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Massacre in Iran

Statement of the Fourth International

Down With the Shah!

[The following statement was issued November 21 by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

* * *

Over the past year there has been an unprecedented upsurge of the Iranian masses against the brutal police state of Shah Reza Pahlavi, embracing wider and wider layers of the toiling masses—students, oppressed nationalities, peasants, the urban poor, and women. In the past two months, the working class has brought to bear its great power in a massive strike wave.

The workers have combined their own economic demands with political opposition to the hated regime. Once again we see the process of the working class in a semicolonial country tending to take the lead of all the toiling masses in their struggle for democracy and a better life, and the tendency for this struggle to grow into a socialist revolution against capitalism and imperialist domination.

Washington has tried to portray this mighty upsurge, one of the most powerful, sustained, and heroic of recent times, as a religious, conservative response to the "liberalization" policies of the shah. Nothing could be further from the truth. This great elemental movement is directed against twenty-five years of repression at the hands of one of the world's most brutal police regimes; against imperialist backing of this regime and imperialist economic exploitation; against the harsh suppression of the oppressed nationalities, which comprise the majority of the population; and against the economic and social policies of the shah that are grinding down the toilers of the city and countryside.

U.S. imperialism installed the present regime in a CIA-sponsored coup in 1953. Washington has armed it to the teeth and trained the hated SAVAK torturers. Now Washington and other imperialist powers have rushed to the shah's support, backing his use of massive repression as he clings to his throne. The shah's regime plays a key role in the counterrevolutionary plans of imperialism in the whole region, and the stakes are high for it.

The bureaucrats of the Kremlin and Peking have also come to the shah's aid in his time of need, utilizing the occasion of the tyrant's birthday in October to publicly avow their support. "Chairman" Hua even paid the shah a friendly visit this summer while his troopers were gunning down demonstrators in the streets. Shortly thereafter, the shah's sister was given a warm welcome in Moscow. Once again the policy

of "peaceful coexistence" stands exposed for the counterrevolutionary policy that it is.

At the same time, even from its own narrow nationalist viewpoint, Moscow has been compelled to warn against any moves by Washington to intervene directly militarily into the situation to save the tottering monarch, given the fact that Iran borders on the Soviet Union. Carter has indeed sent up trial balloons hinting at such intervention. The dangers that any direct imperialist intervention would have are clear—it could lead to world war, given the strategic importance of the country.

In early November, the shah began to

play his last card, an attempt to crush the upsurge by military might. But this will be easier said than done. The masses have shown tremendous courage. The protests continue in many cities. No section of the masses has as yet been defeated. The showdown battles are yet to come.

The Fourth International calls on the international workers movement and all supporters of democratic rights to solidarize with the struggles of the toiling masses of Iran against the shah and his regime, to demand that Washington and the other imperialist powers cease all aid to that regime, and to remain vigilant against any attempt by the imperialists to intervene.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Open the Doors of China's Political Prisons!

By Will Reissner

Teng Ching-shan, a member of a rural production brigade, was arrested in 1970. The charge: slandering Mao between 1967 and 1969. The sentence: fifteen years imprisonment followed by three years deprivation of civil rights.

Lin Hsi-ling was a law student and a member of the Communist Party during the "Hundred Flowers Bloom" period in China in 1957. For a brief time citizens were allowed to criticize official procedures. Taking Mao at his word, she criticized the lack of democracy in society. As a result she was labeled a "rightist," arrested, sentenced to twenty years in prison, and deprived of civil rights for life. When last heard of in the mid-1970s she was still under detention.

These are two of the cases of political repression in China contained in an Amnesty International report made public November 27. The study outlines deficiencies in the Chinese judicial system and provides insight into the penal system. It was submitted to representatives of the Peoples Republic of China for comments and corrections before publication, but AI received no reply.

The report merits attention because of the accuracy of AI's studies of political prisoners in capitalist countries.

Some of the facts have recently been confirmed by statements made by the current Peking leadership regarding injus-

tices they attribute to the so-called Gang of Four, the current all-purpose culprits.

Provoking "dissension among the various nationalities, democratic classes, democratic parties and groups, people's organizations or between the people and the government," creating "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation," and spreading rumors are among the crimes punishable by from three years to life imprisonment or even death when the "circumstances of their cases are major."

These crimes are so vague they could include any criticism of any government or party policy or official. In the aftermath of the "Hundred Flowers" period alone, more than one million people were persecuted for such crimes. In June, 1978, twenty-one years later, 110,000 people were released from prison who had been held since the "Hundred Flowers."

During the Cultural Revolution the Central Committee of the CP provided police with guidelines for determining what were political crimes. These included sending counterrevolutionary anonymous letters; posting or distributing secretly or openly counterrevolutionary handbills; writing or shouting reactionary slogans; and attacking or vilifying Chairman Mao and Vice-Chairman Lin Piao. Note that each refers solely to the expression of political *ideas*, which need only be *secretly* counterrevolutionary to be criminal.

Vilifying Lin Piao was then a crime. But Lin himself became the subject of a gigantic campaign of political vilification by the regime before disappearing in 1971 after the failure of an alleged coup.

Assume you were arrested for being prematurely anti-Lin Piao. You could be held under an "arrest warrant" indefinitely. Then after being detained months, perhaps years, you are brought to trial.

The function of defense lawyers, which existed in the mid-1950s, has been abolished. Even the *formal* right of the accused to defense was eliminated from the constitution between 1975 and 1978. Instead, the prosecutor, the judge, and party officials discuss your case and decide on the verdict and sentence. Then the trial is held.

First the judge summarizes the case against you, pronounces the verdict, and asks if you have anything to say before sentence is pronounced.

If you deny the charges, the sentence can be increased. Amnesty International points out that "Chinese officials have often stated that the main principles of the 'Party's policy' in judicial work is that leniency is given to those who confess their crimes and severe punishment is given to those who refuse to do so."

The defendant can make one appeal against the sentence. But this is seen in the same light as refusal to confess and can lead to a stiffer sentence.

Once sentenced to a term of "rehabilitation through labor," you are shipped off to a labor camp. Maoist authorities, and their starry-eyed followers around the world, point to the "reform and rehabilitation" aspect of the Chinese penal system as a humanitarian feature. But when your crime is expression of the "wrong" political views, reform can only mean repudiation of your ideas. And rehabilitation, which can result in a shortened sentence, is proven by enthusiastically carrying out the forced labor assigned you and participation in "political education" sessions.

Sometimes shifting political winds result in wholesale review of sentences, as happened this year to the more than one million victims of the "Hundred Flowers" period and to the over 10,000 "victims of the gang of four" that the Chinese press reports have been rehabilitated since 1976 in Shanghai. Unfortunately some were rehabilitated "posthumously," having already been executed for their "counterrevolutionary" ideas.

Recent demonstrations in Peking calling for democracy and freedom of expression show the widespread opposition in China to criminal penalties for political opinions. China has paid a heavy price for the inability of people to object to policies without risking jail or even execution. It has meant that few would risk questioning policies that were going awry. The "Great Leap Forward" and the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," campaigns that

plunged the economy into chaos, were carried out to the bitter end because to point out early signs of problems meant risking imprisonment for spreading "counterrevolutionary rumors."

The cause of socialism in China would be greatly strengthened by release of all political prisoners and the establishment of workers democracy, with specific guarantees of the right to political expression

without fear of reprisals.

A step in this direction would be an accounting by the Chinese regime of all the political prisoners now being held. Among these we should be especially concerned about the fate of the hundreds of Chinese Trotskyists arrested in 1952 and 1953. Most were never heard from again, although one was seen still in jail in Shanghai in 1974. □

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Massacre of Demonstrators in Streets of Tehran

By Parvin Najafi

At 9 a.m. December 1, thousands who had wrapped themselves in the white burial shroud of Islam, signaling their readiness to die for their cause, poured into the streets of Tehran shouting "Death to the shah."

"Within minutes," reported the December 3 *New York Times*, "army tanks and troops began to roll and the sounds of machine-gun and automatic weapons fire mingled with the chants."

According to some reports, the army fired for more than three hours on the demonstrators, who were spread from the Tehran bazaar in the center of the city to Jaleh Square in the east. Similar demonstrations took place in other cities.

On the next day, December 2, demonstrators again poured into the streets throughout Iran. The army opened fire as it had the day before. As of December 4 there was no estimate of the number killed, apart from the ridiculously low figure of "seven" given by the government.

"Casualties in the [December 1] encounter—the bloodiest yet in a year of violent opposition to the regime of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi—were not known," the Newark *Star-Ledger* reported. "Troops prevented people from watching from windows and rooftops."

Two correspondents from *Newsweek* magazine who were taking pictures of these scenes were arrested, beaten, and had their film confiscated. A reporter from the London *Daily Telegraph* was also arrested.

Eyewitnesses reached by telephone said the massacre was even worse than the Black Friday bloodbath of September 8, during which an estimated 4,000 persons lost their lives.

It is clear that the shah's regime had been preparing for this massacre since the imposition of a military government on November 6. As early as November 14 the *Christian Science Monitor* reported "a growing body of opinion in the military hierarchy that they must shoot it out with the opposition at the earliest opportunity."

With the onslaught of the Iranian working class that was signaled by the massive strike wave in early October, the regime lost the initiative. After the imposition of military rule the army, shaken by the mass mobilizations, did not have the capacity to carry out an immediate bloodbath on a massive scale. But with military rule the regime bought itself some badly needed time and began preparing for a showdown.

On the other hand, beginning in the last

Bank Workers Open the Books

Striking workers at the Central Bank of Iran released November 27 the names of 180 persons who had transferred some \$4.2 billion out of Iran in September and October. The amount is equivalent to about 25 percent of the country's annual oil revenue.

The list is composed almost entirely of members and close associates of the royal family, the top hierarchy of the armed forces, top SAVAK men, members of the shah's handpicked parliament, and former government ministers and prime ministers.

Of particular interest was the appearance of the names of more than a dozen generals. As these are the very individ-

uals in charge of saving the shah's throne for him, the transferral abroad of their private fortunes speaks volumes about their confidence in their ability to do so.

Others on the list include Nematollah Nassiri and Parviz Sabeti, two top former officials of SAVAK who are supposedly under arrest for torturing political dissidents. The two transferred a total of \$72 million out of Iran.

The record for these two months, however, is held by the husband and son of the shah's twin sister, Ashraf. Together they sent about \$200 million out of the country.

week of November, the mass movement started to gain momentum. On November 26 a general strike paralyzed the whole of Iran. Electricity, telephone service, natural gas, water, and telecommunications were shut tight. All government ministries, private and government-owned industries, banks and financial institutions, and shops and bazaars were closed down by the strike.

Gigantic demonstrations were also held. In Mashad, the scene of the largest protest, 1.2 million persons marched, shouting "Down with the shah." In Qum, 200,000 demonstrated. In these two cities, after seeing the size of the crowd, officials ordered the army back into the barracks.

In Isfahan, Gorgan, and Kangavar in the west of Iran, the army opened fire on the demonstrators, killing an unknown number.

The nationwide general strike and demonstrations were called to protest the killing of demonstrators in the holy shrines of Mashad five days earlier.

They marked the beginning of a new and powerful wave of mass mobilizations against the regime. After the general strike, demonstrations and local strikes began to spread rapidly.

The shah's regime saw the beginning of December as an opportune moment to move, before the workers and toilers came out into the streets by millions again. All religious ceremonies and gatherings in mosques were banned for the duration of the holy month of Moharam. The military government issued a number of provocative statements to the effect that whoever

dared to disobey military orders would be killed without mercy.

Meanwhile, the bourgeois leaders of the National Front were busy bargaining with the shah about ministerial posts in his government. The *Christian Science Monitor* reported November 30 that negotiations in the previous week had been "furious." It added, "The terms of a compromise between the shah and moderate opposition leaders already have been hammered out, according to the sources. The only argument left, they say, is over who should lead a new government.."

"None of the opposition politicians want to face the possibility of having blood on their hands in Muharram," an informant said. "Thus no one wants to commit himself until the danger has passed."

It seems that the leaders of the National Front, who are backed by the religious hierarchy of Iran, would like to wait for the shah to do the dirty work of killing thousands and then step in to accept ministerial portfolios, smelling like roses. However, in the highly volatile situation of Iran today, their dreams are far from becoming a reality.

With the bloodbath of December 1, the regime has again embarked on a very risky gamble. It has staked its future on another effort to drown the massive popular upsurge in blood. But all indications are that the shah is going to be the loser.

The bloodbath has not broken the will of the insurgent population to resist his rule. On the contrary, it may once again give momentum to a powerful upheaval. □

Brezhnev Warns Carter Not to Invade Iran

By Gerry Foley

The Soviet leadership has begun issuing loud and clear warnings that it cannot stand idly by if Washington resorts to open military intervention in Iran.

The November 19 issue of *Pravda*, the Soviet Communist Party organ, featured a statement by Brezhnev on the possibility of a U.S. intervention. It was in the form of an answer to a question from a "*Pravda* correspondent," and was run in the center of the front page, directly below the masthead.

The question was:

How do you assess the reports appearing in the foreign press about interference by the Western states, especially the U.S., in the events taking place in Iran, and about the possibility that this may go as far as military intervention?

Brezhnev said:

Indeed, reports have been appearing about the possibility of a military intervention by some states. In this regard, we cannot help being concerned about the fact that the government officials in question do not actually deny these reports. Or if they do deny that they are trying to intervene, they do so in a roundabout way that does not exclude the possibility of intervention under a suitable pretext.

The Soviet Union, which has traditionally maintained good neighborly relations with Iran, resolutely declares that it opposes any intervention from the outside in the internal affairs of Iran under any pretext.

The Soviet chief concluded:

It should be clear that any intervention, and still more so any military intervention in the affairs of Iran—a country that borders directly on the USSR—would be regarded as affecting the interests of the security of the USSR.

Brezhnev's statement has been followed up by a series of articles in the Soviet press pointing to the danger of U.S. military intervention in Iran and amplifying the warning he issued. The campaign on this theme has been measured. It has not dominated the Soviet press. But it has been given sufficient prominence to assure that the Kremlin's message gets across both to Washington and the Soviet people.

In its November 21 issue, *Pravda* ran an article on the "reaction of the international press" to Brezhnev's declaration. It appeared to represent a careful selection of the points the Kremlin hopes to see impressed on all quarters.

The Polish CP organ, *Trybuna Ludu*, was quoted to the effect that the statement showed that the Soviet Union was respectful of the sovereignty of nations and would "take action to prevent other states from

violating this principle."

Next, it was noted that the organ of the Yugoslav CP, *Borba*, had seen the statement as confirmation that "the Soviet Union keeps a close watch on new areas of conflict that arise, in order to reduce tensions."

L'Humanité, organ of the French CP, was quoted as saying: "L.I. Brezhnev's statement on the USSR's position is all the more important since it is the first official Soviet statement on the events in Iran. The Soviet Union is striving to prevent Iran from becoming a focus of international conflict as a result of these dramatic events. At the same time, L.I. Brezhnev's warning makes it absolutely clear that the Soviet Union's reserve cannot be taken for indifference."

