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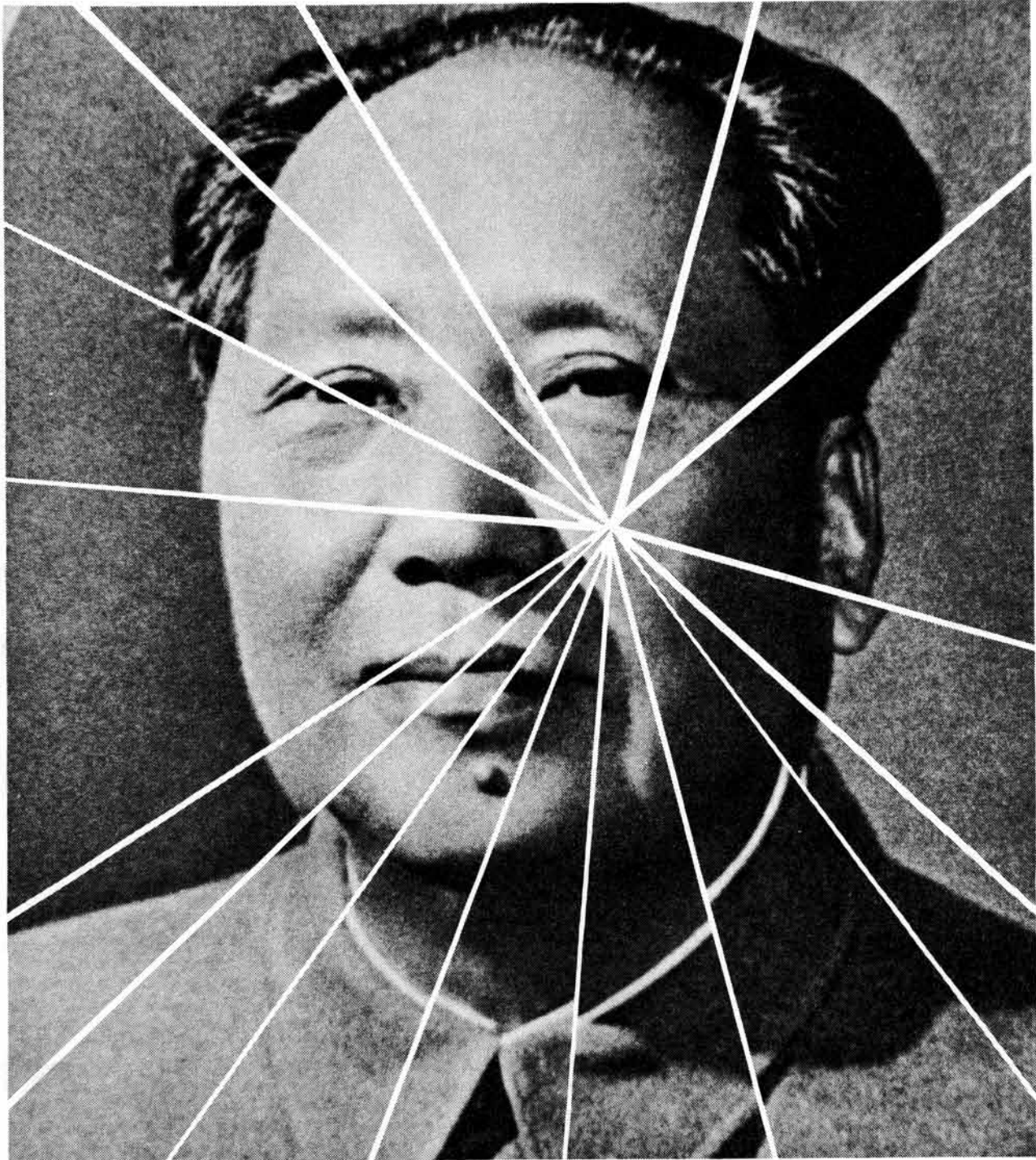
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The Mao Cult Begins to Shatter

Stop U.S. Spy Flights Over Cuba!

By Fred Murphy

While Cuban exiles in the United States have begun to call for an end to the U.S. economic blockade, the Carter administration has tried to cook up new reasons to justify it and has even launched new belligerent moves against Cuba.

U.S. officials announced November 16 that Carter had ordered a resumption of high-altitude flights over Cuba by the Air Force's sophisticated SR-71 "Blackbird" spy plane. Such flights had been routine practice for previous U.S. administrations, but Carter made a big show of ending them shortly after he took office in January 1977.

The officials refused to say when the spy flights had been resumed. The ostensible purpose is to determine if new MIG-23 jets provided to Cuba earlier this year by the Soviet Union are adapted for carrying nuclear weapons.

Cuba, of course, has no nuclear weapons. In addition, both the Cuban and Soviet governments have declared that the MIG-23s are for defensive purposes only, and Washington itself admits that the aircraft are of a defensive type.

The editors of the *Washington Post* called the suggestion that the planes were nuclear-equipped "farfetched," while *Post* staff writer George C. Wilson pointed up the absurdity of the accusation in a November 22 article:

The significant military question is whether Soviet Mig 23s in Cuba pose a meaningful threat to the United States. The present force of about 10 Mig 23s, which could fly only about as far from Cuba as Jacksonville, Fla., in a round-trip bombing mission, certainly could not be considered a grave military threat to the United States.

Would Cuban leaders, or their Soviet backers, declare war on the United States with a puny force of fighter bombers that could fly no farther than Florida? Would those leaders risk nuclear incineration of their own countries by dropping tactical nukes on Florida?

Carter will have a hard time convincing the American people that there is any danger of Cuba launching a nuclear assault on the United States.

The announcement that spy flights had been resumed came just as the Pentagon was assembling its largest naval force in the Gulf of Mexico since the 1962 "missile crisis." Maneuvers just fifty miles off the Cuban coast involved thirty-six warships, two nuclear submarines, and more than 300 aircraft.

When Cuban radar detected this massive fleet apparently moving toward the island,

Havana mobilized troops and put its anti-aircraft defenses on alert. The alert ended only after Washington reiterated earlier assertions that the naval movements were only "routine" training exercises.

"Western diplomats" cited in a November 20 Reuters dispatch from Havana said it was only a "coincidence" that the naval moves came at the same time as the resumption of spy flights.

While Washington was parading its military might in the Caribbean and trying to whip up a scare over the Soviet MIGs, the Cuban government was taking some important steps to encourage the growing sentiment among Cubans living in the United States for a lifting of the U.S. economic blockade.

On November 20, a delegation of some seventy-five Cubans from the United States, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and Spain arrived in Cuba for two days of "dialogue" with Fidel Castro and other Cuban leaders. The delegation included a number of prominent figures from the exile community in Miami who in the past had been strong opponents of any dealings with the Cuban revolutionary government.

When the talks ended on November 21, Castro announced that his regime was ready to release some 3,000 persons still

being held for counterrevolutionary activities, provided the United States accepts all those who wish to go there. Washington has "moral responsibility" for those it abetted in attacks on Cuba, Castro said.

The prisoner release will involve the vast majority of the counterrevolutionaries still being held. Only those who were jailed for atrocities or who are linked to terrorist groups that are still active will not be freed.

Castro also announced that thousands of Cubans who wish to join their families in exile will be allowed to do so, and that restrictions on exile visits to Cuba will be lifted at the beginning of the year.

With these moves the Cuban government has lifted some key obstacles to improved ties with Cubans living abroad, and has also deprived Carter of an issue he had been using for anti-Cuba propaganda.

Extreme right-wing emigré groups have been losing their grip on the Cuban community in the United States for some time, a process that is bound to accelerate. In Miami, Rev. Manuel Espinosa draws thousands of Cubans to his Christian Evangelical Church, which says its purpose is to reunify the Cuban family. Espinosa often leads chants of "Down with the blockade!" at church services.

On November 23, Rev. José Reyes, the president of the delegation of exiles that was visiting Cuba, told reporters in Havana that "the economic blockade cannot be maintained against a country as small as Cuba."

"Washington has to respond positively," Reyes said. "Cuba is showing the world that human rights are respected here." □

The Campaign to Rehabilitate Nikolai Bukharin

By Will Reissner

In the course of four trials in the Soviet Union between 1936 and 1938, every surviving member of the Bolshevik Party's 1917 Politburo, with the exception of Stalin, was found guilty of charges such as conspiring to assassinate Soviet leaders, plotting to restore capitalism, acting as agents of Nazi Germany, and other "crimes against the Soviet state."

These trials, collectively known as the "Moscow Trials," were instrumental in furthering Stalin's consolidation of the power of the rising bureaucratic caste in the Soviet Union. Among those found guilty of these preposterous charges were such long-time leaders of the Communist Party as Kamenev, Zinoviev, Trotsky, Radek, Muralov, Pyatakov, Bukharin, and Tomsky.

Since Khrushchev's speech to the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in 1956, in which he admitted many

of the crimes of the Stalin era, some of the victims of the Moscow Trials have been posthumously rehabilitated in the Soviet Union.

To date, however, none of the most important figures—Kamenev, Zinoviev, Trotsky, or Bukharin—have been exonerated. This year a major international campaign has been launched to pressure the present Kremlin bureaucrats to rehabilitate Nikolai Bukharin, forty years after his execution in 1938.

Toward this end, in 1965 Yelena Stasova, then the most senior surviving Bolshevik and former party secretary under Lenin, joined with three other surviving Old Bolsheviks in drafting a letter to the Politburo asking that it "rehabilitate Bukharin from the charges made in 1937 [when he was expelled from the CP], by annulling the verdict and reinstating him in the Party."

All four signers of the letter died before receiving an answer.

In 1976 Anna Larina and Yuri Larin, Bukharin's wife and son, made a similar appeal to Leonid Brezhnev and to the Twenty-fifth Congress of the CP. Larina had spent two decades in prisons, labor camps, and internal exile before being freed in the aftermath of Khrushchev's 1956 speech.

On June 9, 1977, Bukharin's wife and son received a reply from the Soviet CP Control Commission stating that "your appeal to have Bukharin reinstated in the Party and restored to full membership of the Soviet Academy of Sciences of the USSR cannot be granted since the guilty verdicts. . . have not been set aside."

Then in March of this year Yuri Larin sent an appeal to Enrico Berlinguer, the leader of the Italian Communist Party, asking for help in the fight to clear his father's name. A copy of the letter reached the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation in Britain, which began to coordinate an international campaign to demand the exoneration of Bukharin.

The response of the Italian CP was rapid and unequivocal. In the June 16, 1978, issue of *l'Unita*, the CP daily, party historian Paolo Spriano wrote that the rehabilitation of Bukharin and other victims of the purge trials "is not merely a problem concerning their historical merit, but a moral and political necessity." Three leading members of the Italian CP signed the Russell Foundation's appeal to the Soviet CP to restore Bukharin to his rightful place in Soviet history.

Leading figures from the Communist parties of Australia, France, and Britain have also signed the appeal, as have members of other tendencies in the workers movement.

As part of the campaign, the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation also published a book, *The Case of Nikolai Bukharin*,* containing a review of Bukharin's trial, Larin's letter to Berlinguer, the Italian CP's response, and other relevant material.

Among the most interesting material in the book is a letter from Zhores Medvedev to author Ken Coates, which is published as a postscript. Medvedev writes that while doing research for his own book *Khrushchev: The Years in Power*, he learned that Khrushchev had been planning to rehabilitate Bukharin and Kamenov, among others, in 1958. But he was dissuaded from this by Maurice Thorez and other leaders of foreign CPs.

According to Medvedev, a special commission of the Central Committee "had already completed the work and recom-

mended rehabilitation." But an opponent of the move alerted foreign CPs. Maurice Thorez, then head of the French CP, flew to Moscow, says Medvedev, and told Khrushchev that such a move would lead to serious losses among foreign CPs, all of which had defended the trials when they took place.

Medvedev quotes Khrushchev as saying that "these arguments influenced us but I am now sorry I followed this advice. We should have rehabilitated them, and we would certainly have done so, if not for the interference from Thorez."

The appeal to Brezhnev has already received wide support, particularly in the British labor movement. However, the campaign for Bukharin's rehabilitation clearly faces a long and difficult struggle.

To rehabilitate Bukharin, or Kamenov or Zinoviev, would naturally raise questions about the rehabilitation of Trotsky. In fact, Italian CP historian Spriano himself made this connection, stating that "if today we are fighting for Bukharin, tomorrow we shall fight for Trotsky."

But Trotsky was the only purged Bolshevik leader to make a rounded analysis of the character of the Soviet bureaucracy, and to point out the need for a political revolution in the Soviet Union that would maintain the social gains of the October Revolution while taking political power from the bureaucrats and returning it to the Soviet working class.

For that reason, Brezhnev would be more comfortable rehabilitating Stalin than Bukharin. □

In This Issue

Closing News Date: November 25, 1978

CHINA	1332	The Wall Poster Attack on Mao —by Leslie Evans
PERU	1334	Students Take the Lead in New Wave of Protests—by Miguel Fuentes
SOUTH AFRICA	1337	Rise in Labor Ferment Among Black Workers —by R.D. Willis
GUYANA	1338	The Mass Suicide—by Will Reissner
IRAN	1339	Oil Strikers Resist Back-to-Work Order
FRANCE	1339	The Trade-Union Movement Since the Elections—by Michel Thomas
USA	1344	New Evidence Supports Marroquin's Bid for Asylum—By Matilde Zimmermann
EUROPE	1348	The Capitalist Crisis and the Working-Class Solution—by Ernest Mandel
EAST GERMANY	1352	Rudolf Bahro Writes From Cell —by George Saunders
NEWS ANALYSIS	1330	Stop U.S. Spy Flights Over Cuba! —by Fred Murphy
	1330	The Campaign to Rehabilitate Bukharin —by Will Reissner
BOOKS	1342	The Degeneration of the Italian Communist Party—reviewed by Gerry Foley
SELECTIONS FROM THE LEFT	1343	
DRAWINGS	1332	Mao Tsetung—by Copain

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The Wall Poster Attack on Mao

By Leslie Evans

Several closely related developments in Peking strongly point to the opening of a public campaign of criticism of Mao Tse-tung and the possibility of further rifts in the top leadership of the Chinese Communist Party.

These include the denunciation for the first time by the Chinese press of major figures and events that marked the beginning of the Cultural Revolution that Mao led in 1965-69; the appearance of wall posters charging that Mao supported the so-called gang of four—top government and party officials arrested after Mao's death in September 1976 and denounced as "counterrevolutionaries"; and the official rehabilitation of all those who were arrested during the antigovernment demonstrations in Peking's Tien An Men Square in April 1976.

At the time of the arrest of the "gang of four"—Chiang Ch'ing, Mao's wife; Yao Wen-yuan, head of the party propaganda department; and Politburo members Chang Ch'un-ch'iao and Wang Hung-wen—in October 1976, they were accused of a plot to "seize power" in the weeks following Mao's death. This was soon escalated into the accusation that "for years" they had persecuted political opponents and inflicted serious damage on China's economy.

While these accusations always plainly implicated Mao Tse-tung, who presided over the government that was said to have done these things, the late chairman has up to now been spared direct criticism. The key issue left deliberately ambiguous by China's post-Mao leaders has been their assessment of the Cultural Revolution that brought the "gang of four" to power in 1966, established the cult of Mao's personality, and humiliated and purged many functionaries who have returned to office following the chairman's death.

