadership. A lot of leaders are still in the country, running the movement.

This is what is frustrating the South African government. It has put people in jail, but right under their nose we have got the real leadership. They can't get hold of it, simply because we had this process of decentralization of leadership. So in reality the Black Consciousness movement is going even stronger than it was before.

Q. What kind of activities is the Black Consciousness movement organizing in exile, now that a number of figures like yourself have left the country?

A. The Black Consciousness movement did not really want to organize in exile as a separate entity from the rest of the liberation forces of South Africa. Our hope in being in exile was that of joining hands with the liberation movements and working out a common strategy with them. This would come about by mutual discussions with members of the Pan Africanist Congress and the African National Congress.

Now the role of the Black Consciousness leaders outside here was to become representatives of the movement inside.

Q. What do you think about the American government's policy toward South Africa?

A. At the moment, the United States, together with Great Britain, Germany, and other Western countries, controls South Africa economically. They wouldn't like to disturb the existing government, because the existing government is the custodian of their economic power within South

Africa. Thus they do their best to retain that government, which to a certain degree has got some stability, some political stability.

Now, whatever policy they are having, is just towards improving the social aspects of our lives, that we should be able to sleep in the same hotels as whites, go to the same restaurants, travel on the same trains. They would like this to happen and be carried out within the framework of the apartheid system.

Now, how do we see that? We reject it altogether. We are not impressed by the American government, by Carter, saying they are for "human rights." This is an empty cry.

The Carter administration wants to impose its own capitalist imperialism and retain it in South Africa. People like Andy Young are just the salesmen for the policy of imperialism, this time no more in a white skin, but in a Black skin.

We totally reject the United States policies toward South Africa.

Q. American apologists for the apartheid regime argue that the United States should keep its investments in South Africa because it helps Blacks, gives them jobs; and if the U.S. corporations are in there they could use their influence to pressure the regime into making some reforms. What do you think of that argument?

A. This argument is really false. It is not necessary to have investments there to influence that country.

I think some of the companies are more truthful than what these people say. I refer you to a spokesman of General Motors, who said, "We are subject to the host country's laws. We are committed to respect its customs, its cultures, and traditions. We try to work within the system." And a representative of Ford said, "Essentially, we are here in South Africa to contribute to the business community and to make profits." I think this is true.

If in the process of making profits, they have employed Blacks, it is simply because they are benefiting from the cheap labor of Blacks, not because they are benefiting Blacks. And therefore to say that investments in South Africa would in any manner bring about a change by pressuring the South African government is false.

Q. Does the actual practice of American companies differ at all from South African companies, in terms of wages and working conditions for Blacks?

A. Not at all. Just as the man from General Motors says: We are here to obey the customs and traditions of the country. They accept that by tradition the Black cannot earn the same wage as the white and that by tradition a Black cannot supervise a white.

Q. How have some of the American companies reacted to attempts by Black workers to form unions?

A. There are some who say you can form



Ernest Harsch/Intercontinental Press-Inprecor

DRAKE KOKA

a union, who are trying to be tolerant. But there are others who say that although you can have a union, we cannot negotiate with your union because it is not legally recognized. If there is a dispute in that company, instead of calling the union leaders, they would phone for the Bantu labor officers, who are representatives of the government.

Also, during the stay-at-home strikes [in 1976], some people were fired from Mobil Oil, from Shell, from Caltex, and from IBM.

Q. What do you think of the Sullivan and EEC codes that are supposed to pressure American companies to improve wages and working conditions, as an alternative to pulling out entirely?

A. I tell you, that is trash. They are not advocating anything outside the legal framework. Nothing. They've been saying: Improve wages. That is within the scope of any company to do. There is no law that puts a ceiling on wages. They say: Recognize Black trade unions. But they know that as long as the Industrial Conciliation Act exists, even if a company recognizes a Black union, that recognition is invalid.

We in the Black Allied Workers Union put it clear. We say a call for better wages and better working conditions is not our priority. Our priority is to bring about a total change of the system of labor and break the spine of apartheid.

Q. Do you see these codes as part of a response to the movement against impe-

rialist investment in South Africa, as an effort to sidetrack it, blunt it?

A. Yes. They are trying to say: Wait. The system will be improved internally. You'll be better horses than you were yesterday. You'll be well fed. You'll be well groomed, with white dustcoats. And that will bring you liberation. We have never seen that before.

Q. Let's take up this question of divestments. There's a growing movement in the United States and in other countries demanding that foreign companies pull out of South Africa, that universities that have stocks in corporations that function in South Africa get rid of those stocks. Do you think this movement in the United States is moving in the right direction?

A. It is definitely towards the right direction. If these people should pull out their stocks, that would cripple the South African economy.

Also, this is a form of politicizing and mobilizing the American public against their government's policies of continued support to South Africa. It is a very good move. Fighting must be done from all angles, and we must utilize whatever means are within our reach. So I would encourage this movement to go on.

Q. There are twenty-seven to thirty million people of African descent in the United States. What has happened is that part of the development of the Black movement here has included support to the African liberation struggle. Do you have anything special to say to Blacks in the U.S.?

A. My appeal, really, is directly to them. And my appeal to Blacks in the United States has been influenced by one major factor: that we are sharing a common experience in the struggle for liberation. The oppression, suppression, and exploitation that we are undergoing now, they went through. They are still going through that process even now. So therefore they are just the right people who will understand our case.

Their struggle here is our struggle, and our struggle is their struggle. If we join hands and say that all Blacks should work in solidarity, then we may be able to better our conditions.

Q. You are a leader of a South African trade union. On your tour here, what would you suggest to American unionists to help the struggle in South Africa?

A. The best way they can effectively participate is for them to stop handling the commodities that are being taken over to South Africa, to start demanding that their own management stop investing in South Africa. Workers here should be united in drawing up programs whereby they can start boycotting South African

goods or boycotting companies that have dealings with South Africa.

Q. Shifting back to the situation in South Africa. You already mentioned the lack of recognition of Black unions. What other kinds of obstacles are there to organizing Black unions?

A. One of the great obstacles we face is police harassment. The Black unions that are initiated by Blacks and run by Blacks have the heavy hand of the government upon them. The police ransack their offices, take all their files, take the names of members, and start intimidating the membership. Sometimes they go to the extent of arresting the officials, and interrogating or detaining them. That's one of the major hardships.

Then we still have financial problems. Our trade unions need to be maintained. We need to be self-sufficient. But this is one area where we are still finding difficulty. The law in South Africa says that no white nor employer can deduct dues for a Black trade union. This makes it difficult for the workers to pay trade union dues from their wages. There is no effective system of collection of dues.

Q. What's the current state of the trade-union movement? How many workers are organized, in what sectors? What's the strength of the Black Allied Workers Union, other unions?

A. Well, the total number of unionized Black workers in South Africa is about 800,000. It is still a very small figure in comparison to the seven million Black workers we have in the labor force.

Q. The most common figure cited in the white-controlled press is 80,000. Is that then an underestimate?

A. It is very much underestimated, definitely underestimated. Take for instance the National Union of Clothing Workers of Lucy Mvubelo. It alone has 25,000 members. And the Black Allied Workers union has 22,000 members. These are just two unions. We also have the transport union, the engineering unions, the metal workers unions, and so forth.

The Black Allied Workers Union is really a general trade union. The last time I took statistics according to job categories, there were forty-six. But we are mainly among the textile workers, the engineering and electrical workers, the laundry workers, and the dock workers in Durban. We have not yet penetrated the motor industry.

We deliberately drew up a plan to concentrate in the heavily populated cities, in the industrial areas. We said we must select the industries where we think we can organize, because we are running a trade union with a purpose. Now, so far, we have got our branches in the Johannes-

burg region, in Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Ladysmith, Kingwilliamstown, and Port Elizabeth. We are trying to organize as much nationally as possible.

Labor is the most political aspect of our lives. We have got the Industrial Conciliation Act, politically decided. We have got job reservation, the Bantu Settlement of Disputes Act. All these acts flow down to us from a political platform. They are there to entrench white domination as a whole. Therefore our attacking them, even if from a purely labor angle, will always tend to be political.

Q. Over the past few years there've been attempts to form a Black trade-union federation. How has that development progressed?

A. I'm sorry to say that last month there was a little bit of a split from the people who were organizing it. The difficulties came from the white-oriented trade unions.* They didn't want to be subjected to such attempts. Therefore they could not agree. It is still a stalemate.

Q. If such a federation were actually formed, what kind of role do you think it could play?

*Black trade unions that receive informal assistance or direction from white unionists.—IP/I

Polish CP Sends Pope 'Heartfelt Congratulations'

He was the first non-Italian pope in 455 years. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the crowd of 200,000 outside St. Peter's "seemed puzzled" on hearing his name. But fifty-eight-year-old Karol Wojtyla was selected October 16 as the 264th person and the first Pole in history to sit on the Throne of St. Peter. He took the name of his immediate predecessor, "the smiling pope," who had antagonized no-one during his 33-day reign.

The election of Pope John Paul II met with a favorable response in the most diverse quarters. Jimmy Carter called it "a very good move," and said of the new pontiff: "We know a lot about him. He's quite young. He and Dr. [Zbigniew] Brzezinski are old friends." Television news commentators in the U.S. lauded Wojtyla as one of the world's great fighters against communism.

Strangely enough, the Stalinists were almost as enthusiastic. The Italian CP newspaper *L'Unita* hailed John Paul II's election as "a turning point in the history of the church." Polish CP Secretary Edward Gierek sent a note of "heartfelt congratulations," cosigned by Poland's president and premier. "The significant decision of the Cardinal's Conclave," wrote the three leaders, "fills Poland with great satisfaction."

A. It would be a power bloc, representing workers. They could then wield their power, even to bring down the government. Because the Black labor force in South Africa is 80 percent of the total.

Q. What role do you see the Black working class playing in the overall liberation struggle? What kind of relationship do you see between the struggles of Black workers, and the struggle for Black majority rule?

A. I must point out that at this moment it is a misnomer to say that we have got a Black working class and a sort of Black non-working class. That gives the connotation that we have got different classes in the Black community. You see, the apartheid system has brought Blacks together, no matter whether they are workers, white collar, or even businessmen. They have brought all of us into one camp, the camp of Blacks. So we do not see Black workers as a separate entity from the rest of the Black majority. Therefore, in the struggle for liberation they are fused into one. So therefore at the present moment I fail to see a distinct Black working class.

But the workers are still the major force upon which we rely. That is why we are doing our best to organize workers. □

The *Daily World*, which reflects the views of the American Communist Party, took the occasion to reprint from the Soviet press a feature on "religious forces and the struggle for peace in Europe," signed by N. Kovalsky. The theme of the article is that the church hierarchy is split into two opposing camps. The dividing line is of course how different clerics feel about détente. "Time will tell," says the *Daily World*, whether the second John Paul will line up with those who "advocate peace and cooperation with Communists and all other peace forces," or with those who "desire to see all Europe turn anticommunist."

For now, the Stalinists are giving him the benefit of the doubt. □

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50,000 in Mexico City Commemorate 1968 Massacre

By Roberto Flores

[The following article is scheduled to appear in the November 6 issue of *Perspectiva Mundial*, a Spanish-language news-magazine published fortnightly in New York. The translation is by the *Militant*.]

* * *

MEXICO CITY—The massive march of more than 50,000 workers and students extended for miles through the center of the city. At 6:10 p.m., it stopped. The tens of thousands of demonstrators observed a minute of silence, marking the exact moment when, ten years earlier, the army opened fire in Tlatelolco Plaza, killing some 500 students.

Then, in unison, one heard the demands: "October 2 will not be forgotten!" "Free the political prisoners—general amnesty!" and "Present the disappeared!"

In this way, on October 2, the tenth anniversary of the massacre of Tlatelolco was commemorated.

The imposing demonstration, which one student characterized as an "act of struggle, not of mourning," was organized by the National Representative Commission (CNR) to demand a general amnesty for political prisoners and the presentation of the hundreds of "disappeared," activists who have been kidnapped by the police and whose whereabouts are unknown.

The CNR, composed of political, trade-union, student, and popular organizations, held the demonstration despite the promulgation of an amnesty law by the government a few days earlier. The massive turnout at the demonstration also followed a scare campaign set loose by the capitalist press, which speculated about "provocations" and "possible confrontations." But such tactics did not deter the marchers due to the general scepticism about the amnesty law promoted by President José López Portillo.

Up to now, 111 political prisoners in Mexico City, and a few more elsewhere, have been freed under the new law. Eight political exiles have been authorized to return to the country.

Those who are supposed to have participated, directly or indirectly, in "acts of violence" are not covered by the law. In addition, the decision of who will benefit is left in the hands of the government itself.

