

Intercontinental Press

combined with **IMPREGOR**

Vol. 17, No. 6

© 1979 by Intercontinental Press

February 19, 1979

USA 75c

UK 30p



Insurgent Masses Take Tehran

NEWS ANALYSIS

Where Does Indochina War Danger Come From?

By Mary-Alice Waters

The atmosphere in Washington has reeked of capitalist hypocrisy since the end of Teng Hsiao-p'ing's U.S. visit.

"U.S. warns Chinese against an attack on the Vietnamese," read a front-page headline in the February 10 *New York Times*. The article reported an official government statement expressing "serious concern" over tensions along the China-Vietnam border.

"We seek peace and a stable system of independent states in Southeast Asia," the statement said.

Talk of "peace" from the government that waged a ten-year war of annihilation against the Indochinese people! From the government that arms the military dictatorship in Thailand as a dagger against the workers and peasants throughout Southeast Asia!

Talk of "independent states" from the government that until 1975 held Laos, Kampuchea (Cambodia), and Vietnam in semicolonial bondage!

The Carter administration's propaganda game is as simple as it is cynical and dangerous. First, falsely portray Vietnam as an aggressive, expansionist power. Then, hide your own maneuvers to contain and reverse the Indochinese revolution behind hypocritical appeals for China to stay out of Vietnam.

Carter needs this cover because the American people have not forgotten the Vietnam War. They are extremely suspicious of any U.S. military moves, whether in Africa, the Mideast, or Indochina.

The Stalinist bureaucrats in Peking are serving as willing accomplices in Carter's charade, in return for Washington's promises of trade and closer diplomatic ties. During his U.S. visit, Teng said that Vietnam ought to be "punished" and "taught some necessary lessons" in retaliation for its participation in toppling the Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea last month.

Teng's treacherous remarks do pose a threat to peace in Indochina, but not for the reasons that Carter and the capitalist press would like us to believe. *The danger is not a Chinese invasion of Vietnam, but the imperialist maneuvers that Peking is helping to cover up.*

Carter Hosts Thai Dictator

What Washington is really up to in Southeast Asia was made crystal clear earlier this month when Carter played host to the military dictator of Thailand.

According to the February 8 *New York*

Times, "The United States has agreed to speed deliveries of tactical fighters, weapons and ammunition to Thailand in response to the continued fighting in Indochina, Prime Minister Kriangsak Chamanand said at a news conference [in Washington] today."

The *Times* quoted General Kriangsak as saying, "The United States has reassured us and given us confidence that if the situation around us escalates, the United States will not stand idly by."

Washington's escalating crusade against the Vietnamese revolution is behind Carter's eagerness to massively step up support to the brutal rightist regime in Thailand. That crusade suffered a blow last month with the fall of Pol Pot.

Ever since its defeat in Indochina four years ago, U.S. imperialism has sought to isolate and economically strangle Vietnam. This campaign intensified last year in retaliation against a series of revolutionary measures that swept away the last major remnants of capitalism in southern Vietnam.

The Pol Pot and Thai regimes were also alarmed by these events, fearing that the revolutionary impulse would spread to the workers and peasants of those countries. The two governments cooled down a border dispute and began to strengthen military, diplomatic, and trade ties.

The imperialists began to see the Pol Pot and Thai regimes as a vital counterbalance against the Vietnamese revolution. The November 10 *Far Eastern Economic Review* noted that the Australian government believed that "it is essential to preserve [Kampuchea] as an independent buffer between non-communist Thailand and communist Vietnam."

Every last imperialist power lined up behind Pol Pot's bloody regime during the civil war in Kampuchea last month, although none were in a position to directly intervene. The Australian government has already cut off all economic assistance to Vietnam in response to Hanoi's massive aid to the Kampuchean insurgents who toppled Pol Pot. The Japanese and Swedish imperialists are threatening to follow suit unless Vietnamese troops withdraw from Kampuchea.

Despite official denials by Carter's cronies in Bangkok, the Thai government is now providing refuge and a base of military operations for the remnants of Pol Pot's army in its clashes with the new

Kampuchean government and Vietnamese troops.