Thus it marked a new stage of the campaign against the "gang of four" when on November 15 the Peking *Kwangming Jih Pao* singled out the document that launched the Cultural Revolution, written by Yao Wen-yuan in November 1965, and declared it "a reactionary signal to practice fascist dictatorship" (cited in the November 17 *New York Times*). This was Yao Wen-yuan's famous article in the Shanghai *Wen Hui Pao* attacking the vice-mayor of Peking, playwright Wu Han, who had published a satirical play that indirectly criticized Mao. Following this blast at Wu Han, the Mao faction escalated its attack, striking down Peking's then-



MAO: Denounced as "fascist dictator."

mayor, P'eng Chen, and then turning its fire on head of state Liu Shao-ch'i and party general secretary Teng Hsiao-p'ing.

In a speech given at Hangchow on December 21, 1965, Mao himself said of this article, "Yao Wen-yuan's article is also very good: it has had a great impact on theatrical, historical and philosophical circles." (*Chairman Mao Talks to the People*, Stuart Schram, editor [New York: Pantheon Books, 1974], p. 237.)

Mao said explicitly that he was personally behind the campaign initiated by Yao against the Peking party machine. In a speech to a Central Work Conference on October 25, 1966, he declared:

"I could do nothing in Peking; I could do nothing at the Centre. Last September and October I asked, if revisionism appeared at the Centre, what could the localities do? I felt that my ideas couldn't be carried out in Peking. Why was the criticism of Wu Han [i.e., the Yao Wen-yuan article] initiated not in Peking but in Shanghai? Because there was nobody to do it in Peking." (*Ibid.*, pp. 270-71.)

If Yao's 1965 broadside is now branded a "reactionary signal to practice fascist dictatorship," what does this say about Mao, who ordered the campaign?

Another step in this effort to discredit the entire Cultural Revolution was the

dramatic trial in Peking in early November of five of the central leaders of the Mao faction of the Red Guards whose fame stems entirely from their activities in the first year or two of the Cultural Revolution. Arrested last April, the most prominent of these is Nieh Yuan-tzu, the leader of the Mao faction at Peking University in the 1960s.

It was on May 25, 1966, that Nieh Yuantzu put up a wall poster at Peking University denouncing the university administration for "revisionism." When Nieh came under attack by the party committee in the university, backed by Liu Shao-ch'i and Teng Hsiao p'ing in the central government, Mao declared that Nieh's poster was "China's first Marxist-Leninist big-character poster," and on June 1, 1966, ordered it broadcast on the radio and published in the press. (Stanley Karnow, *Mao and China* [New York: Viking Press, 1972], p. 175.)

When Nieh was arrested, she was accused of having beaten professors with an iron bar and of having committed other violent acts in 1966-67. The November 17 *Hsinhua* reported that she and four other "notorious counter-revolutionaries" had been "brought to justice." This euphemism is usually used by the Chinese press to refer to a death sentence.

It is no secret that Nieh Yuan-tzu and Teng Hsiao-p'ing were enemies during the Cultural Revolution. But no one before has disputed that in those years Nieh stood on the side of Mao Tse-tung while Teng led the opposing faction. So when today a government in which Teng Hsiao-p'ing is one of the two leading figures arrests Nieh for "serious crimes during the Cultural Revolution" (*Hsinhua*) it would appear that Teng is taking his revenge on the survivors of the Mao faction and has finally reached the point where he is prepared to undertake the demolition of Mao's reputation as well.

Thus it was not surprising when, a few days after these events, wall posters went up in Peking openly criticizing Mao Tse-tung. On November 19, a fourteen-page poster appeared, ostensibly reviewing a new play about the Tien An Men protests of April 1976.

During those protests, some 100,000 persons in Peking demonstrated in mourning for the late Premier Chou En-lai. In the course of the demonstration, many people criticized the Mao government or defended Teng Hsiao-p'ing, who was then serving as acting premier but was already under public attack by the Mao faction.

The recent wall poster declared: "Chairman Mao, because his thinking was metaphysical thinking during his old age and for all kinds of other reasons, supported the Gang of Four in raising their hands to strike down Comrade Teng Hsiao-ping" (Reuters dispatch from Peking, November 19).

The poster said that Chiang Ch'ing and

the other Politburo leaders used "Mao's mistaken judgment about class struggle" to "launch an all-out offensive against China's revolutionary cause."

It added:

"First they used Mao's hand to strike down the representative of China's proletarian revolution, Comrade Teng Hsiao-ping. This is made very clear by the resolution of the party central committee that was proposed by Mao and was announced at that time. After that, they imposed a most violent suppression of the revolutionary cadres and the revolutionary people of the whole country."

The poster, according to Reuters, was allowed to remain up for a full day. Other posters went even further. Japan's Kyodo press agency reported on November 20 the appearance of a wall poster which said that Mao had been out of touch with reality and governed through a "family-style fascist dictatorship" in his last year (United Press International). The following day the same sources reported the appearance of further wall posters criticizing party Chairman Hua Kuo-feng for the first time.

Finally, a *New York Times* report from Hong Kong November 21 tells of Peking posters calling for an investigation of the suppression of the Tien An Men demonstrations of 1976, demanding that "those responsible for the suppression and cover-up . . . be brought to justice."

The Tien An Men incident is shaping up as the focal point in the efforts to downgrade Mao, increase Teng Hsiao-p'ing's prestige, and, it would appear, undermine the authority of Hua Kuo-feng.

It was the mammoth Tien An Men demonstrations that prompted the Mao regime to dismiss Teng Hsiao-p'ing from all of his party and government posts, in what was reported as a unanimous resolution of the party Politburo issued on April 7, 1976. The same meeting of the Politburo, attended by Mao and Hua as well as the now-disgraced "gang of four," voted unanimously to declare the Tien An Men demonstrations a "counterrevolutionary incident" and to appoint Hua Kuo-feng to the post of premier. Thus Hua's rise to power was directly linked to the suppression of the Tien An Men protests.

Moreover, to whatever degree Tien An Men involved the organized forces around the Teng Hsiao-p'ing faction of the party, it also drew into the streets many genuine opponents of the CCP, who raised demands for democratic rights. For all of these reasons, whatever abstract promises of reform the post-Mao government may have made, the full legitimization of the Tien An Men protests has been a question with such far-reaching consequences that it has taken two years for the regime to confront it directly.

For example, the hundreds of protesters who were arrested at Tien An Men were not released after the purge of the Mao

faction. They remained in prison until March of 1977, some five months after Hua came to power as party chairman. In January 1977 and again in January 1978 wall poster campaigns in Peking demanded the full pardon of all participants in the protests, the removal of high officials guilty of ordering the suppression, and a full investigation of the decision to ban the protests.

Moreover, the poems written in Tien An Men Square, some of which contain a deeply radical criticism of the bureaucratic leadership of the country, began to circulate throughout China. The January 13, 1978, Paris daily *Le Monde*, for example, reported the appearance on Peking walls of the pages of what was already a third edition of *printed* Tien An Men poems which had been published illegally and which was still officially declared "counterrevolutionary."

In a half measure, the February 1978, issue of the party theoretical magazine *Red Flag* published a new version of the Tien An Men incident which exonerated Teng of any wrongdoing, and said the violence had been provoked by the "gang of four" when people innocently came to mourn Premier Chou En-lai.

This interpretation was challenged at the first congress of the recently reestablished Communist Youth League, held at the end of October in Peking. The heroes of the congress were a group of Tien An Men prisoners, who were hailed by the head of the youth presidium as "the best of our time." (Hsinhua, October 22-23.)

The Tien An Men heroes were praised for having "refused to 'criticize Teng Hsiao-ping,'" and were said to have come to Tien An Men not simply to mourn but to try to bring down the government headed by the "gang of four."

This new interpretation is a direct slap at Hua Kuo-feng. If these youth were "the best of our time" because they rejected outright the criticism of Teng in April 1976, what are Chinese readers to think of their party chairman, who at Mao's funeral five months later described Teng as a "counterrevolutionary revisionist" and called on the masses to "deepen the struggle to criticize Teng Hsiao-ping"? (*Peking Review*, September 24, 1976, pp. 15-16.)

The Chinese press began in early November to publish the Tien An Men poems widely. In addition, *China Youth News* on November 11 carried an interview with five of the prisoner-poets. Most remarkable was the fact that among those interviewed was an electrician from Shansi named Wang Li-shan, who, it turns out, is the author of the most famous of all the Tien An Men poems, the one called "Fierce-browed, we unsheath our swords."

This was the stirring verse that became known around the world for its lines, "China is no longer the China of yore, and the people are no longer wrapped in sheer ignorance; gone for good is Chin Shih

Huang's feudal society." That blunt denunciation of China's first tyrant emperor, Chin Shih Huang, was a glove thrown in the face of power, inasmuch as the name was universally used by Mao's propagandists as a synonym for Mao himself.

That the CCP regime would risk making heroes of such people as these suggests a step toward liberalization unprecedented in China since the short-lived "Hundred Flowers Bloom" episode of 1957. Descriptions in the Chinese press itself of the events leading up to this decision suggest that the impetus came from below and not from the party leadership. A recent issue of the official *Poetry* magazine comments:

"China is a land of poetry. . . . but a great event like the Tienanmen Square poetry movement, where millions of people gathered spontaneously and used poetry to express their feelings, to mourn for the death of the dear one [Chou En-lai] and to accuse living traitors, and the circulation of these forbidden poems to all corners of the country by men and women, old or young, who copied them and passed them on, has no historical precedent." (Hsinhua, November 14.)

The bureaucracy's aim, or at least Teng Hsiao-p'ing's, seems to be a major "reformist" maneuver calculated to regain some popularity after the terrible Mao years, to pose as defenders of democratic rights, and thus generate enthusiasm for the industrialization plans that dominate Peking's thinking at this time.

Teng, with his credentials as an opponent of Mao and himself a victim of the Tien An Men repression, can hope to ride such a liberalization movement for some time to come. But for many in the bureaucracy, tarred with responsibility for the crimes of the previous government, giving voice to mass discontent spells their downfall.

Plainly China is emerging from the lull that followed the fall of the Mao government and entering a turbulent period in which the center of attention will be the tension between the bureaucracy and the masses over the extent of democratic rights and the pace of real improvements in the masses' standard of living. □

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Peru—Students Take the Lead in New Wave of Protests

By Miguel Fuentes

LIMA—Any hopes remaining among Peru's military rulers that their brutal attacks on striking miners in early September had terrorized the masses into passivity must have been shattered during the first two weeks of November.

Tens of thousands of students struck the public schools in Lima. They were joined in the streets by striking bank, printing-trades, and shoe workers; water works employees; and teachers and other public workers.

Residents of the Comas district north of Lima also took their demands for improved public services to the streets, while in the Cuzco area thousands of peasants carried out land occupations. Eleven hundred miners at the big Cuajone copper mine in southern Peru prepared to launch a work stoppage, and prisoners in Lima went on a hunger strike against bad jail conditions.

The military's response was almost universally the same: brutal repression that left at least one dead, hundreds wounded, and at least 500 arrested. But the mobilization continued nonetheless, and more demonstrations were being planned.

Central to this new wave of struggles has been the combative example set by the students of Lima's public schools. Beginning October 16, hundreds of youths between the ages of twelve and seventeen mounted daily demonstrations against increases of 33 to 50 percent in public transportation fares (see *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, November 20, page 1293).

The student protests grew from day to day. Even primary-school students eight to eleven years old joined in the struggle, and on some of the marches in early November the average age was less than twelve.

November 8 was the first day of a two-day strike called by the Committee for Coordination and Unification of the High-School Student Movement (CCUMES). The strike effectively closed down almost the entire secondary and much of the primary school system in Lima.

There were also reports of student mobilizations in Cuzco, Cañete, and Huancayo.

Being in the forefront of the struggle has caused the student youth to bear the brunt of the military's repression. November 8 was a typical day. There were marches of thousands of youth in various parts of the capital and in the neighboring port city of Callao. I witnessed a police attack in central Lima.

Because of the repression, march routes are rarely announced in advance; this

makes it necessary to scout the likely points of concentration. Shortly before 3 p.m., I passed through the Plaza San Martín in the heart of the downtown area. I noticed about sixty schoolgirls between the ages of eight and eleven gathered under the marquee of the Cine Metro.

At first I thought they were lining up to see a film. But then they moved out from under the marquee, across the plaza, and down the Colmena, a main street. I followed, still not quite believing children that young were demonstrating.

Doubts vanished as we reached the intersection of Avenida Tacna and the Colmena. Coming toward the intersection from the Avenida Wilson was a densely packed march of at least 4,000 primary and secondary students, all dressed in their obligatory gray uniforms. The schoolgirls wheeled about and raced to join the march.

Leading the demonstration was a young woman perhaps fourteen years old. Participation of women students, often in leading roles, is a new phenomenon in Peru.

All of a sudden a police bus raced down the avenue and disgorged a load of green-helmeted troops of the Special Forces Unit of the Civil Guard. They immediately began firing their tear-gas rifles.

Students and bystanders alike ran to get out of range of the acrid gas. Dozens were not fast or fortunate enough to escape. Many were trapped inside an enclosed parking lot. The cops raced in after them. As they dragged the students to the bus outside, I could see them savagely swinging their clubs—huge cops hulking over their small victims, mostly children under twelve.

As their comrades were being hauled onto the bus, thousands more students regrouped and counterattacked, trying to stop the beatings and arrests. But the few rocks available in the street were little match for the police armament. As the battle raged up and down the street, a *tanqueta* arrived. This armored, tank-like vehicle began firing tear-gas bombs, while a *rochabus*—a gigantic armored truck—pulled up with its powerful water cannon.

A retreat was called for. But as had happened earlier in the day in many other parts of the city, it was only temporary. Regroupments took place, followed by new police attacks. In the late afternoon, the students were joined by off-duty teachers and striking bank workers and public employees.

All downtown Lima was a battleground.

The Plaza San Martín and Avenida Alfonso Ugarte were littered with rocks and bricks, making the passage of vehicle traffic virtually impossible. Numerous Civil Guard autos and at least one *tanqueta* were put out of action.

By early evening the Civil Guard had given up trying to control the crowds. There were too many demonstrators in too many different locations. There were not enough *tanquetas* and *rochabuses* to go around, and the cops on foot were too vulnerable.

At one point the students marched to the Children's Hospital with their wounded, demanding that they be cared for. Fourteen-year-old Osvald Carranzo Liendo was taken to the same hospital the previous week after a police tear-gas bomb knocked out his eye.

Other cities were also the scene of student demonstrations in late October and early November. Thousands took to the streets in Cuzco, and were met with *tanquetas* and *rochabuses*. Police opened fire on a demonstration in Huancayo on November 6, killing a passerby and wounding at least four students. Schools were closed in Huancayo until November 10 and indefinitely in Cuzco.

In a vain attempt to isolate and demobilize the students, the Morales Bermúdez regime whipped up a campaign in its controlled press against "agitators" of the "adult," "foreign," and "communist" variety.

The government also tried to mobilize groups of parents to "control" the youth. But a week-long series of articles in the daily press could point only to one so-called mobilization of parents, in the Dos de Mayo school district in Callao. Meanwhile, numerous meetings in support of the students were held by parent and community groups.

The youth were not the only victims of repression on November 8. The newly formed public-employees union, the CITE,¹ had called a walkout for that day. At least 5,000 public workers mobilized in central Lima, while thousands more marched in the Jesús María district.

I was walking alongside a CITE march when an attack came at 10 a.m. A *tanqueta* came hurtling out of a side street, firing tear-gas bombs at the demonstrators

1. Confederación Intersectorial de Trabajadores Estatales (Intersectoral Federation of State Workers).

from behind. For the rest of the day, as with the students, regroupments and new attacks continued. In the early evening the CITE strikers and other workers joined forces with the students for further demonstrations.

The CITE is demanding that the government honor commitments it made after more than 50,000 public workers marched in Lima on September 6 and put an end to plans for laying off thousands (something the International Monetary Fund has been pressing for). The CITE is also seeking union recognition and a wage increase.