The right-wing British *Daily Telegraph* was quoted as saying that Brezhnev's statement was a clear warning. This point was made in the words of a number of other bourgeois papers, including the Japanese *Mainichi Shimbun* and *Asahi*. The latter, the most prestigious Japanese daily, was also called upon to point out that the Soviet Union was acting within its rights according to international law.

The Lebanese journal *Al Liwa* was quoted as saying that it was legitimate for the USSR to be concerned about U.S. military intervention in a neighboring country.

In general, the *Pravda* article interwove quotations indicating that Brezhnev's warning should be taken seriously with others suggesting that the USSR was interested mainly in avoiding the development of any dangerous conflict or tensions.

In the same issue of *Pravda*, a dispatch from Washington entitled "On the Events in Iran" began as follows:

"Don't Let Iran Become Another Vietnam." Under this slogan a large number of demonstrators marched near the White House in protest against the plans for an imperialist intervention in Iran by the United States.

The article took note of a number of statements by U.S. government officials as well as in the U.S. capitalist press that suggested the possibility of military intervention in Iran. It pointed out that special committees had been set up in the president's office and in the State Department to study the situation there.

In the November 22 *Izvestia*, a major article appeared entitled "Dangerous Plans." It reviewed the indications of

Washington's involvement in Iran and of its intentions, as well as the extent of the U.S. economic interests there.

The article, by the Soviet paper's Washington correspondent, concluded as follows:

The warning against foreign intervention in the internal affairs of Iran—in any form or under any pretext—that was issued in this interview [Brezhnev's statement] has been taken in all seriousness here. In the light of historical experience and the development of events in the recent period, this warning is extraordinarily important and timely. Its significance for the maintenance of peace and security in the Persian Gulf region can hardly be overestimated.

These references to "historical experience" and so forth seemed to suggest at least the possibility of a confrontation on the order of the one that occurred in 1956 at the time of the British-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt. They could even be taken to suggest that if Washington provoked a civil war, the USSR could not avoid becoming involved.

Obviously, "historical experience" includes some prominent cases of indirect military conflicts between the USSR and the U.S. in civil wars taking place around the fringes of the Soviet sphere—as in Korea and Vietnam.

The Soviet government has shown in the past that it considers that it has vital interests at stake in the Middle East, and it has confronted the Western powers more boldly in this part of the world than in any other.

Clearly the part of the Middle East that concerns the Russians most directly is the northern tier—Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. This entire belt of countries, once the bulwark of imperialist control in the region, has now become a powder keg.

Not one country in the northern tier can anymore be considered stable. A major social upheaval is in progress in Afghanistan, where the USSR has become heavily involved. Armed clashes have been going on there for some time.

Also, the Kremlin clearly has hopes that it can woo Turkey away from its alliance with the imperialist powers. Moreover, the international economic crisis has brought Turkey close to bankruptcy, and the society is becoming more and more violently polarized.

It is evident that the strategic stakes involved in the northern tier of the Middle East are extremely high, both for Moscow and Washington—considerably higher in fact than they were in Indochina. The

processes now under way in this area could result in a major shift in the strategic balance between the Soviet bloc and Western imperialism.

Moreover, the Kremlin has vital political interests in the region as well. Both of the major ethnic groups, the Turkic and Iranian peoples, extend far across the Soviet borders, representing nearly one sixth of the population of the USSR. And it is among these nationalities that the bureaucracy has traditionally faced particularly sharp hostility.

Any uncontrolled revolutionary process in this area, thus, represents a grave political danger for Moscow. So, it has to try to win an influence over the struggles that are developing.

Therefore, there is every reason to believe that the Kremlin's warning to Washington was in earnest. Despite Moscow's clear concern about maintaining détente, the world situation is quite different now from that of the immediate postwar period, when Stalin helped the imperialists consolidate their control of Iran.

The U.S. press noted that Washington responded with unusual haste to assure Moscow that it did not plan a military intervention. It is to be hoped that the Soviet government's warnings will dissuade the U.S. imperialists from any such attempt. That could avert tragedy for the peoples of Iran, and who knows how much of the rest of the world's population. □

were stabbed in the back by their treacherous Stalinist leadership.

The last nationwide political strike of oilworkers occurred in 1946. On July 14 of that year, oil workers from one end of the country to the other downed their tools and pledged not to return to work until their demands for the removal of the military governor of Khuzestan Province and an end to British control over the country had been met.

As is the case with the current strike, the 1946 walkout occurred in a situation of a massive revolutionary upheaval against the shah's regime. In two parts of Iran, Azerbaijan and Kurdistan, the shah's army was defeated and independent republics were set up.

The strike by the oil workers announced the readiness of the heaviest battalions of the oppressed to move into the front lines and take on the regime and its imperialist masters. But they were cruelly defeated in less than three days.

A comparison between the two strikes provides a better understanding of the present workers struggle, and in fact a better understanding of the present mass movement in Iran.

After the oil workers walked off their jobs on July 14, 1946, representatives of the strikers sent a telegram to the United Council of the Associations of Labor (Iran's CP-dominated trade-union federation at the time).

In this telegram the workers informed their "leaders" of their decision to strike, explained their demands, and added: "A strike fund has been established. Please contribute quickly."

The following telegram was sent to the strikers the next day by the leaders of the United Council, who were also leaders of the Tudeh Party (the Iranian CP):

"Comrades have negotiated with the chief of staff, who has agreed to order the military governor not to intervene in the workers' strike. . . . we may send a commission [to Abadan] tomorrow. Maintain calm and tranquility as before. Louis Sayan will arrive in Tehran on Wednesday, July 17, 2:30 p.m."

Not a word about continuing the strike. Not a word about assistance to the strike fund. In fact, not a word about the strike at all. Instead, Louis Sayan is coming on Wednesday!

Sayan was a top bureaucrat of the World Federation of Trade Unions. His mission to Iran, if not stated in so many words, was to see if the Tudeh Party could live up to its duties and contain the mass upsurge in the framework of "postwar peace and collaboration" worked out between the Soviet bureaucracy and American imperialism.

It turned out that the assurances to the workers that the military government would not intervene were a cruel hoax. On the afternoon of July 14, the military

And Why This One Is Different

How Stalinists Betrayed 1946 Oil Strike in Iran

By Parvin Najafi

The nationwide strike of oil workers that has cut off the flow of crude oil and natural gas from Iran since October 31 has entered its second month.

The strike has continued, despite lucrative wage increases offered by the government, because the oil workers insist that their political demands be met. These are:

1. Unconditional and immediate lifting of martial law and dismissal of the military government.

2. Unconditional and immediate freedom of all political prisoners and return of the exiles.

3. Dismantling of SAVAK, the Iranian secret police.

4. Expulsion of all imperialist military and civilian advisers, in particular from the oil industry.

5. No sale of oil to the racist regimes of South Africa and Israel.

6. Immediate arrest and punishment of government officials responsible for the massacres of thousands of protesters during the last year and a half.

Since the beginning of the strike the oil workers have been subjected to extreme harassment, intimidation, and brutality. Hundreds of strikers have been arrested, including the twelve members of the strike coordinating committee at the Abadan refinery, the world's largest.

The strikers were first threatened with charges of "treason." When that failed, the shah's army was sent into the oilfields and refineries to disperse sit-down strikers. When the workers resisted, the troops opened fire, as they have done on several other occasions since. Many oil workers

and their families have been thrown out of their "company" homes.

Despite all this, the oil workers remain more determined than ever to put an end to the tyranny of the shah's regime and its imperialist masters.

The oil workers constitute a crucial sector of the proletariat, providing 80 percent of government revenue and 60 percent of the gross national product. Consequently, the eyes of the whole country have been on their strike.

It can be said without any hesitation that the oil workers have truly not failed Iran's working masses. Not only have they continued their strike despite all odds but they have also organized and led massive street demonstrations on an almost daily basis.

Their heroic resistance has inspired all the oppressed and exploited of Iran to resist intimidation by the shah's military government and to redouble their efforts to bring this hated regime down. At the same time, it has won the admiration of class-conscious workers the world over.

Asked by an American correspondent why they were waging such an all-out fight against the regime, a member of the strike coordinating committee replied: "I say why did my father not act and I do not want my son to ask me the same question."

But the truth is that their fathers did act. They were as ready as the oil workers are now to fight to the bitter end to put an end to the imperialist control of Iranian oil—then in the hands of the British. But they

opened fire on a gathering of striking workers, killing 46 and wounding 170.

The commission promised by the leaders of the United Council soon did arrive in Abadan. But instead of helping the workers to organize a better defense of their strike, the commission persuaded them not to insist on their political demands and to return to work.

So within three days, even though none of the demands of the oil workers were met, the strike was ended. When Sayan arrived in Iran, "class peace" had replaced the class war of a few days earlier.

As a reward for breaking the oil strike, three Tudeh Party leaders were shortly thereafter "honored" with posts in the

shah's regime.

The defeat of the oil strike before the workers even had a chance to display their power and their readiness to fight had a deeply demoralizing effect on all the workers and oppressed in Iran.

In comparison, the oil workers' strike of today continues to inspire the Iranian masses and has dealt the shah's regime severe blows.

A major reason why the oil workers have been able to carry on such an uncompromising struggle now—and not thirty-two years ago—is because they do not have a reformist leadership to derail and betray their battle. In fact, that is true of all the struggles now being waged in Iran.

In more than a year of confrontation with the regime, the Iranian workers and toilers have shown the whole world that they know how to fight. Now, however, they must learn how to win victories. And this requires more than sheer militancy and heroism, more than the *absence* of misleaders. The vanguard of the Iranian proletariat, the most advanced workers, have to put into use the theoretical, programmatic, and practical experience accumulated in the heritage of more than a century of revolutionary struggle by the workers of the entire world.

Only in this way can they be sure that their self-sacrifice will find a victorious conclusion. □

Peking's 'Democracy Wall'

Teng Invites the Masses to Air Their Grievances

By Leslie Evans

The Chinese government moved on November 30 to try to halt the nightly rallies that had been going on for a week at "Democracy Wall" in Peking, and to prescribe political limits for the content of the hundreds of wall posters being put up by citizens in the country's capital. The December 1 *New York Times* reported that a broadcast on Peking's closed-circuit loud-speaker system called on people to stop participating in demonstrations demanding democracy and to stop putting up wall posters criticizing Chinese Communist Party Chairman Hua Kuo-feng.

The wall-poster campaign began on November 19 with a sharply worded blast at Mao Tsetung, accusing him of having supported the now-disgraced "gang of four"—purged members of the CCP Politburo—and of having helped to impose a dictatorship over the Chinese people during the Cultural Revolution of the mid-1960s. A central focus of the wall posters has been support for Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-p'ing, and praise for antigovernment demonstrators in Peking's Tien An Men Square in April 1976 who were condemned at the time as "counterrevolutionaries," but who have recently been exonerated by party officials.

There can be little doubt that the wall-poster campaign was initiated and authorized by forces in the CCP hierarchy around Teng Hsiao-p'ing. It did not erupt spontaneously, but was prepared beforehand in careful stages. At the same time, many of the issues raised and the type of grievances aired go beyond anything previously permitted by the CCP regime with the exception of the brief liberalization in

the spring of 1957. This suggests that the campaign is something more than the mobilization of the members of Teng's faction against the diehard Maoists in the apparatus. It would also appear to be an attempt by Teng to present himself to the Chinese people as a champion of democratic reform, an operation that to be successful requires some genuine concessions.

There have been elements of both kinds of campaign in the events in Peking in the latter part of November. Much of the poster campaign and demonstrations focused on simple adulation of Teng and sharp criticism of men in the leadership whose record should make them Teng's political opponents.

Prominent holdovers from the Mao era, such as former Peking mayor Wu Te, Peking garrison commander Ch'en Hsilien, and trade-union functionary Ni Chih-fu have been denounced and their removal from office demanded. These men are accused of complicity in actual crimes against the Chinese people—particularly in the brutal suppression of the Tien An Men demonstrations.

They are, however, also long-standing enemies of Teng Hsiao-p'ing and helped to twice drive him from office in disgrace (in 1966 and again in 1976). Thus Teng can at one blow pose as a defender of people's rights and at the same time settle some old scores that would end by greatly strengthening his organizational position in the party hierarchy.

The other side of this campaign is the promise of an end to the worst abuses of the Mao era, the institutionalization of

certain elementary democratic rights, and a loosening of the stranglehold of the Maoist censorship and thought-control apparatus.

There are, of course, strict limits on how far the government can go in this direction without jeopardizing the rule of the privileged bureaucratic caste that governs China. But the people around Teng Hsiao-p'ing at least are convinced that they must back off from the extremes of repression of the last decade if they are to avoid a massive explosion.

Green Light for Wall Poster Campaign

Thus, the wall-poster campaign did not arise out of thin air. Many of its themes, although usually more timidly stated, began to appear in the official press by mid-October. An October 21 Hsinhua news agency dispatch reported the publication in China of a 1957 speech by legal authority Tung Pi-wu, which had called for replacing party-led campaigns by a written law code (which China to this day does not have). This has been a long-standing demand of Chinese dissenters seeking a legal bill of rights. The speech stressed: "Which people who do not observe the law and do not do things according to law are more numerous, ordinary citizens or cadres of state organs? To my mind, the state cadres."

One of the first hints of the public criticism of Mao came in an October 22 report of a recent speech by People's Liberation Army (PLA) general and Politburo member Hsu Shih-yu of Canton, long a close associate of Teng Hsiao-p'ing and

reputed to have sheltered him after he was purged in 1976. According to Hsinhua:

He said that Lin Piao and the gang of four had passed Mao Tsetung Thought off as the "ultimate truth" and outlined many "forbidden areas" to fetter the people's thinking and obstruct the development of the revolution. . . . Hsu Shih-yu said: "My understanding of this teaching [Mao Tsetung Thought] is that we must uphold revolutionary truth and not personality cult."

In Peking, a city-wide discussion was organized among 400,000 young people "to establish the true values in life, ranging from politics to love." (Hsinhua, October 24, 1978.) A discussion of these questions had been permitted in the letters column of the *People's Daily*, which revealed that the Mao era left a heritage of disillusionment among young people:

A young railwayman wrote that many of his workmates had "seen enough of life" and would in future "steer clear of politics." They had "sincerely believed in what the gang said and then found it all a fraud." . . .

A P.L.A. recruit wrote: "So much selfishness was shown in the days of the gang of four, I think one should take more care of oneself." [Hsinhua, October 24, 1978.]

A special concern among the millions of young people sent to the countryside in the Mao era was the ten years in which they received no education. Many now felt they would be bypassed by younger people just coming out of high school. As Hsinhua put it, "Is it too late to begin at 30?"

In November, Peking's new mayor, Lin Hu-chia, promised massive improvements in people's lives, including a crash housing construction program. In response to a complaint in the letters column of the *People's Daily*, he promised that more fresh vegetables would be available soon.

Promise of No Retaliation

At the same time the press began to run many articles inviting criticism by the masses and promising that any officials who retaliated against citizens for airing their views would be punished (*Liberation Army Daily*, November 9).

Accompanying the promise of a loosening of the Maoist controls has been a wholesale drive to encourage people to commit themselves to the campaign to industrialize the country. The press is filled with praise for scientists and technicians. Many of the part-time study groups that used to be used to inculcate people with Mao Tsetung Thought are now devoted to the study of chemistry, mathematics, and foreign languages (Hsinhua, October 21).