This imperialist-orchestrated campaign against the Vietnamese revolution provides the necessary context for understanding the Chinese government's escalating hostility toward Vietnam over the past few years.

Ever since Mao Tsetung clinked champagne glasses with Richard Nixon seven years ago, Peking has increasingly viewed the Vietnamese revolution as a destabilizing factor on its borders and an obstacle to improved trade and diplomatic ties with Washington. With the step-up of imperialism's anti-Vietnam crusade last year, Peking jumped on the bandwagon.

The Chinese Stalinists condemned the big mobilizations that expropriated thousands of remaining capitalist enterprises in southern Vietnam. Using the fact that many of the expropriated capitalists had been of Chinese national origin, Peking portrayed the revolutionary measures in Vietnam as racist.

These same factors explain the Chinese military build-up along the Vietnamese border and Teng Hsiao-p'ing's bellicose statements during his U.S. visit.

In return for economic favors from imperialism, Peking is deliberately lending the prestige of the Chinese revolution to Washington's anti-Vietnam campaign. On the other hand, a major war with Hanoi is the last thing that the Peking bureaucrats are interested in. With economic modernization uppermost in their minds, they stand to gain nothing from the instability and drain on resources that would result from becoming embroiled in a war.

The strategy of peaceful coexistence practiced by the Peking bureaucrats (and those in Moscow, too) aims to buy an indefinite truce with imperialism, at the expense of the world revolution. This is based on the utopian and reactionary concept, originated by Stalin, that socialism can be built within the borders of a single country.

Throughout its entire thirty-year history, the Chinese Stalinist regime has only gone to war, as in Korea, when its survival has been directly threatened by imperialism. This desire for peace and stability was again demonstrated during the war in Kampuchea last month.

If the Peking bureaucrats were angling for an opportunity to back up their ally Pol Pot by a military offensive against Vietnam, that would have been the time—not four weeks later.

Kampuchean Prince Norodom Sihanouk told the *New York Times* February 9 that "The Chinese told leaders of the Pol Pot regime: 'We're helping you as much as we can now. We'll be able to do more only after China has completed its modernization.'"

The *Times* added, "The Prince said that he took that to mean China was unwilling

to face a major war anywhere for the time being but that this did not rule out the likelihood of continuing dangerous border clashes between Vietnam and China."

Of course, Peking's military buildup along Vietnam's border does create a danger of sporadic outbreaks between Chinese and Vietnamese troops. But this is not the source of the war threat in Indochina today.

Neither is Vietnam responsible for "the increasing tensions in Southeast Asia," as the Carter administration demagogically claims.

The war threat comes from U.S. imperialism and its unceasing expansionist drive for new markets, new investment opportunities, and new military footholds to protect these interests.

The war threat comes from U.S. imperialism's drive to recoup some of the losses it suffered at the hands of the Vietnamese, Laotian, and Kampuchean people four years ago.

Defenders of the Indochinese revolution must mount an educational campaign to expose these *real* dangers.

Our spotlight must be on Washington—and its allies in Canberra, Stockholm, and Tokyo—not Peking or Hanoi.

Our spotlight must be on the Thailand-Kampuchea border, not the Vietnam-China border.

Our spotlight must be on U.S. and Thai aid to rightist guerrillas in Laos, not Vietnamese aid to Kampuchean opponents of Pol Pot.

Our spotlight must cut through the fog of Carter's "peacemaker" hypocrisy, revealing his threatening moves against the workers and peasants throughout Southeast Asia.

Our demands should be:

Halt all imperialist aid to the Thai dictatorship!

End the economic blockade of Laos, Kampuchea, and Vietnam!

Provide massive aid to reconstruct Indochina, with no strings attached!

Stop the imperialist campaign against the Vietnamese revolution!

Hanoi Blasts Carter Policy

The Vietnamese Communist Party newspaper *Nhan Dan* denounced the U.S. government February 8 for using the fighting in Cambodia as a "pretext to delay the normalization of relations with Vietnam."