The militancy of the public employees represents a new and important challenge to the Peruvian dictatorship. Until recently, these workers enjoyed a somewhat privileged position in the labor force, with "secure" though low-paying jobs. But no jobs are secure now that Peru's economy is on the skids. In only a few months' time the CITE has gone from being a "professional association" to viewing itself as a trade union. Its members now clearly identify with the rest of the working class and its struggles in the streets of the country.

November 8 was also chosen for a three-hour strike during peak business hours by the Federation of Bank Employees (FEB). During the previous two days the FEB had struck selected banks, and on November 8 virtually all major financial institutions in the capital were shut down.

The FEB's demands are for the reinstatement of fired and laid-off workers and improved working conditions. The union has also called for an end to the "brutal repression against the students." The bank workers rallied in central Lima late in the day on November 8 and linked up with the public employees' and students' protests.

Another blow was dealt the government on November 8 when the Lima Printing

Trades Federation rejected a plea to end strikes that had crippled the work of several ministries. A general assembly of the union not only refused to end the fifteen-day-old work stoppages but instead voted to extend the strike to all units of the federation.

The rebuff to the regime was doubly sharp since the printing union leaders, who are affiliated to the bourgeois APRA party, had recommended a return to work. The APRA is the dominant party in the Constituent Assembly, and the military is counting on it to be the bulwark of capitalist rule in the "transition" to a civilian regime now under way. The November 8 vote indicates the obstacles facing the APRA's current campaign to regain control over unions whose leadership it lost during the period of the Velasco Alvarado government.

The central demand of the printers' strike is the reinstatement of laid-off workers. Day-to-day strike activities are being organized by a strike committee independent of the APRA union leaders.

On November 6, employees of the Lima water works (ESAL) began an indefinite strike for back pay and higher wages. The Civil Guard launched attacks on strikers in several locations early in the morning of November 7.

This strike also has important political implications, threatening not only the military government—as all strikes in Peru today tend to do—but also the big right-wing Christian People's Party (PPC). ESAL director Augusto Bedoya Reyes, who called in the police against the strikers, is the brother of PPC leader and assembly deputy Luis Bedoya Reyes.

Complicating the strike for the Bedoya brothers and the military is the union's revelation that some 50,000 clandestine

water connections exist in the city, involving such enterprises as Coca-Cola, Pepsi-Cola, and the Hotel Savoy, as well as major buildings in the wealthy suburb of Miraflores. Such connections allow these big consumers to avoid paying water bills. But as the union has pointed out, the connections are not made for free, and certain individuals high in the ESAL and probably in the government itself are getting paid off handsomely.

There were also a series of walkouts in early November by the employees of the Diamante shoe corporation, demanding higher wages and the reinstatement of laid-off workers. I watched as more than 700 Diamante workers, with women in the lead, marched out of a plant in tight formation on November 10. Diamante owns the largest chain of shoe stores in Peru.

Eleven hundred miners voted unanimously in a general assembly November 5 to strike the Southern Peru Copper Company's (SPCC) huge Cujajone mine in Moquegua Province. The strike, demanding union recognition, was to begin November 10.

Southern Peru, a subsidiary of the huge U.S. metals corporation Asarco, has refused to recognize the newly reorganized Cujajone unit of the national miners federation, the FNTMMP. The company is demanding that the miners rescind their choice of Hernán Cuentas, a FOCEP² deputy in the Constituent Assembly, as their representative to the national federation. Cuentas was general secretary of the

2. Frente Obrero, Campesino, Estudiantil, y Popular (Workers, Peasants, Students, and People's Front). Cuentas is a leader of Revolutionary Marxist Workers Party (POMR), one of the Trotskyist groups in the FOCEP.



Amauta

LIMA: Student protests against hike in bus fares began October 16 and were still continuing as of November 23.



CHINCHEROS, October 29: 8,000 peasants seize untilled lands belonging to government "cooperative."

Cuajone union in 1973, until he was fired by the SPCC and deported from the country for leading a strike.

The Cuajone miners have received a vote of support from the Moquegua People's Assembly, one of the numerous organs that have been springing up in Peru to coordinate popular struggles. The assembly in Moquegua is perhaps the strongest in the country so its solidarity is significant.

It is not only the students and workers who are going into action these days. The government is also faced with a new rise in struggles by landless peasants. The latest in a series of land seizures took place at Chincheros, near Cuzco, on October 29. Upwards of 8,000 peasants and their families occupied almost 4,000 hectares of land belonging to a government-run agricultural "cooperative."

In Cañete and elsewhere in recent weeks, pitched battles have taken place between occupying peasants and police and private goon squads organized by absentee landlords. The peasants of Chincheros could soon suffer the same type of attack.

In the Balanza district of Comas, a northern suburb of Lima, 5,000 residents gathered on November 5 to discuss community problems. Both the Lima municipal government and the national regime came under sharp attack for their neglect of basic public services.

On November 7, a delegation of 150

Balanza residents gathered in front of the Presidential Palace in central Lima, unfurled banners, and began chanting their demands. This protest and the big assembly were organized by the Temporary Intersectoral Coordinating Committee, a coalition of community organizations, unions, and parents groups in Balanzas. It resembles the formative stages of the people's assemblies in other parts of Peru.

If the military did not already have enough to worry about, they also faced a hunger strike begun November 6 by 750 inmates at the El Sexto prison in Lima. The prisoners were demanding better food, water, beds, and medical attention; an end to torture; the resignation of the prison warden; and unrestricted visiting rights.

The hunger strikers got a big boost when four Constituent Assembly deputies, including Juan Cornejo Gómez of the FOCEP, visited the prison. Their report of the inhuman conditions in the overcrowded facility received wide publicity and forced the authorities to agree to improve conditions and not seek reprisals. On that basis, the prisoners agreed to end their strike.

The events of early November point up the ongoing crisis of capitalist rule in Peru today. Every sector of the society has been in motion—from students to workers to peasants to prisoners. There is increasing identification among all these struggles.

On almost every march I witnessed,

slogans were shouted in support of some other sector's demands. In addition, virtually everyone chanted "Down with the military government!" There is also growing recognition of the need to centralize the battle: Other frequent chants were "National walkout" and "Indefinite general strike!"

What Peru's capitalist rulers are facing was perhaps best exemplified by an incident I saw on November 8. About 150 schoolgirls, nine to eleven years old, swept down Moquegua Street shouting, "The people are hungry; down with the fare increase." I followed them around the corner to a boys' primary school. The girls found their male comrades locked inside by the school authorities. So they organized a battering-ram detail, quickly smashed in the door, and liberated the boys, who then joined them on their march.

In one day in the streets these young people get more of an education about how capitalism really works than from all the lies in their textbooks. From their confrontations with the *tanquetas*, *rochabuses*, and Civil Guards, they are drawing lessons that bode ill for the continuation of capitalist rule in Peru. The young represent the future; and today in the streets, young—very young—revolutionists are being formed who are showing determination to make the future their own.

November 10, 1978

South Africa—Rise in Labor Ferment Among Black Workers

By R.D. Willis

JOHANNESBURG—Although there have been no major Black strikes in South Africa since the massive political actions of 1976, a series of recent labor disputes has given a glimpse of the simmering discontent that prevails in the country's factories, construction sites, and workshops.

One of the conflicts that has captured the most attention is a strike by more than 200 Black women workers at the Eveready battery plant in Port Elizabeth. The women, many of whom are members of the National Union of Motor Assembly and Rubber Workers of South Africa, halted work at the end of October after the management refused to recognize the union or negotiate the workers' grievances.

The women are demanding better conditions and a basic pay increase to replace the present bonus incentive scheme. They point out that the hourly rate of pay for Eveready production-line workers is 55 cents an hour, compared to 85 cents at Willard's and 92 cents at Ford's, both of which have plants in Port Elizabeth.

The company has so far been adamant in refusing to recognize the union, despite the fact that it is a legally registered union, being composed predominantly of Coloured workers.* In fact, according to Brian Frederick, the national organizer of the union, "The factory have systematically tried to get rid of union members and new employees are not taken on if they belong to our union. Yet the white union is allowed to continue." Despite the harassment, the union claims 400 members in the plant, out of a total Black work force of 450.

J. Poulton, Eveready's factory manager, dismissed the workers' demands as "ridiculous and unrealistic."

The decision to go on strike followed a vote on October 19, when 62 percent of the workers polled favored strike action. A few days later, on October 25, a mass meeting of 1,300 union members was held in Port Elizabeth to support the Eveready workers (the union has 4,500 members nationally).

The bosses responded by sacking 198 of

the women, to which the union countered by calling for a nationwide boycott of Eveready products. At least twelve unions have so far come out in support of the boycott. The union has also appealed for backing from the 1.5-million-member International Metalworkers Federation, to which it is affiliated.

Thus far at least, Eveready has vowed not to give in, and has warned of further retaliation. Managing Director Ben Allen threatened, "If a boycott seriously affects our production, we might have to reduce our labour force. . . ."

Simultaneously with the Eveready conflict, eighty Black workers employed by the Amanzimtoti municipality, just south of Durban, were fired November 15 for refusing to work until they received a pledge of higher wages. Dissatisfied with a meager 5 percent raise granted two weeks earlier, the workers had demanded pay hikes of between R5 and R15 a week (they currently earn weekly earnings of R27).

On November 17, about 160 Black municipal bus drivers and conductors in Johannesburg left their vehicles for several hours and flocked to the Department of Labour offices to demand the reinstatement of Joseph Zungu, the chairman of their works committee (an advisory body elected by the workers). According to the authorities Zungu had been fired for a technicality, but the drivers maintained he was being victimized. After a meeting with the protesting workers, officials of the municipal council announced that Zungu had been reinstated with a few days suspension.

In an earlier dispute, eighty-seven Black bus drivers in Alberton, just south of Johannesburg, were convicted August 1 of striking illegally (most strikes by Africans are illegal).

At the end of September, about 200 Black workers in Clermont, near Durban, staged a sit-in for higher wages at a construction site of the Port Natal Administration Board. Police reinforcements were rushed in to force the workers off the site.

Another recent struggle involves efforts by the Sweet, Food and Allied Workers Union to win recognition by the Unilever management at its Boksburg and Durban plants. The Black union has won a pledge of active support from the International Union of Food and Allied Workers Associations.

Visitors to the automobile factories of Port Elizabeth have noted a growing resentment among Black workers there as well, despite a few cosmetic reforms enacted by such companies as General Motors and Ford, primarily involving the phasing out of "petty apartheid" in the plants (segregated washrooms and dining areas).

One Black worker summed up the feelings of many when he stated, "It's more money we want. We don't care where we eat or what toilet we use. There's only one way to talk equality—money. We want exactly the same rates as whites doing the same jobs, and the same fringe benefits. We also want more chances for better jobs."

Against the background of scattered labor ferment, a number of Black unions have intensified their efforts to establish a Black trade-union federation, despite all the legal and extralegal obstacles placed in the path of Black trade unionism here.

In August and September, a number of Black unions in the Transvaal sent representatives to two meetings, resulting in the formation of an interim federal committee, similar to existing committees in other provinces, to work toward the construction of a countrywide federation. The main initiator was the National Union of Motor Assembly and Rubber Workers. Other unions involved were the Glass and Allied Workers Union; the Engineering and Allied Workers Union; the Paper, Wood, and Allied Workers Union; the Transvaal branch of the Metal and Allied Workers Union; and the Transvaal branch of the United Automobile, Rubber, and Allied Workers Union.

On October 22, twelve Black unions agreed on the constitution and policies of a new Black union federation. Representatives from the four interim regional committees in the Transvaal, Natal, Western Cape, and Eastern Cape also attended. Participants predicted that the inaugural conference of the federation, which is to be called the Federation of South African Trade Unions, may be held within six months.

If actually set up, such a federation could prove a powerful weapon for Black workers—an especially explosive development in a country where the entire economy is based on the exploitation of Black labor. □

*Coloured and Indian workers, who make up a small minority of all Black workers in South Africa, are allowed to belong to legally registered unions. While there are a number of African unions, they are not legally recognized, a fact often used by management to refuse to negotiate with them.

The Mass Suicide in Guyana

By Will Reissner

The November 20 mass suicide in Guyana of more than nine hundred members of the People's Temple, a religious sect founded by Rev. Jim Jones, has captured headlines around the world.

Outside California few had ever heard of the church or its leader until November 18 when members of the sect killed a California congressman and three reporters who had gone to Guyana to investigate charges that people were being held against their will on the church's 27,000-acre communal farm in a remote area near the Venezuelan border.

Following the shootings, Jones's followers committed suicide by drinking poison.

The fact that so many people were apparently willing to kill themselves at the command of their religious leader is a chilling commentary on the unraveling of the social fabric of American society. It also recommends a closer look at the cult Jones headed.

The People's Temple was the last in a series of churches established by Jim Jones, a Midwesterner from the state of Indiana who went to California in 1965. But it was more than a church. It was also a social movement, and for a time a powerful force in the Democratic Party in the San Francisco Bay Area. According to people familiar with the People's Temple, it became increasingly bizarre in the last two years.

Jones had been a Methodist minister in Indianapolis in the 1950s. He became deeply involved in Christian charity work—establishing soup kitchens and nursing homes for the aged—and worked with pacifist and antiracist groups. In this he resembled many other idealistic preachers.

Jones left Indiana, eventually making his way to California, where he established his own church, the People's Temple, on a combination of Christianity and social action.

The church became involved in social and political issues, particularly, in recent years, around those that concerned racial discrimination.

Tony Thomas, now a Socialist Workers Party field organizer for the Southeast, met Jones in connection with work in the anti-apartheid movement in San Francisco in 1976 and 1977. "Jones told me he had consciously patterned his church on the Nation of Islam," Thomas recalled. "He wanted to build a religious organization with a highly disciplined membership that could mobilize around social issues."

For a time Jones was successful in this endeavor. His church reached a high point of perhaps 10,000 members, mostly Black,

all ready to act on Jones's command.

His ability to turn out several thousand members of the People's Temple for rallies, door-bell ringing, and the like enabled Jones to play a role in the California Democratic Party, and he was courted by local politicians.

The church was active, for example, in Jimmy Carter's election campaign. Rosalynn Carter spoke to a meeting at Jones's temple, and several hundred members of the church were brought to Washington by bus to attend Carter's inauguration.

Among those who sought Jones's support were California Governor Jerry Brown and San Francisco Mayor George Moscone. Moscone even appointed Jones chairman of the San Francisco Housing Authority in 1975.

When Jones applied for a land grant from the government of Guyana he filed letters of recommendation from Vice President Mondale; Health, Education, and Welfare Secretary Joseph Califano; and many senators and members of congress.

Following investigations and exposures of some of the sect's abuses of its membership, such as requiring members to sign all their property over to the church and physical intimidation against people who broke with it, Jones decided in 1977 to take his followers to Guyana to escape what he felt was an impending crackdown.

Church members followed Jones to the remote corner of Guyana where a communal farm and community was hacked out of the jungle. There the community remained in obscurity, until the visit of Congressman Leo Ryan and several news reporters apparently led Jones to believe the community was about to come under attack and prompted him to order the murder of the congressman.

The murder plan called for a member of the sect to fly out on the same plane as the congressman and shoot the pilot while the plane was in the air, thus killing everyone aboard. But the attacker began shooting while the plane was on the ground, thus linking the People's Temple to the killing. When this happened, Jones called on his followers to kill themselves.

Witnesses to the mass suicide report that most participants willingly drank the poison at Jones's urging, and that parents fed it to their children before taking it themselves. Photos of the bodies show that many people died arm-in-arm.

In explaining the shocking final act of the sect members in Guyana, some commentators described the People's Temple as a bizarre cult and left it at that. It is certainly true that the cult was bizarre, and became more so in the past two years.