Meanwhile, there are hundreds of political prisoners throughout the country, dozens of exiles who have no guarantee of a safe return, and the many "disappeared," about whom nothing has been said.

A broad range of organizations joined to



Roberto Flores/Perspectiva Mundial

Part of protest in Mexico City October 2 marking the tenth anniversary of massacre of 500 student demonstrators in Tlatelolco Plaza.

build the October 2 demonstration. There were high school and university students represented, groups of residents from working-class neighborhoods and suburbs, feminist organizations and contingents of lesbians and homosexuals, numerous independent trade unions, and left-wing parties. Among the latter was the Revolutionary Workers Party, the Mexican section of the Fourth International.

The march was headed by some of the leaders of the student movement of 1968 such as Raúl Alvarez Garín, Gilberto Guevara Niebla, and Eduardo del Valle, as well as by leaders of political parties and Rosario Ibarra de Piedra of the Committee to Defend Political Prisoners, the Politically Persecuted, "Disappeared," and Exiled. The protest culminated with a rally in the Plaza of the Three Cultures in Tlatelolco.

It took almost an hour for the column of demonstrators to enter the huge plaza. Once more, the crowd maintained a minute of silence. From the bell tower of the

church of Santiago Tlatelolco, illuminated with bright red lights, the bells tolled for those who had fallen ten years ago.

Alvarez Garín spoke as a representative of the student movement of 1968. He gave an account of what had occurred ten years earlier, saying that today "democracy continues to be obstructed."

Ricardo Pascoe, leader of the Independent Union of the Autonomous University of Mexico, spoke for the trade unionists. Rosario Ibarra de Piedra urged workers and peasants to unite in the struggle for a general amnesty and for the presentation of the disappeared. She denounced the government's amnesty law as partial and inadequate.

October 2 was also commemorated in other Mexican cities. An action of 10,000 took place in Monterrey; 3,000 rallied in Guadalajara; and a march and rally of 5,000 took place in Culiacán. Actions also took place in Puebla, Orizaba, Cuernavaca, Morelia, Querétaro, and Oaxaca. □

The Economic Crisis Underlying Mass Movement Against Shah

By Saber Nickbin

The imposition of martial law in twelve major cities in Iran September 8—causing 1,000 deaths the first day—represents an important turning point in the deepening crisis of the Iranian ruling class.

This crisis has been marked by the development of the largest mass movement in more than a quarter of a century. In the last year, a spontaneous protest movement against the shah's repressive dictatorship has developed. This movement has turned into a powerful mobilization of millions calling for the overthrow of the monarchy.

The rapid growth of this movement, whose breadth and depth have surprised most observers, might have produced a prerevolutionary situation in Iran for the first time since the CIA coup in 1953, which put the shah back on his throne. At one point, the mass movement assumed explosive and uncontrollable proportions. The growing demoralization in the ranks of the army was threatening the regime's capacity to control the situation.

One day before the proclamation of martial law, nearly a million demonstrators in Tehran alone shouted, "Death to the shah," and asked the soldiers to join them. The Iranian regime, by once again resorting to force and calling out the tanks, has been compelled to recognize that a guarantee of even the most elementary democratic rights could give rise to an explosive mass movement demanding its overthrow.

In spite of the fact that more than 50,000 heavily armed soldiers and about 3,000 tanks now patrol all the major cities daily, and that all gatherings of more than three persons are prohibited, the regime claims to be pursuing its "liberalization" policy.

This "policy" has so far resulted in the death of more than 10,000 persons in one year. There are still more than 100,000 political prisoners. SAVAK, the political police, retains complete control over all newspapers and mass media. Prior to the "liberalization" policy, people could at least meet in mosques. Today even that is no longer possible. Above all, the repression has become much more severe, and there is every indication that it will mount.

'Liberalization' With Martial Law?

The Iranian ruling class has justified this by saying that the shah does indeed want to liberalize the country's political life, and that his regime has already begun to guarantee many freedoms. However, he underestimated one problem—the new at-

mosphere of political freedom enabled the conservative religious leaders to become active and to spur the superstitious Iranian masses to revolt against the "modernizer" shah! Most of the conservative forces have supposedly not been able to accept the rapid pace of reforms instituted by the shah in the early 1960s. Now that they have a chance, they are urging the Iranian masses to rise up against the process of "westernization."

This is the reason why the shah's regime has no other choice but to maintain strict control, while gradually granting political freedoms, even if this means imposing martial law on the whole country!

It is obvious that this makes no sense at all and was cooked up by the propaganda machine of the regime and its imperialist allies. However religious and superstitious the Iranians may be, they nevertheless have the strongest tradition of struggle for freedom against all kinds of reaction and repression in the entire Middle East.

The constitutional revolution of 1906-09, which forced the Qajar dynasty to provide a constitution; the Jangali movement toward the end of the second decade, which led to the establishment of a soviet republic in Gilan; the mass movement against autocracy, during and after World War II, which brought to light the struggles of the Azerbaijani and Kurdish national minorities against their national oppression, and led to the establishment of independent republics in western Iran; the mass movement against imperialism, which culminated in the nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, and which was defeated after the 1953 coup—all of this represents only a few chapters in the history of the Iranian revolution. All of these struggles rapidly became revolutionary mass movements, which could have unleashed the dynamic of permanent revolution in Iran.

The Outbreak of the Crisis

What is behind these upsurges? Iran's integration into the worldwide system of imperialism has resulted in a permanent socioeconomic crisis that could only be contained by the forces of autocracy and reaction, which are supported and armed to the teeth by imperialism. The agrarian crisis, the national question, the low level of industrialization, and imperialist domination together created the conditions that can give a really explosive character to any mass movement against autocracy.

Each time a change in the class relationship of forces has made it possible, the masses have rebelled against the state. Each time, the movement has broadened into revolutionary struggles that take up all the fundamental historic tasks of the Iranian revolution.

Thus, the sudden growth of the mass movement over the last fourteen months is nothing out of the ordinary. But there is a very important difference. In the past, all the revolutionary uprisings in Iran were made possible by sudden changes in the relationship of forces between the classes, owing to sudden upheavals in the international situation and to "external causes" that have led to a sudden weakening of the reactionary forces in Iran.

And once the external factors were removed, the relationship of forces more or less reverted to what it had been originally, enabling the reactionary forces to impose a lasting defeat on the mass movement.

For example, the constitutional revolution took place immediately after the 1905 revolution in Russia. It began in the districts that were under the authority of the tsar's imperialist forces. As soon as the tsarist regime was restabilized in Russia, it helped the Iranian rightists put the revolution to rout.

During World War II, the invasions of Iran by the allied forces, and particularly the presence of the Red Army on Iranian soil, had created a very favorable relationship of forces for the mass movement. But once the Stalinist bureaucracy had made a pact with the Iranian regime, the forces of the central government were able to crush the movement of the oppressed nationalities.

This time, the situation is different. The change in the relationship of social forces, which has weakened the shah's regime and made it possible for the mass movement to develop, is essentially owing to a gradual upset in the internal situation that has taken place over the last two decades. This process has now reached a qualitative stage with the emergence of a structural crisis of the Iranian economy. Nothing

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indicates that the Iranian ruling class can fundamentally reverse this tendency or resolve the crisis. That is why there is every likelihood that, in spite of martial law, the Iranian masses will not be defeated; and that their movement against the shah's regime will reemerge in the fairly near future.

Structural Crisis of Iranian Economy

All the major economic indicators show that after two decades of considerable growth, the Iranian economy has entered a profound crisis since the end of 1976. After a rapid growth of the industrial sector, the urban population, and capitalist agriculture, and the expansion of the industrial work force, the Iranian economy has now entered a crisis that is growing deeper and deeper.

The agricultural sector is in a state of near-total collapse; the industrial sector has stopped growing; the number of urban poor has grown to the point where it now reaches several million. Despite its enormous oil revenues, Iran now has a large balance-of-trade deficit. The final straw is a galloping rate of inflation that is now higher than 30%.

The annual rate of overall formation of fixed capital in industry fell by nearly 45% between March 1976 and March 1977 relative to the previous year. The biggest reduction—more than 70%—is in large investments of more than 100 million rials (65 rials equals approximately US\$1). More than 80% of all investments have been put into existing plants rather than into new projects. The flight of capital from Iran has risen to the astounding figure of more than \$3.5 billion (six times greater than total exports, not counting oil and gas).

Unemployment and underemployment have increased severely, and for the first time in years, the number of waged workers has begun to decrease.

It is clear that for the first time in Iranian history, we are faced with a capitalist crisis of overproduction. But what is involved is not just a temporary crisis of overproduction. It is a structural crisis that results from the integration of the Iranian economy into the worldwide market, and it is hard to see how this crisis can be overcome without a complete withdrawal from the world market.

Changing Role of Iranian Economy

To understand the structural nature of the crisis and its effects on the class struggle, we must look more closely at the changes that have occurred in Iran in the recent period (since the 1960s). These changes, associated with the shah's "white revolution" and his "modernization" program for Iran, have their immediate origins in the new phase of the international centralization and concentration of capital corresponding to the period of "late capitalism." With the growing importance of

revenues stemming from payments for transfers of technology, the principal source of monopolistic superprofits, certain changes in the fundamental role played by the underdeveloped countries within the worldwide capitalist economy have become necessary.

During this phase, the international monopolies have become less interested in these countries as outlets for their excess capital than as major markets for the export of goods and technological services.

This is reflected in the fact that today, unequal exchange has replaced the repatriation of capital and monopolistic profits as the principal mechanism for the transfer of value from the underdeveloped countries to the advanced capitalist centers. Moreover, exported capital itself is no longer invested only in the production of raw materials for the international market, but also in the production of goods destined for the domestic market of the underdeveloped countries, which nowadays is no longer negligible.

This phase in the development of the worldwide capitalist system, which has been associated with what is referred to as the policy of neocolonialism, has led to a number of important changes in the relations between the underdeveloped countries and the advanced capitalist countries. During this phase, contrary to what happened in the early stages of imperialism, the advanced capitalist countries can no longer control the internal capital market in the underdeveloped countries, nor do they want to.

In fact, the international monopolies are now very interested in promoting the formation of a native bourgeoisie and in facilitating the internal accumulation of capital in the productive sectors. In order to transform the underdeveloped countries into outlets for the overproduction of technological goods, it is necessary to encourage productive investments by the "national bourgeoisie." That is why the dependent regimes in these countries are now playing a different role than in the past.

Previously, their main function had been to compel the "national bourgeoisie" to invest in the unproductive and subsidiary sectors of the economy, so as to guarantee that competition between the "national" and the imperialist bourgeoisie was always resolved in the interest of the latter. Now, they must create the conditions for the development of an indigenous class of capitalist entrepreneurs technologically dependent on the advanced capitalist countries, who can exploit and expand the internal market of the underdeveloped countries jointly with foreign capital.

The Condition for Change

Iran was one of the few countries in which these transformations were carried out in a more or less satisfactory fashion. The strong state, the size of the internal

market, and the considerable resources from foreign trade owing to oil revenues created favorable conditions for this transformation to take place. This was done by eliminating several obstacles in the way of capitalist accumulation that had been created in the preceding phases of capitalist rule in Iran. Through direct state intervention, all the structural problems of the Iranian economy that prevented the transformation of savings and accumulated wealth into productive investment were eliminated. All of the basic institutions that were needed to provide financial, technical, and management assistance to the new capitalist class were established.

With the help of the "second economic plan" (1955-62), financed by oil revenues, loans from the World Bank, and aid from the U.S. government, the changes in the infrastructure necessary to ease the way for the internal circulation of merchandise were carried out. More than 15% of the budget was spent to upgrade the transportation and communication networks, generate electricity, and increase the capacity of Iran's major seaports.

The regulation of foreign trade was gradually transformed between 1958 and 1961, leading to the replacement of the "open-door policy" of earlier periods by a strict and selective control over imports of consumer goods, and by heavy restrictions on imports of durables and the products necessary to produce certain consumer goods. This new policy forced many big Iranian merchants and foreign companies to begin to produce in Iran itself the commodities that had formerly been imported.

The agrarian reforms forced a large part of the peasantry to leave the land and led to the transformation of wealth accumulated in agriculture into capital invested in the newly established industries. Millions of peasants were compelled to migrate to the cities in order to ensure a supply of cheap labor power, and the land purchased from the big landed proprietors was paid for with shares in the new industries.