Referring to Carter's recent talks with Chinese Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-p'ing, *Nhan Dan* warned that Vietnam must "remain alert to what the United States has agreed with China. . . ."

The article said that while Washington had ostensibly condemned the Pol Pot regime for violating human rights, it had actually "encouraged Chinese authorities to support this gang to enable it to continue the border war against Vietnam."

In This Issue

Closing News Date: February 12, 1979

IRAN	132	Insurgent Masses Take Tehran —by Fred Murphy
	133	Workers Organize Committees, Discuss Politics—by Cindy Jaquith
	134	SAVAK Still at Work
	134	Seyyed-Javadi Jailed in Tehran
	135	How Masses Seek to Win Shah's Army —by Michel Rovere
ITALY	136	CP Withdrawal From Government —by Gerry Foley
BRITAIN	136	New Victories for Striking Workers —by G.K. Newey
PAKISTAN	137	Why Military Rulers Want to Hang Bhutto —by Ernest Harsch
USA	140	Steelworkers Strike Biggest Shipyard
	141	Farmers Tie Washington in Knots —by Osborne Hart
CHINA	142	Opening of Perspective of Political Revolution—by S.S. Wu
CUBA	148	Cuba's Role in Africa —by Claude Gabriel
	154	Twenty Years of Revolution —by Jack Barnes
NEWS ANALYSIS	130	Where Does Indochina War Danger Come From? —by Mary-Alice Waters
AROUND THE WORLD	138	Free the Puerto Rican Nationalists!
DRAWINGS	137	Zulfikar Ali Bhutto; 139, Leonid Brezhnev—by Copain
COVER PHOTO	129	Tehran, February 11: Soldiers and armed civilians celebrate takeover of Tehran

Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 116, Village Station, New York, N.Y. 10014. Published in New York each Monday except the first in January and third and fourth in August.

Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y.

Editor: Mary-Alice Waters.

Contributing Editors: Pierre Frank, Livio Maitan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.

Managing Editor: Michael Baumann.

Editorial Staff: Jon Britton, Dan Dickeson, Gerry Foley, Ernest Harsch, Fred Murphy, Susan Wald, Will Reissner.

Business Manager: Harvey McArthur.

Copy Editor: David Martin.

Technical Staff: Paul Deveze, Larry Ingram, Arthur Lobman, Kevin McGuire, James M. Morgan, Sally Rhett.

Intercontinental Press specializes in political analysis and interpretation of events of particular interest to the labor, socialist, colonial independence, Black, and women's liberation movements.

Signed articles represent the views of the authors, which may not necessarily coincide with those of Intercontinental Press. Insofar as it re-

flects editorial opinion, unsigned material stands on the program of the Fourth International.

To Subscribe: For one year send \$24 to Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 116, Village Station, New York, N.Y. 10014. Write for rates on first class and airmail.

In Europe: For air-speeded subscriptions, write to Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 50, London N1 2XP, England. In Australia: Write to Pathfinder Press, P.O. Box K208, Haymarket 2000. In New Zealand: Write to Socialist Books, P.O. Box 3774, Auckland.

Subscription correspondence should be addressed to Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 116, Village Station, New York, N.Y. 10014.

Please allow five weeks for change of address. Include your old address as well as your new address, and, if possible, an address label from a recent issue.

Intercontinental Press is published by the 408 Printing and Publishing Corporation, 408 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Offices at 408 West Street, New York, N.Y.

Copyright © 1979 by Intercontinental Press.

Insurgent Masses Take Tehran

By Fred Murphy

"This is the voice of the revolution. The dictatorship has come to an end."

Broadcast repeatedly over Iranian national radio on February 11, that message brought word to the whole country of the victory of the popular insurrection in Tehran over the Bakhtiar government and the remnants of the Pahlavi monarchy.

"One of the world's best equipped armies capitulated to a few thousand determined street fighters," as William Claiborne of the *Washington Post* put it in a February 11 dispatch.

The fate of the shah's handpicked prime minister, Shahpur Bakhtiar, was unclear. Various reports said he had committed suicide, fled the country, or gone into hiding. "Dr. Bakhtiar has resigned," his agriculture minister announced. "I do not know to whom he sent his resignation, but his government no longer exists."