But it would be hard to argue that Jones's religion was any stranger than the beliefs of President Carter's faith-healer sister, or of Nixon's semiofficial White House spiritual leader Billy Graham, whose *Angels: God's Secret Agents* climbed the bestseller lists several years ago.

Most who joined the People's Temple were attracted to Jones's amalgam of a Unitarian-like social conscience with born-again Baptist style religious ecstasy. They were responding to his social reformism, particularly his opposition to racial injustice and to the inequities of capitalism. In his church they sought a sense of community that was missing in their lives.

But many stayed with him as he sank deeper and deeper into paranoia, even to the point of snuffing out their own lives.

What a commentary on American society that hundreds of people, mostly Black, chose mass suicide in face of what they expected to be an attack by their own government.

Mass suicide is not without precedent. The more than 900 Jews who killed themselves to avoid capture by the Romans in A.D. 79 at Masada are now held up as heroes by the state of Israel. In tsarist Russia thousands of Old Believers locked themselves in their churches and set them afire to avoid being forced to change their religious practices. There were many instances of mass suicide by Japanese civilians to avoid capture by U.S. troops in World War II. Each of these cases took place in the context of decaying societies.

There are countless individuals in the United States who are so desperate for solutions to their problems, for comfort from the buffeting they receive in their daily lives, that a Jim Jones or a Sun Myung Moon seems better than what they see in society. This is but one reflection of the extreme isolation, alienation and insecurity felt by millions for whom the "American dream" has proved a cruel hoax.

Nor is the phenomenon of looking to a "messiah" to provide answers restricted to religious formations. All too often political groups have been built around the "wisdom" of a cult leader rather than a political program.

This pattern is particularly apparent among the Maoist groupings, built around fidelity to the "Great Helmsman" rather than programmatic agreement. Invocation of "Mao Tsetung Thought" is all that it takes to convince the faithful that yesterday's "revolutionary" is today's "capitalist roader," yesterday's "revisionism" is today's "Marxism-Leninism."

It is also easy for political cults to follow the leader into an ultraright, even pathological course of action. This is what happened, for example, to the followers of Lyn Marcus, leader of the so-called U.S. Labor Party, who followed him from SDS into ultrarightist politics and physical attacks on working-class organizations. □

Oil Strikers Resist Government Back-to-Work Order

TEHRAN—The national strike of oil workers is still going strong as of November 25. Despite hundreds of arrests in the oil fields and refineries, coupled with the eviction of many workers from their "company" homes, and continued threats and violent acts by the government, the overwhelming majority of oil workers on drilling sites, pipeline installations, and refineries have not gone back to work.

At present, army engineers and foreign technicians are running a small section of the operation, but contrary to government-disseminated reports, the production level is far below four million barrels a day. Official reports to the contrary are spread to create demoralization in the ranks of the workers and break their will to continue the strike. So far, however, the oil workers not only have not given up their political demands but have added to them the stopping of oil shipments to the racist states of Israel and South Africa.

On November 22, despite prior threats by the military government and the heavy presence of army troops and police in the

streets, a large convoy of cars carrying the striking workers at Shahr-e-Ray refinery in southern Tehran proceeded to the center of the city, in a campaign to win support for their demands. With lights on and horns honking, a group of cars proceeded toward the bazaar district while another group gathered in front of the central headquarters of the National Iranian Oil Company on Takht-e-Jamshid Avenue.

Truckloads of police and soldiers present at the scene prevented workers from entering the building. However, most of the hundreds of NIOC employees left their offices and came outside to talk to the workers and soldiers, who were themselves carrying on discussions. The two immediate demands of Shahr-e-Ray refinery workers are the release of twenty-five arrested coworkers and the withdrawal of troops from the refinery.

According to an eyewitness account, the soldiers standing in front of the NIOC headquarters were totally overwhelmed by the workers' efforts at fraternization. The eyes of many soldiers were filled with

tears. Even their commanding officer, who was pleading with the workers to disperse, could not help crying in response to the strikers' determined approach. But the police were brutal and violent. They shot and injured two workers and arrested dozens of others.

Now, for the first time, between 60 and 70 percent of the NIOC "white collar" employees, usually regarded as a well-off and conservative layer, have gone on strike in solidarity with the Shahr-e-Ray refinery workers.

Strikes in other industries¹ and public services are also continuing. The latest group of industrial workers who have joined the wave of political strikes are the workers of the National Electrical Power Network. So as not to disrupt people's lives completely, these workers are conducting a zone-by-zone blackout and brownout.

A combination strike and slowdown by the communication workers is also in effect. Their main demand is the expulsion of foreign "advisers." □

Hard Times for CGT, 'New Look' for CFDT

The Trade-Union Movement in France Since the Elections

By Michel Thomas

The breakup of the Union of the Left in France, beginning in September 1977, and this bloc's subsequent defeat in the March 1978 elections set in motion important long-term repercussions in the labor movement.

The two main French union federations, the CGT and the CFDT,¹ had for years been working on the assumption that the left would win the elections. Awaiting the vote, they had suspended struggles and avoided any expression of militancy.

Nonetheless, the failure of the Union of the Left did not affect both of these federations in the same way, and their respective leaderships drew different conclusions

from it. The CGT was hit by a deepgoing crisis. This is the price it has had to pay for its commitment to the Common Program [of the Union of the Left] and its aligning itself unconditionally with the CP in the latter's polemics and break with the Socialist Party.

The nature and depth of this crisis of the CGT are unprecedented, and they are affecting its relations with the working class. At the same time, this crisis has posed as never before the question of internal democracy in unions and what sort of relationship they should have with the workers political parties. The CGT leadership has had to initiate a public debate on these questions.

The CFDT is trying to take advantage of the present crisis and paralysis of the CGT. It has begun very rapidly to make a spectacular political turn, which has become known in France as "the readjustment of focus."

The more and more open objective of the CFDT is to bring about a realignment of the trade-union movement around a "new look" Social Democratic orientation. The essence of this policy is to get the workers to go along with paying the cost of the economic crisis.

In the wake of the Union of the Left defeat in the March elections, Force Ouvrière, the third-largest union federation, whose main strength is among civil-service workers, has won many important gains in representation elections, usually at the expense of the CGT. This progress is the result of the popularity in certain sections of workers of FO's "nonpolitical" orientation. At the time of the elections, this federation refused to make a choice between the left and right. However, the relative strengthening of its position in the representation elections has not been accompanied by any increase in the number of its activists.

1. Confédération Générale du Travail (General Confederation of Labor). Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail (French Democratic Confederation of Labor).—IP/1

The FEN,² the teachers union, which is led by Social Democrats, supported the Union of the Left. After March, it went back to a "realist" policy of negotiating and making agreements with the government. In practice, it is following an orientation quite close to that of FO.

In the new political situation opened up by the victory of the right in the March elections, the picture in the trade-union movement is dominated by division, which is a carryover of the split between the CP and the SP. This rift is endangering the trade-union common front, of which the CGT and the CFDT were the main components.

The union federations have agreed on two things only. One is to recognize Giscard d'Estaing's legitimacy as president.³ The CFDT did not waste any time in this. Immediately after the election defeat, it asked for a meeting with the president. The CGT, for its part, has continually made it clear that it recognizes Giscard, reiterating that there is no political solution in sight for achieving the immediate demands the workers are raising.

The second thing the CGT and CFDT have agreed on is the need for united action by the trade unions, although each poses its own preconditions for such joint action. Both have, in reality, systematically fostered division in the ranks of the workers. And they have done this at a time when the bosses and the government have been mounting a very broad offensive against the gains of the workers movement.

In fact, the bosses and the government are trying to carry over the political victory they won in March into the economic and social arenas. They are now aiming to create an army of two million unemployed in France. Large-scale attacks and campaigns are being launched against the law establishing a forty-hour week, against the minimum-wage law, and against unemployment compensation.

Recently, François Ceyrac, the chairman of the CNPF, the employers organization, said that workers should be able to work up to the age of sixty-seven or seventy if they want to. He proposed this at a time when tens of thousands of workers are being thrown out of work every month.

But, far from being roused to fight back by these provocative statements, the union federations have agreed to negotiate on the basis of the bosses' proposals. Several dozen contracts have been signed since March, and there is not a one of them that does not involve capitulation on the basic

common wage demand for a 2,400 franc minimum wage at April 1978 buying power.

The militancy of the workers has remained at a high level in a whole series of sectors. Examples are the workers in the health services, the arsenals, the Renault automobile works, the railroads, the post office, teachers, and the merchant marine. For months there has been an unbroken chain of strikes. The union federations are trying to outdo each other in coming up with the cleverest way to prevent these mobilizations from converging, to keep them isolated, and to string them out.

The achievement of trade-union unity against the attacks of the bosses and the government would unleash a dynamic in which the workers would be able to express their militancy and their determination to fight back. This would pose the question of a counterattack by the working class as a whole, proceeding from the economic to the general political level.

Neither the CP and the SP or the CGT and the CFDT intend for a moment to let things get that far. Every opportunity is taken to engage in polemics, every opportunity is taken to find a pretext for division between the CGT and the CFDT. The most recent polemics have been over the elections to the European parliament. The CFDT—to the great indignation of the French Stalinists—has come out publicly in support of the international campaign being run by the Socialist parties.

The Crisis of the CGT

The CGT, the principal French union federation, is paying a very high price for having committed itself to the Common Program and for having lined up with the CP at the time of the split in the Union of the Left.

The indictment of the CP for having provoked the split and opened the way for the victory of the right is having repercussions in the CGT. In September 1977 this union federation suddenly discovered that it could not support a program that did not include nationalizing the subsidiaries of the nine corporations that the Common Program pledged to transfer to the public sector.

On March 13, immediately following the first round in the legislative elections, the CGT expressed its satisfaction at the last-minute electoral pact arrived at by the CP, the SP, and the Left Radicals, even though this agreement did not include one word about nationalizing the subsidiaries in question.

For its fortieth congress, which is being held this November, the CGT has put down in black and white the demand for nationalizing the so-called daughter companies. But this is a crude attempt to legitimize, after the fact, the attitude it took in September.

However, the Stalinist fraction that runs the CGT has recognized how troubled the

activists and the rank-and-file workers were by its position. It could not continue forever to ignore the protests of the activists, especially trade-union leaders who are also SP members.

In September 1977, two members of the national leadership of the CGT, Claude Germont and Pierre Carrasus, denounced the federation's lining up with the CP. They demanded freedom of expression for all points of view in the federation's press, calling for the publication of open-forum columns. For months a number of petitions and open letters have been circulating in the CGT raising the same demands.

The national leadership decided to try to co-opt these critical tendencies in the preparation of its fortieth congress. It has arranged for the publication of very long and very rich open-forum columns in the federation's press. It needs at all cost to refurbish the CGT's democratic façade in order to try to reverse the trend and regain the ground that has been lost.

The CGT leadership senses that its bureaucratic grip cannot be maintained by the traditional methods of imposing discipline, asserting authority, and refusing to allow debate and the expression of differences. While it is very limited and tightly controlled, this democratic opening is creating conditions that are unprecedented in the CGT.

Now, the expression of all sorts of differences in the federation has been, to some extent, legitimized. *Le Peuple*, the fortnightly organ of the CGT, recently published a discussion column by two very critical activists, who called for coordinating and unifying the struggles taking place with a view toward building a general strike.

These unprecedented democratic freedoms in the CGT, of course, remain largely formal. The CP apparatus keeps a firm grip on the organization and is going to continue to. But a different sort of climate exists now, one that offers more of an opportunity for the workers to express themselves and to consider the issues. Nothing can keep the criticism of the CGT's bureaucratic subordination to the CP from spreading. The crisis in the CGT, which has been marked also by a stagnation or decline in membership despite repeated recruitment campaigns, is developing parallel to the one in the CP. They feed each other.

The CGT leadership is not only paying for the divisionist attitude it adopted in the period leading up to the elections. It has now to take account of the political influence the SP has in the working class. This problem could be concealed as long as there was a façade of unity behind the Common Program. But now that the CP and the SP are competing openly, this problem has come out into the light of day.

The CGT also has to make concessions, although these have been very limited and often purely formal, to the new aspirations

2. Fédération de l'Éducation Nationale (National Education Federation).—IP/1

3. Giscard D'Estaing was elected for a seven-year term in the framework of an "electoral college" established by the Gaullist constitution, which places severe restrictions on popular sovereignty.—IP/1

that have arisen in the society and in the working class. It has to recognize now that women workers have their own specific demands. More belatedly than the CP, it has taken up the term "self-management."

All these factors combined are creating a situation marked by persistent problems for the Stalinist leadership. These chiefs are trying to maintain their bureaucratic control over the CGT without putting the federation in a position where it has to fall back into a ghetto existence, confined to those sections of the working class that have long supported it.

One of the CGT leadership's major difficulties in carrying out this operation lies in the lack of understanding and the rigidity of the intermediate-level cadres. They are often unprepared for a "democratic" course, which requires flexibility in thought and action. This is something that they have never learned.

The CFDT 'Readjusts its Focus'

Immediately after the electoral defeat in March, the CFDT leadership announced a "change of focus." This was officially explained as "refocusing on trade-union problems," as reasserting the unions' autonomy vis-à-vis political parties. The electoral road had failed, the CFDT leadership explained, owing to a lack of dynamism in social struggles. The attitude of sitting back and waiting for the elections had paralyzed the trade-union movement and the working class.

Thus, the CFDT is presenting itself as the only major organization in the workers movement that has gone on after the election results to undertake a general reassessment and to make a certain self-criticism, since it recognizes that it itself fell into illusions.

Underlying this largely demagogic critical turn is the kind of line that is known in France as the "policy of climbing stairs." In fact, the CFDT leaders have gotten themselves photographed from every angle on the stairs leading to the presidential or ministerial offices. They have claimed that negotiation was now the royal road for the trade unions and the key aspect of the class struggle.

This policy of going hat in hand to government officials has been imitated by the unions in the various industries as well as the district councils, without it leading to any appreciable result. But it has been followed with a lot of interest by the government and the bosses, who have sometimes granted satisfaction—not on the demands but on the procedures for consultation and negotiation.

Although the CFDT leadership says that it is not happy with what it has gotten, it intends to continue its new policy "in the face of all adversity" and to get it endorsed at the federation's congress in Brest in May 1979.

This "readjustment of focus" does deserve the attention the bosses are paying

to it. This policy, which was worked out last January and announced in a document that has become known as the "Moreau Report," represents capitulation by the workers movement in face of the economic crisis.

The theme of "negotiable" demands, that is, ones "that are appropriate in view of the economic crisis," was popularized several months before the elections by Edmond Maire, the general secretary of the CFDT. The talk about the need in France to "restore the framework for negotiations" began about the same time.

After the elections, the "readjustment of focus" took the form of rejecting all actions involving more than one kind of worker. The reasoning was that such mobilizations did not apply pressure on the decision makers with whom it was possible to negotiate. Moreover, it was argued that they were dangerous because they assumed a political character. Actions involving several categories of workers made the unions dependent on political parties.

The CFDT leadership showed its adeptness in exploiting the bitterness the activists felt about days of action bringing together different categories of workers that were just intended for show. It is basing itself on their revulsion against this sort of thing in order to justify its rejecting unity in action with the CGT.

Underlying the readjustment of focus is the CFDT leaders' analysis of the problems the crisis poses for them. What they propose is a policy of adapting to the crisis. At the same time they try to cover themselves by talking about the need to safeguard democratic institutions and by making a face-saving deal with the bosses. The deal they offer is along the lines of "you give us concessions on the quality of labor's situation, and we'll be reasonable about our quantitative demands."

All the CFDT's proposals point in the direction of capitalist reforms of the work process, of working hours, and "responsibility" on the job. This is also to involve a more egalitarian distribution of the volume of wages. The whole package is decked out in the vocabulary of self-management in an attempt to make it appear that it reflects the aspirations of the workers.