In 1957, the state-owned Industrial Credit Bank was established to provide cheap, long-term loans to aid in the construction of big plants. This bank itself participated in many joint operations and "pilot" projects to ease the way for the growth of industry. Later, in 1969, a similar bank was created—the Iranian Bank for the Development of Mines and Industry—which is a mixed bank combining participation by the state with that of foreign banks. This bank has enabled international monopolies to locate Iranian clients, either for joint operations or simply to buy factories ready to go.

Through these "reforms," the Iranian economy has been transformed to correspond to the changes that have taken place in the worldwide imperialist system, and to the role that the international monopolies have given it. As far as impe-

rialism is concerned, it has been a success.

Iranian imports have risen from 49 billion rials in 1959 to 795 billion rials, with 90% of them coming from the advanced capitalist countries (this does not include arms imports). More than 75% of imports in the last five years are goods used in the productive sector; machinery and spare parts make up 45% of these imports, and raw materials and intermediary products used in the new industries make up the other 30%.

As far as Iran is concerned, this transformation has meant a tremendous increase in the formation of indigenous capital and in capitalist production. The overall formation of fixed capital has multiplied twentyfold, from 53 billion rials in 1959 to 1,048 billion in 1975 (investments in machinery represent more than 40% of this last figure). Foreign capitalists' share of total investments has fallen, going from 30% to just under 7% in the same period.

It is these developments that the regime and its propagandists have called the "modernization" and "industrialization" of an "independent Iran." One fact is clear—Iran's role in the international division of labor established by imperialism has remained unchanged. While Iranian imports have been multiplied by forty in two decades, oil exports have been multiplied only by five; the growth in exports of manufactured goods is entirely negligible. More than 90% of Iran's non-oil exports still consist of raw materials and hand-made carpets. The Iranian economy's dependence on the oil sector has grown. In 1957, the oil sector represented less than 68% of total exports, while in 1974 it reached a level of 97%.

Nevertheless, it is true that the industrial sector of the Iranian economy has grown considerably during this period. The share of the industrial sector (including mines and construction) in added value rose from 16% of the gross national product (at 1972 constant prices) in 1959 to more than 25% in 1975. During the same period, the agricultural share went from 33% to 14.5%. In 1959, only 20.8% of total jobs were in industry, while by 1975 this figure had increased to 32%.

Whatever these figures may indicate, they certainly do not show the contradictory character of Iran's industrial growth, which comes from its special and dependent nature. To demonstrate this, we must look more closely at the process of industrialization and analyze its results.

The Nature of Iranian Industry

Industrial growth based on technological dependency and impelled by external factors has given Iranian capitalism the characteristic features that are leading to its stagnation and decline.

A growing uneven development is appearing in the industrial sector, from both

the geographical and technological standpoints. Income disparities are continuing to widen.

Industrial production is concentrated almost exclusively in the consumer goods sector. The expansion of the internal market is proceeding very slowly. Iranian companies cannot compete on the world market. There is a permanent tendency toward overaccumulation and inflation. The layer of wageworkers is still very thin. Precapitalist and semicapitalist relations are tending to become stabilized, and even, in some cases, to be reinforced.

The fact that this industrial growth has been imported from abroad essentially means that large, modern enterprises (employing little labor power) have been grafted onto the old traditional sectors dominated by small craftsmen using almost no technological methods. Gradual modifications in these sectors have been forestalled by importing completely equipped factories.

The result is that about 2,000 modern enterprises employing some 250,000 workers coexist with hundreds of thousands of small shops adding up to about two million persons. Those employed in 860,000 small shops (averaging two persons per production unit) account for 81.5% of the labor force. Only 138 enterprises employ 500 workers or more; they account for 150,000 workers. Thus, productivity in the major portion of the industrial sector is extremely low. The fact that the small shops continue to survive and even flourish in certain branches of industry is in itself an indication of the nature of the crisis of Iranian capitalism.

The modern enterprises have not been able to make major changes within the backward sector. The reasons for this are not hard to detect if we look at the various sectors of modern industry.

Three Industrial Sectors

The first sector is made up of industries producing luxury goods or consumer durables for a small, well-off layer of the population. They import nearly all of their raw materials and means of production. These goods used to be imported. Thus, they are not in competition with native industries.

The majority of these enterprises are nothing but assembly plants. So even here, no technical skills are developed; the labor power required is not very costly. These plants are somewhat isolated from the rest of the Iranian economy. Moreover, the increase in demand for products of this type is slight. A large number of consumers still prefer to buy goods directly imported from abroad. Thus, these industries survive today thanks to the various kinds of assistance they receive from the state; for example, in some items they are assured of a virtual monopoly over the market.

The second sector is made up of enter-

prises producing previously imported goods. Everything that was said earlier about the first sector applies here too, except that part of the raw materials are produced in Iran. However, the stimulative effects on the Iranian economy as a whole are still quite limited. Before, these raw materials were exported; today, there are restrictions on exporting them. Furthermore, foreign buyers have turned toward countries producing raw materials at more competitive prices. Iranian capitalists also buy raw materials from foreign countries, even though they are produced in Iran. Bankruptcies are common among concerns involved in this sector.

The third sector is made up of factories producing the same commodities as the traditional handicraft industries. Thus, there is competition between them. Many small manufacturers were driven out of business. But after a decade of industrial development, it is possible to get a clearer picture of the situation. The traditional sector is managing to survive. The modern enterprises are not substantially more efficient than well-organized handicraft units. The technology that is imported is second hand, but it is quite expensive to install.

Thus, these modern enterprises have a very low level of competitiveness. By working harder and putting members of their families to work, small businessmen can manage to hang on. By directly distributing their goods on a small local market, they can even make a bit of a profit. However, there is no incentive for them to use more sophisticated technology or to expand production. The modern sector has blocked the development of these small workshops, but their survival prevents the more modern companies from totally controlling the domestic market. Thus, a severe crisis of overproduction is developing in this sector.

Uneven Development

The extremely uneven pace of industrialization is causing ever more acute problems. More than 65% of the new industries are concentrated in and around Tehran, for several reasons—the proximity of the big urban market, economies of scale owing to the bigger size of the enterprises, opportunities to do business with other companies, and so on.

On the other hand, the small handicraft industries are able to produce for small, widely scattered local markets. Furthermore, they can more easily take advantage of domestic sources of raw materials and ties with other, complementary enterprises on the local level.

Patterns of private consumption are in keeping with this inequality. In 1953, consumer expenditures in the rural districts were nearly equal. In 1975, the Tehran district alone spent twice as much on consumption as all the rural districts put together.

Thus, in view of all these obstacles, the domestic market is experiencing very limited growth. The very structure of Iranian industry does not create the kind of internal dynamic that could lead to an expansion of the market and an intensification in the division of labor. The interchanges between Department 1 (producing the means of production) and Department 2 (producing the means of consumption) which, in the capitalist system, are decisive for the expansion of the internal market, are practically nonexistent. Apart from the production of raw materials, Department 1 is reduced to a bare minimum. Thus, even if the modern sector were able to gain control of the entire internal market, it would be faced with a permanent crisis of overaccumulation and overproduction.

Conquering foreign markets is now one of the dreams of the Iranian bourgeoisie. But a cheap labor force or low-cost oil cannot substitute for technology that is more effective and less expensive. It will be hard for the Iranian exporters to make much headway on the world market.

Lagging Agricultural Production

According to the regime's propagandists, the agrarian reform was supposed to lead to the modernization of Iranian agriculture and the development of a prosperous peasantry. Not a single one of the goals has been attained. In 1975, Iranian agriculture employed 36% of the work force but accounted for only 9.3% of the gross national product.

Not only is Iran incapable, after decades of industrialization, of exporting manufactured goods, but nowadays it has to import food, at a cost of two or three billion dollars a year.

According to the government propaganda agencies, the origin of this situation is to be sought in the government's "lack of attention" to agriculture while it was concentrating on a "rapid industrialization." Furthermore, the government states that the rise in the standard of living has meant an increase in the demand for food staples, while migration of the peasants to the cities is causing a shortage of agricultural labor.

In fact, industrialization has forced the peasants to fall back on subsistence farming. Industry cannot absorb either the peasants who have been driven off their land, or the annual population increase.

In addition, the total arable land available for cultivation has not increased, while the rural population has grown by five million persons. The most fertile lands have been used for crops destined for export. So in order to survive, peasant families are forced to work long hours and mobilize the entire family's labor power. The agrarian reform has not stimulated a growth in the number of waged workers, but on the contrary, has led to an increase in the number of unpaid workers engaged in

family farming. This process recurs throughout the Iranian economy.

Imports have to make up for the shortage of food staples. Domestic crops must



SHAH: More medals than brains?

compete with American wheat, Australian meat, Israeli oranges, and so on. More than one Iranian farmer has succumbed to these blows.

Migration to the urban areas is leading to a drastic pauperization of part of the urban population, which has been thrown back into precapitalist living conditions. Furthermore, this industrial reserve army is exerting a downward pressure on wages. All of this contributes to limiting the expansion of the internal market, and therefore the growth of sectors related to the production of consumer goods.

The Oil Sector

The oil industry is the brightest jewel of the ruling class. While it employs less than 0.5% of the active population, it brought in 37.3% of the gross national product in 1975. While this modern industry has a high rate of productivity, it nevertheless has very little stimulative effect on the rest of the economy. The bulk of what it produces is crude oil for export. Essentially, it provides a cheap energy source. In addition, it provides the state with large revenues for its projects—industrialization, subsidies to lagging agriculture, weapons purchases, and maintenance of a gigantic army to ensure the power of the ruling class.

Thanks to the oil industry, the imminent danger of a grave crisis was beaten back. But oil revenues are falling off owing to

worldwide inflation and a drop in demand. The crisis of the Iranian economy cannot be overcome by pumping fresh money into it. The crisis of overproduction may be delayed, but in the long run it will combine with galloping inflation, of which the Central Bank now declines to give an official estimate.

The oil revenues have also made it possible for the state to guarantee capitalist profits, through tax breaks, setting up an infrastructure, long-term loans at very low interest rates, and so on. But none of these measures can keep the crisis from breaking out. On the other hand, the financial resources from oil have multiplied unproductive expenditures and increased the inequality of income distribution. In 1977, while the rural population was battling famine, 500,000 Iranians spent their vacations in Europe or the United States and spent two billion dollars!

When there is a drastic drop in oil revenues, there will be nothing to replace them. In the 1980s, even if arms spending is drastically reduced, which the generals would disapprove of, the oil revenues might no longer serve as shock absorbers as they do now. The crisis will be even worse. Exports of gas and petrochemicals cannot serve as a palliative. Why should European countries import gas from Iran instead of the Netherlands, Algeria, or elsewhere, in view of the high costs of transport? In addition, Iran has already begun to export gas.

Finally, the crisis of overproduction affecting the petrochemical sector internationally makes it highly unlikely that an export campaign in this field could be successful. The best possible prospects for the industry consist of supplying the internal market and making it possible to reduce imports, which would have a favorable effect on the balance of payments.

Political Crisis of the Ruling Class

With the impending outbreak of a crisis of overproduction, all of the regime's failures have been thrown into relief. The political opposition has gained forces; a vast movement against the monarchy has erupted.

It was the big bourgeoisie itself that began to complain initially. Up to then, the shah's regime had done a good job of taking care of its interests. But when a crisis began to lurk around the corner, the bourgeoisie began to bite the hand that had fed it. First, it complained about the growing waste of resources by the state. The regime in turn began to talk about the need to tax the profits of the major industries. The bourgeoisie proposed an austerity program attacking wages, together with protectionist measures. The bourgeoisie began to criticize the immense political and economic power of the state. It wants to participate more directly in running the government and in the planning decisions

that affect the distribution of public funds. All of these squabbles finally led to an agreement on a change of government: Hoveyda was replaced by Amouzegar in August 1977.

The Amouzegar cabinet included a few direct representatives of the big bourgeoisie, and it reflected the increased influence of the technocrats. Many programs put forward by the bourgeoisie were adopted by the new cabinet. Nothing could happen without the big Iranian industrialists being consulted first. Tax bills were amended with the aim of shifting a heavier part of the burden onto the petty-bourgeois layers. A major propaganda campaign was launched against the "unproductiveness of the Iranian working class" and the "high wages" that it received. Small producers and distributors were held responsible for inflation.

It was promised that a fight would be launched against corruption. The government declared that it would create a "politically open atmosphere" and would "guarantee many freedoms."

The petty bourgeoisie and the working class obviously did not look upon these proposals too favorably. The petty bourgeoisie has always been attacked by the state, which initiated the process of industrialization. This process has meant the ruin of the independent producers. To them, the "fight against inflation" appeared to be, and in fact was, a weapon in the hands of the big bourgeoisie to conquer the entire market.