In the factories in the Mao era the chief criterion for promotion was "political attitude." The October 21 Hsinhua announced that in the future factory promotion will be decided through examinations in technical competence. These are in effect democratic reforms, moving toward the restoration of the right to remain silent and not making

it a condition of employment in China that one listen two nights a week to the harangues of the ruling party and be compelled to prove that one agrees with them if there is to be any hope of advancement.

'China Youth' Calls for Democratic Rights

A further development has been the appearance of a differentiation within the previously completely monolithic Chinese press. For many years most East European regimes, and even the Soviet Union, have permitted the publication of one or two somewhat more "liberal" journals that give voice in a muted way to calls for reform.

The first such journal to appear in China came out in September 1978 with the resumption of publication of *China Youth*, suspended by the Maoists in 1966. On November 18, Hsinhua carried a summary of an article from the current issue on the question of democracy and the legal system that went beyond anything to appear in the more established newspapers. It said in part:

There were deep-seated social and political causes for the appearance of the gang of four on Chinese soil. They were a product of history. They took advantage of inadequate laws, and the lack of a sound judicial system or institutions which could be depended on to secure socialist democracy. The result was that once the democratic instruments of the party and the people were seriously weakened and damaged, a small number of careerists and intriguers in positions of power were able to do as they liked. . . .

Real ownership by the working people in the economic sphere requires corresponding democratic rights in the political sphere. In those places where the people's democratic rights are only nominal, is not economic ownership nominal too? . . .

It has been proved in practice that once democracy is taken away, no one dares to speak his mind and we are inundated and carried away by falsehoods, and big empty talk. Once that happens, no one raises opinions any more and we are engulfed and corrupted by flattery. . . . Any dictatorship which excludes this sort of democracy is definitely not a dictatorship of the proletariat.

The article raises some concrete demands:

All the democratic rights of the people should be accurately and comprehensively spelled out in laws which are effectively enforced. The right of the people to elect, dismiss and supervise state administrative and managerial personnel should be guaranteed. People's deputies should be elected by secret ballot and measures should be taken to change the state of affairs in which the masses do not even know their deputies, much less know what they are doing and advocating.

This—for China—rather astonishing article was republished by the *People's Daily* on November 13, just a few days before the first wall poster appeared. All of this helps to explain the climate in which the demonstrations at "Democracy Wall" have taken place.

As in the "Let a Hundred Flowers

Bloom" campaign of 1957, the government itself—or at least the supporters of Teng Hsiao-p'ing—has sought to defuse popular grievances and win popularity as "liberalizers" by inviting a certain amount of criticism and making a show that they will now tolerate and even help to circulate some views that are not official policy.

It must also always be kept in mind that many of the posters that are put up are written to order by cadres of the various factions of the CCP, who often use the posters to float charges that cannot yet appear in the official press. The best that can be achieved at this stage is to present the range of opinions that have been expressed, which do at least stand in stark contrast to what it was possible to say in China publicly when Mao was alive, or even six months ago.

Four Questions About Great Helmsman

The November 24 Paris *Le Monde* reports from Peking a wall poster which posed some questions:

Ask yourself: if Mao was not in agreement, how could Lin Piao have acquired such power?

Ask yourself: didn't Chairman Mao know that Chiang Ch'ing (his wife) was a traitor? . . .

Ask yourself: if Chairman Mao was not in agreement, how could the "gang of four" have launched the campaign against the "Right deviationist wind" and struck down Teng Hsiao-p'ing?

Ask yourself: if Chairman Mao was not in agreement, how could the Tien An Men incident have been characterized as counterrevolutionary?

Two days later a poster appeared in Peking calling for the rehabilitation of former head of state Liu Shao-ch'i; this was followed by posters calling for the rehabilitation of one-time Defense Minister P'eng Te-huai, the two most important figures in the CCP leadership purged by Mao in 1966 and 1959 respectively.

At the same time, veiled attacks on party Chairman Hua Kuo-feng continued to appear. One poster parodied Mao's alleged last words, handing power over to Hua ("With you in charge, I am at ease"), substituting, "With Teng Hsiao-ping in charge, the people of the entire nation are now finally at ease." (*Los Angeles Times*, November 25.)

Similarly, after Hua belatedly announced that he felt that it was a "wise decision" to rehabilitate the Tien An Men demonstrators—whom he had himself helped to put in jail—a November 23 wall poster retorted: "The reversal of the verdict on Tien An Men is only common sense and does not require any wise decision and empty talk from a central authority." (*Los Angeles Times*, November 25.)

A Sampling From the Wall Posters

Other posters that week declared:

• From 1966 to 1976, China was under a fascist regime and the only person who defended us ordinary people against the fascists was Chou

En-lai [and people close to him such as Teng. *New York Times*, November 26.]

• We cannot tolerate that human rights and democracy are only slogans of the Western bourgeoisie and the Eastern proletariat only needs dictatorship. [*New York Times*, November 26.]

• Taiwan now has one of the highest standards of living in all of Asia. Why is it that our national economy has not been able to catch up with the one controlled by the Chiang Kai-shek clique? [*Los Angeles Times*, November 26.]

• No wonder foreigners call the National People's Congress a rubber-stamp parliament. It has only its name but no real power. [*Los Angeles Times*, November 26.]

• As far as we know, China is a people's republic and not a feudal dynastic state. People have the right to appoint and dismiss their servants. [*New York Times*, November 26. This last was in reference to Mao's personal appointment of Hua Kuo-feng to serve as China's premier after the Tien An Men demonstrations.]

Actually, according to some of the reports, the majority of the posters do not address themselves to directly political questions, but air personal grievances. An account by Frank Ching from Peking in the December 1 *Wall Street Journal* contains the following examples:

A 64-year-old Mongolian wrote that he had come to Peking to accuse the Communist Party of responsibility for the death of his son, who was in the air force. A 15-year-old girl put brush to poster to tell passers-by that her mother had been arrested illegally.

Ching describes an altercation between a beekeeper from Liaoning and court officials after the beekeeper pasted up a poster on the wall of the Supreme Court building protesting that the government had never compensated him after his bees died while being transported on a government train.

"How can you carry on sticking up your poster with Soviet spies watching you?" an irate court worker asked the beekeeper, pointing to Western reporters taking notes. "I've been sending you letters for a month to get someone to do something about my case," the beekeeper replied. Standing his ground, he finally extracted a promise of quick action.

Foreign Reporters Sought Out

One of the most striking things about the poster campaign has been the accompanying rallies and discussion meetings, marked in particular by an unprecedented willingness to talk to foreign reporters.

The November 27 *New York Times* reports a discussion between a European diplomat and a group of workers from Kweiyang who call themselves the "Democratic Forum." They are people in their late twenties or early thirties who were sent to the countryside for "thought reform" after the Cultural Revolution. None of them went to college. They said they came to Peking after being refused permission to put up their posters in Kweiyang. Their poster said that the United States

had developed more rapidly than China because the Americans had broken with superstition whereas China had been burdened first with Confucianism and then with "modern superstition." They told the diplomat:

"Everyone in China knew that the Cultural Revolution was a period of fascist dictatorship. But at the time no one dared to say it. Now we want real freedom, human rights and democracy." While raising these demands, they also expressed support for both Teng and Hua.

Thousands Gather at 'Democracy Wall'

The most interesting exchanges began on November 25 on Chang An Avenue near the intersection of Hsi Tan Street, the site of the main wall where the posters are put up, now called "Hsi Tan Democracy Wall." Crowds of up to 10,000 came daily to read and copy the wall posters. On November 25, Chinese began to start conversations with the Western reporters, and this soon escalated into a series of mass meetings. The most detailed account of these meetings has been supplied by John Fraser, Peking correspondent of the Toronto *Globe and Mail*. He writes in the November 27 issue:

The crowds asked many of us if we were afraid to talk to them. We said no, but were they afraid to talk to us? Most foreigners got the same response—an enormous shout of "meiyou pa" or "we aren't frightened."

Fraser was accompanied by American columnist Robert Novak. When the crowd learned that Novak had an interview scheduled with Teng Hsiao-p'ing, he was bombarded with questions to be relayed to the vice-premier. Fraser writes:

There was enormous interest in how Western countries handled elections. One person was very insistent that we understand the situation in China and he received warm and loudly enthusiastic support from the crowd:

"Why is it that in our factory workshop, the people have the right to choose their leader, but we have no say about the people who run the country? This is not right."

Fraser said the crowd seemed to be generally supportive of Hua Kuo-feng, and to be very friendly toward Teng. At the same time, many of the questions and comments were pointed.

'Did Everyone Think We Had Gone Crazy?'

One frequent question was: "A few years ago, did everyone in the West think the Chinese people had gone crazy?" And: "Tell us the state of democracy in your country. Is it true that you can criticize your leaders without being labelled a traitor?"

Fraser reported some of the demands as follows:

They want more contact with "foreign friends" so that the masses can have a means of conveying their wishes to Chinese leaders;

"The Chinese people want a true democracy,

true freedom and true human rights." They do not want dictatorship or despotism in any form. The kind of democracy they want is "socialist democracy." . . .

They want the "Hsi Tan democracy wall" institutionalized as an area of free speech just like Hyde Park corner in London (the parallel was made by the Chinese.)

They want Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping to visit the Hsi Tan wall and take a look at the posters.

They want the people of the West to know about Hsi Tan wall and to show support to the Chinese people as they fight for democracy.

Fraser agreed to return to the "Hsi Tan Democracy Wall" the following night to report Teng Hsiao-p'ing's response to their questions.

Thousands of people listened excitedly as he delivered a report on Novak's meeting with Teng. The crowd cheered when he said that Teng had declared his support for the right to put up wall posters and had said the Hsi Tan Democracy Wall was a good thing. The reaction was mixed when he added that Teng said that "some of the things the masses were saying were incorrect."

Following Fraser's report, the crowd moved to nearby Tien An Men Square, where it broke up into discussion groups surrounding foreign journalists. Fraser recounts:

Someone talked about learning from the Yugoslavian experience. Another said that in the United States, there was a bourgeois democracy and the Chinese people did not want this. They wanted, he said, a proletarian democracy, but this did not mean that there wasn't anything to learn from bourgeois democracy. He particularly pointed out the importance of separating the executive, legislative and judiciary powers. . . .

We asked people if the evening's events would be reported in the People's Daily and a huge, spontaneous laugh went up.

"No," said one very articulate young man, "the People's Daily only reflects the views and perspective of the leaders. It does not represent the true feelings of ordinary people. We would like to see the People's Daily report what the masses really feel as well as what the leaders think and in this way it would be a truly great newspaper."

Discussion on Soviet Dissidents

The journalists were told that the Chinese people wanted to see more foreign films and read more foreign books.

Another group, accompanied by a British and a French journalist, had a discussion on Soviet dissidents, led by several young people who were completely up-to-date on the major figures in the movement there. The talk went on to include contradictions in U.S. foreign policy over human rights and the question was put to the journalists: "Why is there so little reflection of human rights problems in China from the Western press?"

The young people in the crowd were surprisingly well informed on many international issues that are rarely if ever reported in the Chinese press. They explained that a nominally restricted govern-

ment publication, *Reference News*, which reprints material from the Western press, was now fairly widely accessible through friends or contacts. Also, the government had stopped jamming British Broadcasting Corp. and Voice of America radio transmissions and these were widely listened to.

Fraser adds:

In comparing Western accounts of news events which affect China with those published in the official press here, it is clear that many Chinese have come to distrust their own media—some vociferously. [*Toronto Globe & Mail*, November 28.]

The only response to all of this in the official press was the publication on Monday November 27 of excerpts from Teng Hsiao-p'ing's discussions with a representative of the Democratic Socialist Party of Japan. According to the Hsinhua summary:

On the question of the masses' putting up big-character posters, Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping pointed out: "This is a normal thing, and shows the stable situation in our country. To write big-character posters is allowed by our country's constitution. We have no right to deny this or to criticize the masses for making use of democracy and putting up big-character posters. If the masses feel some anger, we must let them express it. Not all the opinions of the masses are carefully thought out, nor can we demand that they all be entirely correct. That is nothing terrible.

At the same time, he added:

Some utterances are not in the interest of stability and unity and the four modernizations. We have to explain matters clearly to the masses and know how to lead.

Alain Jacob of *Le Monde* was also present at Tien An Men Square the night when Fraser made his speech and the crowd broke up into discussion circles. After the discussion with the foreign journalists, he reports, Chinese orators spoke to various groups. Some of the speakers simply raised themes taken directly from the pages of the *People's Daily*. Jacob described one all-Chinese discussion meeting in the square that seemed to be different:

The speaker demanded freedom of speech, raising some laughter when he demanded that the salaries of high officials be the same as that of the workers, or, additionally, that the people have the right to see uncensored films and even to dance. [*Le Monde*, November 29.]

6,000 March to Tien An Men Square

The following night, Tuesday November 28, an actual demonstration took place along the route from Hsi Tan Street to Tien An Men. John Fraser writes:

With shouts of "Long live democracy" and "We will never turn back," more than 6,000 people marched from Hsi Tan poster wall to Tien An Men Square last night—twice the size of the crowd that made the same pilgrimage the night before.

If there was any doubt about the spontaneity of the proceedings during the past few days, it was removed this time when it became readily apparent that the movement for greater democracy in China is without any leaders and at the moment has no goal other than to shout brave slogans to a willing crowd.

The closest thing to an explicit instruction came when a young electrical worker stood up in front of the Martyr's Monument in the centre of Tien An Men—battery megaphone in hand—and said:

"There has never been a better chance to say what we think than now. Don't let it pass. Take the spirit of Hsi Tan democracy wall to your units so that it will grow." [*Globe & Mail*, November 29.]

A day later, Fraser attempted a more sober estimate of the degree of spontaneity in the Peking demonstrations. As one of the few on-the-scene impressions, his opinion is worth considering:

Are the Hsi Tan rallies, with their shouts of "democracy" and "human rights," a genuinely spontaneous outburst or the product of a clever political machination tied in with a leadership power struggle? . . .

The answer is probably yes on both counts. . . .

It is certainly possible that Teng forces started the Hsi Tan big-character poster campaign to provide some volatile grass roots support for their man. Most large campaigns in China, before and after liberation, had a specific political objective at the onset. [*Globe & Mail*, November 30.]

Fraser notes that movements such as the Cultural Revolution proved by their very nature to be not fully controllable. In particular there is the composition of the participants in today's meetings:

The young people who have publicly taken up the cry for more liberty and justice in Chinese life are all children of the Cultural Revolution. As such, they are probably the most deeply politicized generation in China's history. . . . For a political leader to tap successfully into this extraordinary reality, it is necessary to ride the aspirations of the masses.

Fraser adds that he was able to speak to a Japanese diplomat who was one of the few Westerners present at the original Tien An Men demonstrations in April 1976, and that even then many of the speeches were on the question of how to achieve democracy and human rights in China. "This was not widely known at the time but is emerging with a vengeance now."

Teng Applies the Brakes

By Wednesday, November 29, the tolerant attitude expressed in Teng's comments in the press began to evaporate and the government started to rescind its invitation to air criticisms.