The CFDT has shown that it is ready to accept lower wages in exchange for a shorter workweek. But it is abandoning any perspective for a struggle for the thirty-five hour week now under the pretext that such a reform can be consolidated only on a Europe-wide scale. Everywhere it is throwing out offers of participation by union organizations on the different levels in setting economic goals for the various localities, regions, and industries.

The CFDT justifies these proposals on the basis of its theory of a "new type of development." This involves the conception that it is possible to find a solution for the crisis that is in the interests of the workers by altering the economic decisions

the bosses make at every level. The federation, however, remains cautious about putting forward its policy publicly. This is because of the pressure it faces from the CGT and the CP. Unlike the CGIL⁴ [the CP controlled federation] in Italy, it cannot praise accepting austerity and sacrifice as a revolutionary virtue.

The CFDT leadership has also learned the lessons from the recent behavior of the CGT and the CP. These organizations are refusing to take responsibility before the workers for managing the crisis. So, no other policy is possible in France as long as the CP and the CGT remain dominant in the workers movement.

The CFDT leadership is linked to the SP but it is very critical of the party's line. It judges correctly that the SP cannot hold its own against the CP on the shop floor and suspects it of being willing to concede too much to the Communists for the sake of unity.

The CFDT's central objective in its operation "to restore hope" is to bring about regroupment in the French workers movement favorable to a form of Social Democracy in which the unions would play a preeminent role. It believes that it can hold its ground against the CP and calls on the SP to act as a mere extension of the unions in parliament.

The CFDT is openly backing the "Rocard Current"⁵ in the SP. This has brought it some sharp reprimands from François Mitterrand, who remains the head of the SP. There is some truth in the accusations of "neoworkerism" hurled at the Rocard tendency by the CERES,⁶ the "left" current in the SP, which is heavily influenced by the CP.

In the CFDT, this "change of focus" is provoking a great deal of concern and resistance, as well as open opposition. But this policy is backed up by a rejuvenated and reinvigorated old anti-Marxist right wing. There is a left opposition that could become very large. But it is quite fragmented and heterogeneous and has no tradition of struggle against the federation's bureaucratic apparatus.

On the other hand, in recent years the CFDT leadership has continued its forced march to build a homogeneous apparatus and done so quite effectively. For more than a year it has not hesitated to resort to massive expulsions, even at the risk of tarnishing its reputation for democracy and for promoting "self-management." □

4. Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (Italian General Confederation of Labor).—IP/I

5. Michel Rocard is a former leader of the United Socialist Party, a centrist formation, who joined the SP after the formation of the Union of the Left.—IP/I

6. Centre d'Etudes, de Recherches et d'Education Socialistes (Center of Socialist Studies, Research and Education).—IP/I

The Degeneration of the Italian CP

Reviewed by Gerry Foley

The political immediacy of this book, by the Italian correspondent of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*, is well symbolized by the picture on its cover. Italian steelworkers are shown at a demonstration under a banner that says "We have had enough."

This demonstration, organized by the steelworkers union, took place in December 1977. It was one of the most dramatic signs that masses of workers were moving toward openly and consciously challenging the class-collaborationist policy of the Italian CP. Currently, the Italian CP leaders call this policy the "historic compromise." What they mean is a coalition in fact if not an actual government.

Most of the demonstrators must have been Communist Party voters, and a large proportion of them were probably members of the party as well. This political reality is indicated by the fact that one of the workers in the picture is carrying a copy of the CP daily *l'Unità*.

But they were demonstrating against the austerity policy of the Andreotti government, which is able to stay in office only because it has the support of the Communist Party.

In fact, the CP leadership has been eager to prove to the Christian Democratic chiefs and the Italian capitalists that it can defend the cutbacks most effectively.

The CP's "Intermediate Range Plan" says, for instance: "Austerity is an unavoidable necessity if we are to deal with the present economic difficulties. . . . We see austerity as a means for transforming the way of functioning and the social goals of the economic system according to a precise program. We see it as a means for reorienting investment, production, and public expenditures, and even changing the quality of consumption and thus of changing the life styles bound up with consumption."

What this means in reality is a "life style" that involves less "consumption" of any kind. And the Italian workers, many of whom come from impoverished rural backgrounds, know all too well what sort of "life style" goes with less money in the pocket and less food in the cupboard.

So, the CP has had to appeal to "patriotism." Libera quotes CP leader Giorgio Amendola as follows:

"Any left program, any program of

democratic transformation or social renewal demands austerity, severity, and rigor, which the working class as a national leading class must be capable of accepting.

Italie: Les fruits amers du compromis historique [Italy: The Bitter Fruit of the Historic Compromise]. By Anna Libera. Paris: Editions la Brèche, 1978, 301 pp.

Any demagogic policy, even presented in an extremist form, may favor dangerous centrifugal tendencies that reflect the rejection of national discipline, which is indispensable for the success of a policy of renewal. But this discipline must not be imposed. It must be accepted, and therefore it requires discussion, popular participation, and mass consensus for the measures taken. That is, self-discipline. Communists must take the lead in accomplishing this difficult task of national self-discipline."

That is, the CP leadership sees the party's role as persuading the workers to accept voluntarily the policy of a capitalist government.

The CP leaders are even anxious to try to repair the threadbare cloak of respectability of the Italian parliament, increasingly hated and despised by the Italian people for its corruption and its reactionary attacks on their freedoms and living standards. Libera offers an example of CP parliamentary cretinism that gives a vivid image of degeneration. She quotes a defense of parliament forms by CP deputy Lucio Libertini:

"A certain ritual is in fact useful, even necessary. It sanctifies the objectivity of certain rules. It offers guarantees to all, it involves a rigorousness of custom and method. To pick examples at random: The use of the formal form of address among old friends when they speak in debate; the rule that a tie must be worn, and even a vest; even the strange title 'your honor' used during the official sessions; the hallowed respect for schedules and the punctilious, even Byzantine respect for the rules. All this may seem bizarre, ridiculous, useless, but it is not. . . .



"People smile at the fact that it was Ingrao [CP president of the Senate] who reestablished the rule that ties must be worn, and enforced it with great severity. But it has to be considered that these little things are the means of imposing respect for parliament. And they are being done by a political group that by its discipline, as everyone recognizes, is assuring the conditions that make it possible for both houses of parliament to function."

It is ironic that in the CP's very efforts to gain acceptance into the game of bourgeois "parliamentary democracy," it reveals its totalitarian nature—its reliance on the "big lie"—so clearly. What kind of party but a Stalinist one could be so brazen as to praise austerity as a means for "transforming society" or to hymn the decrepit nineteenth-century trappings of the Italian parliament?

The effectiveness of the Stalinist parties' use of the "big lie" technique has depended largely on the tendency of those who oppose capitalism to rally around a workers party under bourgeois attack and to suspend critical judgment of what it says. Thus, this method works best when a Communist Party is confined to a ghetto or treated like an outlaw force. It tends to break down when the bourgeoisie and a CP are openly working together. Actually, in the present situation, the Italian CP has been losing its credibility with the workers quite rapidly.

Libera quotes a letter to a Rome daily by a young automobile worker that expresses the growing impatience of masses of workers with the CP's "new think" demagoguery.

"I thank Andreotti for increasing the price of gas, and especially for raising the tax on car use by 2,800 lira [about US\$3.50]. As a member of a great party, I feel like an instrument of the great collective might of the proletariat, and I am proud of this self-exaction, pardon me, this exaction imposed by my labor. In this way, as Comrade Amendola says, we workers are becoming the moving force of our country's destiny and the masters of her fate."

The revolt of the workers against the policies of the CP political and union leaderships that Libera describes has continued to develop since the book was delivered to the publisher, in February 1978.

Recent strikes are beginning to force even the most right-wing CP leaders to begin to talk out of the left sides of their mouths again.

Thus, the central points the book makes about the failure of the historic compromise and the revolt of the CP's working-class following against it are even more forceful and timely today than when it was published early this year. The book shows how this development started and predicts where it will go, and the forecast is already being strikingly confirmed.

However, this book is by no means a merely topical one. In her study of the current policy of the Italian Communist Party, Libera analyzes the history of the party and of the Italian workers movement, as well as the political and social situation in Italy today. She also goes into the history of Italian revolutionary thought and of the political role of the Catholic church.

In all, this book gives a rounded history and analysis of the struggle for socialism in Italy, as well as its perspectives for the future. It is the indispensable book on Italy for revolutionists and Marxists, and will certainly remain useful for many years.

It is exemplary in particular in the way it brings a broad historic and theoretical study to focus on the key political questions of the moment. In this way, it combines immediacy with depth, and delivers a punch with a great deal of weight behind it.

Libera does not just show the rank opportunism of the CP leaders, such as the ultraparliamentary clown Libertini, and the demagogic eulogists of "austerity" and "national self-discipline" for the workers. She shows in depth and detail why the CP's reformist strategy is basically one of surrender and why it is the opposite of the practical plan for progress that the Stalinists claim. There are few such clear and concrete accounts of the failure of gradualism.

Libera shows how the CP's so-called policy of alliances actually repels the allies the workers movement needs. The clearest example is the way that in trying to cozy up the Catholic church and the Christian Democratic Party bosses the CP was led to turn its back on the women's movement. In the name of building bridges to the poor masses under the influence of the church, the CP sought to avoid "confrontations" with the clericalists on the questions of women's right to divorce and abortion.

Despite the CP's attitude on this, the women's movement won major victories. And this had a much more powerful effect in breaking the hold of the church on the Catholic masses than all the CP's attempts to bring about "a reconciliation between Christians and Marxists."

Libera shows how in practice the CP's so-called strategy of strengthening democracy leads it into becoming an accomplice

in the dismantling of bourgeois democracy itself and into opposing the extension of democratic rights for the masses. For example, the CP opposes holding referenda on such questions as the right to abortion—on the grounds, naturally, that this violates the prerogatives of parliament.

She shows the way that the CP leaders have falsified the thought of Antonio Gramsci, the most illustrious founder of the Italian Communist movement, to conceal their own unoriginal gradualist and opportunist conceptions in Gramscian terminology.

In particular, Libera shows concretely how the "Eurocommunism" of the Italian CP, with all its glittering formulations, is the application of the same old Stalinist approach to the party's immediate needs as the leaders see them. She describes how at the time of the fall of fascism, the CP leaders turned their backs on the mass revolutionary movement in favor of making a deal with the bourgeoisie.

The quotations she gives from the CP material in the 1940s say essentially the same thing as the supposedly Eurocommunist pronouncements today about the need for "alliances" and for respecting "parliamentary democracy."

She cites an article from *l'Unità* in 1944, saying:

"We cannot follow any narrow party interest today or any limited class interest. It is the Communist Party and the working class that must take up the banner of the national interests that fascism and the groups that put it in power have betrayed."

In 1943, Togliatti said:

"... it would be absurd in a country that has gone through the tragic experience of twenty years of fascism, which is emerging from this experience in an exhausted state, with a considerable part of the population that has to go through a major reeducation, to consider a government of a single party or the domination of a single class."

More than thirty years later, the CP is no more interested in establishing a workers government than it was then.

Libera describes the way that the opportunism and gradualism of the CP leaders in 1943-46 led them to forget that when the power of the bourgeoisie is shaken by a crisis, it will soon be reestablished if capitalism is not overthrown. They fell into illusions that the favorable relationship of forces that existed after the fall of fascism was going to be permanent.

The so-called "practical" politicians of the CP, the leaders of masses of Italian workers, were the pathetic dupes of their opportunist delusions and were promptly cheated by the capitalists. They were thrown out of the government and driven into semioutlaw status for decades. Libera quotes the CP leader Gian Carlo Pajetta as follows:

"I think that we should admit that at the time we thought that while it was not impossible, it was extremely unlikely that the capitalists would reconsolidate their position and exclude the Communists from the government for a long period."

Furthermore, Togliatti did not learn anything from the experience. At the Eighth Congress of the Italian CP in 1956, he said:

"It is obvious that if we accept this perspective of an advance toward socialism in democracy and peace, we have introduced the concept of a progressive process, in which it is difficult to say when the qualitative leap [i.e., the change from capitalist to workers rule] occurs."

At the same time, Libera does not neglect the specific features in the development of the Italian CP, or the peculiarities of the Italian situation.

This book, in fact, offers a clear and dynamic picture of the development of the Italian working class in the postwar period. It is not just an exposé of the role of the Stalinist leadership but an account of great social transformations and powerful workers struggles.

Libera describes how the Italian workers broke out of the straitjacket of intimidation and division that the bosses succeeded in imposing on them in the 1950's, how they won great victories and opportunities to learn and organize. She writes:

"In FIAT, for example, after so many years of repression, the workers made it a point of honor to insolently display their political opinions. One would put a red flag on his machine, another a portrait of Marx, of Mao, or Trotsky. And for years no one has dared to take them off."

The workers also began to break out of the narrowness imposed on them by capitalist society:

"The unions demand the 'right to study for the workers,' which was not conceived in a narrow way as vocational training but as raising their cultural level (special remedial courses, university seminars on all the subjects studied, and many others, such as the question of women's oppression).

"The steelworkers contract in 1972-73 stipulated that the workers could have 150 hours over three years to learn. These courses were put under union control. . . .

"The women in particular were able to use their 150 hours to develop their study of women's oppression, and in some cities they fought successfully to extend the right to attend these classes to housewives."

The steelworkers demonstration shown on the cover of the book is, in a way, the culmination of this process, of the advance of the Italian working class toward a self-confidence and clear consciousness of their interests that is making it harder and harder for the Communist Party leaders to delude or manipulate them. □

New Evidence Supports Marroquín's Bid for Asylum in U.S.

By Matilde Zimmermann

[The following article appeared in the November 24 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist newsweekly published in New York.]

* * *

When political refugee Héctor Marroquín met with Leonel Castillo last March, the immigration chief refused to admit that there is repression in Mexico. He would say only that Mexico is "not as open as the United States."

Castillo should study carefully the 300 pages of documentary evidence recently sent to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service in support of Marroquín's request for political asylum in the United States. Submitted in the form of an affidavit by Marroquín's attorney, Margaret Winter, this material proves beyond any doubt that the Mexican police, army, and government-inspired right-wing paramilitary groups are guilty of illegal arrest, torture for the purpose of extracting false confessions, imprisonment without trial, kidnappings, and murder. It reconstructs in frightening detail the way in which Marroquín was framed up by the Mexican police and press for crimes he had nothing to do with, and proves his innocence.

When Héctor Marroquín first entered the United States in April 1974, he was in many ways just like hundreds of thousands of other Mexican immigrants.

He was twenty-one years old, with no money, no papers, and no faith in the capitalist system. He knew that if he was lucky enough to get a job, he would do backbreaking work for miserable wages.

There was one thing that made Marroquín different from most other immigrants, however. He was running for his life, afraid that if he remained in Mexico he would be gunned down by police, beaten into signing a phony confession, or kidnapped by rightist terror squads.

Marroquín was forced to flee after he was publicly accused of the assassination of a school librarian, under circumstances that guaranteed he would not be given a chance to prove his innocence. At the time, he was already a political activist, a socialist, and an outspoken opponent of tactics such as assassinations.

A Student Activist

Although only fifteen years old during the Mexican student upsurge of 1968, Marroquín was deeply affected by that struggle and by the police massacre of

hundreds of students in Tlatelolco Plaza in Mexico City.

Several years later he became a leader of the movement for student autonomy at the University of Nuevo León in Monterrey. He participated in demonstrations against police repression and became a member of a group called the Comité Estudiantil Revolucionario (Revolutionary Student Committee).