The working class, which before had always been promised a share of the profits, good housing, and high wages, has now been asked to tighten its belt and work harder. Despite the repression, the Iranian working class in the new industries managed to win some wage increases. By taking advantage of the shortage of skilled labor power, the workers forced the employers to give in to their demands. But during this period of economic crisis, the bourgeoisie has persuaded the government to help it fight these demands.

The government has promulgated a draconian new labor law, that, in essence, is a direct attack on the working class. The workers will have to have identity cards that will carry complete information about their past and present jobs. The aim is to prevent them from quitting one job for a better-paying one. Penalties will be imposed on firms that hire another company's workers. All of this, of course, has contributed to politicizing the Iranian working class, and proving to it that the fight for its own interests necessitates the winning of democratic rights.

The plans for a solution to the agricultural crisis have begun to go into effect. They may lead to an explosion in the countryside, because they involve driving the peasants off their land. The peasants have already begun to fight back. They have also experienced state policy directly. The

result of this is a gradual politicization of the peasant masses.

Competition in bourgeois circles has intensified under the hammerblows of the economic crisis. The capitalists have begun to denounce one another. But given the close ties that exist between them and the state institutions, this amounts to placing these institutions in question.

Each capitalist has accumulated his wealth through services rendered to the royal court, or through contacts with members of the top echelons of the state bureaucracy. The royal family itself is the leading capitalist family. Many capitalists bestow on the shah or on other members of the royal family (or of its retinue) free or low-cost shares in their industries, in order to get the right to corner the market. When the capitalists begin to accuse each other, this means that they are undermining the sources of their wealth and power. The role of the royal family itself is under attack.

All of these quarrels among the capital-

ists have, of course, stirred up the social forces that were opposed to the state and helped give their struggle a broader political dimension. It is in this context that the mass movement against the dictatorship has emerged. The period of economic growth has ended, and all the dreams about the "movement toward a great civilization" (referring to a book written by the shah) have been exposed for what they are.

Discontent exists among the immense majority of the population. The class struggle has sharply intensified; and, on top of everything, the authority of the state has come under challenge by the ruling class itself. And the ruling class is incapable of doing anything whatever about this. It cannot resolve the socioeconomic crisis while it is itself the cause of it. It cannot change the regime that it has sprung from. Thus, in these turbulent times, nothing can be of more help to it than the shah's tanks. □

Shuji Sugawara—1949-1978



SHUJI SUGAWARA

[The following statement was issued October 2 by the International Bureau of the Japan Revolutionary Communist League, Japanese section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

Comrade Shuji Sugawara, central leader of the Japan Communist Youth (the Trotskyist youth group in Japan), died September 21 of a cerebral hemorrhage. He was 29 years old. His sudden death came just after the fourth national convention of the JCY, where he had been reelected national secretary.

Comrade Sugawara had been a political activist since he entered Tohoku University in 1968. A leader of the student movement in the northern city of Sendai, he joined the JRCL in 1970 and began working full time for the League in 1974. He moved to Tokyo in 1976 when he was elected national secretary of the JCY at its second convention. Since then, he played a key role as a national leader of the JCY and JRCL, including as a national organizer for the struggle against the opening of Narita Airport in March 1978.

He is survived by his wife Setsuko, a leading activist in the Socialist Women's Council, and by a three-year-old son.

Comrades from the Tokyo area as well as other parts of Japan came to the funeral ceremony, and over 300 comrades attended a memorial meeting for Comrade Sugawara organized by the JRCL and the JCY.

It is with deep regret that we announce this sad news to our comrades around the world. □

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Is India Really on the Verge of Revolution?

By Sharad Jhaveri

"The overthrow of Congress just a year ago showed the masses' determination to avenge the blows of emergency rule and seize hold of their own destiny. India is in the grip of a pre-revolutionary social ferment. Its reverberations could shake the whole world. For all its underdevelopment, by sheer size India is a giant: the second biggest nation on Earth, by population, the world's tenth industrial power, the third greatest employer of scientists and engineers. With 20 million organised workers, one of the biggest Labour Movements in the world is poised on the brink of earth shattering events."

With those words, Roger Silverman introduces the central thesis of a two-part article on India published in the March 17 and March 31, 1978, issues of the London weekly *Militant*, which is reputed to have a sizable influence among the British Labour Party's youth. Silverman is the *Militant's* international editor. His article has had a certain impact in India too, where it has been given wide publicity by several groups, including the Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP).

Silverman regards the former government of Indira Gandhi as having been a bonapartist regime, installed to save her own position. He does not view Gandhi's imposition of a state of emergency in June 1975 in the overall context of the deepening crisis of the Indian economy.

It is true, as Silverman points out, that the emergency was not proclaimed with the explicit consent of the monopolies that benefited the most from it. They accepted it as a *fait accompli*. But according to Silverman, the Indian ruling class was loath to trust the narrow and corrupt ruling clique of Gandhi. "They wanted a dictatorship of their own choice," he writes, "with proper preparation and timing, with as stable a social base as possible, under a leader more sensitive to the collective pressure of their entire class."

This is only one aspect of a Marxist analysis of the complex phenomenon of Gandhi's downfall. It leaves out of account the subterranean revolt that was brewing against Gandhi's dictatorship among the masses. Objectively, this rise in mass struggle, which the emergency could not contain, impelled Gandhi to opt for general elections in March 1977.

The founding of the Janata Party on the eve of the elections helped the Indian bourgeoisie achieve two significant results.

First, the nonmonopolist sector of the bourgeoisie, including the traders and the small businessmen and industrialists, ob-

tained a stake in the political realm, widening the regime's social base.

Secondly, the new formation's demagogic stance as the "savior of democracy," helped the Indian bourgeoisie reinforce the tarnished illusions of the Indian masses in the nature of Indian "democracy." The rising revolt against Gandhi's repressive regime was safely channeled into electoral politics, which were dominated by the bourgeoisie.

Silverman does not seem to note these two aspects of the March 1977 political situation. Instead, he tends to justify the Communist Party of India (Marxists)'s support to the Janata Party.

Silverman proceeds to describe the developments in India since March 1977. In its factual aspects, this description is accurate.

But his view of the direction of political developments leads him to think that a revolutionary situation is around the corner. He thinks that India today fulfills the three objective conditions for revolution codified by Lenin. These, according to Silverman, are (1) a split in the ruling class, (2) a fighting working class, and (3) the neutrality (if not outright hostility) of the middle classes toward the establishment. Silverman writes, "Rarely in world history can these conditions have been so brilliantly fulfilled as in India today."

Silverman compares the March 1977 downfall of Gandhi with the February 1917 revolution in Russia. He compares Prime Minister Morarji Desai with the liberal-capitalist Cadets, Industries Minister George Fernandes with the Mensheviks, and former Home Minister Charan Singh with the Social Revolutionaries.

Silverman, however, overlooks certain vital distinctions between the two situations. Through all the recent ups and downs of the class struggle in India, the bourgeois state with its three repressive arms—the military, bureaucracy, and judiciary—has been kept intact. On the political level there is a crisis of the various bourgeois parties and their factions, but there has been no disintegration of the state power itself.

No dual power in the form of workers councils appeared in India in March 1977, as it did following the February 1917 revolution in Russia. There is no mass revolutionary party that could pose an independent proletarian perspective. The drama of March 1977 was acted out basically within the script written by the bourgeoisie.

The Revolutionary Socialist Party takes

up some of these points in the June 1978 issue of its journal, the *Call*. But the RSP does not stress the dangerous effect that such an analysis can have on the tactical level.

Such a highly exaggerated and overly optimistic assessment of the situation in India could prove fatal for a revolutionary party. It underestimates the real strength of the class enemy and its state. Advocacy of immediate class confrontation would lead to suicidal skirmishes and premature tests of strength that could prove fatal to the vanguard of the working class. What is required is a realistic assessment, an all-round balance sheet of the real political, ideological, and repressive strength of the bourgeoisie and its state.

Silverman rightly notes the lack of a revolutionary party in India. But here is the weakest part of his analysis: he comes to place great hopes in the Stalinist CPI(M) for fulfilling the role of a revolutionary vanguard party.

Stressing that the CPI(M) is now the major party of the Indian working class, Silverman attempts to exhort it to rise to the occasion and fulfill its historic mission, as he perceives it. He asks the CPI(M) to give up its two-stage schema of the coming Indian revolution.

According to Silverman, all that the CPI(M) lacks is a clear perspective of the revolution. In this he is quite critical of the party. He regards the CPI(M)'s tactics of keeping "quiet about all the signs that Janata is really just as bad as Congress" as extremely dangerous and opportunist.

He writes, "The CPI(M) leaders are underestimating the masses, trailing along behind them. Wherever the Party has fought independently it has won a stunning victory. The masses are increasingly suspicious of Janata and well disposed towards the CPI(M) when it offers an alternative. But apparently the CPI(M)'s main concern is to hold them back for fear of a 'premature' conflict with Janata." By "temporising and equivocating," the CPI(M) leaders are allowing the ruling class to "restore its balance and reassemble its apparatus of repression."

Nevertheless, Silverman seems to think that the CPI(M) has a mandate for revolution.

In this, Silverman tends to forget the Stalinist heritage and class-collaborationist traditions of the CPI(M). He does not recognize the need for an independent proletarian perspective and a revolutionary Marxist party as its expression. Merely noting the need for such a party is insufficient. Its program takes on central importance. The program and policies of the CPI(M) act as obstacles to the creation of such a party.

The real problem is that of winning the proletarian cadre away from a class-collaborationist perspective, not how to convert the CPI(M) into a revolutionary party. □

Italian Weekly Features Articles on Trotskyism

The Italian mass-circulation weekly magazine *Panorama* ran a feature of four articles on Trotskyism in its August 15 issue. The first item, entitled "Comrade Lev is Back," summarizes the history of the conflict between Trotsky and Stalin and said that Trotsky's ideas are today receiving a greater hearing than ever before. Two shorter pieces follow: an overview of Trotskyist groups and currents around the world, and a 1932 letter from Trotsky to an Italian follower, Alfonso Leonetti.

The final item in the feature is an interview with the American Trotskyist George Novack. A long-time leader of the Socialist Workers Party, Novack is also the author of numerous books on Marxist philosophy.

Panorama reporter Massimo Conti introduces the interview by saying that "the United States is the country where the Trotskyist movement is the most firmly established." But Conti was amazed when Novack told him the SWP's candidate for president had received more votes than the candidate of the Communist Party in the 1976 elections. "How can that be?" he asked.

"We have a big advantage over the American CP," Novack explained. "That is that we are not linked with the Soviet Union and with the crimes of Stalinism."

"In addition," he went on, "our party is always there as soon as struggles break out. We fight for the rights of Blacks and other minorities. We were among the first to recognize the importance of the women's liberation movement. My wife Evelyn Reed is a well-known feminist. The SWP was active in the struggle against the war in Vietnam and against Carter's attempts to intervene in Angola. A few weeks ago we helped organize a march of 100,000 persons in Washington, D.C., in favor of a law recognizing women's full equality with men. We have members in the major industries, and they are active participants in the country's most important trade unions."

When Conti asked about recent accomplishments of the SWP, Novack outlined the latest developments in the party's lawsuit against the FBI. Lawyers for the SWP and Young Socialist Alliance had just won a contempt citation against the Attorney General of the United States, who had refused to turn over files on FBI informers.

Panorama quotes Novack on the goals of the American Trotskyist movement: "We want to see a radical change in society. The conditions for a socialist transformation of society are more favorable now

than they were thirty or forty years ago. This is true in the United States as well as in other countries. With the continued worsening of the economic situation, signs are beginning to appear of new attitudes on the part of working people. We are seeing evidence of unrest even within the trade unions. We think this is the beginning of a new situation.

"Trotsky once said that revolutionaries

Pnompenh Tries to Break International Isolation

By Matilde Zimmermann

The latest call for imperialist intervention against Cambodia came in an October 12 letter to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance signed by eighty U.S. Senators. The letter complains that the Carter administration has not responded forcefully enough to accounts of mass terror in Cambodia. (In point of fact, Jimmy Carter—who welcomes Ian Smith to Washington and praises the shah of Iran—has branded the Cambodian regime as "the worst violator of human rights in the world today.") The eighty senators express the ominous opinion "that Cambodia has become a uniquely horrible situation warranting a uniquely vigorous response from the world community."

The prime mover behind the intervention call is Democratic senator from South Dakota and former "dove" George McGovern. In August McGovern called for military action against Pnompenh "to knock this regime out of power."

Meanwhile, the clashes between Pnompenh and Hanoi show no signs of winding down. According to radio broadcasts from both capitals, border fighting has escalated over recent weeks. U.S. "intelligence sources" in Bangkok (i.e., the CIA and the army) report a major buildup of troops and matériel on both sides of the border.