Detachments of armed civilians, joined by many soldiers and airmen, moved quickly on February 11 to take over the shah's palaces, the prime minister's offices, and other strategic points in the capital.

The Eshratyabad army and riot-police base in northwest Tehran fell after a brief siege and a mutiny by troops inside.

At the parliament buildings, the soldiers on guard put up no resistance and marched out bearing a sign reading: "We are with the people."

Police stations fell one after another. "Most of the policemen abandoned their posts, although more than a score were reported killed," Nicholas Gage of the *New York Times* reported. "After a police station was seized by disciplined fighters, hundreds of civilians would occupy it, leaving the Shah's supporters the choice of abandoning the station or battling crowds of citizens."

The 11,000 political and common prisoners at the Qasr Central Prison did not wait for the insurgents to open it up. The guards fled, and the prisoners broke out themselves and rushed into the streets.

The headquarters of the U.S. military mission was seized shortly after the American advisors there evacuated. Iranian troops assigned to guard the British and U.S. embassies surrendered to the insurgents or left their posts. The Israeli mission and the Egyptian embassy were both sacked—the latter no doubt in revenge for the asylum Sadat provided the shah when he fled Iran in January.

Former Prime Minister Amir-Abbas Hoveyda and ex-SAVAK chief Gen. Nematol-

lah Nassiri were taken prisoner by insurgents when the Jamshidiyeh Garrison fell. The two had been held there since the shah launched his feeble "anticorruption" effort last September.

Army ground forces commander General Badrehi was shot dead by revolutionists. Several other top generals, including Tehran military governor Lt. Gen. Mehdi Rahimi, were placed under arrest and brought to the revolution's command post, the headquarters of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

"Under an armed escort," a Reuters dispatch reported, "half a dozen blindfolded men in civilian dress staggered toward the school [Khomeini's headquarters], their foreheads marked with green paint. Their guards said they were agents of Savak . . . and that they would be put on trial." General Rahimi would also be tried—for murder, a Khomeini aide said.

Dozens of seized army vehicles filled the streets near Khomeini's compound. Piles of weapons brought from an occupied munitions plant were assembled in the courtyard and distributed to squads of volunteers, who were then dispatched to military installations or other sites where pro-shah forces were still putting up resistance.

In a message read over national television in the evening on February 11, Khomeini urged the "brave and determined people" to "maintain . . . preparations for defense even if the armed forces return to their bases."

Most of the city was in the hands of the revolutionary forces by February 12. Pitched battles were reportedly still going on at some garrisons and at the headquarters of the supreme military command.

Little information has been published in the Western press thus far on events elsewhere in Iran. Fighting was reported between insurgents and pro-shah forces in Tabriz, and in Isfahan a crowd of workers marched on the central prison. The power of the central government had already been waning in many places during the week before the Tehran insurrection. Popular defense guards, or "Islamic marshals," had reportedly taken control in Isfahan, Mashad, Qum, Kermanshah, Shiraz, and dozens of smaller towns and villages.

Air Force Technicians Provided Spark

The Tehran insurrection was sparked by civilian air force technicians at the Dashan Tadeh Air Base in eastern Tehran. These highly skilled workers had been in the forefront of air force oppositional activ-

ity for weeks. To counter their growing influence among cadets, airmen, and junior officers, the high command had stationed a detachment of the elite Javidan (Immortals) Brigade at the Dashan Tadeh base.

The technicians left their barracks chanting revolutionary slogans late in the evening on February 9, after watching a television film of the massive marches that greeted Khomeini's return to Iran. A Javidan officer told the technicians to disperse, and ordered an air force sentry to fire on them. He refused, and was immediately shot dead by Imperial Guardsmen, who then turned their rifles on the demonstrators.

The technicians, now joined by air force cadets, rushed to the base arms depot and seized weapons. A pitched battle began between the insurgents and the Imperial Guards.