In a pamphlet entitled *My Story* Marroquín has explained the nature of the CER in early 1973: "We discussed the economy and politics, and came to some conclusions—that what was needed in Mexico was a workers' and peasants' government; that the present government represented the capitalists and could not solve our problems; that students, workers, and peasants had to organize independently from the government."

Sworn statements included in the new evidence submitted to the INS confirm that Marroquín's political activity had nothing to do with terrorism. For example, the principal of the school where Marroquín was a student teacher in 1973 writes: "I was very familiar with [Marroquín's] political opinions, which were the same as those of other teachers who were also persecuted by the police. He worked to organize students around legal goals, in order to democratize the university and society itself."

Rejects Guerrilla Tactics

In mid-1973, the CER began to move toward guerrillaist positions that Marroquín did not agree with. An affidavit by Marroquín's wife, María Isabel Guadalupe García Zúñiga, explains how this happened:

"Around the end of August, Héctor explained the following situation to me: He had attended a meeting with CER activists to discuss how to build a campaign against right-wing terrorism and put forth the political ideas of the CER. A proposal to form political-military brigades was made at this meeting. These brigades would provide a way of talking to people, passing out leaflets, and defending the movement against possible paramilitary attacks. These defense guards were to be armed, because the right-wing gangs were armed.

"Héctor expressed his opposition to this tactic, saying he thought it would be counterproductive, since the government would take advantage of the situation to launch more severe repression against the

students and smash their organization. He was very upset about the fact that the other members of the CER did not seem to understand what he was saying, and began to call him a petty-bourgeois reformist and lose confidence in him. Héctor had always taken his political work very seriously and therefore felt very bad about the whole situation."

García Zúñiga says that Marroquín's differences with the other members of the CER continued after this meeting. In fact, they deepened. He soon left the group and devoted himself to his studies and to political reading to strengthen his arguments against guerrilla tactics.

Marroquín knew from his own experience how the police used allegations of guerrilla activity to silence political activists. In January 1972, Marroquín's roommate and close friend Jesús Rivera was murdered outside an apartment the police said was inhabited by "terrorists." Marroquín happened to be nearby and saw the police shoot Rivera again and again as he came out of the building with his hands in the air.

Thus Marroquín had good reason to be afraid when he opened a Monterrey daily newspaper on January 19, 1974, and saw his own picture and those of several other political activists. The article identified Marroquín and the others as "the principal leaders of the Frente Estudiantil Revolucionario," and said they were wanted in connection with the killing of a school librarian two days earlier.

This was not the last time Marroquín's picture appeared in the newspapers. Over the next several months, the police repeatedly accused him of terrorist acts, calling him armed and "extremely dangerous." The cops variously identified him as a member of the CER, the Liga Comunista 23 de Septiembre (a guerrillaist group some CER members joined long after Marroquín left the CER), and the "Batallón Revolución 10 de Marzo."

Marroquín went into hiding with relatives after an attorney warned him that he had no chance of receiving a fair trial and would be tortured and possibly killed by the Monterrey police if he turned himself in.

Torture, Forced Confessions

Marroquín's attorneys and the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee have collected dozens of sworn statements from

Mexican political prisoners and from relatives of young people who were killed or "disappeared," that is, kidnapped and never heard from again. These affidavits show graphically what would have happened to Marroquín had he not fled from the police. They also show that the young student activist had a much more accurate perception of Mexican "justice" than does the head of the INS.

The testimony of Fernando Miguel Ruíz Díaz is just one example. Like Marroquín, he was involved in high-school protests in the late sixties and in a struggle to democratize his university in 1971. By 1974, however, his political activity was limited to attending university council meetings as a student representative. In May of that year he was arrested, and for four days the police beat him, gave him electric shocks, and threatened to kill him. Finally, Ruíz Díaz says, he could not stand it anymore. "I agreed to sign a statement prepared beforehand by the police" confessing to a string of incidents he had nothing to do with.

Ruíz Díaz can prove that he is innocent. But he has not had a chance to present that proof in court. He has been in prison for almost four years without trial or sentence.

Two other political prisoners, who are now members of the Mexican Communist Party, testify that they were formerly members of the Comité Estudiantil Revolucionario. Both were arrested and tortured in 1974; they have been in prison for nearly four years without being sentenced.

A twenty-three-year-old prisoner named Sergio Manjarrez Cepeda testifies that he was also a member of the CER at the University of Nuevo León. He describes the group before it was influenced by guerrillaist ideas:

"The Committee became conscious of the need for profound social change in our country. Its only activities were to spread our ideas about how to do this and to analyze our social reality. The only brigades we formed were for distributing leaflets at the factories and schools and holding political discussions."

The volume and consistency of the documentation presented in the Marroquín case would convince the most skeptical reader that political repression is widespread in Mexico. This is confirmed by authoritative organizations such as Amnesty International.

Amnesty International Report

In 1976, Amnesty International published the results of a fact-finding mission to Mexico: "There is little doubt in the minds of the mission," they concluded, "that 'police brutality'—a violent and aggressive behavior towards suspects—is so frequent as to constitute the rule rather than the exception. Frequently, prisoners who claim to have been tortured or just wrongfully arrested will, unless asked,

State Department: 'Deport Marroquín'



Militant/Susan Ellis

HECTOR MARROQUIN

The U.S. State Department has advised the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) that Héctor Marroquín should be deported to Mexico. The "advisory opinion" was issued last June but released by the INS only this month.

Although the INS will make the final decision on Marroquín's asylum request, the State Department's "opinion" carries much weight. INS officials have given Marroquín's attorneys only until

November 27 to reply to the State Department letter.

The brief, one-and-a-half-page ruling concedes that Marroquín's account of the facts, if true, could cause him "to fear return to his homeland." But it then proceeds to whitewash the brutal repression carried out by the López Portillo regime, claiming that "fair public trials in Mexico are the norm," and that "human rights violations . . . are not condoned by the Government of Mexico."

The State Department acted without considering any of the evidence of repression amassed by Marroquín's attorneys over the last year, or even informing them that such a ruling was in the offing.

"I am calling on all supporters of human rights to protest this outrageous denial of my rights," Marroquín said. "How can the State Department rule on my right to asylum without even looking at the evidence?"

"So far we have sent hundreds of pages of testimony and data to the INS—the last thing we sent was over 300 pages long. But the State Department didn't look at any of it. Only public pressure can force the State Department to back down and retract its unfair and arbitrary ruling."

Protests against this blatantly undemocratic ruling may be sent to Cyrus Vance, Secretary of State, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520. Copies should be sent to the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee, Box 843, Cooper Station, New York, New York 10003.

omit to refer to the routine beating up. It is taken as a matter of course. . . ."

Amnesty also noted that ". . . particularly with regard to political prisoners . . . not only is routine ill-treatment alleged to be employed to secure confessions, but the techniques so alleged constitute so intensified and acute a form of ill-treatment as properly to merit the description of torture."

The "Disappeared"

The Amnesty International report substantiates another fear that drove Marroquín to flee. If the police found him, he was afraid he might join the ranks of "disappeared."

"The Mexican daily newspapers frequently publish information or paid advertisements on persons who have disappeared for an extended period of time after allegedly being arrested by the authorities.

Some never reappear. Others are found dead, sometimes mutilated, by the wayside. Several have appeared dead in police establishments, the authorities claiming that the detainees committed suicide. The relatives of these express scepticism, if not outright disbelief, about such 'suicides' and assert their conviction that such deaths are due to torture or ill-treatment by the detaining authority."

The fate of the other three students accused of taking part in the librarian's murder also shows what the authorities had in store for Marroquín. Two of them were gunned down by police in May 1974, one in an execution-style slaying by plainclothes cops. A third, Jesús Piedra Ibarra, disappeared after being arrested and was taken to an infamous torture site, Military Camp No. 1.

In their efforts to apprehend Jesús Piedra in April 1974, the police arrested his father, a surgeon who was then sixty-one

years old and in poor health. An affidavit by Jesús Piedra Rosales describes how he was held incommunicado for several days, beaten, almost drowned, and kicked all over his body. His back was fractured, and he had to be hospitalized. The purpose of the torture was to force him to reveal his son's whereabouts, which he did not know.

Long-distance Robbery

One of the crimes the Mexican police accused Marroquín of was an armed robbery at a Monterrey bakery on August 30, 1974. On this occasion the cops even claimed Marroquín was "positively identified" by eyewitnesses.

But on August 30, 1974, Marroquín was in a hip-to-toe cast in a Galveston, Texas, hospital, recovering from an automobile accident that broke his leg and pelvis and punctured his lung. He had fled from Mexico on April 9, 1974, crossing the U.S. border at Eagle Pass, Texas.

Hospital records and bills submitted as part of the Marroquín evidence prove that he was nowhere near the site of the robbery. Marroquín's injuries were so serious that he was still wearing a cast in November 1974.

Documentary evidence also establishes Marroquín's innocence of another "terrorist" crime—a shootout with Monterrey police on April 23, 1974. Pay stubs from the Harold Farb Construction Company show that Marroquín was at work in Houston on April 23 and throughout the following period.

Role of FBI

When he went into hiding, Marroquín knew that the Mexican police were after him because of his political activity.

But he did not know that he had another powerful enemy.

Documents released to Marroquín under the Freedom of Information Act show that the FBI opened a file on him when he was a fifteen-year-old student.

Almost every word of Marroquín's FBI file was excised by government censors. But other FBI documents suggest that it was not unusual—only illegal—for the FBI to conduct surveillance of a Mexican high-school student.

Files of the BOCOV ("Counterintelligence-Border Coverage") Program reveal a number of FBI operations designed to "discredit" Mexican radical groups. This disruption program—like that used against the Black movement, antiwar activists, and socialists in this country—included planting false stories in the Mexican press and issuing a poison-pen leaflet attacking a prominent member of the Communist Party.

Did the FBI also plant the articles in the Mexican press accusing Héctor Marroquín of terrorist crimes?

The few heavily censored pages turned over to Marroquín by the FBI show that

the bureau was still following his activities in 1974. In fact, only seven days before Marroquín crossed into the United States, the FBI sent a series of urgent bulletins to border stations in the Southwest warning them to be on the lookout for him. Marroquín's attorneys have appealed for complete and uncensored copies of the files, in order to determine the extent of FBI complicity in the persecution of Marroquín by Mexican authorities.

One thing the full files would surely show is a cozy relationship between the FBI and the INS. FBI files obtained by the Mexican daily *Excelsior* in late 1977 show that FBI agents posed as INS representatives in order to interrogate people suspected of political activism and that the FBI arranged to have border-crossing cards canceled to pressure individuals into becoming informants.

The complete files would also show whether the FBI had anything to do with the fact that Marroquín was stopped at the Eagle Pass border station when he tried to enter the United States for the second time, on September 18, 1977.

After three and a half years in the United States, Marroquín had returned to Mexico over a weekend to try to get a lawyer's advice on the possibility of clearing himself of the charges against him. Marroquín's papers were challenged by U.S. border guards, and he was summarily convicted of attempting to enter the country illegally.

There seemed to be only a three-month stint in the Maverick County Jail standing between him and deportation back to Mexico, where he would face certain imprisonment and torture, and possible death.

'Nobody Asked for Papers'

Marroquín had made some friends in the United States, however, and had won respect for his political dedication. He was active in a successful Teamsters organizing drive at the Coca-Cola plant where he worked in Houston.

He had also found an organization that fit his own socialist ideas. He had joined the Socialist Workers Party.

First attracted by the SWP's campaign for mayor of Houston in 1975, Marroquín was impressed by the party's defense of the rights of undocumented workers like himself. As he explains in *My Story*, there was one thing that really told him what kind of movement he was joining:

"Nobody ever asked me for papers. Everywhere else I'd been, everyone wanted to see my papers. But all the comrades of the SWP and YSA were interested in was whether I agreed with the program and was willing to work with the other members to put it into practice."

With the help of the SWP and the Texas Raza Unida Party, Marroquín got legal help. While still in jail, he filed a petition for political asylum in the United States.

A few days after his release from jail,

Marroquín flew to Detroit for the national convention of the Young Socialist Alliance. There the YSA voted to launch an all-out campaign to save Marroquín's life.

The Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee was formed to publicize the facts of the case and build the broadest possible support for Marroquín's request for political asylum.

That campaign has had considerable success. In the first five months of 1978, Marroquín told his story to audiences in sixty American cities.

His right to political asylum is supported by the 1.6 million-member National Education Association, the Detroit City Council, members of Congress, and many other prominent individuals. Thousands of people have signed petitions or sent letters and telegrams to Castillo demanding that Marroquín be granted political asylum.

Castillo and *la migra* may not like Héctor Marroquín. They may find it a frightening idea that a young socialist and trade-union activist without "proper" papers could have a right to remain in this country.

But the American people have shown, whenever they have had the chance, that they do not share these sentiments.

Many of these people do not agree with Marroquín's socialist ideas. But they are outraged by the idea that the U.S. government would deport a persecuted refugee just to avoid admitting that repression exists in Mexico.

Marroquín's supporters do not think that political asylum should be granted only to refugees from countries on Washington's "enemies list," such as Cuba and Vietnam.

If this fight for political asylum is successful, it will not only be a victory for Héctor Marroquín. It will also be a victory for everyone who has fled repression in Iran, in Chile, or in South Africa, and for all supporters of political freedom. □

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Selections From the Left

**lutte
ouvriere**

"Workers Struggle," Paris weekly supported by a grouping of militants who view themselves as Trotskyist in orientation.

The November 11 issue features an account of working conditions inside a plant owned by the French auto manufacturer Citroën, as described by an auto worker:

"The management of Citroën prides itself on having the most up-to-date plant in Europe. It's true that they have something to crow over. At the Javel plant, before the relocation, some 10,000 workers produced 400 DSs a day. Now, at Aulnay, 9,000 workers put out 600 CXs, not counting the other vehicles.

"In the new plant, the assembly line is completely automated and equipped with the latest machinery. For example, it takes sixteen minutes to assemble all the parts of an auto chassis. And there are about twenty machines that do the 1,050 welding operations needed for the assembly.

"While the technology is very advanced, it does not benefit the workers in any way. For instance, on the assembly line, you always have to rush so as not to wind up in the next station. It's not unusual, in this daily rat race, for several workers to wind up in the same car trying to do their jobs and getting in each other's way. Keeping up the pace is an obligation in mass production. Your nerves are put through the wringer, and the risk of work accidents goes up as a result. . . .

"What happens is that at the end of the day, when we get into the buses to go home, we are completely drained and dropping with fatigue.

"Furthermore, in addition to the advanced machinery, management sets aside some stations where the work is particularly hard. What these are, in fact, are disciplinary stations reserved for uncooperative workers. They did this with the wheel assembly for the CX, where a worker had to put three wheels weighing twenty kilograms each on each car, which meant that by the end of the day he had handled more than thirteen tons.

"But management also has other ways of imposing discipline. To see to it that we have the least possible contact with one another, they deliberately put workers of different nationalities next to one another, capitalizing to the hilt on whatever antagonisms may exist between them.

"The fatigue and nervous strain from the conditions Citroën imposes on us bring out aggressiveness that sometimes leads to a brawl.

"That is the kind of life we lead in this plant, and for ludicrous wages at that. A

skilled worker who is part of a crew earns an average of 2,700 francs [US\$633] a month including overtime, and 2,400 [US\$563] without it."

Internationales

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

The Fälldin government in Sweden was the first anywhere to fall over the issue of nuclear power. In its November 10 issue, *Internationales* commented on the significance for the Swedish antinuclear movement of the defeat of nuclear power in the November 5 referendum in Austria.

"The antinuclear movement the world over has won its greatest victory so far with the outcome of the referendum in Austria.

"All commentators are now looking at the connection between the victory in Austria and a referendum in Sweden.

"Now the opponents of nuclear power have the wind in their sails, its supporters say.