Chinese Vice-premier Teng Hsiao-p'ing predicted October 13 that Vietnam would launch an all-out military offensive and attempt to capture Pnompenh as soon as the rainy season was over.

In response to this situation, the Pnompenh regime seems to be attempting to break out of its international isolation. A trade agreement has been reached with Tokyo, and Cambodian officials have visited Rome, Paris, and Brussels to discuss trade possibilities. Diplomatic and economic ties have been established with Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singa-

needed to combine the Bolshevik program with American know-how. That's what the SWP is trying to do."

"What can Trotskyists teach other Marxists around the world?" was one of Conti's questions. In his answer Novack explained the Trotskyist concept of internationalism and the importance of solidarity with the struggles of oppressed people wherever they occur.

The interview ended with Novack's expressing support for the campaigns of Soviet dissidents and confidence that the changes he saw occurring on a world scale would some day have an impact within the Soviet Union as well. □

pore, and are being sought with the Philippines.

Cambodian Foreign Minister Ieng Sary has invited U.N. Secretary General Kurt Waldheim to visit Cambodia "to see with his own eyes" whether there is any basis for charges of human-rights violations. Pnompenh has indicated a willingness to allow selected foreign observers and journalists to enter the country, beginning with those most friendly to the regime.

In the October 13 issue of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, correspondent Nayan Chanda describes "the frenetic diplomatic activity in Phnom Penh in recent weeks, involving visits by a stream of friendship delegations from abroad and a barrage of statements and interviews."

On September 24 Radio Pnompenh broadcast Premier Pol Pot's official invitation for all Cambodians who have fled the country to return home, where they are promised "a cordial reception."

Prince Norodom Sihanouk has been brought out of mothballs and is being dusted off for possible display as a symbol of national unity. Once promised the position of head of state for life, Sihanouk was forced to resign in April 1976, at which point he disappeared from sight. There was speculation that he might be dead or working as an agricultural laborer. At an October 13 news conference at the United Nations, Ieng Sary passed around recent photographs of Sihanouk with Cambodian President Khieu Samphan and said the prince was back in his old palace in Pnompenh "living now like before, comfortably."

It is safe to assume that Washington is watching with interest to see how far Pnompenh will go with its new overtures. And if the imperialists don't like what they see, they can probably count on McGovern to start waving the flag of intervention once again. □

Romanian Dissenter Paul Goma Begins Tour of United States

By Gerry Foley

Paul Goma, the most prominent Romanian writer and protester against violations of human rights, began a tour of the United States October 19 with a press conference in New York, organized by the International League for Human Rights.

The purpose of his tour, Goma said, was to dispel illusions that the Ceausescu regime is more independent of Moscow or more liberal than the other East European governments. His lectures are being organized by the Truth About Romania Committee, and he expects to speak on university campuses as well as to groups of senators and congressmen.

The exiled protester expressed bitterness about the existence of what he said were friendly relations between Washington and Bucharest. He began by saying that the Romanian people recognized that their fate had been decided by the big powers dividing up the world between them.

Goma said the Romanian people no longer expect to be liberated by the United States but they hope that the U.S. government will at least not strengthen the hand of their oppressors by laying out the red carpet for Ceausescu or his emissaries.

When those protesting the denial of human rights in Romania try to appeal to President Carter, Goma complained, the Romanian authorities tell them that they are "crazy" because "Comrade Ceausescu and President Carter are good friends."

The biggest obstacle to developing international support for the victims of Ceausescu's repression, in Goma's opinion, was the existence of illusions about the independence and liberalism of the regime.

"The fact that we can now talk like what we are, Romanians," Goma said, "does not mean that we have any more bread and still less that we have any more freedom."

It was easy to describe the state of human rights in Romania, Goma said, "since there aren't any." The exiled writer, who stressed that the Romanian human-rights movement unlike other protest movements in Eastern Europe was made up mainly of workers, began by denouncing the denial of the rights of labor.

What sort of rights workers have in Romania can be judged, he said, by the fact that when coal miners went on strike last year, they were not fighting for more rights but only trying to defend the few advantages they had enjoyed during Stalin's time.

Romanian antibureaucratic fighters had thought that the imprisonment of political dissidents in mental hospitals was "a

Russian invention." But they have discovered that this practice has been used in their own country since 1955, since Ceausescu's rise to power.

Goma thought that in fact the Romanians might have an invention to their credit in this field of "mental therapy"—the use of injections of a mixture of milk and iodine, which cause severe pain.

There are three categories of political offenders in the mental institutions, Goma said. The first are "political criminals." In the past, such persons would have been given long prison terms. Now they are allowed to choose between years in prison and a few months in a mental institution.

Many persons, he said, are tempted to choose the shorter term, but this means that they will be subjected to "psychological and physical destruction."

The second category are "agitators," that is, those who protest against injustices and the denial of democratic and basic human rights.

The third category are "potential agitators," that is, individuals considered likely to make protests if they get the opportunity. Such persons are regularly rounded up before any international conference takes place in Romania.

Goma said that he himself had been held in a mental ward for a few months while in police detention, and that "if it had not been for you [those in the West who protested his imprisonment], I might finally have been tried and sentenced for treason."

The situation in Romania, Goma said, is really worse than in the other East European countries because the state is being run by "a couple of lunatics."

Goma complained that the only right Washington seems to be concerned about in Romania is the right to emigrate. He said this attitude was playing into the hands of the Ceausescu government.

He himself had been offered an exit visa several times while being held by the police but had refused it, demanding a visa that would enable him to go abroad and return. As a result of this insistence and protests on his behalf in the West he has finally gotten a passport good for reentry.

However, because of the failure of the Belgrade conference to review compliance with the Helsinki accords to achieve anything in the area of human rights, Goma decided not to return to Romania.

Goma was asked by this reporter what he thought the possibilities were for get-

ting the big West European Communist parties to defend persecuted dissidents in Romania. He replied that Santiago Carrillo, head of the Spanish CP and the most outspoken "Eurocommunist" leader, was a "good friend of Ceausescu." (He did not say whether he thought this put him in the same category as President Carter.)

Goma had tried to appeal to French CP head Georges Marchais, but Marchais refused to see him. However, it had been possible, he said, to pressure the CP-controlled union federation in France to speak out in defense of the democratic rights of East European dissidents at the conference of the Kremlin-controlled international labor federation in Prague. He thought it might be possible to get something from the unions, if not from the Communist parties as such.

The Romanian writer was able to communicate effectively what a bitter experience it was to live under a totalitarian regime in a Balkan country with a tradition of obscurantism, crude nationalism, and petty tyranny.

But it is not very likely that he can build effective support in the West for the anti-bureaucratic fighters in Romania until he gains a better understanding of the world in which he is operating. The fact that he expected the Belgrade conference to produce something for the dissidents and was embittered when it did not indicates great political naiveté.

Since Goma himself said that the U.S. government must know what the real situation in Romania is, how can he think that his talking to a few anti-Communist senators and congressmen is going to change anything?

Furthermore, at the New York press conference, he showed an insensitivity to oppression outside East Europe that is likely to cut him off from the very forces in the West that have an interest in consistent and active defense of democratic rights. □

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For an End to All Restrictions on Women's Right to Abortion!

By Jacqueline Heinen

In most countries in the world, women do not have the right to abortion. And in those countries where the law has been changed, the bourgeoisie is still trying to take back the concessions it has been forced to grant.*

Leaving aside such questions as how these laws are to be implemented, and the deficiencies of the health-care system, it is not possible to discuss these "liberalization" measures without pointing out how restrictive they are in the majority of cases.

In Great Britain, women may have abortions up to the twentieth week, on condition that they obtain authorization from two physicians, who alone are empowered to decide whether the "case" before them corresponds to the restrictive provisions of the law. In the United States, the right to abortion is recognized by law, but women and doctors can still be sentenced to prison terms if abortions are performed after a certain time period has passed.

In France, the law supposedly gives women "the right to abortion," but only up to the tenth week, as long as they are not minors or immigrants and have undergone two compulsory interviews. And in France, as in the United States, the law does not specify that abortion costs are to be automatically reimbursed. The list goes on.

In this situation, our struggle is to get the women's movement as well as the labor movement to lead a battle for recognition of the right to abortion and contraception as an inalienable right—the right of women to choose whether or not they want children, and if so, when and how. In the slogans that we raise, we oppose any restrictions on that right.

But this position cannot be taken for granted, as the recent debate inside the National Abortion Campaign in Great Britain showed. The debate was over what position the organization should take on a bill proposed by the Abortion Law Reform Association (ALRA).

The ALRA is a reformist organization that has existed in Great Britain since 1936. Its main objective has always been to try to put pressure on members of parliament, rather than to mobilize broad masses to win the right to abortion. This bill defined abortion as a right, but only up to the point where the fetus becomes "via-

ble," that is, up to the twenty-eighth week.

At first glance, this proposition would appear to be sensible, given the real physical and mental risks incurred by women who decide to abort after that point. But the very fact that it involves a time limit fundamentally undermines women's right to choose. We cannot allow anyone, on grounds of sparing the public's feelings—least of all the feelings of the parliamentary representatives who are being called upon to vote—to place limits on a right that belongs to the individual woman.

This is a conclusion that the NAC came to after a long debate, and after its 1977 congress had defeated the ALRA proposal by a slim margin. The majority that emerged from the 1978 congress tends to agree with what the comrades of the IMG (International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International), who took part in the discussion, had to say:

From the standpoint of principle, we need legislation that gives women the right to abort without having to pay, and without needing anyone's permission. This implies that there not be any restrictions, and that we go as far as possible in obtaining legislation regarding funding and the structures that will make it possible for the law to be really implemented. It should be a law that reflects women's interests alone, steering clear of any compromises that bend to the interests of parliament. That is why the NAC should propose that there be no limitation, legal or medical, on women's right to abortion. Only women should be able to control their bodies and their reproductive functions. No other individual, no institution, and no government is entitled to claim that right.

In the capitalist system, the bourgeoisie uses parliament and the laws as an instrument of control over the working class. That is why the NAC is now in favor of there being no restrictions on women's right to choose, and we do not accept any time limits (such as "viability" of the fetus) on that choice. At any time in their pregnancy, women are responsible enough, if they have access to adequate information, to decide whether or not to end their pregnancy. Women do not need to be protected against themselves in matters of procreation and sexuality. The acceptance of a time limit would mean that we recognize the right of the state to intervene in women's lives. Furthermore, it would mean that at a certain point, the rights of the fetus would prevail over those of women.

Granted, no one can deny that women who have late abortions are taking a risk. But one can also ask what would happen if the right to contraception and abortion—and thus information—really existed at all levels of society? How many women would take such a risk? And, on the contrary,

where that right does not exist today, don't many women take infinite risks by aborting in the first three months, at a time when, in principle, abortion should not pose major risks if it is practiced under the right conditions?

So a problem arises, one that has come up in many discussions: Why fight to get a law passed giving women the right to abortion? Why not consider abortion like any other medical procedure? The law does not codify the right to be operated on for appendicitis, for example!

From the moment that a consciousness exists of the fact that women should be free to have abortions, what is necessary is to fight to decriminalize abortion, to abolish all the laws that penalize it. A victory in this field will then make it possible to wage a struggle to have abortion included in the health-insurance code, like any other medical procedure.

This is the type of position that was adopted by the Italian Radical Party when it proposed a referendum to abolish the abortion law dating from the fascist period, and, at the beginning, by a coalition of bourgeois liberals and reformists in Switzerland, which sponsored an initiative on decriminalizing abortion without putting forward any proposal for an alternative law.

Moreover, this approach to the question found a certain echo in the antiparliamentary point of view held by a major current in the women's movement in those two countries. For many feminists, a "refusal to be manipulated," and hence, a refusal to participate in campaigns with other political forces, was combined with a total underestimation of the importance of parliamentary battles for the growth of a mass movement around abortion.

In Italy, the combination of these two currents paralyzed the women's movement, making it incapable of responding to the aspirations that were beginning to be expressed among working-class women. It even led to a deep division within the movement, between the current of feminists who had been the first to launch the struggle around abortion, and those who, conscious of the backwardness of the Italian working class on this issue, struggled to get the trade-union movement to take up the demand for the right to abortion and take part in the political battle that was then going on at the parliamentary level.

The former current did not manage to go beyond its social horizon, and put all the

*See "International Campaign Launched for Right to Abortion," by Jacqueline Heinen, in *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, July 17, 1978, p. 854.

emphasis on "alternative" ways of doing things, on personal experience, as though the battle for the right to abortion were already outmoded on the grounds that the initial mobilizations had succeeded in establishing a few "consultori" (clinics).