Official-looking wall posters began to go up urging people to refrain from criticizing Hua Kuo-feng. On December 1, Teng Hsiao-p'ing made a demonstrative public appearance with Hua. At the same time further wall posters went up demanding that attacks on Mao be stopped. One of

these referred to Mao as "the red sun in our hearts," and warned that if the authors of the anti-Mao posters dared to sign their names, the people would "smash your dog heads." (*New York Times*, December 2.)

Another poster urged Chinese not to criticize their country to outsiders.

At the same time that the poster campaign and rallies took place, a top-level but thoroughly secret meeting of the central party leadership was taking place elsewhere in Peking. Inasmuch as the "democracy movement" was also in large part a pro-Teng demonstration and directed at criticizing Hua and other Mao era leaders, it can be seen as in part at least tied in with Teng's strengthening of his grip on the party leadership. There seems to be little doubt that he has emerged as China's central leader in the last few weeks. That does not at all mean that the grievances aired in Peking in the last two weeks are not genuine or representative of deep feeling among the Chinese people.

Teng plays a risky game when he tries to coopt such sentiments and time their public expression to coincide with his own factional needs. This time he himself joined demonstratively in the counter-thrust to slow down the protests that he had invited. This put him in the patently two-faced position of posing as a defender of Mao's reputation and repudiating as too harsh the wall posters that had attacked the late chairman. This provoked at least one bold author into the only reported criticism of Teng. According to the December 1 *New York Times* the poster declared:

"You can clamp down silence again on the people, but that won't solve anything."

The Graying of America

Increased air pollution has cut visibility in suburban and rural areas of the northeastern United States by 10 to 40 percent in the last twenty-five years, according to figures released November 20 by a research department of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Visibility in urban areas declined by only 5 percent in the same period, presumably because it couldn't get much worse.

A spokesman for the agency expressed concern for the "damage associated with visibility impairment," including "loss of property values, loss of tourist revenues in scenic areas, reduction in sunlight, hindrance to aviation, and general citizen dissatisfaction."

Keep your files complete and up-to-date. Missing issues for the current year may be ordered by sending 75¢ per copy. Write for information about previous years.

Shotgun Barrages Fail to Stop Peru Student Protests

By Miguel Fuentes

LIMA—Despite a mounting death toll here in the capital and in provincial cities, Peru's high-school students are continuing their protests. November 21 marked the thirty-fifth day of meetings and demonstrations.

In mid-October the government of Gen. Francisco Morales Bermúdez decreed a rise of almost 50 percent in the cost of diesel fuel and cooking gas. This led to an immediate increase in transportation fares. The price of a single bus ride (*pasaje*) went from 12 soles* to 18 soles for ordinary passengers and from 5 soles to 9 soles for students.

This fare hike is having a drastic effect on the standard of living of many Peruvians. One father I spoke with in the Lima suburb of Comas told me that he has four children, each of whom must change buses once to go to school. This means four *pasajes* each day for each child, for a total of 144 soles. His wage—when he's working—is a little above the minimum of 230 soles a day.

Some of the students I talked to said the rise in bus fares has meant that there is no more milk in their households. The rise in travel costs in an average-sized family with a minimum income comes to about 60 soles—the price of a quart of milk.

Faced with this "choice"—milk or school—it is little wonder that Peru's students have taken to the streets. Whether they realize it or not, their action has implications far beyond challenging a bus fare increase. In reality, it is posing a major challenge to the military dictatorship's entire austerity program.

To gain the "restructuring" of Peru's huge debt to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and big imperialist banks, the military has agreed to severe cuts in government spending. Price subsidies on a whole range of basic food products were suddenly eliminated last May, calling forth massive protests and a two-day general strike—the biggest in Peru's history. The recent hike in diesel fuel represents a further cut in the state budget, inasmuch as it is aimed at eliminating spending to offset a big deficit in the accounts of PetroPerú, the state-owned oil company. This has been a key demand of the IMF.

Thus, if the students' militant struggle forces the government to roll back the fare



Miguel Fuentes/IP-I

Part of march of 5,000 primary and secondary school students in Lima November 8, demanding cancellation of increase in bus fares.

increase, an important part of the austerity program would be jeopardized. Hence the military's response: fierce repression, with concessions on other students demands but not on the *pasajes*.

Besides a fare rollback the students have also been demanding the abolition of a recently imposed requirement that an average mark of 12 (on a scale of 20) be achieved in order to advance to the next grade. The old standard was 11. Other demands include an end to the evaluation system whereby two marks of 8 mean repeating a year, and improved conditions in the schools (some even lack chairs).

The protests began October 18. From actions of several hundred in this school or that they quickly grew to involve thousands. The movement spread from Lima to other cities. Everywhere they were met with repression—at first tear gas, clubs, and water cannon; then firearms, beginning with the killing of one bystander and the wounding of five students in Huancayo on November 6.

The protests reached a peak in Lima on November 8. Tens of thousands of students mobilized in various parts of the city. They were joined in the streets by striking public employees, bank workers, and others (see *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, December 4, p. 1334).

Similar protests occurred in Cuzco, Huancayo, Zarate, Cangallo, and elsewhere. Reports on the true extent of these mobilizations is only now reaching Lima, owing to the regime's tight control over the major news media.

The exact number of dead is not known. Bodies "disappear" in the hands of the police, and families are warned to keep still. But it is known that two students were gunned down in Cangallo. In many cases the victims are children under the age of twelve—primary students who spontaneously join in the struggle.

On November 10 the military launched its fiercest attack to date at the Mariano Melgar Educational Center, a school that has been at the center of the mobilizations.

At 7:30 a.m. students from a nearby women's high school marched over to join their male comrades at Melgar. They met peacefully in the patio and decided to begin another march. As they entered the street they found themselves facing a *tanqueta* (a small armored vehicle with tear-gas cannon) and a squad of police.

Meeting the students outside Melgar itself represented an attempt to stop the most militant students before they got started, a move that would be repeated at other schools. The cops hoped to prevent a

*The exchange rate of the sol stood at 187 to the dollar as of November 10. Thus 12 soles equals approximately US\$0.06.

central mobilization of all the students.

As the students entered the street in front of Melgar they were attacked suddenly and brutally, without warning. Tear gas was launched from the *tanquetas* and from police rifles. Many students were forced back into the enclosed schoolyard while others managed to escape down the street.

The police quickly ran out of bombs and began throwing rocks. The students retaliated with the same rocks. Then two more *tanquetas* and several busloads of special Civil Guard assault troops arrived. After another heavy barrage of tear-gas bombs failed to dislodge the students from the portals of the school, the assault guards brought out shotguns, assumed firing positions with six standing and six kneeling, and alternated sending blasts of shells at the school.

At least eighteen students were hit. Many were badly wounded. Among them was sixteen-year-old Víctor Alvarado, who received a shotgun blast to the head. He died on the operating table at 11:30 that evening.

Víctor Alvarado was buried in the late afternoon on Sunday, November 12. It was a gray, chilly day, but hundreds of family members and fellow students formed a procession to the cemetery. Hundreds more lined the streets and applauded and shouted protests as the cortege passed by.

Félix Alvarado, a poor taxi driver, and his family decided that their son's death should not go without protest. Speeches denouncing the repression were made at the cemetery. The Civil Guard mounted a big show of force, but it failed to daunt the militant spirit of those in attendance.

On November 12 the regime announced that the schools would return to the old passing grade of 11. But stepped-up repression was also declared: Students directly involved in the protests would not be promoted. Fifty-six were to be expelled, and the cases of 200 more were being "reviewed."

Besides this, more than 1,000 students have been arrested since the protests began. Many are still being held under abominable conditions. Those released have only been freed after their parents either paid a bond or promised to pay for any "damage" their sons or daughters may have caused. Also, a number of schools have been closed for varying periods.

The press reported November 12 that bus fares had been rolled back in Cuzco, which had also been the scene of heavy fighting.

Fierce fighting took place also in Huancayo when the Civil Guard attacked new student mobilizations that began around November 13. (This information comes from an eyewitness; no account has appeared in any of the government-controlled dailies. The dictatorship often imposes an "embargo" on information to try to isolate

protests. It is not unusual for the military even to stop traffic in and out of a city or to cut off phone service.)

In response to the police attacks, the students in Huancayo began blockading streets with chopped-down trees. Soon they made it impossible for the *tanquetas* or police reinforcements to reach certain points. The cops used their guns as they had two weeks earlier, but they lost control of the city nonetheless. Finally the government had to send in an infantry battalion to occupy Huancayo's streets.

There was a lull of several days in Lima after the bloody attack on the Melgar school. But on November 17 high-school youth were back on the streets, now joined by fresh contingents of university students. At the National University of San Marcos, some 2,000 high-school students were joined by 1,500 from San Marcos and another 500 from the National Agricultural University.

The march from San Marcos answered the question that had been on everyone's lips during the week. The students were rejecting the regime's carrot-and-stick policy. Students also mobilized in Comas and other districts of the city, and the unequal battle was joined once again.

Four thousand students marched in downtown Lima in the evening on November 17. *Tanquetas*, water cannon, and foot patrols were unleashed against the demonstration, and the center of the capital became a battle ground. The Avenida Grau was soon filled with large rocks, and trees were cut down to block other streets. As on November 8, a number of Civil Guard vehicles were put out of action.

Throughout the struggle the students continued to regroup and shout their slogans: "Down with the fare hike!" "Down with the cost of living—raise wages!" "All the people struggle for the general strike!" As on previous occasions their demands met with the approval of bystanders, who shouted their agreement or applauded.

November 17 was an important day in that it showed the capacity of the students to continue their fight despite heavy repression and the loss of central leaders to the dictatorship's jails. Also, the contingents from the universities gave evidence of the students' capacity to draw fresh layers into struggle.

University students from San Marcos had not mobilized in such numbers for several years. The agricultural students had experienced a five-year lull in actions of such scope, but on November 20 they held a rally of 1,000 and declared a hunger strike in support of their demands. The San Marcos students rallied again on November 21.

Another important factor in the situation is the call for a new national general strike. The main union federation, the CGTP, is coming under increasing pressure to set a date for the strike voted at its fifth congress in early October. (The Com-

munist Party [*Unidad*], which controls the CGTP, acceded to the strike call at the insistence of left-wing forces at the congress, but so far has resisted actually organizing a countrywide work stoppage.)

The government cannot allow the current tug of war with the students to go on indefinitely. The recently concluded agreements with the IMF and the banks do not allow for economic concessions, and General Morales Bermúdez has called for a new period of "austerity."

Austerity measures have been resisted with strikes and local semi-insurrections in the past. To allow the militant example of the students to continue is to invite the masses of workers and unemployed to join them in the streets, and to allow pressure to mount for a general strike. Given the mood of the masses, such a strike could tend to go over from a defense of living standards to an insurrection aimed at bringing down the dictatorship once and for all.

Conceding a rollback in the bus fares would open a breach in the whole austerity program. But the alternative solution—a massacre of students in sufficient numbers to drive them off the streets—would pose far greater dangers.

The military was able to get away with a full-scale assault on striking miners in Lima in early September mainly because the miners' struggle had been isolated by the CGTP's failure to lend solidarity. But the miners had also come to Lima from other parts of the country. The students, on the other hand, live in Lima; so do their families. And fundamentally they are seen by the population as a whole as *children*. Thus an attack on them like the massacre in Mexico in 1968 might well ignite an explosion of protest throughout Peru.

A crisis point is rapidly approaching for the government. It is walking a tightrope of escalating repression and must soon decide to either go all-out or else concede the struggle. At the center of this stand children and teen-agers, nine to eighteen years old.

If the students at the Mariano Melgar Educational Center are any indication, the youth are not backing off. I arrived there at 5:30 in the afternoon on November 20. The Civil Guard were loading arrested students into vans. A hundred yards away stood more than 500 angry students, shouting their protests. And in the square hundreds of bystanders were watching very, very intently.

November 21, 1978

Paper Chase

Bad checks totaling more than \$3 billion change hands in the Philippines each year, Solicitor General Estelito Mendoza reported in Manila November 16. He said at a conference on credit and banking that this figure is equivalent to about 14 percent of the country's gross national product.

Prosecution Witnesses Balk at 'Trial' of Soweto Rebels

By R.D. Willis

JOHANNESBURG—As the "sedition" trial of eleven young Black Soweto youths nears the end of its second month, the frame-up character of the apartheid regime's case against them is becoming increasingly obvious.

So far, at least two state witnesses have openly admitted that they were beaten and tortured by the Security Police to compel them to make statements prejudicial to the defendants. This brutality (hardly uncommon in South Africa) is a reflection of the authorities' determination to railroad the eleven behind bars.

While there are a number of political trials now under way in various parts of the country, the trial of the Soweto youths is the most significant. The regime has moved against them not only because of their individual roles in the massive Black rebellions of 1976 and 1977, but also because of what they represent—a militant new generation of freedom fighters set on bringing down white supremacy and on establishing Black majority rule. The regime is seeking to use the case to strike a blow against the entire freedom struggle.

All eleven defendants were leaders or activists of the Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC), which had spearheaded the big mobilizations in Soweto and had set an example for Black youths throughout the country. The SSRC was outlawed in October 1977, along with seventeen other Black and anti-apartheid organizations.

Most of them were arrested during a police swoop in June 1977, just days before scheduled protest actions to mark the first anniversary of the initial June 16, 1976, student demonstrations in Soweto. The most prominent of the accused, twenty-three-year-old Daniel Sechaba Montsitsi, was president of the SSRC at the time.

The ten other defendants are Wilson Twala (18), Susan Sibongile Mthembu (22), Seth Sandile Mazibuko (19), Mafison Morobe (22), Jefferson Khotso Lengane (21), Thabo Ndabeni (21), Kennedy Mogami (19), Reginald Teboho Mngomezulu (21), Michael Khiba (20), and George Nkosinati Twala (23).

The eleven were detained without charge

from the time of their arrests until July 28 this year, when they were brought before the Randburg Magistrates Court. They were indicted on main charges under the Sedition Act and on alternate charges under the Terrorism Act.

Specifically, they are accused of calling for the distribution of petrol bombs, advocating the burning down of Soweto's Bantu Education Department building, intimidating Black police living in Soweto, "forcing" Black workers to stay away from their jobs in protest strikes, marching on John Vorster Square (the main police headquarters here) to demand the release of political detainees, establishing contact with other student organizations in the country, and compelling members of the regime's Urban Bantu Council in Soweto to resign their posts. The indictment claims that R7 million (US\$8.05 million) in damages was inflicted as a result of these activities on property belonging to the West Rand Administration Board, which oversees the running of Soweto and other Black townships in this area.

In addition, the government is trying to make an amalgam between the SSRC and the South African Student Movement (SASM), an organization of Black high-school students that was directly identified with the Black Consciousness movement. The indictment claims that it was SASM, as an organization, that set up the "action committee" that eventually led to the emergence of the SSRC in early August 1976.

Tsietisi Mashinini (the SSRC's first president) and Montsitsi had been members of SASM at their local high schools. But Mashinini later explained, after he left South Africa, that they had been involved in setting up the action committee and the SSRC in their capacities as individual activists, not under the direction of SASM. They took care to avoid implicating SASM—and by association the South African Students Organization, the Black People's Convention, and the other main Black Consciousness groups—with the SSRC's own activities. The prosecution's attempts to claim a direct organizational link between the SSRC and SASM may be part of the regime's efforts to justify the banning of the latter group, which it ordered in October 1977.