"That's right! Now we have to raise our sails to get a referendum in Sweden as well.

"Atomkraft, an umbrella organization involving thirty groups opposed to nuclear power, has decided to take up the demand for a referendum.

"All the objections, raised by Social Democrats among others, that the questions are too complicated can now be answered with [Austrian SP Premier] Bruno Kreisky's words:

"No, this is not too complicated a question. No, what would our democracy amount to if it were too dangerous for the people to be able to decide on this question?"

"A referendum must offer a clear choice: for or against nuclear power. A 'no' vote must mean an end to nuclear power in Sweden.

"Another important question of democracy is that opponents of nuclear power should be guaranteed as much money by the state to campaign against it as those who support it have at their disposal.

"In order to keep this question from being exploited by the parties, the referendum should not be held on a regular election day. That would frighten away all the Social Democrats who are against the bourgeois parties but also against nuclear power.

"But to force a referendum on nuclear power in Sweden, public opinion has to be mobilized to demand it. And we have to begin now to mobilize such a broad current of public opinion."

Socialist Challenge

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

On November 9, England's High Court ruled on the libel suit brought by Vanessa Redgrave and five other members of the Workers Revolutionary Party against the London weekly the *Observer*.

The *Observer* article in question, headlined "Vanessa and the Red House Mystery,"* was published in the paper's September 28, 1975, issue. It contained allegations that a WRP member had been detained and interrogated against her will at a WRP cadre school outside of London, and that WRP "members have been known to hint at arms caches hidden in the grounds" of the school. Three hours before that issue of the *Observer* hit the streets, the article was used by British police as a pretext to raid the school.

The court issued a three-part ruling on the libel suit. It found that parts of the article were in fact "defamatory of the plaintiffs," that not all the statements in it were true, but that the WRP's reputation had nonetheless not been "materially injured." The suit was thrown out and the WRP was ordered to pay the court costs, estimated at between £60,000 and £70,000 (about US\$116,000 to US\$135,000).

An editorial in the November 16 issue of *Socialist Challenge* comments on this bizarre ruling:

"The decision of the judge in the recent action brought by Vanessa Redgrave et al against *The Observer* is, by any standards, an outrage. Because those bringing the action were left-wing and belonged to the Workers Revolutionary Party, they were penalised.

"Just picture the opposite. Right-wing Tories, supporters of Smith, etc., bringing a case for defamation against a newspaper. Can anyone seriously believe that if the jury decided that the paper got its facts wrong the judge would then not have awarded the damages? The unashamed class basis of this decision has shocked even *The Times!*

"We have numerous disagreements with the WRP. We believe that they represent the worst features of sect politics in this country. Their style and method of politics was used with great effect by *The Observer* lawyer.

"But despite the fantasy world which the WRP inhabits there can be nothing but contempt for the distributors of 'justice' in capitalist Britain. The law, in this case, is not an ass but politically vindictive."

*For the text of this item, see "The 'Observer' Article Used as Pretext for Police Raid," in *Intercontinental Press*, October 20, 1975, p. 1437.

The Capitalist Crisis and the Working-Class Solution

By Ernest Mandel

[The following article appeared in the February-March 1978 issue of *Critique Communiste*, a theoretical quarterly published in Paris. The introductory note is by *Critique Communiste*; the translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

We are publishing below the final chapter of a book by Ernest Mandel published in West Germany in 1977, entitled "The 1974-78 Crisis: A Marxist Analysis." This 180-page book will be published in French during 1978.

Mandel seeks to place the generalized recession of 1974-75 both in its particular historical framework (the end of the long postwar period of expansion) and in the more general framework of the overall history of the capitalist mode of production. He explains how this recession and the phase of depression—with its halting, uneven, and episodic recovery—were not accidental and were not produced by such extraneous factors as the rise in the price of oil, the "irrational behavior of the trade unions," or "the excessive demands of the workers." Rather the crisis flows inevitably from the inherent logic of the system, although accidental or extraneous factors can obviously play a role in determining the particular character of each cycle. In the course of this work, Mandel refines the explanation and application of the Marxist theory of periodic crises and cycles of industrial production. Every revolutionist will find Mandel's book an indispensable tool for analysis and for struggle.

* * *

Every crisis of overproduction involves a massive attack by capital against wage labor. The crisis increases unemployment, and thus also the fear of unemployment, which tends to make workers accept speed-up, a drop (or stagnation) in real wages, and the loss of previous gains in terms of working conditions, social security, and protection won during prosperous times against the most flagrant forms of poverty and injustice.

This has been true of every crisis. It was also true during 1974-75. Since then we have seen a general austerity drive against wages by big business. The outcome of this offensive depends on the interaction of three factors:

1. The level of organization, militancy, and class consciousness of the proletariat at the moment the offensive is launched (which is itself determined by everything

that has happened over the last fifteen or twenty years in the class struggle and the workers movement in each individual capitalist country and in the world as a whole).

2. The response of the mass organizations of the workers movement, above all the trade unions, but also the traditional mass parties.

3. The relationship of forces within the proletariat between the bureaucratic apparatuses and the new workers vanguard that has been forged through the struggles of the last ten years (an additional, and in the long run decisive, aspect of which is the comparative strength of the new revolutionary party being formed).

If we wish to draw a sober balance sheet on what has happened in the imperialist countries over the last three years, we must conclude that the employers' offensive has scored certain victories—of varying importance depending on the country—but that nowhere have they achieved their overall goal.

Working-class militancy and the vanguard have not been smashed.

In no imperialist country have the workers suffered a grave, decisive defeat. The capitalists have not been able to increase surplus value to a rate anywhere near that required to solve their serious immediate crisis or to satisfy the historic needs of capitalism.

However, the working class and the workers movement are still, by and large, on the defensive. With the exception of Portugal in 1975, the workers have nowhere been able to use the extremely serious crisis of capitalism to challenge the existence of the bourgeois regimes. Even in Spain, where the scope of militance and politization has been the greatest, the winning of democratic rights and the collapse of the dictatorship under the masses' hammer blows have not (yet) created a crisis that threatens to collapse the capitalist regime itself.

Granted, the potential for such crises remains intact in the four countries of southwestern Europe. This potential might even spread to several countries further north. But at least for now this has not happened. The reason is clear—even though the objective strength and degree of organization of the working class are greater than ever before, and even though a new workers vanguard challenging the domination of the old bureaucracies has actually emerged in many factories and trade unions throughout capitalist Europe

(to a lesser extent in Japan or America, but they will follow the same course, with a few years delay), the traditional bureaucracies still have tremendous power to halt or disorient struggles, since there is no other political force within the workers movement sufficiently broad to present a credible alternative.

The mass workers organizations in Europe had been living in a dream world of "constant growth guaranteeing full employment and social progress."¹ The traumatic shock of four years of widespread unemployment brought them back to reality.

But the bourgeoisie has gone on a big propaganda offensive to confuse workers by "explaining" the crisis as one of shortages rather than overproduction. This campaign is designed to blame massive unemployment on the colonial peoples and on trade unions and working people in Europe. The leaderships of the trade unions and the mass workers parties have proven themselves totally incapable of providing a theoretical and political response to the bourgeoisie's ideological offensive. Almost all of them make concession after concession, when they don't give up altogether.

Are the Trade Unions to Blame?

This disarray was reinforced when neo-Ricardian ideas (from the Cambridge school) came back into vogue among economists linked to the workers movement, including the Communist parties (especially the Italian Communist Party).

For the neo-Ricardians, the rate of profit depends only on wages and has nothing to do with the organic composition of capital. So they blame a falling rate of profit on wage increases. From there it is just a short step to the conclusion—shared by the bosses—that "excessive" wage demands eliminate jobs and are thus to blame for unemployment.² This is a step that many economists linked to the workers movement, and even many leading Social Democrats, make very easily.

This shows how theoretical questions that seem to be academic today take on direct social, political, and practical importance for the class struggle. Only the

1. This was obviously the theory behind the Common Program of the Socialist Party, Communist Party, and "Left Radicals" in France.

2. See the statements of various ruling-class representatives.

Marxist explanation for the falling profit rate—that it is caused by the increase in the organic composition of capital and not by wage increases—can provide a firm foundation for trade-union and working-class resistance to the bourgeoisie's propaganda campaign. This offensive obviously has a practical goal—to make the trade unions accept cuts in real wages and an "incomes policy" that takes away their right to defend the interests of their members, such as the unconditional right to strike.

The right-wing Social Democrats broke with Marxism a long time ago on this question and transmit the conventional platitudes of bourgeois ideology to the workers movement: "We are all in the same boat. We all have to pitch in to save this company, or the national economy, or Europe, or the 'free world'" (depending on the circumstances).

In a whole series of European countries, the leading Social Democrats have become the advocates and representatives of the austerity policies the bourgeoisie demands. This has been the case particularly in Britain, West Germany, Portugal and Denmark.

Some "Eurocommunist" parties have openly followed in the Social Democrats' footsteps, even outstripping them at times in the "courageousness" of their commitment to austerity.³ This is true, for instance, of the Italian and Spanish CPs. The Portuguese CP has taken a softer position, backing the austerity program in principle but letting itself be drawn into opposing several concrete austerity measures, under pressure from its working-class base.

Alone among all the big workers parties in Europe, the French CP has so far declared its firm opposition to any austerity policy, in the name of a classical Keynesian anticrisis approach. It shares this position with most of the left Social Democratic tendencies (the Labour left in Britain, CERES in France, Fraternalidade Operaria in Portugal, the Renardist trade-union left in Belgium. But so far none of these currents has failed to give practical support to austerity measures upon going from opposition into the cabinet. It is unlikely that the French CP will do anything different.

Two Arguments for Austerity

There are two types of arguments used by right-wing Social Democrats and right-wing Eurocommunists to defend austerity policies. The first is basically political. It boils down to the everlasting "lesser evil" refrain. "If we don't administer the crisis, it will be administered by the reactionaries, who will impose much harsher aus-

terity programs. Besides, if we don't allow capitalism to extricate itself from this crisis through austerity measures, unemployment will bring the far right back to power, which will mean total catastrophe."

To put things another way, "Let them cut off three fingers so that you don't lose your whole hand."

But there is not the slightest bit of serious evidence propping up such a defeatist argument. Who has ever proved that the workers would be incapable of fighting wage freezes and wage cuts if they organized a militant and unified struggle? Who has ever shown that right-wing governments can blunt the resistance of the workers movement? Has the big defeat the British miners handed to the Heath government's union-busting drive been forgotten? Who has demonstrated that the reemergence of fascist gangs necessarily means they will win? Doesn't anyone remember what happened in July 1936 in the proletarian centers in Spain, and during the 1960s in Italy?

The second argument is more strictly economic in character; it almost seems to be a technical question. The right wing of the workers movement argues that without curtailment of spending by consumers (that is, cutting the volume of wages), there can be no growth of investment, and thus no reestablishment of full employment. To quote Helmut Schmidt's demagogic phrase: "The profits of today are the jobs of tomorrow."

Even from the "purely technical" point of view, however—that is, even by sticking to the framework of the capitalist mode of production—it is simplistic and wrong to theorize that a nation's resources fall into two big funds: the fund of household consumption (basically by wage earners) and the fund of productive investment.⁴ In reality, this is not the case. There are not two but three major categories of expenditures:

1. The fund of consumption by the productive class (including social security payments, which represent the income of all workers not able to sell their labor power for such reasons as retirement, sickness, disability, unemployment, pregnancy, or the need for job training or retraining).

2. The fund of productive investment.

3. The fund of unproductive expenditures. This last category includes not only administrative expenditures, military spending, and the costs of maintaining the ruling classes and their dependents and lackeys, but also the distribution and marketing costs created by the anarchy of the capitalist system, amassing of wealth, hoarding for purposes of speculation, the

export of capital, and so on.

Thus, it appears that it is quite possible for the first fund to be reduced through austerity measures without there being a corresponding increase in the second category. In that case, "compulsory saving" by wage earners simply fuels unproductive expenditures. It is even possible that despite a diminishing of the first fund, the second will diminish at the same time. This is exactly what happened in 1975. It seems to be recurring today in many imperialist countries.

Furthermore, to identify productive investment with the creation of new jobs is another red herring. A growing portion of investment is made for the purpose of rationalization, eliminating more jobs in the industry where it is carried out than it creates in the branches that supply the equipment.

Salvation Through Exporting?

The crudest arguments for austerity begin to lose their credibility among unionized workers as large-scale unemployment becomes chronic and deepens. The workers become more and more irritated and outraged about the powerlessness of their governments, whether of the "left" or "right," to reestablish full employment.

Therefore, the advocates of class collaboration and raising capitalist profits are falling back on a new line of defense: "economic recovery" will only come through a vigorous expansion of exports and a strict curtailment of imports.⁵ Since the competitive position of the nation's industry on the world market depends on "moderation" in wage increases, austerity is necessary to insure a "recovery through exports."

Here again empirical facts contradict the theory. The table (see box) clearly shows that there is no correlation between the more moderate rates of growth in wages and the success of export drives.

This is because industrial competitiveness depends basically on unit costs. These are determined much more by technological progress, economies of scale, the greater or lesser availability of capital, the cost of credit, the degree of access to energy sources or cheaper raw materials, and the burden of debt, than they are by minor fluctuations in the rate of growth of wages. Moreover, we should not forget that in manufacturing, wages represent no more than 25%-30% of production costs and sometimes even less.

Furthermore, it is patently unrealistic for all the imperialist countries to project a "recovery of growth through exports" at

3. See, for instance, Enrico Berlinguer, *Austerità, occasione per trasformare l'Italia* [Austerity: An Opportunity to Transform Italy], Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1977.

4. There is an obvious parallel here with the Stalinist axiom of the priority of heavy industry over the manufacture of consumer goods in the process of industrialization, which was based on the same incorrect two-sector theory.

5. See both the French SP's 89 *Réponses aux questions économiques* [89 Answers to Economic Questions], Paris: Flammarion, 1977, pp. 107-108; and the work of the French CP economists Boccara, Herzog, Le Pors, and Quin, *Changer l'Économie* [Transform the Economy], Paris: Editions Sociales, 1977, pp. 90-91, 97, 147-150.

the same time. Since the world market is expanding only slightly, if not contracting, it is obvious that one country's gain must be another country's loss. Therefore, when the trade unions and reformist workers parties support the export drives of their own ruling class, they do so not only at the expense of wages of workers in their own countries. The American trade-union bureaucrats' support for protectionism and for an "illegal alien hunt" is only an extreme example of a much broader tendency. For the proud motto, "Workers of the world unite," these mouthpieces of business unionism substitute the delightful slogan, "Workers of the world, eliminate one another's jobs, and condemn yourselves and each other to unemployment and wage cuts."⁶

The bosses in each country readily invoke the pressure of international competition to justify their opposition to the only effective measure that can immediately reduce unemployment: substantially cutting the work week with no loss in pay and no change in the way work is organized, thus providing for the hiring of additional workers.

Almost all the big trade-union federations in Western Europe have come out for an immediate changeover to a thirty-five- or thirty-six-hour week. They should immediately launch an action campaign across Europe—including North America and Japan, if possible—for this demand, culminating in a Europe-wide general strike.

But how can they realistically struggle for the thirty-five- or thirty-six-hour week throughout Europe, and at the same time back the campaign of "their own" bosses to step up "their" export level and improve "their" competitiveness (at the expense of their neighbors)?⁷

There are two lines of action here and they are mutually exclusive: either accept international capitalist competition, or apply working-class solidarity and internationalist trade unionism.

Back to Keynesian Methods?

Among those who reject austerity or seek

to camouflage it, the general preference is for Keynesian methods to spur recovery. They say that increasing the buying power of workers, especially of the poorest strata (who will immediately spend any extra income) will create additional markets for consumer goods, putting the process of economic growth back on the right track (growth of a different type than that of the 1950s and 1960s, however, with increased social consumption). The Common Program in France tends in this direction.