As for us, we know that the right to free abortion and contraception on demand will be won only by mobilizing the masses of women and workers. But we know that the laws resulting from mass mobilizations (such as the 1967 law in Great Britain, the 1973 Supreme Court decision in the United States, or the Veil law in France) are partial gains that have to be defended.

Two very significant examples show the necessity of not underestimating the importance of carrying out a legal battle as part of the struggle to establish structures making it possible for women to have abortions.

First, take the example of English Canada. The development of the women's movement at the end of the 1960s, and especially the mobilizations around abortion, had established a relationship of forces such that the authorities were compelled to tolerate abortion in practice. While there had been no change in the law, it was relatively easy up until recently to get a hospital abortion by appealing to an ad hoc body.

However, as an immediate consequence of the economic crisis, and the austerity policy imposed by the bourgeoisie, particularly in the public sector, a number of gynecology units—which were considered "secondary" relative to other hospital departments—were shut down, and the facilities that had been allotted up to then for abortion were eliminated. Most of the ad hoc bodies simply began strictly applying the terms of the law itself, which permits abortion only in exceptional cases.

Faced with this situation, Canadian feminists realized that only by relaunching a central battle for the right to legal, unrestricted abortion could they lay the groundwork for a successful struggle to unleash the funds necessary to enable women to have abortions.

Another example is what is happening in Australia, where clinics do of course exist in which women can have abortions (some of which even appear to be official institutions), but where the law at the national level also does not permit free abortion on demand. Leaving aside the fact that several of these clinics are mainly a source of fantastic profits for their owners (an abortion, performed in an assembly-line manner, costs \$200), it should be noted that the Fraser government is now trying to drop abortion from the list of medical services covered by the national health insurance to make it into an "optional" service similar to plastic surgery, implying a higher insurance premium!

There again, the Australian feminist

movement is being forced to lead a battle, both to keep abortion covered by health insurance (considered as a gain), and to have abortion recognized as an inalienable right written into the law.

If we now look at the situation in countries where the abortion laws have been "liberalized," we find that nowhere is abortion considered a right, leaving the choice entirely up to the woman. Not even in Sweden, where the time period for abortion on demand has nevertheless been extended to eighteen weeks, and where the opportunities for legal abortion beyond that limit are real. There, as elsewhere, it is still the medical profession that has the last word.

In particular, if we take France as an example, where the law defines abortion up to the tenth week as a "right," we see that the restrictions in the Veil law referred to above—the lack of funds with which to set up the necessary structures, the use of the "conscience clause" by all-powerful department heads to make sure no abortions are done in "their" hospitals—all lead to a situation where, in spite of an article of the law "authorizing" contraception and abortion within certain limits, what is in fact involved is neither a right nor a choice for the majority of women.

In France, as in the other countries where the law has been modified, recognition of women's right to choose presupposes that the central target of mobilizations places *no* restriction whatever on *any* woman (which implies first of all that abortion should be free).

In contrast to the reformists, we refuse to consider the problem of abortion and contraception in terms of improving or applying the existing law, nor do we consider that issues of "conscience" are involved for the deputies or doctors who have to make the decision.

The Italian CP showed that it was willing to make any and all concessions during the parliamentary debate to save the "historic compromise." It agreed as a last resort to restrictions in the law concerning minors, and now that this law has been passed with all its limitations, the CP makes triumphant speeches about implementing it on the local level without questioning the deficiencies in the hospital system.

The French CP has recently begun declaring that it wants to carry out a campaign to implement and extend the Veil law, but maintains a discreet silence about the restrictions on minors so as not to offend the voters by bringing up a controversial issue—the family.

The British Labour Party makes abortion an issue of "conscience" for parliamentary deputies, and despite its position on paper favoring women's right to abortion, allows its own members to vote against liberalizing the law.

Finally, the West German Social Democratic Party didn't lift a finger in 1974 when the Supreme Court of Karlsruhe knocked down a decision by parliament decreeing the right to abortion up to the third month. The law in question was later replaced by one much more restrictive, without eliciting any mobilizations by the workers movement. The sole exception is the recent decision by the Berlin civil-service trade union to renew the struggle around this issue.

Such examples are not likely to convince feminists who are still hesitating that the successful outcome of their struggle depends on their ability to link up with the workers movement.

However, the battle for the right to abortion and contraception cannot be won without a massive mobilization of working-class organizations, and of working women first and foremost. To that end, there are special axes of struggle that we can proceed from to make it easier to involve the workers movement. For instance, cases of repression, as we saw in France with the example of Aix or of Frank Dupin, in Belgium with the defense of Dr. Peers, and in Canada with the battle for Dr. Morgentaler's release and then acquittal.

But the consequences of the economic crisis, and the general tendency of the bourgeoisie internationally to resurrect women's traditional role, can imbue this struggle with an explosive dynamic, enabling it to go far beyond the issues of abortion and contraception and bursting the framework that the reformists try to impose on it.

The mobilizations in various countries have in fact already shown that this battle, which nearly always leads women to put forward demands having to do with the quality of contraception or their desire to have some control, together with the staff, over the family planning or abortion centers that are set up, necessarily leads to a questioning of the health-care system that exists in this society, and of the role of the multinational pharmaceutical trusts.

In particular, the internationalist dimension of this struggle can be a decisive element in bringing out its political character. In the colonial and semicolonial world, women sometimes struggle around issues analogous to those that exist in the advanced capitalist countries, as can be seen today in Mexico or Mauritius, where mobilizations for the right to abortion and contraception have already taken on major proportions. But they are also, and more often, reduced to struggling against forced contraception and sterilization.

Solidarity with these women, who are among the most oppressed and exploited, must be a central feature of the recently launched international campaign. Such solidarity can be established on the basis of a slogan shared by all women: For the right to choose! □



An Phoblacht

October 8 march in Derry City commemorating tenth anniversary of civil-rights demonstration attacked by police.

Derry—5,000 March in Support of Irish Freedom Struggle

By Gerry Foley

More than five thousand persons attended a rally in Derry City on October 8 to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the first broad civil-rights march attacked by the police.

The police pogrom against civil-rights marchers in Duke Street in Derry ten years ago marked the beginning of the escalation of explosive mass protests that brought the oppressed Catholic minority in the British imperialist enclave of Northern Ireland to their feet.

In 1968, TV viewers throughout Ireland and Britain could see police beating peaceful demonstrators to the ground. These pictures brought home the reality of repression in Northern Ireland to broad audiences, just as the TV newsreels from Vietnam were doing at the same time.

The demonstration in Derry this October 8 was also attacked by the "forces of order"—in this case, by the British army, which was brought in in 1969, supposedly to "restore peace."

In the October 12 issue of *Hibernia*, a

liberal mass-circulation weekly published in Dublin, Niall Kiely described the actions of the British army:

Anyone still entertaining delusions about the "peace-keeping" role of the British Army in Northern Ireland would have suffered a rude shock last Sunday [October 8] in Derry's Guildhall Square. . . . dozens of soldiers burst into the Square within minutes of the Sinn Fein rally ending, wielding batons threateningly and firing plastic bullets indiscriminately and with gusto.

It was a calculated stroke which can only have been designed to ensure that rioting—which showed no signs of getting off the ground at the time—did in fact take place. The sudden attack on the square, which was still emptying after the meeting, inevitably brought casualties: the first to fall was a white-haired man in his 60s, knocked at short range by an Army plastic bullet which left blood streaming from his head.

The international press concentrated on a clash between police and a Protestant mob trying to get at the Catholic demonstration. In fact, the differences between the cops and the proimperialist mob were merely tactics.

The only thing the mob knows is Catholic bashing. That has been its traditional role and privilege. Today, however, Catholics are a majority in Derry, and if the Protestants had provoked a fight, the army would have had to come in to back them up, as it has done many times in the past ten years. Obviously, it was not in the political interests of the British authorities to carry out such an operation at that time.

The political aim of the British is to try to look like neutral peacekeepers, especially when the press is watching, and to get across the idea that it is only an "extremist" element in the Catholic community that opposes imperialist rule.

Unfortunately, the Provisional republicans played into the hands of the British by insisting that the march and rally be under their auspices and by trying to give the action the appearance of mass acclaim for their guerrilla struggle. This approach corresponds to a sectarian tack the Provisionals have taken in the last year. With a broader united-front approach, the action

could have been much larger, as is indicated by the growing protests in the recent period against imperialist repression.

The Derry demonstration also marked the second anniversary of H-Block, the section of Long Kesh prison camp where republican prisoners are confined in isolation cells without clothes, proper sanitary facilities, or even beds.

The H-Block prisoners issued a strong appeal for support for the action. Their statement said, in part:

We, the Republican P.O.W.s [prisoners of war] in H-Block, are still as far away from civil or even human rights as is imaginable. We still endure the most horrific conditions engineered by a totally repressive and corrupt regime.

We are still denied the very basics of decency. Naked, surrounded by filth, harassed and beaten, we are at the complete mercy of inhuman screws [jailers] who take their orders from Mason [chief British official for Northern Ireland]. . . .

We are engaged in the only form of protest available to us, as Archbishop O Fiaich [primate of Ireland] has recognised, and we know that all those who support our just demands will take part in this march which is the best form of protest available to them. Mass action, people on the streets denying in public Mason's claim that we are criminals. Over 20,000 people marched in Coalisland [on August 27]. We hope that double that number will march in Derry on October 8th. . . .

We appeal to all, show us your support. Our position grows daily worse. How long can such a situation continue without the inevitable outcome—serious illness or death? . . .

Attend the march. Ensure that the organisers can create a mass protest against Brit repression, torture and occupation.

The prisoners of H-Block ask you: support the march. Do not let us rot in Mason's stinking cellblocks.

In its October issue, *Socialist Republic/Poblacht Shóisialach*, the paper of the Irish Trotskyists, also urged support for the demonstration in Derry:

The march in Coalisland and another held more recently from Dunville Park has shown that a broad mass resistance exists against British rule and repression which even forced O' Fiaich to speak out against the conditions of political prisoners. . . .

It's taken the SDLP [the moderate Catholic bourgeois nationalist party] two years to make a statement on H-Block. . . . This statement just about lives up to our expectations of the SDLP. It waffles about and is as pro-British as the party itself.

However, the fact that they did make a statement shows they are vulnerable on the issue, and also shows the broad support the prisoners have. Unity around the October march could bring a speedy end to the prisoners' ordeal.

Despite the problems, the march and rally were large and spirited, reflecting the reviving confidence and the deepening anger of the oppressed Catholic people.

At the rally representatives of the Relatives Action Committees, organizations springing up through Northern Ireland to mobilize support for the prisoners, con-

demned those individuals and groups that had failed to participate.

Michael Farrell, one of the leaders of the 1968 march and a leader of the Irish Trotskyist organization, People's Democracy—Movement for a Socialist Republic, explained the importance of broad mass action.

The main Provisional speaker was Aindreas O Ceallachain. In its report of his speech, the Dublin weekly *An Phoblacht*, which reflects the views of the Provisionals, stressed the following statements, among some others:

"In battle one needs resources of physical courage. But no one could endure the

torments of Long Kesh without great moral courage. That moral courage is derived from spiritual strength and faith in the justice of our cause.

"If these men were in Salisbury, Dr. David Owen and Andrew Young would call them freedom fighters. President Carter might even send one of them a letter.

"But they are not in Rhodesia, Chile or Russia. They are incarcerated in Ireland because they would not accept the status of slaves in their own country. . . .

"... a small country, armed with a righteous cause is stronger than all hosts of error. And that is the reason we will win." □

A 635-Mile Monument to Stalinist Rule

The East German government has finished a 635-mile segment of the nine-foot-high fence along its western border from the Baltic Sea to the Czechoslovakian frontier.

It has taken five years to complete this portion of the fence, at an estimated cost of \$500,000 to \$1 million per mile. When completed it will be 825 miles long.

A highly elaborate system, combining sophisticated killer devices and constant patrols by border guards, has been installed to discourage East German citizens who may be dissatisfied with the regime's version of "realexistierenden Sozialismus" (existing socialism) from trying to leave.

In the October 1 issue of the *Toronto Star*, correspondent William Currie describes some of the latest touches that have been added:

"The fence is a mesh of razor-sharp

metal triangles, just big enough for a person to get his fingers in for a handhold. The fencing hangs loosely from cement posts sunk three feet into the ground and set five feet apart. It is not electrified."

A U.S. army intelligence expert told Currie that the fence is hung loosely for a purpose. "If a man sticks his fingers in the mesh to climb, his weight makes it sag and the triangles close, cutting his fingers off."