Besides the eleven defendants, a number of "co-conspirators" have been named in the indictment, including Mashinini, Khotso Seatlholo, and Trofomo Sono (all former SSRC presidents), as well as Drake

Koka, the secretary general of the Black Allied Workers Union and a founder of the Black People's Convention. All are now living outside the country.

Although the prosecution has so far tried to focus attention on such acts as the burning of buildings and stoning of police during the Soweto rebellions, the indictment does spell out the real reasons that the eleven are now on trial. It charged that the defendants and their compatriots strove "to create political, social and/or cultural awareness and solidarity amongst Black schoolgoers" and that they "adopted as policy the total rejection of the [segregated] system of education for Blacks at schools and specifically, the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction."

Despite their months of incarceration, the eleven activists have continued to express their militant defiance of the apartheid system. During their July 28 court appearance, they gave clenched-fist salutes and shouted "Amandla" (power). Their relatives and friends, who had packed the courtroom, responded with "Ngawethu" (to us).

This spirit of resistance was backed up by solidarity actions in Soweto itself. On September 18, the original date for the start of the trial (it actually began on September 29), several hundred students attended a four-hour service at Soweto's Holy Cross Church, where they sang freedom songs and chanted slogans. After leaving the service, about 300 of them marched down one of Soweto's main roads, giving Black power salutes as they went.

A few days later, eight Soweto students were detained on their way to another service in solidarity with the eleven, called by the Soweto Students League, which emerged after the SSRC's banning.

In an effort to avoid protest actions outside the courtroom, the trial was moved to the circuit court in Kempton Park, a small town seven miles northwest of here.

When the trial finally opened September 29, all eleven defendants pleaded not guilty to the charges against them.

From the very first day, the prosecution has sought to paint a picture of a small group of conspirators who were engaged in violence and intimidation, not only against the authorities, but against other Blacks as well. For instance, Major Daniel van Wyk testified for the prosecution that Black workers had been intimidated into staying away from work during the August 4, 1976 strike. They were subjected to

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"intimidation by pamphleteering," he said.

Despite the regime's intentions, some of the state witnesses have given testimony that tends to contradict the conspiracy allegations. Major Gerrit Viljoen noted the spontaneity and breadth of the uprisings, stating, "There was total chaos that day [June 17, 1976]. The mood was so hostile that even children of two and three years old were waving fists in the black power salute."

Sarah Makape, a political detainee who was called to testify by the prosecution, stated that she had participated in two demonstrations on June 16, in which the students flashed V-signs to the police to show that they were marching peacefully. The peaceful aims of the demonstrators, however, did not prevent the police from firing into them, killing many.

The defense, when it is called to present its case, will attempt to show the popular character of the Soweto events, thereby exposing the prosecution's lying claims that it was all the result of a conspiracy. Susan Mthembu, one of the defendants, declared their hope that the "true feelings of blacks can come out, otherwise it will all be buried and forgotten." Another remarked, "It must be shown that the unrest was not caused by a bunch of rowdy children, but by legitimate grievances and complaints of the people."

As in many other recent cases here, some of the state witnesses have revealed in court that their written statements had been extracted under extreme pressure. They have done so despite the risks of reprisal by the Security Police.

The first such exposure came on November 6, when a state witness (whose name cannot be publicly revealed) declared in court, "On two occasions I was beaten by Captain Arthur Cronwright, from John Vorster Square, who told me he was Hitler's nephew and if I did not cooperate he would get rid of me in the same way Hitler got rid of his victims—that means death." At one point, when he was taken for interrogation, he heard Montsitsi crying out nearby. "A Lieutenant Kriel told me to listen well," he testified, "as such things could happen to me at any time."

The judge's only response to these revelations was to say that he would pass the allegations on to the police commissioner.

A few days later, on November 10, Ezekel Molefe testified that a constable at the Dobsonville police station in Soweto had tortured him with electric shocks a week after his detention. "The constable wanted me to say that I had thrown stones at the police on June 16."

Molefe was detained just minutes after leaving the witness stand.

Whatever the regime may have wished, the trial has not had the effect of intimidating the defendants or their supporters into giving up their struggle for a free and

just South Africa under Black majority rule.

This determination was expressed by Susan Mthembu, who attempted to smuggle a letter out of prison. In it she affirmed that her convictions would not be weak-

Daniel Sechaba Montsitsi Tortured in Prison

JOHANNESBURG—Daniel Sechaba Montsitsi, a former president of the Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC), who is now on trial on charges of sedition, was severely beaten while in Security Police detention.

According to the report of a doctor who examined him, Montsitsi had been picked up and dropped on his head. He was also brutally beaten with rubber truncheons, leaving visible abrasions up and down his back, from the neck to the backs of his legs.

The beatings produced symptoms of pre-epilepsy, as well as headaches and fainting spells, indicating some neurological damage. At one point, Montsitsi was so badly injured that he had to be taken to a hospital for treatment. Although he had an outgoing and defiant personality before the beatings, he is now considered somewhat subdued in his behavior. Unless subjected to further beatings, he is expected to recover satisfactorily, however.

Montsitsi, who is twenty-three years old, is one of eleven Soweto student activists now sitting in the dock in Kempton Park, several miles north of here. The apartheid regime has accused them of being part of a "conspiracy" that is alleged to have been behind the massive uprisings that shook Soweto and other Black townships in 1976.

Montsitsi had been a leading activist at Sekano-Ntoane High School in Soweto when the students stood up against South Africa's racist system of segregated and inferior education for Blacks. He was involved in the SSRC from its inception and became the organization's third president at the beginning of 1977, after his predecessor, Khotso Seatlholo, was forced to flee the country.

In that capacity, Montsitsi played a key role in organizing student protests against government attempts to drastically raise rents in Soweto. He was also instrumental in the campaign against the Urban Bantu Council, a Black-staffed body that was subservient to the regime and sought to win support for Pretoria's apartheid policies. As a result of that campaign, the council collapsed in late May 1977 with the resignation of most of its members.

Montsitsi's obvious leadership capabilities and the militant stance that he represented greatly angered the authorities and soon marked him out as a target of repression.

ened by detention. And reflecting the prevalent optimism among Blacks here about the certain victory of the freedom struggle, she declared, referring to the white supremacists, "I don't give the bastards more than five years." □

He was detained on June 10, 1977, along with some of the other defendants in the trial, just before scheduled demonstrations to commemorate the first anniversary of the initial demonstrations in Soweto. From the time of his detention until he was remanded for trial this June, Montsitsi was held in strict isolation, providing ideal conditions for the beatings he was subjected to.

Although the prosecution in the trial has attempted to present Montsitsi and the ten other activists as a handful of "agitators" who used intimidation to create political instability, the case has not turned out as the authorities planned. A number of the state witnesses (some of whom are themselves political detainees) have stood up to all kinds of police coercion and have given evidence that tends to undermine the government's case. They have described the very real grievances of Blacks in South Africa and have pointed to the breadth of support within the Black community for the student activists.

One recent state witness, W. Ribare, a former math teacher at Madibane High School, affirmed that the official policy of "Bantu Education" was indeed inferior to the schooling that whites received, and that, moreover, it was intended to "keep us where we are." He added that there was no need for "agitators" to cause unrest.

Despite the obvious weakness of the state's case, there is still a grave danger that Montsitsi and his colleagues will be convicted. The South African system of "justice" is stacked against them.

They urgently need international support, both to win their freedom and to stay the hands of the apartheid regime's professional torturers. □

Be Prepared

Clerical and other nonprofessional employees of the Boy Scouts of America who relocate when the organization moves from New Jersey to Texas in July 1979 face somewhat more than the usual uncertainties of moving.

According to a top Scout official, they will be working more hours for the same pay, possibly with additional responsibilities, will be moving at their own expense, and may receive fewer paid holidays.

Those who decide not to take up this offer will receive one free day at company expense to find a new job.

Big Turnout at International Congress for Rudolf Bahro

By George Saunders

WEST BERLIN—For four days the hallways and rooms of the Technical University here were filled with animated groups, literature tables, and a variety of posters, leaflets, and newspapers as the radical left turned out in big numbers for the International Congress For and About Rudolf Bahro, November 16-19.

The crowd, mostly young and very much engaged in the issues raised by the congress, came not only from West Berlin (with its student population of around 60,000) but from all parts of West Germany. There was a good representation from other West European countries, with many exiled rights activists from Eastern Europe as well.

At the big public discussions, the Audi Max (Auditorium Maximum) was jammed beyond capacity three nights in a row. All the aisles were filled and all standing room in the back was taken. From the balcony the crowd spilled down two stairways directly onto the stage, where panelists from a broad spectrum of the European left discussed Bahro's ideas and called for his release.

The largest attendance at one of these evening discussions was estimated at more than 3,500. Besides the Audi Max, which seats 2,000, another hall seating 1,000 had to be opened and the discussion piped in.

Why Bahro Is Behind Bars

Who is Rudolf Bahro? A previously unknown Communist oppositionist who worked in East German industry as a technical specialist, Bahro made an inner break with the system after the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. He began work on a critical study from a Marxist viewpoint of the "socialism" that actually exists in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The result was his book *The Alternative*, which he arranged to have printed in August 1977 by Europäische Verlagsanstalt, the publishing house of the West German trade-union federation.

To coincide with publication of his book, Bahro arranged interviews with the West German bourgeois press and television, and he is now well known throughout West Germany. The East German authorities had him arrested immediately. He was held incommunicado for nearly a year, then tried in secret and sentenced to eight years in prison.

The trial and conviction were announced in the official press in June 1978, but no details were given. The charges against him were "betraying state secrets" and

working for some unnamed "intelligence agency," presumably on the grounds that his book gives facts and figures on the East German economy as part of an analysis of the system. The crude spy charge is only meant to divert attention from his ideas.

Bahro has made clear that he supports the noncapitalist foundations of the German Democratic Republic (GDR). He calls for a radical change in the political superstructure as a precondition for moving forward toward socialism. In Bahro's view, in order to permanently eliminate bureaucratism, a "cultural revolution" is necessary in the sense of abolishing the old division of labor (the distinction between mental and manual labor especially), eliminating hierarchy in the factories and offices, and actually socializing the process of production so that all workers participate in management.

He has expressed sympathy with the "Eurocommunist" trend and argues that democratization in the East will help the cause of "transformation" from capitalism to socialism in the West.

The large turnout at the congress was indicative of the interest the West German left has recently taken in the antibureaucratic struggle in the GDR. The rise of that struggle has major implications for the national question in Germany; it suggests what an attractive force a democratized socialist GDR could be in the fight for a united socialist Germany.

The rise of opposition in the GDR has been especially notable since the ouster of protest singer Wolf Biermann in 1976. Statements and actions in the GDR against Biermann's deportation and for socialist democracy continued through 1977, the appearance of Bahro's book being perhaps the most significant development. There have been many arrests, and dozens of cultural figures have been deported to West Germany. Among these are the protest singers Gerulf Pannach and Christian Kunert; the writer Jürgen Fuchs; and a group of young workers and intellectuals mostly from Jena, the so-called Jena group.

In February 1978 the Committee to Defend Rudolf Bahro was formed in West Berlin. It is a united front made up of unaffiliated socialists and members of several socialist organizations, including the GIM,* German section of the Fourth

*Gruppe Internationale Marxisten—International Marxist Group.—IP/1

International. Plans for the Bahro congress began shortly after the founding of the committee. All of the above-mentioned figures expelled from the GDR helped build the Bahro congress in one way or another, the "Jena group" being especially active. A concert with Wolf Biermann and others in October drew 6,500 persons and netted substantial sums for the expenses of the congress.

During the congress itself two greetings from opposition groups in the GDR reached the Bahro committee (Postfach 3005, Berlin 30), a similar message having arrived earlier, in October. One of the letters was signed "a Communist group in the GDR"; it said in part:

"The socialist opposition that is rising up everywhere in the GDR, and of which we are a part, has gladly taken up Bahro's ideas, discussed them, and is ready to spread them.

"We greet and support your initiative toward winning freedom for Rudolf Bahro and toward a discussion contributing to the unity of the left in Western Europe."

Aims of the Congress

The congress had a dual aim—to call for Bahro's release and to examine his ideas. In publishing his book Bahro particularly called for such discussion.

The Bahro committee made it clear from the outset that it had no anti-Soviet, anti-Communist, or antisocialist aims, nor did it oppose a lessening of tensions with the Soviet Union. This was stated, for example, at the opening of the congress by committee sponsor Rolf Berger, president of the Technical University and a member of the West German SP; and by sponsor Ossip Flechtheim of the West German branch of the International League for Human Rights. Flechtheim also stressed that the GDR authorities are not hopelessly rigid, citing a case a few years ago in which a GDR opponent was released from jail after a campaign by Western trade-union, civil liberties, and socialist organizations.

A theme constantly stressed at the congress and in its final resolution was the link between the struggles against anti-democratic measures in the West and for democratization in the East.

Wolf-Dieter Narr of the Bertrand Russell Tribunal, which has recently done much to expose political repression in West Germany, said that a similar tribunal against repression in the East was being projected. He assailed the phony human-rights ver-

biage of the capitalist governments, noting that they have lined up unanimously behind the bloody shah of Iran.

Trade-Union Support

A certain amount of trade-union support was evident at the congress, indicating the possibilities for mobilizing this powerful social force in defense of East European rights fighters. Much remains to be done to make this a reality, however.

One of the speakers at the opening session was Werner Vitt of the West German chemical workers union, IG-Chemie. He called for discussion between Western unions and the democratic, socialist intelligentsia in Eastern Europe, as represented by Bahro.

Two West German teachers unions, one in which pro-Moscow Communists have some influence, sent greetings to the congress. A letter was publicized from the Metalworkers union at a Volvo plant in Göteborg, Sweden, to the Metalworkers union in the GDR. It said in part, "The attacks against writers and artists hurt your country far more than these victims could have with their works," and further asserted that the kind of social criticism Bahro has written is necessary for workers democracy and social progress in general.

Auto workers at the Volkswagen plant in Wolfsburg, West Germany, have formed a study circle to discuss Bahro's book. A statement in support of Bahro by forty workers from that plant appeared in the auto workers' national publication.

Ernest Mandel, speaking for the Fourth International at the congress, called the defense of Bahro one of the central tasks of the international workers' movement. Solidarity with Bahro, he said, means solidarity with all the victims of repression in the countries under Stalinist rule. He reminded the audience of the revolutionary political prisoners in China and the victims of Stalin's purges in the 1930s, calling for their rehabilitation.

Although Bahro does not represent *the* alternative, Mandel explained, and although there is much in his book that revolutionary socialists would disagree with, it is essential to continue the discussion and show the Honecker bureaucracy that they have not silenced Bahro by jailing him.

Mandel stressed that Bahro's freedom can be won if a big enough international campaign is made. He held up the model of the successful fight to free Leonid Plyushch, the Marxist Ukrainian dissident. Someone from the audience, echoing Guevara's famous slogan, called for "four, five, many Bahro committees."