It is unquestionable that a rise in the income of working people can have an immediate "multiplier" effect, and in the short run can lead to a strong recovery in the consumer sector, especially if this sector contains much unused productive capacity. All the experience of the last forty-five years attests to this.

But experience also confirms that such a short-term recovery does not automatically produce a large-scale renewal of productive investment and a radical decrease in unemployment (see, for example, the failure of Roosevelt's New Deal). Experience demonstrates that it is impossible to prevent the bourgeoisie from responding in a hostile fashion whenever the growth of workers' real wages passes a certain threshold where the ratio between wages and total surplus value within the national income is seriously upset. These hostile responses include flight of capital, investment strikes, economic sabotage, and financial (to say nothing of political-military-terrorist) conspiracies against the "governments of the left."

Given the maintenance of the capitalist mode of production and the fact that a country is part of the international capitalist economy, the two abovementioned factors result in accelerated, if not galloping, inflation—the "natural" device the capitalist system provides for taking away what the workers have already won.

Some, such as Steven Holland, the theoretician of the British Labour left, have denied that Keynesian recovery techniques inevitably cause inflation.⁸ They see inflation as simply the combined result of recovery and the state's financial crisis, which is in turn caused by the bourgeoisie's refusal to pay "enough taxes." But is

there any way of changing such behavior on the part of the bourgeoisie—which is in keeping with the logic of capital accumulation—except by expropriating them?

Hence, the use of neo-Keynesian methods to spur recovery can have only very limited positive effects, especially because they are short-lived. After a year or two, tensions mount significantly at all social, economic, and political levels. The mixed economy is a myth.

A capitalist economy can only recover and prosper according to the laws of capital, that is, production for profit. You can, of course, overcome these tensions by obeying this logic—but that means austerity. Or you can overcome them by expropriating the bourgeoisie and obeying another set of laws, those of an economy based on satisfying human needs—in other words, by building socialism. But trying to straddle the two solutions, or trying to ally them through some kind of alchemy means running rapidly toward a total breakdown of the economy, as in Chile in 1973—in other words, toward catastrophe.

The left Social Democrats and the most sophisticated left Eurocommunists make an effort to take into account the negative results of past experiences with Keynesian techniques. Thus, they combine a policy of recovery through increased consumption with one of controlling investments and enlarging the public sector, supposedly to reestablish full employment.⁹ All the contradictions of the "mixed economy" idea burst through when light is shed upon these proposals.

How can it be guaranteed that investments in the public sector will not compete with the growth of the private sector? Who is going to make the rulers of the trusts obey the government's dictates on investment that run contrary to their own interests, i.e., investments that are only complementary? How are the capitalists to be prevented from "destabilizing" the national economy—with the help of their class brothers in other countries—as long as the imperatives of the "open economy" are accepted? How is the bourgeoisie to be prevented from responding with all the hostile reactions referred to earlier if the most profitable monopolies are actually nationalized? (Obviously, the socialization of losses only aids big business. How is the bitter rivalry between the nationalized and private sectors to be prevented from provoking energetic reprisals by the private sector—particularly if nationalizations extend into manufacturing?)

How can one be sure that every increase in public investment will not automatically be followed by a reduction in private investment, if not a massive flight of capital, making all those grandiose plans

9. Steven Holland, *The Socialist Challenge*, London: Quartet Books, 1975.

6. The Social Democratic former prime minister of the Netherlands, Willem Drees, stated in an interview with the *Economic Bulletin of the Free University of Amsterdam* in May 1977: "The volume of unemployment is caused by the fact that we allow work to be done here in the Netherlands by foreign workers that could be done by our own citizens. . . . We should have gradually sent these foreign workers home, at the same rate at which Dutch workers became available. . . . But in any case we should completely eliminate all the [foreign] workers who are here without permits. . . ."

7. The PSUC (Catalan section of the Spanish CP) recently adopted a document on political economy at its fourth congress explicitly based on a struggle against inflation and for "the restoration of competitiveness and profitability to industry."

8. The expansion of the public sector is defended primarily by the French CP, the Labour Party left in Britain, and (to a lesser extent) the French SP. The idea of public control over investments is put forward mainly by the German left Social Democrats. See, for example, Baisch et al., *Die Wirtschaftskrise in der BRD* [The Economic Crisis in West Germany] A group of economists led by Prof. J. Hufschmid, whose approach lies somewhere between the left Social Democrats and the CP, is oriented almost exclusively toward neo-Keynesian solutions. At a news conference in Bonn on May 1, 1977, this group called for a special recovery budget on the order of twenty billion German marks, instead of the miserly three-billion-mark budget proposed at that time by Helmut Schmidt's cabinet.

for a 6% medium growth rate (as in the French CP's program) unworkable?

Under these conditions, class conflict is also transferred to the domain of financing. How is the bourgeoisie going to be forced to pay the large tax increase that is supposed to finance the expansion of the public sector? And if it does not pay, won't austerity for the workers be the only alternative, or else galloping inflation (which amounts to the same thing anyway)? Where are the extra resources going to be found to simultaneously restore mass consumption, social services, and public investment if the bourgeoisie, out of its class interests, refuses to pay? Won't a test of strength rapidly develop?

And in economic terms, this test of strength means either expropriate big business or capitulate to it. In political terms, it means that either the working class takes power or the counterrevolution returns with a vengeance.

The supporters of such "left" solutions, moreover, weaken their case by not adding the call for a break with the capitalist world market. The only outlet this leaves them is a combination of increased protectionism (fussy and ineffective, because it inevitably brings on reprisals), and efforts to coddle the "national" and international bourgeoisie. The French SP expresses this contradiction in a particularly striking way, stating:

"The soundest and most powerful way of turning back the flight of capital is, of course, to put economic development back on the right path, because a healthy economy is the best guarantee of fiscal stability. Today, only the left is capable of bringing about an economic recovery." (89 *Réponses aux questions économiques*, p. 105).

Is there such a thing as a "healthy economy" independent of class interests?

Is the bourgeoisie going to fervently applaud an increase in production accompanied by a hard-hitting tax on capital? Is it going to be taken in by a huge jump in sales of ski boots and economy cars, even if some of its best factories are expropriated and its global profits cut in half? Is the bourgeoisie's "holy of holies" the index of industrial production, real wages, and employment? Or is it not rather the volume and rate of profit?

Do the economists of the French SP really think they can put the Common Program into effect while increasing the volume and rate of private profit? And if not, won't the national and international bourgeoisie consider the economic situation "unhealthy" and unleash a flight of capital, no matter what the index of production says? Once again the concept of a "mixed economy" is shown to be a dangerous and destructive myth. It could become a real trap for the working class and the workers movement.

The crisis, and the reappearance of large-scale unemployment, are an organic

Rate of Increase in Real Wages and Rate of Growth in Exports

	Real Wages*		Volume of Exports	
	1976	1977	1976	1977
United States	+2.60%	+2.25%	+3.60%	+1.75%
Great Britain	+1.20%	-3.75%	+7.40%	+10.50%
France	+3.00%	+3.10%	+8.50%	+6.25%
West Germany	+2.00%	+4.00%	+12.40%	+5.00%
Japan	+4.30%	+2.75%	+21.80%	+5.50%
Italy	+4.40%	+7.75%	+11.70%	+7.00%

*Increase in hourly wages minus increase in consumer prices.

Source: *Perspectives économiques de l'OCDE*, No. 22, December 1977.

outgrowth of the capitalist system. These problems cannot be overcome within the framework of capitalism, except through a brutal attack on the living and working conditions of the masses. This attack cannot be repelled except by overturning the capitalist regime and beginning to build a qualitatively different type of economic system.

Obviously, the response of the workers movement to the crisis cannot simply be to proclaim the need for a general anticapitalist struggle; this would mean division, demoralization, and certain defeat. The crisis confronts workers with concrete, wrenching problems: layoffs, falling incomes, factory closings, and attacks on trade-union and political rights won in the past.

To refuse to launch a defensive struggle around immediate issues, on the grounds that "there is no solution under capitalism," means to condemn oneself and the whole working class to impotence. Moreover, the working class is not going to follow dogmatists who make a fetish out of this.

The workers have already demonstrated their readiness to struggle fiercely in defense of every gain and every job that is threatened. The elementary duty of revolutionary Marxists is to support this battle with all their strength, proposing the most effective demands and organizational forms.

The thirty-five-hour week, the sliding scale of wages (defending it or winning it, depending on the country), defending the right to strike and the right to free collective bargaining, solidarity actions with those hardest hit—immigrant workers, women, youth, the elderly, the unemployed—these are the main priorities of this basically defensive struggle.

The bosses and reformists argue that such demands undermine the profitability of industry and threaten to aggravate the crisis. To this we respond that, faced with a choice of defending the physical and moral integrity of our class or else defending the capitalists' profit, we stand firmly for defense of our class and against profit.

If full employment and a decent standard of living are incompatible with capitalism, then the bosses simply have to go.

The reformists (and ultraleftists) retort that the logic of capitalism cannot be refuted factory by factory, industry by industry, or region by region, but only in its entirety; and that while waiting for the final battle against international capitalism—which must take place in all countries simultaneously, thus relegating it still more surely to the indefinite future—we must meanwhile accept the logic of the system.

Our answer is that everything starts somewhere; that it is entirely possible to defeat one employer or one sector of the employing class if the working class is united and militant and produces a leadership equal to the task. In fact there is no better way to open up a general struggle than through some partial struggles that are rewarded with victories and that show the workers in practice that it is possible to defend the jobs, wages, and rights they have won.

But it is true that every victory in a defensive struggle can only be fragile and precarious. It is true that the logic of capitalism will reassert itself in the long run, as long as we live under capitalism.

The logic of capitalism is particularly disadvantageous to the workers in a period of massive unemployment and economic depression. That is why every defensive struggle has to be part of an overall anticapitalist strategy that seeks in every way to maximize the mobilization of the working class to win transitional demands and to fight against the fundamental causes of their oppression.

In a period of economic depression, such transitional demands should center around:

- Expropriation of all factories that close down or lay off large numbers of workers, and their operation at the state's expense under workers control.

- Nationalization without compensation of all credit institutions, key industries, and all "national" and "multinational" monopolies, and their operation under

workers control.

- Thoroughgoing workers control over hiring and the organization of work, including veto power over any layoffs.

- Development of a plan for economic recovery and development, based on giving priority to the needs of the masses, to be drawn up by workers and community organizations based on a network of democratically elected and frequently replenished committees.

Development of public enterprises for this purpose, and an end to all subsidies to private enterprises (or else the nationaliza-

tion of all subsidized enterprises).

The struggle for these demands should result in the creation of a broad network of factory and neighborhood committees that can draw up and supervise the implementation of this plan and foil sabotage by the bourgeoisie; the general arming of the laboring population to thwart any military-fascist conspiracy, "national" and/or foreign; the dismantling of the bourgeois repressive apparatus; and the formation of a workers government that can implement this program with the support and supervision of the broad masses.

This transitional program opens the way to the building of a democratic socialist society, with a self-managed and planned economy, founded on the power of workers councils and a spectrum of political parties with no restrictions; a society that can maintain, consolidate, and extend all political freedoms for all its members.

To struggle for such an alternative to the dead end of capitalism means counterposing to unemployment, austerity, and growing repression the only real, effective alternative worthy of an effort by the toiling masses.

January 1, 1978

Renews Call for 'Public Discussion' of His Ideas

Rudolf Bahro Writes From East German Prison Cell

A letter from prison by the East German Marxist dissident Rudolf Bahro recently got past the gates of Bautzen prison in East Berlin. This is apparently the first direct word from Bahro since he was arrested in August 1977. The letter was printed in the October 30, 1978, issue of the West German newsweekly *Der Spiegel*.

The East German authorities confirmed in June 1978 that Bahro had been tried and sentenced to eight years imprisonment for "espionage." He had written a political and theoretical critique of the bureaucratic system in the German "Democratic" Republic (GDR) and the rest of Stalinist-dominated eastern Europe. This book, *Die Alternative* (The Alternative), was brought out in West Germany in August 1977 by the publishing house of the West German trade-union federation. An English edition was scheduled for November 1978 by New Left Books in Britain.

Bahro's letter is addressed to a fellow prisoner who apparently does not share Bahro's Marxist point of view. Bahro explains that he has always been "decidedly in favor of the noncapitalist foundations of the GDR, which I cannot view only or even primarily from the standpoint of my own temporary situation." He adds that he does not think in terms of "hostility toward the Soviet Union."

"What I aim at is a discussion of these foundations, whose superstructure needs to be renovated thoroughly—both politically and, above all, ideologically. This is also needed because such an orientation (as 1968 in Prague foreshadowed) will further encourage anticapitalist transformation over there [in the West]."

Bahro describes the conditions of his internment as not overly harsh thus far. (This of course in no way lessens the urgency of the demand for his immediate release.) He has been able to obtain and read many books, "mostly world litera-

ture," and is studying French and Czech.

"All in all, I can last through the seven 'lost' years to come in a halfway productive fashion if things do not get worse. (I have heard *this* threat made, although in a veiled way, but I believe psychological methods 'only' are implied (which is bad enough). Formally speaking, at any rate, I have been treated correctly." That is, he has not been tortured.

Bahro indicated some details of his trial and pretrial detention, which had been kept totally secret (on the grounds of "national security"). During the investigation he did not abandon any of his views, "even those on which they concentrated their fire, my readiness to make use of the 'sealed train'; that is, to allow the bourgeois mass media to 'convey' my ideology. Before the court and in general I left no doubt that I will stay on the road I have taken."

The allusion to the "sealed train," by which Lenin reached Russia from neutral Switzerland in 1917 (through a tactical agreement with German imperialism) and thus brought his revolutionary program to the Russian workers, is indicative of Bahro's combative spirit even after a year of detention. The Stalinists have consistently attacked their revolutionary Marxist opponents for using the bourgeois media—after denying them the opportunity to publish their views inside the workers states. Trotsky, too, in the 1920s and 1930s, had to defend his right to use the bourgeois media to counter Stalinist smear attacks.

Bahro comments that persecution has only helped draw attention to his ideas. The German edition of his book has sold 80,000 copies, and a paperback edition is due. Translations into five or six other languages are projected.

"My song is going round the world; what more do I want?" Bahro asks. But he

comments that this has been accomplished only as a result of "bourgeois reaction and a few so-called ultralefts." He asks whether it is true that the leaders of "Eurocommunist" parties have officially taken positions in his defense. "Have they indicated the *content* of their positions? Do they recognize me as a Communist with whom one may be publicly identified?"

Bahro in the past has indicated sympathy with the "Eurocommunist" trend, but clearly he is not confident of great support from the big West European CPs.

"I had always hoped they would speak up, but was not sure. 'To have a public discussion of the theses in my book' was what I have called for, and that was exactly what they [the GDR authorities] were trying to avoid at all costs by condemning this theoretical and political book as 'the gathering of information' [that is, for hostile intelligence agencies]."

The letter also contains a summary of the structure of his 500-page book (the text not being available for East Germans like his fellow prisoner to judge for themselves). "I have tried to analyze existing socialism as Marx analyzed capitalism," he says.

Bahro concludes his letter with a thumbnail biography of himself. His background was that of a typical career official in the ruling East German Communist Party (the so-called Socialist Unity Party, or SED for short). After studying philosophy and editing the Communist youth magazine *Forum*, he worked as a technical expert from 1967 to 1977 in the area of industrial rationalization and scientific organization of production.

The appearance of Bahro's letter came on the eve of a major conference in his defense—The "International Congress For and About Rudolf Bahro" scheduled to take place in West Berlin, November 16-19.