In addition, "Two antipersonnel mines are strapped on the east side of each post, one at head level, one at knee level. They are aimed parallel to the fencing and armed with a quarter-pound of TNT and a half-pound of buckshot. It takes a quarter-ounce of pressure on the fence to set them off. If one facing south is tripped, the next one facing north goes off, catching anything between in a crossfire."

6,000 March in West German Antinuclear Action

Six thousand antinuclear activists turned out for a demonstration October 1 in Biblis, West Germany, a town located on the Rhine River south of Frankfurt. Biblis is the site of the largest operating nuclear reactor in Western Europe.

The demonstration had rather broad support. In addition to a wide range of community groups and environmental organizations, the action was sponsored by several political organizations, including the Young Socialists, the organization affiliated to the German Social Democratic Party; several Maoist groups; and the International Marxist Group, the West German section of the Fourth International.

Before the march started off, demonstrators, with some abstentions, adopted a resolution calling on the Hessian state

premier to take a stand before the October 8 elections that any plans for expanding the Biblis nuclear plant should be dropped once and for all.

The marchers then set off for the reactor site, where a rally was held.

The march and rally went off peacefully, in contrast to police attacks on other big antinuclear actions, such as the Kalkar demonstration in 1977. The authorities, with an eye toward the elections, kept the police presence minimal.

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Open Letter to Communist Party of Soviet Union

Reviewed by Marilyn Vogt

The Ukrainian philosopher Vasyl Lisovy was a member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union when, on July 2, 1972, he sent a letter to the party leadership protesting the wave of arrests in the Ukraine that began in January of that year.

The victims of the crackdown were intellectual figures with whose ideas and activities Lisovy, like many other Ukrainians, was familiar. Those arrested were prominent cultural and literary figures who had criticized Russification of the Ukrainian republic and had contrasted Russification to the nationalities policy championed by Lenin and the October revolution of 1917. They had also protested police repression of democratic rights and the imprisonment of those who shared their ideas.

Many of those arrested in 1972 were soon to be sentenced to long prison terms.

Lisovy, in his letter, defended freedom of expression as a prerequisite for building socialism. He condemned the closed trials where such intellectuals were sentenced to long prison terms for possessing *samvydav*—officially unapproved and uncensored writings—or for alleged “anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda.”

“It is useless,” he said, “to argue that to the extent that the ideas of the accused have a hostile character then the public should not be acquainted with them. Because this would mean that the court does not trust the people, and thus it stops being a popular court and becomes an institution against the people. . . . Why then the fear of acquainting the working class with all the material of the court case? . . . An important condition of publicity should be acquainting the public with those materials which are characterized as anti-Soviet. . . . The matter of characterizing materials (written or oral) cannot be left to the hands of the investigator. . . . Nor can this matter be farmed out to specialists. . . . The right of establishing such criteria is the sovereign right of the whole working class (or at least the whole Communist Party).”

As regards the rulers’ blanket definition of *samvydav* as “anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda,” Lisovy said: “It is well-known that the organs of the KGB impute anti-Soviet propaganda to the distribution of so-called *samvydav* or uncensored literature. I am deeply convinced that if a whole

number of works of K. Marx, V.I. Lenin or T.H. Shevchenko¹ circulated in *samvydav* without their origin being known, they would also fall in the category of ‘ideologically harmful literature.’”

He pointed out that while the rulers ban discussion in the official press of blatant social and economic problems—from juve-

Open Letter to the CPSU, by Vasyl Lisovy. Published by the Committee in Defense of Soviet Political Prisoners, P.O. Box 6574, Station C, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5B 4M4. 1978, 47 pp.

nile delinquency, alcoholism, and environmental pollution to the oppression of women and the national oppression of non-Russians—the people know these problems exist. The solutions to the problems can only come about through open discussion. Yet if this discussion is banned officially, how can concerned Soviet citizens discuss them except unofficially, in *samvydav*? To be concerned and seek solutions is their responsibility. However, their writings are then branded as “anti-Soviet.”

“I am convinced that in the milieu of the Ukrainian intelligentsia no one questions the rada (Soviet) as the basic building block of the state, or questions socialism as a social system. If criticism of particular phenomena of social life reaches certain generalizations, then this is done only with the desire of accelerating the development of our society towards achieving high ideals,” Lisovy said. “The interpretation of these ideals and the different understandings of what is Soviet and what is socialist is another matter. It is no secret that some of us understand socialism and communism as the model of barrack-like communism and worse. These ‘some’ are not just anybody—they can be found in very high positions.”

“Considering the conditions under

1. Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861), a Ukrainian poet, has become known as the father of Ukrainian nationalist literature and remains a symbol of the aspirations and goals of the Ukrainian people today. While systematically imposing Russian domination on the Ukrainians, the Stalinist bureaucracy erects statues to Shevchenko.

which I am presenting this letter, it is hard for me to believe it will receive constructive reaction,” he concluded. “But in this case I don’t care. . . . To the extent that the views and the activities of most of the arrested are well known to me, I do not consider these views and activities anti-Soviet—I share them.”

The party leadership took only two days to answer Lisovy’s letter. On July 4, 1972, he was arrested and subsequently sentenced—for this letter—to seven years in a forced labor camp and three years’ internal exile on a charge of “anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda.”²

In March, 1976, Lisovy’s wife, Vira, appealed from the Ukrainian SSR to the Paris-based International Committee Against Repression, a coalition of trade-union, civil-rights and prosocialist forces, for help to free her husband. She appealed for help not only because of the injustice of the sentence but because of her husband’s deteriorating health under inhuman conditions of confinement. She also fears that he will be rearrested, charged, and sentenced before his term ends.

She reported that Lisovy had already been sent for a total of two years in solitary confinement and punishment cells in the camps because of his protests against conditions.

These punishment cells, according to Amnesty International, are damp, either drafty and cold or without ventilation at all—sometimes underground—where prisoners sleep on bare boards and where sanitary conditions are primitive. Food rations are cut and delivered only every other day.

Vira Lisova stated: “He came out so wasted that he could walk only by gripping the walls (this is the state in which I saw him during my visit—completely exhausted and emaciated, so that it was difficult to recognize him).”

Yet despite these physical and psychological punishments, his wife said, Lisovy has not been broken. “During my visit to the isolation cell in the Kyiv KGB prison in January 1976 my husband professed to

2. A colleague of Lisovy’s, Ievhen Proniuk, who helped draft the open letter, was also arrested, tried with Lisovy, and got a longer sentence—seven years in a forced labor camp and five years’ internal exile—on the same charge.

me that he remains a Marxist and feels neither legal nor moral guilt."

Vasyl Lisovy's letter and Vira's appeal, recently issued as a pamphlet by the Edmonton-based Committee in Defense of Soviet Political Prisoners, are rich testimony to the bankruptcy of Stalinist rule. Lisovy's ideas reflect and reaffirm that dissidents in the Ukraine—scores of whom are now imprisoned by Stalin's heirs—are guided by the spirit of the October revolution and take their inspiration from the ideas of Lenin, both of which are anathema ("anti-Soviet") as far as Stalin's heirs are concerned.

Lisovy, like many other imprisoned Ukrainians, has pointed to the stark contrast between the nationalities policy of Lenin and that of Stalin.

"In the circle of the Ukrainian intelligentsia," he said, "there appeared a glimmer of hope that following the criticism of the Cult of Personality the nationality policy would be implemented according to the principle of internationalism rather than the forced levelling of ethnic characteristics. . . . It seemed that at last the Leninist principles of nationality policy would be rehabilitated not only theoretically but in state and legal institutions. The degree of national state autonomy, which was foreseen in the treaty of 1922, was completely changed during the Cult of Personality. The whole world knows that according to this treaty the spheres of culture and living conditions were left in principle to the exclusive jurisdiction of the republican state organs. . . . Compare all the principal nationality policy documents (party and state) which appeared immediately before the creation of the U.S.S.R., that is, when Lenin was still alive, to the reality which arose during the period of the Cult of Personality. Every unbiased person will notice a difference of principle. Why hypocritically shield with Lenin's name that which clearly contradicts all the principles defended by him?"

But it is by masquerading as Lenin's continuators that the bureaucratic caste ruling in the Kremlin justifies its hold on power. The crackdown in 1972 was repeated in 1977 against the members of the Ukrainian Helsinki Monitoring Group. Five members of the group have received long prison terms: Mykola Rudenko (12 years), Oleksiy Tykhy (15 years), Myroslav Marynovych (12 years), Mykola Matusevych (12 years) and Lev Lukyanenko (15 years).

Their statements echo Lisovy's ideas. They defend the call for an independent Soviet Ukraine, and they have also been charged with "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda."

Revolutionists abroad who step up their efforts to free these imprisoned fighters not only help push their fight forward but further expose the ruling bureaucratic caste in the Kremlin as the grave-diggers of the October Revolution. □

'Labour Focus on Eastern Europe'

A new issue of *Labor Focus on Eastern Europe*, the socialist defense bulletin on Eastern Europe and the USSR, is available. It contains current documents from the anti-Stalinist struggles in the workers states. Included in the September-October 1978 issue are:

- An interview with East German Marxist Rudolf Bahro who was sentenced to eight years imprisonment June 30, 1978, on a charge of "espionage." What Bahro had done that the East German rulers considered treasonous was to write a book called *The Alternative*, a Marxist critique of East European societies. Bahro was arrested August 24, 1977, one day after an interview with him was shown on West German television. *Labor Focus* has printed the text of this interview.

- An autobiographical sketch by Yuri Orlov, a founding member of the Moscow Helsinki Monitoring Group. Orlov was arrested in February 1977 and subsequently sentenced to a twelve-year term on a charge of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" for his civil-rights efforts. In this brief piece, Orlov describes his political development from youth, when he first began to question the claim that Stalin's rule was the most democratic in the world, through his experiences in a small underground group reading Hegel, Marx, and Engels in an attempt to "return to the ideas of Marxism." His account casts light on the lives of a whole generation in the Soviet Union.

- Letters from peasants in southeastern Poland who have organized strikes and committees to oppose the government's new pension tax. More than 240,000 peasants have refused to pay this tax. They

have denounced the undemocratic way the law was adopted and imposed (they are denied even access to its full text) and the government's refusal to meet with elected peasant representatives. They call for an end to the police terror against peasant protesters. Polish civil-rights activists in the Social Self-Defense Committee have backed the peasants' struggle. Their statement is also printed here.

- A contribution to the debate going on within the Czechoslovak civil-rights group Charter 77 over program and tactics for the struggle to win democratic rights in Czechoslovakia. This article is by Jan Tesar who actually opened the debate. Tesar, a historian who has been twice imprisoned for opposing the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and the totalitarian rule of the postinvasion government, has attacked the perspectives and methods of the "reform communists" within the Charter group.

- An interview with members of the Plastic People of the Universe, an underground rock group in Czechoslovakia. A leading figure in the "rock underground," Ivan Jirous, is now serving an eighteen-month prison term.

- A report of recent activities of the Eastern Europe Solidarity Campaign, a coalition of trade-union, civil-liberties, and socialist forces in Britain, defending political prisoners in the USSR and East Europe.

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Selections From the Left



"Seinen Sensen" (Youth Front), the magazine of the Japan Communist Youth, the Trotskyist youth group in Japan. Published monthly in Tokyo.

The lead article in the October issue focuses on building a demonstration against the docking of the *Mutsu*, a nuclear-powered merchant ship with a leaking reactor. The Japanese government is sending the ship to be repaired at Sasebo, a seaport on the Korea Straits in western Japan.

"The key task facing government policy-makers at this time is getting the *Mutsu* into Sasebo harbor and building facilities there to service it. By making Sasebo the home port for the *Mutsu*, the capitalists hope to accomplish three main objectives.

"First of all, the *Mutsu* project is at the heart of the government's nuclear energy policy, part of an overall energy policy linked to the reorganization of Japanese industry. The ruling class urgently needs to move beyond the stage of simply sponsoring research into peaceful applications of atomic energy, to actually driving ahead with the construction of nuclear power plants and even of equipment that can be used for military purposes.

"Secondly, building repair facilities for the *Mutsu* is an initial step toward turning Sasebo into a port for nuclear-powered ships and, eventually, toward providing the Self-Defense Forces [the Japanese military] with nuclear weapons. American and Japanese imperialists are clearly planning to build up Sasebo as a key link in the U.S.-Japan-South Korea military alliance.

"Thirdly, the capitalists consider Sasebo and Sasebo Heavy Industries [a local shipyard which the government recently intervened to save from bankruptcy] to be important bases for the development of undersea mineral resources on the Japan-Korea continental shelf, and for construction of central terminal stations (CTS) for transshipment and offshore storage of crude oil as provided for in the Japan-South Korea Continental Shelf Agreement. These huge CTS facilities have already become the focus of a confrontation between the government and the environmental movement.