Mandel agreed that "many, many Bahro committees" was an excellent slogan. There are already Bahro committees in France and Great Britain; they cosponsored the congress with the Berlin committee. Formation of an Italian committee

was announced at the congress. The GIM has called for a delegated conference of Bahro committees.

Mandel concluded his remarks on how to defend Bahro with the point that the ruling bureaucracies in the postcapitalist countries are particularly susceptible to pressure from Western trade unions, mass Communist and Socialist parties, and progressive social movements. We must demand, Mandel said, that the unions and "Eurocommunist" parties wage an *active* campaign and bring their full influence to bear.

Support From Eastern Europe

Another important aspect of the congress was the support and participation of fighters for democratic rights from Eastern Europe itself. The leading opposition group in Poland, the Committee for Social Self-Defense (KOR), sent a message to the congress. So did representatives of Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia, together with another group there, the Committee to Defend the Unjustly Persecuted.

Ludek Kavin, a signer of Charter 77 who recently left Czechoslovakia and is active in Vienna, presented the first paper in the discussion of Bahro's views. He stressed that opposition movements have firmly established themselves in his own country and in Poland, the USSR, and now the GDR. Similar developments can be seen in Romania, Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Bulgaria. He pointed to the key role of socialist forces in those movements and advocated close cooperation among such oppositionists in exile from different lands.

Kavin called special attention to the recent arrest of Jaroslav Sabata, a longtime Czechoslovak Communist leader. An active oppositionist since the Soviet invasion, Sabata was jailed by the Husak regime until 1976, when he was released in response to an international campaign. Sabata immediately joined the Charter 77 movement and was serving as one of its three official representatives when he was arrested on October 1, 1978. A trial is expected very soon, and Kavin called for protests to be sent to the Czechoslovak authorities.

The congress addressed a reply to the letter from Charter 77, demanding withdrawal of Soviet troops from Czechoslovakia and freedom for Sabata and all the other imprisoned Charter activists.

At the final session of the congress a recently published appeal by exiled Soviet dissidents to Western socialists, Communists, and trade unions was read by Vadim Belotserkovsky, a former Soviet dissident now living in Munich. The appeal has been signed by, among others, Leonid Plyushch, Pyotr Grigorenko, Ludmilla Alekseeva, and Valentyn Turchin.

Among other congress participants from Eastern Europe were Jiri Pelikan and Zdenek Hejzlar, exiled former leaders of the Prague Spring; Mihaly Vajda, exiled

Hungarian dissident now in Bremen; Boris Weil, exiled Soviet dissident now in Denmark; and representatives of the Czechoslovak revolutionary-socialist publication *Informacni Materialy* and of *Listy*, organ of the Czechoslovak socialist opposition in exile.

A crucial question was the degree to which the "Eurocommunists" would show support for Bahro at the congress. The Spanish Communist Party, which on the surface has gone the furthest in its criticisms of Moscow, did the least in this defense effort. Clearly by a political decision of its party leadership it did not send a representative to the congress, as it had been invited to do. Nor did an invited speaker from the CP of Great Britain respond to the invitation.

As for the French CP intellectual who did come to the conference, he made it very clear he was there only in a private capacity and in no way represented his party. A congress press release identified him only as Dr. Adler from Lille. He is actually a coauthor of a recent semiofficial book of the French CP entitled *L'URSS et nous* (The USSR and Us; see review elsewhere in this issue).

Adler did not participate in any of the big public discussions, and although he attended the workshops on Stalinism and the West European Communist parties, he kept a very low profile.

The Italian CP, on the other hand, was officially represented. Its representative signed the final resolution of the congress, along with other left parties. Thus the CPI appears together with the Fourth International—something sure to irritate Moscow. Originally, a top leader of the Italian CP, Sergio Segre, had indicated his willingness to come to the congress. But in the end Angelo Bolaffi, an editor of the party's theoretical journal, *Rinascita*, attended. He too said very little and steered clear of controversy.

Messages came to the congress from Pierre Joye of the Belgian CP's Central Committee, and from Ilka Björklund, a deputy in the Finnish parliament from the People's Democrats, a Eurocommunist product of a recent split in the Finnish CP. Björklund, who has been censured in *Pravda* for his firm stand on Bahro, announced that a member of his party is translating *The Alternative* and it will soon appear in Finnish. (Editions in English, French, Italian, and other languages are also forthcoming.)

Another "Eurocommunist" who took a strong position, Franz Marek—a former leader of the Austrian CP who was expelled for his opposition to the invasion of Czechoslovakia—spoke at the outdoor rally at the end of the congress.

The "Eurocommunist" parties can clearly be pressured to do more in the future, especially since Bahro expressed sympathy with their views and has inquired as to what positions they have

taken in his case.

As for the Social Democracy, the Italian and Spanish parties sent official representatives and signed the final declaration. So did a leader of the French SP. The West German SP had no official representation, although two prominent SP members were sponsors and participants. These were Peter von Oertzen, a member of the party's National Executive, and Gerhard Schroeder, president of the Young Socialists, the SP youth group.

A letter from Willy Brandt, the former premier who is now the chairman of the West German SP and of the Second International, was made public at the congress. Brandt promised to consult with friends in the organizations he heads "to see how we can apply ourselves toward winning the release of Rudolf Bahro."

Some New Left elements in the audience charged that the West German SP was trying to take over the Bahro congress. Counterposed to this ungrounded fear was the perspective of putting pressure on them, as well as on the "Eurocommunists," for real and effective measures for Bahro—especially by winning support from rank-and-file workers who vote SP, are in SP unions, and who really want democracy, both East and West.

Besides the major panel discussions—on the October revolution and its meaning for the left today; the Prague Spring and the crisis of the system in Eastern Europe; and the full development of the individual as the true goal of production under socialism—there were nine different workshops in the afternoons. Some 1,800 persons attended these.

Topics included the relations between workers and intellectuals in the struggles in Eastern Europe from 1953 to the present; the continuing patriarchal oppression of women in the "socialist" countries and the ways of advancing women's liberation there; the possibility of reform in the ruling bureaucratic parties, as opposed to revolutionary action by the masses; and various aspects of the economic structures in Eastern Europe. All these topics were dealt with in Bahro's book, and his views on them were discussed critically.

Included among the speakers, besides those already mentioned, were: Heinz Brandt, a veteran West German trade unionist currently active in antinuclear work within the union movement; Rossana Rossanda, of the Italian *Il Manifesto* group; Rudi Dutschke, a leading New Left figure of the 1960s; Renate Damas, an economist and specialist on the GDR;

Elmar Altvater, a leader of the Sozialistische Büro, the largest centrist group in West Germany; Sybille Plogstedt, formerly a political prisoner in Czechoslovakia and now an editor of the feminist monthly *Courage*. Also, Bernd Rabehl, a leader of the *Langer Marsch* (Long March) group; Jutta Menschik, author of *Feminism: History, Theory, and Practice*; Hillel Ticktin, editor of *Critique*, a journal of Soviet studies and socialist opinion; Chris Harman, of the British Socialist Workers Party; and Oliver Macdonald of *Labour Focus*, the British socialist defense bulletin on Eastern Europe and the USSR.

The congress was widely covered by the West German news media, and all major newspapers quoted from the final resolution. It was generally seen as a victory for the radical left and an example of united action for democratic rights.

The final resolution was adopted unanimously by the hundreds attending the concluding session of the congress. The broad endorsement of the resolution by groups with differing views, in the opinion of the organizers of the congress, showed that despite difficulties their general aims had been realized. They stressed that the resolution can serve as a point of departure for further international efforts. □

Bahro Congress Appeals for International Campaign

[The following is the text of the resolution adopted unanimously by the Congress For and About Rudolf Bahro. The translation from the German is by George Saunders.]

* * *

The participants in the International Congress For and About Rudolf Bahro in West Berlin, November 16-19, express their opposition once again to the sentencing of Rudolf Bahro by the GDR judiciary in a secret trial in which he had no effective legal defense. We demand his immediate release.

Bahro has attempted to apply Marxist methods and categories to the study of the societies in Eastern Europe and to point the way toward a socialist transformation.

Regardless of whether one agrees with Bahro's theses and particular statements, his book is a significant political and scientific contribution by a critical Marxist and Communist. With his work *The Alternative*, he has also made an essential contribution toward presenting socialism as a realistic perspective and has tried to work out practical steps toward change. Therefore he embodies, as does Robert Havemann, the hopes of many in both East and West.

We demonstrate for and discuss Rudolf Bahro because we are for socialism. Social-

ism and democracy are inseparable.

Solidarity with Rudolf Bahro to us means solidarity with all political prisoners and people persecuted for their political or religious convictions in the countries of Eastern Europe. However, as is shown by the many cases of *Berufsverbot* and other restrictions on democratic rights in West Germany and West Berlin, people who think like Bahro in these places have difficulty in disseminating and explaining without interference their ideas and proposals for alternative social development. Therefore it is natural that we also fight against all forms of political repression, for the realization of social and civil rights, and for a general amnesty of political prisoners throughout the world.

The participants in this international congress—trade unionists, Communists, independent socialists, Socialists, and Social Democrats from different countries of Eastern and Western Europe—have debated over Bahro's work for the past three days in an open dialogue. Regardless of differences in day-to-day political work, we have tried to set an example with this congress.

We affirm our intention to continue this discussion in our various countries by further exchanging our experiences, and to strengthen the work of solidarity. Rudolf Bahro hopes for a critical reception and

discussion of his book. We can only inform others of this hope and appeal to the political and moral sense of responsibility of all left organizations.

We call on democratic public opinion throughout the world, and especially the various political, religious, and trade-union organizations in the labor movement, as well as youth and student organizations, to do everything in their power to increase the pressure on the GDR authorities to free Rudolf Bahro. This will be possible only if further international initiatives follow this congress. In this regard the international trade-union movement has a special role to play.

Endorsed by:

The present individual sponsors of this congress, the Committee to Free Rudolf Bahro (Berlin), Committee to Free Rudolf Bahro (Paris), Biermann Committee (Paris), Editors of *Listy* (Frankfurt), United Socialist Party (PSU, France), Party of Proletarian Unity (PdUP, Italy), *Il Manifesto* (Italy).

Also, the representatives of the Socialist Party of Italy (PSI), Socialist Workers Party of Spain (PSOE), Communist Party of Italy (PCI), United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

Also, in behalf of numerous French socialists, Gilles Martinet, member of the presidium of the Socialist Party of France (PSF). □

The French CP Takes a Look at the Soviet Union

Reviewed by Louis Couturier



The publication of *L'URSS et nous* has been played up with unusual fanfare by the French Communist Party, including a special statement by the Political Bureau, a speech by Georges Marchais to the Central Committee, receptions, and a special page in *l'Humanité*.

This book is a collection of pieces by five CP authors, compiled by Francis Cohen. This is not a random choice. While the historian Alexandre Adler has written half of Chapter Two ("Stalinist Realities"), and while the Russian teachers Claude Frioux and Léon Robel, as well as the economist Maurice Decaillet, took part in the writing of several of the six chapters, it is to Francis Cohen that we owe the introduction, the historical background, half of several chapters, and the conclusion. It is no overstatement to say that he is the one who was responsible for "setting the tone" of the collection.

Now, who is Francis Cohen?

We will not go into his past in detail, for what middle-aged "Eurocommunist" today has not paid tribute to the Stalin cult? It should be recalled, however, that the CP considers him an expert on the USSR, and rightly so, for back in 1949 he wrote the most fawning articles in *La Nouvelle Critique* on Lysenko, Soviet biology, Soviet science, Soviet painting, and Soviet cinema. True, at that time, under the guidance of the late Jean Kanapa, the editorial board of that magazine included, among others, Henri Lefebvre, Annie Besse (now Annie Kriegel), Victor Leduc, and Pierre Daix.

The others have changed. No one can deny that Francis Cohen has the merit of consistency. The various books that he published after the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, though they make fewer references to Stalin and Lysenko, are still hymns of praise for the Soviet Union. In 1974—i.e., less than four years before *L'URSS et nous*—Editions Sociales published a book of his called *Les Soviétiques* [The Soviets]. This is a fat 350-page book, in which the Stalin era is treated in three miserable pages, and the repression is given ten lines.

But the book boasts long passages on Soviet democracy, and Comrade Cohen tells us that "in the Soviet Union, we are watching the old dream of untold millions—the dream of a workers

government—being painfully born into reality."

This interesting article of faith must be kept in mind to appreciate the performance of *L'URSS et nous*. There is something in

L'URSS et nous [The USSR and Us].
By Francis Cohen et al. Paris:
Editions Sociales, 1978. 220 pp.

it for everyone—anti-Stalinists and unrepented Stalinists, those who like barefaced lies and more subtle types who prefer lies of omission, liberals, teachers, and especially future CP voters.

Francis Cohen—with a boldness that one would have thought him incapable of—asks questions that in the Soviet Union would each be worth several years of hard labor. Is the USSR socialist? What are its internal conflicts? Can we draw up a balance sheet of the damage done by Stalinism? Is terror an integral part of the system? Has a new class of exploiters been created? What are the principles of Soviet foreign policy? Is there an economic or political crisis in the Soviet Union?

A list of this type is obviously revolutionary enough, but what are the answers? The authors' foreword sounded promising ("The time has come for a serious reflection on Soviet socialism") and not very polite as far as Francis Cohen's earlier literary output was concerned.

In trying to summarize the book's 220 pages without distorting them, we come to the following conclusions:

1. Yes, the USSR is socialist.
2. There are internal conflicts (particularly between blue-collar workers and the peasants, who are supported by some intellectuals).
3. Stalinism took a heavy toll, but that's all in the past.
4. Terror is not an integral part of the system.
5. There is no new class of exploiters.
6. Soviet foreign policy is a policy of peace.
7. The crisis in the USSR, or in the international Communist movement, is a crisis of growth (like the growing pains of adolescence).

We can see why the Soviet press has gone easier on *L'URSS et nous* than on the

works of Elleinstein or Carrillo. It condemns the anti-Soviet uses that such a book may be put to "despite the intentions of the authors," but this will not lead to transforming Comrades Cohen, Robel, and Frioux into agents of imperialism. They will still be able to get Soviet visas for their many trips to the USSR (which Elleinstein can no longer do).

However, *L'URSS et nous* cannot be compared to any other publication of the French CP. What we have here is a text that has the leadership's stamp of approval. Thus, it shows just how far it is possible to go in criticizing the USSR, and what are the boundaries that are not to be overstepped.

What is really new is the violent denunciation of Stalinist terror. This is nothing new to readers of *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, but the CP activists stand to be shaken up by it. Alexander Adler, who has a postgraduate degree in history, tries his hand at a precise balance sheet, using Soviet figures, and engaging in calculations as intricate as they are questionable. He comes up with 400,000 to 500,000 executions between 1935 and 1939; 4 million persons arrested in the same period; 7 million prisoners in 1953; 10 million deaths owing to the repression of the 1930s.

These figures are a novelty in an official CP publication. Elleinstein gave no figures in his *Histoire de l'URSS* [History of the USSR], Vol. 2. Out of "scientific caution" (that is, out of a desire not to commit himself for the time being), he was content to speak of "several million persons deported." Khrushchev was equally evasive in his secret report in 1956.