"It is clear from all this that the fight to keep the *Mutsu* out of Sasebo is now the central issue for environmental activists nationwide. But we should not view it as just another campaign like the 1968 Sasebo struggle [protests against the docking of U.S. nuclear warships]. This time, we have to project a nationwide, political

struggle to smash the reactionary policies of the Fukuda government by striking at one of their key components.

"The local Socialist Party and Sohyo council (in particular the trade-union youth council) now claim they're going to make the fight against docking of the *Mutsu* their biggest action campaign since the Miike coal miners' strike in 1960. The unions, led by the longshoremen, say they're ready to take direct action to keep the *Mutsu* out of Sasebo.

"Well that's certainly nice to hear. But the Japan Communist Youth will be out there for sure, standing in the very front ranks of the struggle to force the *Mutsu* out of Sasebo!"

rouge

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

In an article entitled "Three Ministers Against Rouge," the October 10 issue reports on an increasing number of government prosecutions directed against the French Trotskyist paper. (The three ministers concerned are the heads of the ministries of the Army, Justice, and the Interior.)

"We announced yesterday that four new court cases are being prepared against Rouge. They are based on articles in which we exposed racists, fascists, or abuses by the French police and army. The prosecutions have been speeded up, and in several cases we were not the only ones to publish the information in question. The courts seem to have selected their targets.

"For example, in the Erulin case, a complaint was lodged against Rouge and *Libération* [a broad New Left paper] for defamation of the army. We are being attacked for an article published last May 25 that reported the past and present responsibilities of the colonial-wars veteran recently decorated by Giscard.

"*L'Humanité*, in an article written by Henri Alleg, who was tortured during the Algerian war, also published this information. The [state-controlled] television network let René Andrieu repeat it on his program "Dossiers de l'écran" ["Screen Documentaries"]. Pierre Vidal-Niquet gave his own testimony in our columns. Jean Daniel, the editor of *La Nouvelle Observateur*, demanded that the government prosecute him for reporting the same thing. But all this did not matter to the ministers. It's only Rouge and *Libération* that they are harassing. These are papers for which such prosecutions can be a major burden, and they are two papers that the authorities find to be a nuisance.

"The Ministry of Justice, for its part, did not appreciate our interest in the condi-

tions under which persons are held in maximum security cells. On February 6, we published a personal testimony by Ben Jelloum on the maximum security block in the Baumettes prison in Marseilles. The minister of justice was aroused.

"We got a summons for defamation and for besmirching the honor and good repute of the prison administration. The trial is to be held on October 17.

"Then, the Ministry of the Interior took a great interest in the article we published October 25, 1977, on the death of an immigrant worker, shot down by the police in the Marseilles station. A complaint against us for defamation of the police was lodged with the Bobigny court. The pre-trial hearings are under way.

"Finally, a private citizen, whose extreme right-wing positions are well known, responded to some facts we published in our June 22 issue on the right-wing international in Europe. We took this information from an article in the daily *Nice-Matin*, which has not been bothered. The summons set the trial for yesterday, but it was postponed.

"As can be seen, those who are bringing us before the courts are all of the same stripe. They are doing this because we have financial difficulties. The times are past, it seems, in which papers were banned. But the government has plenty of means for replacing the old censorship orders. The one that it prefers, since it arouses the least notice, is to hit newspapers in their pocketbook.

"By increasing the court cases against Rouge, with streamlined procedures, and by focusing this harassment against us in a discriminatory way, they are trying to shut us up. It is freedom of the press that is at stake. Everyone knows that the prosecutors choose arbitrarily whom they are going to go after and, as can be seen, it's always the same papers they attack."

Socialist Challenge

Newspaper sponsored by the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International. Published weekly in London.

An editorial in the October 12 issue comments on Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua's visit to Britain.

"Rumours that he will be attending the Tory Party conference in Brighton have been strenuously denied by the Chinese Embassy," the editors write, "though a meeting with [Tory leader] Thatcher is likely.

"The main reason for Hua's visit is to cement links with capitalist Europe, develop further trade links, encourage tour-



Socialist Labour

10,000 in Waterford, Ireland, march for jobs. See selection from "Socialist Labour" below.

ism, etc. The cold warriors in Britain will be delighted by the visit, and we doubt whether the cause of Chinese dissidents and 'human rights' will feature prominently in the British press. For the Chinese support NATO, and that makes them immune to criticism as far as Fleet Street and the Foreign Office are concerned.

"It would appear that no press conference is being organised by the Chinese Embassy or the Foreign Office for the distinguished visitor from China. We were certainly intending to go in order to ask questions which no Fleet Street paper would have posed.

"Why is Pinochet due to visit China later this month?

"Are executions of oppositionists still continuing in a number of Chinese cities?

"How many political prisoners are there in China? Are the Chinese Trotskyists and a number of former Red Guard leaders going to be publicly tried?

"Why has the Chinese government been defending the rights of expropriated Chinese capitalists in Southern Vietnam? Does it think these expropriations were 'unfair'? If so, why did it not protest when its Cambodian comrades-in-arms simply butchered large groups of Chinese merchants?

"Does the Chinese government still believe that Britain needs a Tory government?

"We will now have to wait for another opportunity before these and other questions can be posed."

SOCIALIST LABOUR

Paper of the Socialist Labour Party of Ireland, published monthly in Dublin.

The Socialist Labour Party was formed following the June 1977 general elections

in the formally independent part of Ireland. The founders were major political figures who were driven out of the Irish Labour Party by a right-wing leadership committed to a coalition with Fine Gael, the most openly proimperialist of the two main Irish bourgeois parties.

The lead article in the September-October issue is on a labor demonstration in Waterford, a city of about 30,000 inhabitants in the southeast of Ireland in which there is some industry:

"Well done, Waterford workers! The massive anti-unemployment march on 8 September has set a magnificent headline for the rest of the country. The solidarity which brought over 10,000 workers out of their work-places and on to the streets, and which closed down factories and schools, shops and pubs, could stop not only the 281 threatened redundancies at the paper mills but any attempt at unloading the crisis on to the workers.

"We are tired of being expected to be the ones to put our shoulders to the wheel,' said Dick Larkin of the Waterford Trades Council and he hoped that the demonstration was 'the beginning of a more militant attitude.' With the right kind of lead from the Trades Council itself, it could just be. The paper mills workers will be looking to the Council to back any action they may take.

"The Army was nowhere to be seen. The three Special Branchmen [political policemen] who watched the demonstration pass along the quay were laughed at. But it was in large part the Army's and the Gardai's [police's] doing that the Trades Council's call for a work stoppage and march had such a massive, and unexpected, response.

"When the paper mills workers held the first of their Friday afternoon demonstrations two weeks previously, the Gardai had asked the Army to stand by, and they did—with three armoured personnel carri-

ers! Michael O'Brien, ITGWU [Irish Transport and General Workers Union] official and chairman of the central committee set up to fight redundancies in the paper mills, said, to applause, that 'jackboot tactics' would not dampen the resistance."

ARRITTI

Weekly paper supporting autonomy for Corsica. Published in Bastia.

On September 23, the office of the Union des Patriotes Corses, a nationalist organization, was bombed. This was the latest of a series of terrorist attacks by pro-French gangs on the island.

In its September 29 issue, *Arritti* ran a picture of the wrecked office on its front page and commented:

"Take a good look at this picture. It will no doubt remind you of one that appeared in May 1977 and which we reprinted in May 1978—the picture of the wrecked printing plant where *Arritti* was published. This picture has the same look. It was the work of the same people—by this we mean the same team, because of course the individuals may change. . . .

"But it does not matter exactly who the perpetrators were. They will certainly not escape the only real justice—the justice of the people.

"What is important is who is behind them. It is obviously, in the last analysis, the state. This is indicated by looking at who gains from the crime. The only gainer is the French colonialist state, which has betrayed democracy; betrayed the republic; betrayed liberty, equality, and fraternity; and violated its national and international commitments. Only this state has an interest in trying to destroy the paper and the movement, which along with other nationalist currents and organs, represent the

aspiration of an entire people for liberation.

"This is a wretched, contemptible state, incapable of countering nationalist teaching by political arguments. The top leader of this state came to Corsica and for three days we waited in vain for a political refutation of Corsican nationalism, an intelligent or reasonable reply. What we got were the kind of promises a small shopkeeper makes, and we can already see that even these are not going to be kept. We got the big talk of a petty demagogue and a bully's threats, the consequences of which are now well known. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing [president of the French state] has demonstrated the total inability of the French state to politically combat our steadily growing current.

"So, what means does this state have left to try to stop the growth of the nationalist current? Violence, of course, violence in all its forms. It has administrative discrimination, a mild form; manipulation of news, a treacherous form; and police and judicial repression, a more scandalous form, despite its façade of legality.

"It has an anonymous campaign of lies, slander, and mudslinging, a form of violence used traditionally by dying colonial regimes. Finally, it has fire and steel, the acute form of violence, the last resort of incompetents and murderers.

"Should we be surprised that they use such means? No, by no means. This is natural. In every country and throughout the centuries, the advance of humanity, justice, and liberty has had to confront the same enemies, the same reactions, and the same dangers. . . . Justice and liberty cannot be silenced by the destruction of walls, the wrecking of machines, and the burning of papers. They cannot be silenced by the beating and killing of their defenders.

"These people have to be bone stupid to think that this violence—no matter how much they escalate it—is going to reduce our determination by one iota. Another wall will replace any one destroyed, another machine will replace any one wrecked, and other documents will replace those burned, and, when the time comes, new fighters will replace those murdered."

★ KLASSEKAMPEN

Class Struggle, newspaper of the Communist Workers Party (Marxist-Leninist). Published daily in Oslo, Norway.

The Communist Workers Party of Norway may be the largest Maoist group in the West that remains tied to Peking. It must certainly be the largest relative to the rest of the left in its own country, having captured most of the youth radicalization of the 1960s.

However, even this group has been showing some indications recently of a

critical attitude toward the positions of the Chinese Communist Party. For example, it has reported the stands taken by the Albanians at some length, even though it has polemicized against them.

Pressure from the growing homosexual rights movement in Norway has now forced the Communist Workers Party to take some distance from the Chinese leadership and even from Stalin on this question.

In its September 13 issue, *Klassekampen* printed a series of letters on the question of homosexual rights, continuing a discussion that began earlier. The following letter, signed T.K. and S.F., was printed most prominently:

"We want to make it clear from the outset that we definitely agree with J. and T. that the sort of punishment that was meted out for homosexuality in the Soviet Union in the 1930s was one of Stalin's errors, and that the Soviet Communist Party has to be held responsible for this. . . .

"It should be clear for communists and socialists that it was wrong then and is wrong today to discriminate against anyone on the basis of sexual preference. (This also raises the question of the situation in the socialist countries, China and Albania.)

"We know . . . that there is a law in Albania against homosexuality. It can be argued that before 1945, Albania was a poor, oppressed peasant society in which the family played an important role for survival. It seems reasonable, moreover, to suppose that there were a lot of homosexuals in the reactionary priestly caste. But this does not justify oppressing people because of their sexual orientation."

The writers demanded a "clear answer" on the question of homosexual rights from the Communist Workers Party leadership because "the contradiction in this area makes it hard to work among homosexuals."

The letters were followed by a statement from the Executive of the Central Committee of the Communist Workers Party, which said:

"For many years, homosexuals [in Norway] have struggled against various forms of oppression and discrimination. As a result, they have won the repeal of a law against homosexual relations among men and have forced the introduction of a bill against discrimination. The struggle against a number of other forms of oppression continues. . . .

"The Communist Workers Party (Marxist-Leninist) supports this struggle. . . . At the same time, it has been asked whether the democratic rights of homosexuals should also be respected in socialist society. Our program maintains that only a socialist revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat will bring real democracy. Basic rights such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom to organize will no longer be restricted or merely formal in character for the working masses but will be able to be enjoyed fully.

"So, it is our party's view that the oppression and persecution homosexuals suffer today must be done away with. We regard this as the continuation of the struggle now being waged for homosexual rights. This means that we are opposed to laws against homosexuality. . . ."

The statement did not say concretely, however, what the party thought about the denial of the democratic rights of homosexuals in China and Albania. Since in the countries this party claims are models for building "socialism," not only are these rights denied but all other democratic rights as well, it seems unlikely that the statement by the Communist Workers Party (Marxist-Leninist) leadership reassured the doubters or eliminated the "contradiction" that makes life difficult for its supporters in broad movements.

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