Adler's figures seem to us to be greatly underestimated, and Victor Serge seemed much more believable when he estimated the prison-camp population at around 15 million in 1941. Nevertheless, the fact remains that for the first time the French CP has admitted the magnitude of Stalinist repression in the USSR.

After these confessions, Cohen takes great pains to explain the reasons for this repression, and concludes that it is impossible for it to recur. Using tortuous formulations, he explains that the democratic functioning of society was "limited, inhibited, contradicted in certain aspects" during the Stalinist period.

By skimming through the other chap-

ters, it is possible to paint a very somber picture of the USSR—a total lack of democracy, censorship, apoliticalism of the masses, bureaucracy, incompetence, and so on. However, each statement of this kind is tempered by considerations designed to soften the impact and prevent the reader from drawing the obvious conclusions:

"It is around the concept of political democracy under socialism that the most serious differences between the CPSU and our party have been made explicit" (Claude Frioux).

Several pages later:

"Soviet life in its basic fabric . . . is neutralizing authoritarian practices more and more" (Claude Frioux).

"Those forbidden to publish or to see their works produced, forced into exile, stripped of their citizenship, censured, and attacked for their ideas—such cases can no longer be numbered. . . .

"Clearly, what is involved are not occasional slips, but an entire authoritarian, dogmatic conception and practice on the part of the cultural administration, which has led to a general distortion of intellectual life in the Soviet Union. This situation has not improved in the slightest since the Twentieth Congress—just the opposite" (Claude Frioux).

And a few pages further on:

"It must be emphasized that overall, despite the forced departures, the prohibitions and constraints, Soviet culture displays great richness and an undeniable fertility" (Léon Robel).

This juxtaposing of contradictory quotations could go on indefinitely. What we have here is an eclectic type of collection corresponding to a particular need. Generally speaking, the authors, who are known

to have lied shamelessly for decades, cloak themselves in "historic prudence" and "scientific doubt" before coming out with half-truths that have long been assimilated by all who are interested in the question. Jean Elleinstein's "History of the USSR," which came out in 1973, was a model of the genre. Elleinstein went much further than Francis Cohen, having been driven to it by the needs of his internal struggle inside the French CP.

L'URSS et nous was ordered up by the leadership of the CP, in order to win back some following among the intellectuals (its language makes it hardly accessible to anyone not lucky enough to have gone to college), without upsetting Brezhnev too much. This is the logical continuation of the 1976 turn brought on by the distressing

increase in the number of SP voters. How to differentiate oneself from the "Soviet reality that appears less and less to the French masses as a model to be followed" (Francis Cohen), without breaking with the Soviet regime, which is a regime "oriented to the working class and partially led by it" with a painful evolution "oriented more and more toward socialism" (Francis Cohen)?

To paraphrase a shrewd remark by Thierry Pfister in *Le Monde*, we will say that the authors of *L'URSS et nous*, as well as their partners, "appear not as scientists striving to refine an analysis, but as soldiers trying to abandon a position considered untenable by carrying out a strategic retreat in the most orderly possible fashion." □

German Steelworkers Strike for 35-Hour Week

Eight major steel plants in the Ruhr region and in the cities of Bremen and Osnabrück were shut down November 28 as 37,000 West German steelworkers went out on strike.

The strike came after four months of unsuccessful negotiations between IG-Metall, the steel and metalworkers union, and the Steel Industry Employers Association. The union's main demand is for a thirty-five-hour week to protect workers against layoffs. The steel industry has been losing 1,000 jobs a month, with plants operating at about 65% of capacity. A total of 120,000 jobs have been eliminated in the industry since the 1960s.

Eugen Loderer, the union president, was quoted by John Vinocur in the November 29 *New York Times* as saying: "If you

don't change the work hours, then you'll have to cut the work force in half by 1985."

The steel barons flatly rejected a union proposal to shorten work hours gradually, claiming this would hurt the industry's "competitiveness."

The union's demand for a shorter work-week has been coupled with a call for a 5% increase in the average hourly wage of \$5.75. The steel industry countered by offering a 3% wage increase and up to six weeks' vacation.

The strike will have major repercussions throughout Western Europe. Negotiations on a forty-hour week are under way in the Dutch steel industry. In Belgium, steelworkers began a thirty-nine-hour week in November that will be reduced to thirty-five hours by 1980. □

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A Kick in the Teeth for the Peoples of Asia

By Pierre Rousset

On October 23, 1978, Teng Hsiao-p'ing ratified the Sino-Japanese peace treaty that had been signed two months earlier, after long and difficult negotiations begun in 1975.

The Chinese vice-premier's tour of Japan on that occasion—which was nothing short of triumphant—underscored the importance of this major international event, whose impact can hardly be overestimated.

Far more is involved than a mere normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Relations have been more or less normalized since 1972; i.e., since the visit of then-Premier Kakuei Tanaka to Peking as a result of the dramatic reestablishment of ties between the United States and China and Richard Nixon's visit to China.

The fact that an "antihegemony" clause is included in the treaty, the scope of the economic accords now being negotiated by the two governments, and the impact on the countries in the region of the rapprochement between the Chinese giant and the major imperialist power in Asia, bear witness to this.

The Japanese government is, of course, seeking to publicly downplay the political significance of this pact. Tokyo has let it be known that in the paragraph condemning "hegemonism," it insisted on including a sentence which stipulates that "the present treaty will in no way affect the positions taken by each of the contracting parties in its relations with third countries."

Premier Fukuda claims to favor an "omnidirectional" foreign policy, seeking friendship with all countries on a strictly bilateral basis. He is, in fact, leery of the reactions of the USSR, which has condemned the new treaty. However, he cannot conceal what Teng Hsiao-p'ing hastened to point out during his visit to Tokyo: The Sino-Japanese accord is part of a two-pronged international strategy on the part of the Chinese leadership and Washington, which aims to isolate and weaken the "main enemy"—the USSR.

Against 'Social Imperialism'

Teng Hsiao-p'ing has made no mystery of his concerns. At an October 25 news conference, he declared that this was the "first time" that a "stipulation" such as the antihegemony provision had appeared "in an international treaty." He noted that the "definitive establishment of the antihegemony principle" carried a "great deal of

meaning," and that this provision was the "essence," the "key point" of the treaty between the two countries (*Le Monde*, October 26).

So the signing of this peace and friendship treaty falls within the contours of Chinese foreign policy, which has one overriding goal worldwide, from Zaire to Chile (whose foreign minister visited Peking in September), from Iran to Palestine (to be sure, the Chinese government, as of quite recently, was still receiving delegations from the Palestine Liberation Organization; but all the same, it has stopped short of condemning the Camp David accords), and from East Europe to West Europe. That goal is to isolate Soviet "social imperialism."

But the Sino-Japanese rapprochement represents more than just the continuation of a policy that already has plenty of crimes against the world's peoples to its account.

For Peking to support the worst dictatorships in Africa or Latin America, to call for maintaining NATO, or indeed, to endorse ASEAN*, is one thing. It is something else again to call for beefing up the Japan-U.S. security treaty or Japan's military preparedness. We are now witnessing the final outcome of the bureaucratic logic that has made the USSR "the main enemy" and that is driving the Chinese ruling group to ally itself more and more closely with imperialism—in the guise of its international ringleader, the United States, and the dominant capitalist power in Asia, Japan—against the northern "menace." Didn't Teng Hsiao-p'ing, as early as September, declare his satisfaction with "Japan's desire for independence in the area of defense" (*Le Monde*, October 26)?

The conduct of the Chinese vice-minister of foreign affairs left no doubt as to the support Peking now gives to the ruling party in Japan, the Liberal Democratic Party—the principal formation of the Japanese bourgeoisie—and indeed, to its most reactionary wing. In violation of protocol, Teng even asked to visit former Premier Tanaka, now deposed and about to go on trial for accepting bribes from the American aircraft firm Lockheed. Doesn't Tanaka still represent a decisive faction of the Liberal Democratic Party that must be dealt with?

Likewise, when Emperor Hirohito, who symbolizes, both personally and officially, imperial and militarist Japan and the

occupation of China and a large part of East Asia, referred in passing to the "unfortunate events" that have troubled "Sino-Japanese history," Teng Hsiao-p'ing is said to have replied with a nonchalant "let us forget, let us forget the past" (*Le Monde*, October 25).

It goes without saying that the policy of the Chinese ruling group has dealt a heavy blow to the Japanese left and labor movement, which has already been weakened by its divisions and extreme opportunism. This is especially true inasmuch as the historic ties between the Japanese left and China have been very close. Before breaking with the Chinese CP in 1966, the leaders of the Japanese CP had long found refuge in Peking. As late as 1972, the chairman of the Association of Sanrizuka Peasants who were fighting the construction of Narita airport was given a hero's welcome in China.

Furthermore, both the Japanese left and the Sohyo trade-union federation have made condemnation of the Japan-U.S. security treaty (which incorporates Japan into the U.S. military network) a constant feature of their policy for a long time, at least as far as official statements are concerned.

Teng Hsiao-p'ing's visit to Tanaka aroused indignation. In response to this, Tanaka cynically explained that "Teng has a good sense of humour. He doesn't ask about Lockheed. It would be nice if the Japanese had a sense of humour too" (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, November 3).

The agitation over this visit reached as far as the Liberal Democratic Party milieu. And an SP deputy bluntly declared: "Not only is this an insult to the Japanese nation, but we might also ask ourselves whether the Chinese would be willing to return the favor and allow us to meet with someone under indictment" (*Le Monde*, October 25).

More generally, it is Peking's support for the Japan-U.S. alliance that puts the Japanese left in an awkward posture. The chairman of the SP, Asukata, was told in Peking when he restated his party's traditional position toward the United States that the SP's policy was "fifteen years behind the times" (the dominant faction in the SP has pro-Moscow sympathies). And Ueda, a member of parliament and managing editor of the CP paper *Akahata*, declared at the time of Teng Hsiao-p'ing's visit that "by approving the security treaty with Washington, and Japanese rearmament

ment, China is taking a position contrary to that of a socialist country" (*Le Monde*, October 20).

Washington's Blessing and Tokyo's Pocketbook

Tokyo, of course, is not showing the slightest signs of political independence from Washington in signing the peace and friendship treaty with China. It was owing to the thaw in relations between China and the United States in 1971 that Japan once again opened up to its continental neighbor. The buttressing of Japan's role in the region corresponds to the wishes of the U.S. government, which after its defeat in Indochina would like to see a better division of the burden of "defending the free world."

An indispensable part of this, in the eyes of the Pentagon strategists who are worried about Soviet naval power in the Pacific, is beefing up Japan's military strength, regardless of the country's staunchly pacifist constitution. And imperialist Japan has an invaluable role to play in stabilizing the dictatorial and neocolonial regimes in Southeast Asia.

It is considered naive in both Washington and Peking to treat the other two "superpowers" even-handedly; it is necessary to pick the "main enemy" at a given moment. For both, this means the USSR, which explains why the objectives of Chinese and U.S. world policy are now converging so frequently and so closely.

Obviously, the Japanese rulers and capitalists see something in this for themselves. They would also like to see Japan's military might brought more into line with its economic might. The Liberal Democratic Party is riddled with an intense factional struggle over choosing the next party chairman and thus the next premier. Friendship with China has become one of the key elements of this internal strife, which partly explains why Fukuda was able to hush the objections of a good part of his own faction, which has traditionally been pro-Taiwan. As for the Japanese capitalists, they expect a great deal from the increase in Japan-China trade.

As early as February, an eight-year, \$20 billion trade agreement was signed between the two countries. Contracts valued at \$5 billion have already been signed. On top of that, the February agreements were reportedly extended for a period of five years, and the value of the anticipated trade was said to have been quadrupled. Japan has just signed a contract to build a steel-refining complex in Hopei, which promises to be one of the biggest in the world with an annual production capacity of ten million tons of steel. It is helping to build another complex in the Shanghai region, and to modernize a steel mill near Peking.

Of course, the tricky problem of financing Chinese imports remains to be settled. Peking hinted broadly that it would be

willing not only to turn to international credit institutions, but even to accept loans from foreign governments, which would represent a spectacular political turnabout. But nothing seems firmly settled yet. China has also offered to pay in exports of



TENG HSIAO-P'ING

crude oil. In theory this is a prime concern of the Japanese, who are trying to diversify their energy sources. But Chinese oil is of an inferior grade, and Japanese industrialists are ill-equipped to refine it without launching into major investments.

However, Japan's economic recovery is slow in coming, despite government promises of a 7% annual rate of growth for 1978. The Chinese market represents considerable potential, and affects key sectors of the economy, such as the steel industry. The general opinion is that the rewards outweigh the risk, as Susumu Awanokara noted in the November 3 *Far Eastern Economic Review*:

"China is embarking on a massive industrial revolution which will absorb enormous amounts of exports from Japan, as well as other suppliers of plant and equipment, and the chances of success seem great enough for foreigners to be willing to gamble."

Teng Hsiao-p'ing's 'Four Modernizations'

For the Chinese leadership, the overture to Japan not only meets the requirements of the fight against "social imperialism." It is an extension of the policy—indispensable in its view—of bureaucratically rationalizing the country's economy, a policy upheld by Teng Hsiao-p'ing under the name of the "four modernizations." A month does not go by without new developments in the offensive being waged by the

vice-premier against the Maoist legacy and those who oppose his decisions.

As for the political personnel, General Wu Teh has been relieved of his functions as mayor of Peking, and several provincial leaders have been dismissed, notably in Liaoning province, where the new first secretary is leading the ideological offensive. It was his job to point out that "practice is the sole criterion of truth," although some comrades "persist in the mistaken notion that Mao Tsetung Thought constitutes a criterion of truth" (*Le Monde*, October 3).

As for Chairman Mao's famous "little red book," it is now being reviled as a stupefying collection of "maxims" taken out of their logical context, and is apparently headed for the junkpile.

An expert at "quotable quotes," Teng Hsiao-p'ing recently suggested that reunification with Taiwan would take place "only by the peaceful road and in the distant future" (*Le Monde*, October 27).

In the economic realm, the major shift the regime has embarked upon is taking shape more and more systematically. The new chairman of the Academy of Sciences, Hu Chiao-mu (a "rehabilitated" victim of the Cultural Revolution, of course) described the broad outlines of this shift in an article in the October 16 *People's Daily*. It contains all the old themes that were earlier denounced as proof of an "ideological" return to capitalism in the USSR.

The idea is to raise productivity by bringing into play the economic "laws of value," by giving workers direct material incentives "and control" over their productive output, by disciplining those whose factories or communes produce little, by multiplying legally contracted barter arrangements among the various economic units, including within the same commune, by giving a bigger role to the system of bank credit, by introducing specialization of enterprises, and by learning the rules of efficient management from the bourgeoisie.

Hence the plans to send 10,000 students to Japan. These students are supposed to live among the population rather than in separate dormitories, the better to absorb the golden rules of capitalist management. Teng Hsiao-p'ing has had to come to terms with the deep-rooted democratic spirit of the Chinese masses and announce that, from now on, plant supervisors will be elected by the workers in their unit up to the level of department head. But his liberal mask fell when he declared in front of the 2,000 delegates to the Trade-Union Congress October 11 that "the workers must deepen their glorious traditions of hard work, self-sacrifice, and discipline, accepting [job] transfers with good grace, and loving their workplaces as they do their homes."

"The trade unions must educate their members in a spirit of respect for a highly centralized administration . . . and for the

complete authority of the command structure of production" (*Le Monde*, October 14).

Teng Hsiao-p'ing has embarked on a vast project of making production profitable through bureaucratic means. But his policy will run into much opposition—not only from the workers, who may not see eye-to-eye with Teng on the role of factory managers, but also from sections of the bureaucracy.

The fact is that this policy implies a considerable shakeup in the bureaucracy's methods of controlling the country, conferring a new role on the cadres of economic management and involving the spread of contractual arrangements between economic units. Teng is going at it as fast as possible. However, previous experience in the USSR and Eastern Europe has shown how difficult it is to reform these vast bureaucratized state apparatuses.

The overture to Japan and the growth of trade with the world capitalist market—an inevitable outgrowth of his overall policy—cannot help but have profound consequences in the long run, and may precipitate new political struggles within the regime. The veiled conflict between Hua Kuo-feng and Teng Hsiao-p'ing that is beginning to surface may reflect more than anything else the fears aroused in some sections of the bureaucracy by the "adventure" that Teng's forced march toward "modernization" represents.

The Korean Buffer

The new Sino-Japanese pact cannot fail to have major repercussions on the regional level as well. Should the current plans succeed even moderately, the existing economic equilibrium in the area would be upset. Indonesia, for one, fears the competition of Chinese oil, and Australia hopes to profit from the Sino-Japanese "steel boom."

But more fundamentally, it is the strategic equilibrium in East Asia that is liable to be altered. The Sino-Soviet conflict is more and more becoming a dominant feature of the situation in the area, which was never the case in the past. The signing of a friendship and cooperation treaty between Vietnam and the Soviet Union in early November is in all probability a reply to the Sino-Japanese peace and friendship treaty. The repercussions of the latter within the Korean peninsula are still hard to determine. The logic of China's "sponsorship" of North Korea and Japan's "sponsorship" of South Korea should be to exert pressure for a multilateral recognition of the existence of two Koreas.

However, this prospect has always been condemned by the Kim Il Sung regime. The Korean CP is now politically much closer to Peking than to Moscow, as shown by its lineup with Cambodia in the Hanoi-Pnompenh conflict. Moreover, recent indications are that it is being led by "techno-

crats" of the Teng Hsiao-p'ing school, whose job it is to bail the regime out of its financial difficulties after the international bankruptcy it has suffered. But North Korea is bound by mutual defense treaties both to China and to the USSR. In addition, it is militarily dependent to a large extent on the Soviet "umbrella." What will happen when the Sino-Soviet friendship treaty is formally and finally repudiated?

While in Japan, Teng Hsiao-p'ing made one of the cynical remarks about his allies that seem to be a habit with him. Speaking of Korea, he noted that "divided countries are ultimately unified. . . . If these problems can't be solved in 10 years, they will be solved in 100 years. If not in a century, then in 10 centuries." (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, November 3.)

There you have some encouraging words for Kim Il Sung! According to Philippe Pons, *Le Monde's* correspondent in Tokyo, the North Koreans privately admit to wondering "where their country was in Mr. Teng's mind when he decided to go a step further with Japan." (*Le Monde*, October 26.)

Japan is a key part of the Washington-Seoul-Tokyo military-industrial triangle. The interdependence of imperialist Japan and neocolonial South Korea, in defense matters as well as in economic and political areas, is such that the Korean question is considered virtually an "internal" matter in Japan.

The Korean peninsula is part of the "immediate security" zone of the Japanese archipelago. It is also one of the cornerstones of imperialism's military bulwark in the northern Pacific, and is very likely to be affected by the changing balance of naval forces in the area. Therefore, it is impossible to take very many "further steps" with Japan without this having the effect of keeping the situation frozen in the Korean peninsula.

The South Korean masses, who stand alone in their fierce battle for elementary democratic rights against the dictatorial Park Chung Hee regime, will be the first to pay the price for this reinvigorated (but not new) policy of peaceful coexistence.

Southeast Asia today is the object of big diplomatic maneuvers. Visits by Pham Van Dong, the Vietnamese premier; Ieng Sary, the Cambodian minister of foreign affairs; Firyulin, the Soviet adjunct minister of foreign affairs; and finally, Teng Hsiao-p'ing himself to the ASEAN countries followed one another at two-month intervals. Here again, the Sino-Japanese treaty promises new problems for the peoples of the region.

Of course, Teng Hsiao-p'ing, interviewed by some Thai reporters before leaving for

Tokyo, said that, unlike Pham Van Dong on his visit to Bangkok, he would refuse to announce the end of Peking's support to Communist parties involved in guerrilla struggles. While casting doubt on the sincerity of the Vietnamese premier's statements, he allowed himself the luxury of giving the Vietnamese a "lesson in internationalism":

"Pham Van Dong raised this issue to drive a wedge between our two countries. People want to know if Teng is going to say the same thing in Thailand. I can already tell you that if China talked like Pham Van Dong, China would be quite despicable" (*Le Monde*, October 25).

However, this virtuous statement of intent should not fool anyone. Moreover, Teng already gave his views on this subject to the Thai premier on his visit to Peking last spring. Chinese support to the guerrillas could not be totally cut off, because "then the Soviets would take our place." But, Teng added, "in any case, don't worry, if your governments take repressive measures against these parties, the Chinese embassy will not protest" (*Le Matin*, November 4).

When the leadership of the Chinese CP calls for maintaining the U.S. presence in the region and for strengthening Japan's role with respect to ASEAN, the old distinction between governmental policy (which is open to the necessary diplomatic compromises) and that of the party (the guarantor of an ongoing, active internationalist policy) no longer holds. One cannot ally oneself with the worst enemies of the masses in the region—U.S. and Japanese imperialism—and at the same time aid the development of revolutionary struggles!

At the time of Teng Hsiao-p'ing's visit to Rangoon in January, Alain Jacob, *Le Monde's* correspondent in Peking, noted how discreet the Chinese press had become about the activity of the Burmese CP. He reported that the leaders of this party who were living in the Chinese capital "have not hidden from those who have been able to approach them recently the trepidations that Mr. Teng Hsiao-p'ing's visit was causing them" (*Le Monde*, January 28).

It is the Thai resistance that is now at stake in a group of conflicts that go beyond it. Like all the parties in the area, the Thai CP is influenced by Maoist ideology. But when Teng Hsiao-p'ing visited Thailand, he was given an outstanding welcome. The Chinese statesman was invited to attend the formal Buddhist ceremony marking the ordination of the crown prince. This is unprecedented. It shows what type of relations are dominant—party-to-party or government-to-government.

The chief beneficiary of these successive diplomatic visits to Thailand is none other than General Kriangsak and his military regime. Since China no longer regards the revolutionary movements in the region as

*Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which includes the governments of Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

anything but a means of leverage, over which it must keep ideological control to keep them from falling under the influence of the pro-Soviet bloc; and since Vietnam is caught in a stranglehold, with its leadership ready to do anything to loosen the grip, these movements have no other choice but political neutrality toward the Sino-Soviet conflict and its local ramifications.

In general, it is Chinese foreign policy that is clearly the more aggressive in Southeast Asia. Despite the uneasiness that may surface inside ASEAN in view of the dynamic of the Sino-Japanese treaty, and despite the pole of attraction that the People's Republic represents among communities of Chinese immigrants in these countries, it is mainly against the Soviet-Vietnam bloc that the neocolonial regimes in the area are turning. Japanese-U.S. interests prevail. Teng Hsiao-p'ing apparently thinks everything is wrapped up—even while he was visiting Bangkok, two high officials from Peking—CP Vice-Chairman Wang Tung-ling and Deputy Premier Yu Chiu-li—were arriving in Phnompenh as a reminder of China's support for the Khmer regime in its conflict with Vietnam.

With the help of its overture to Japan, the Chinese leadership is certainly hoping to speed up the modernization of its armed forces. It experienced some problems on its fishing trips to Europe, mainly because of Soviet pressures on arms merchants such as France. Tokyo seems willing to help in this, and has asked Cocom, the organization that oversees sales of military and strategic goods to the socialist countries, to bend its rules.

But in the game of mutual rearmament, China risks being the loser. Japan does not have nuclear weapons, but it is incorporated in the U.S. military network. The well-known Japanese "self-defense forces" already number 288,000 and are said to rank seventh in the world in equipment. These forces are undergoing modernization.

To help Japan to rearm, while at the same time helping to politically disarm the Japanese workers movement in the face of this danger, is to put deadly teeth in the jaws of the imperialist giant. It is to play the sorcerer's apprentice, to sacrifice the interests of the population of the entire region, including those of the Chinese people, on the altar of the narrow interests of the ruling bureaucracy.

In a different context, of course, it nevertheless recalls Stalin's terrible policy toward Germany on the eve of World War II. There, too, it was a question of fighting the "main enemy" at the price of total blindness to the real nature of Berlin's policy toward the USSR.

In the last analysis, it is the Chinese workers state that will be threatened by the strengthening of the imperialist alliance in east Asia, which is being pro-

moted by the current orientation of the Chinese leadership. This orientation is all the more criminal in that it tends to restore the equilibrium of imperialist domination in the region, which had been thoroughly

Puerto Rican Unionist Threatened With Jail

[The following has been excerpted from an article that appeared in the November 20 issue of *Perspectiva Mundial*, a Spanish-language fortnightly published in New York. The translation is by Anne Teesdale.]

* * *

"This is an attempt at open repression of the Puerto Rican labor movement. They are trying to bleed our union economically, discredit it before the workers of the country, and jail some of our leaders."

These were the words of José Antonio (Tony) Merle, secretary of publicity and propaganda of the Unión Nacional de Trabajadores (UNT—National Workers Union) in a telephone interview with *Perspectiva Mundial*.

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB)—for "National," read "Yankee"—is asking that contempt citations be issued against the UNT and against Merle personally for allegedly violating a federal court injunction.

In response, the union has launched a campaign of protest telegrams and petitions. "This case is important not only for Puerto Rican workers, but also for all North American unionists," Merle said, "because the [Taft-Hartley] law and the agency that is persecuting us are American."

"They can apply these laws to us because of the political status of Puerto Rico as a colony of the United States," Merle explained. And if the National Board can set a precedent here, they will soon use the same tactic there in the United States.

"So we urge Puerto Ricans, Latinos, and all American workers to support us in this struggle to defend the rights of the unions."

Merle pointed out that the UNT has been targeted for repression because of its combativity. Among other things, it has always stood in strong opposition to the Taft-Hartley Act and its application in Puerto Rico.

Another aspect of the case, Merle said, is repression against independent and socialist political activists. "It is well known that compañero Arturo Grant, the UNT's president, is a member of the Partido Socialista Puertorriqueño (Puerto Rican Socialist Party). There are also other socialists in the leadership of the union—myself, for example."

shaken by the defeat of the U.S. intervention in Indochina, and which was threatened by the process of attrition affecting the Liberal Democratic Party regime in Japan. □

Merle is a founding member of the Trotskyist Liga Internacionalista de los Trabajadores (LIT—Internationalist Workers League).

According to Merle, the case against the UNT started in 1971 when the NLRB began compiling information on alleged violations of labor laws and supposed acts of violence in an attempt to discredit the union.

In June 1976, a U.S. court ruled against the UNT. The union was fined, and former General Secretary Radamés Acosta Cepeda was sentenced to three months in jail.

The Yankee court also issued a permanent "Broad Order" against the union. The order demanded that the union cease "harassing and threatening" the bosses, under threat of being held in contempt.

In an action characterized by the union as "extraordinary and historic," the UNT was forced to print the order in all general-circulation newspapers in Puerto Rico.

In February 1978, the superior appellate court of Boston, Massachusetts—which tries cases from Puerto Rico—rejected an appeal by the UNT. The union was forced to comply with the decision handed down by the lower court.

The NLRB requested on September 6 that contempt citations be issued against the union. The case is to be heard by Administrative Judge Francis Young. Young, who speaks no Spanish, will be sent to Puerto Rico by the U.S. government.

The NLRB alleges that the union did not publish the "Broad Order" quickly enough. They also charge contempt because the UNT printed along with the order an open letter denouncing the board's actions.

Merle said that if the court rules against him, he can be fined and sentenced to three months in jail.

The UNT is asking that messages be sent to demand that the charges against the union be dropped, and that the NLRB withdraw its arbitrary rulings.

Letters and telegrams may be sent to Hon. Francis Young, Administrative Judge, Drug Enforcement Administration, 1405 I Street Northwest, Room 11111, Washington, D.C. 20532. A copy should be sent to the union: UNT, Avenue 65 Infantería, Calle Marginal #24 Altos, Urbanización San Agustín, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico 00924. □



Peter Mpumelelo surveys ruins of his home in Crossroads, near Cape Town, after government sent in bulldozers.

20,000 Black Squatters in South Africa Fight Eviction

By Susan Wald

International publicity has forced the South African government to back down from its plans to continue bulldozing the Crossroads, a Black shantytown on the outskirts of Cape Town.

Pieter G. Koornhof, South African minister for Black affairs, announced November 30 that the government had decided to take a fresh approach to the squatter camp, concentrating on "voluntary" relocation of the camp's 20,000 residents rather than on force.

However, Koornhof refused to withdraw a demolition deadline that had been set for the end of the year, and made it clear that the government is determined to see the camp disappear and to ship those of its residents without "legal" permission to stay in the area back to one of the tribal "homelands."

Koornhof's statement came shortly after Foreign Minister Roelof F. Botha issued a statement sharply attacking an article by John F. Burns that appeared in the November 29 *New York Times*.

Burns's article gave a picture of the squatters' determination to fight eviction.

"The squatter camp has become a symbol of resistance to a racial system that thrives on cheap Black labor yet denies millions of those same workers the right to live with their families outside the impoverished tribal homelands," Burns wrote.

The settlement has endured months of harassment, including police raids in which dozens have been brutally beaten. Twice in September, hundreds of riot policemen barged through the camp in the middle of the night, kicking down doors and dragging residents out of bed. One resident, Sindile Ndlela, was shot dead, and more than 1,000 were arrested in total, many spending two or more weeks in jail before being released on payment of \$57.50 fines.

Under the apartheid laws, Black migrant workers are permanently barred from living in the urban area with their families. They are permitted to live in government-built housing in the Black "townships" of Nyanga and Guguletu a few miles away. However, no new families have been allowed to move in there for the past ten years.

Blacks constitute about a fifth of the population of the Western Cape. In 1966, the government decided to reduce this number by 5 percent a year. Two years later it called a halt to all construction of family housing projects for Blacks.

However, an economic boom forced the authorities to bring more Blacks in from the homelands. As their numbers grew, more and more migrant workers chose to defy the restrictions on living with their families, and shantytowns like the Crossroads grew up.

Burns told the story of one migrant worker, Geoffrey Ntongana, and his family. Ntongana is a caretaker in an office building, earning \$36.80 a week. He and his wife tried living illegally in a friend's home in the Guguletu township, knowing there was no way for them to obtain government-approved housing. But this soon became impractical, and in 1967 Mrs. Ntongana returned to the Transkei with their three children. Within a year, however, two of the children fell ill and died, and the couple resolved to stay together in a squatter camp. □