As the fighting spilled into the neighborhoods around the base, civilians rushed into the streets to aid the rebels. William Branigin of the *Washington Post* described the scene shortly after dawn on February 10:

. . . the airmen had control of the area in a wide radius. There were civilians and airmen on rooftops all around for several blocks. . . . People were putting up barricades and helping to sandbag rooftop positions. Many civilians carried rifles and pistols. . . .

One man brandished an axe. I saw a woman in a black full length veil showing a small boy how to light a molotov cocktail and throw it.

Word of the rebellion spread to the rest of the city. Thousands more civilians came into the streets with weapons. Airmen and technicians made their way to the campus of Tehran University, bringing at least two truckloads of arms and ammunition to be distributed to the crowds gathering there.

The Bakhtiar government declared a 4:30 p.m.-to-noon curfew on February 10. Khomeini promptly declared the curfew illegal, urged his followers to ignore it, and warned the Imperial Guard to withdraw immediately to their barracks or face "a final decision."

Barricades went up across the city during the night. Thousands of persons stood on their rooftops shouting "Death to Bakhtiar," and "Salute to the air force!"

As more and more of their troops deserted or mutinied, the military chiefs sounded a retreat. At 1:45 p.m. on February 11 they issued the following statement over national radio:

"With due consideration to the circumstances, the army's Supreme Council held a meeting today at 10:20 a.m. and, in order to prevent further anarchy and bloodshed, decided to announce the army's neutrality in the present political crisis and ordered the troops to return to their garrisons."

Bakhtiar's last prop was snatched away. The tanks and troops that had been stationed around government buildings under

the martial law then withdrew, leaving them to be occupied by revolutionists. Joyous crowds came into the streets, the shah's parliament resigned *en masse*, Bakhtiar disappeared from the scene. The insurrection was victorious.

* * *

The Iranian revolution has reached a new stage. Expanding the independent self-organization of the workers, soldiers, and peasants is crucial if the oppressed and exploited masses are to press ahead and beat back the counterrevolutionary blows that are sure to come.

The strike committees and neighborhood committees that have already been formed in many places now have the opportunity to take on all the tasks of running the economy, so as to avert the disaster of inflation, shortages, and massive unemployment that will be imminent if the capitalists regain control. The oil workers, who have already been running the most important sector of the economy for months, have set the example in this.

In the countryside, committees of poor peasants can organize the distribution of the land to those who work it.

Administration of the cities, towns, and villages rightfully belongs in the hands of

elected committees (*anjomans*) of workers and peasants deputies, who can counter any appointment of new officials from above and organize prompt elections for a constituent assembly.

Soldiers throughout the country can take advantage of the gains that have been won to hold discussions in the barracks, form committees, elect their own officers, and purge the counterrevolutionary staffs. The armed civilian detachments that ensured the insurrection's victory face the challenge of holding on to their weapons and organizing themselves into a militia to defend and carry out the decisions of the workers and peasants committees. □

Iran After Khomeini's Return

Workers Organize Committees, Discuss Politics

By Cindy Jaquith

TEHRAN—On February 5 Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini appointed Mehdi Bazargan as prime minister of his provisional government counterposed to the regime appointed by the shah.

Bazargan has been one of the central figures in the opposition National Front and served as the first chief of the National Iranian Oil Company when Mohammed Mossadegh nationalized oil in 1951.

Khomeini said that once his provisional government was fully appointed, it would call for the election of a constituent assembly, which would write a new constitution for Iran, establishing an Islamic republic. The constitution would then be put up for a vote.

The appointment of Bazargan occurred against the backdrop of continued mobilizations against the Shahpur Bakhtiar government. In these mobilizations, the demands of workers, oppressed nationalities, and women have increasingly moved to the forefront.

On February 1, the Bakhtiar regime was finally forced to allow Khomeini to return to this country after fifteen years in exile. Following his arrival, the government announced that the army would allow demonstrations to proceed peacefully over the next few days.

Both moves were retreats for Bakhtiar, a clear sign that backers of the shah, including the U.S. government, did not feel strong enough to militarily prevent Khomeini's return.

The day before Khomeini's plane touched down in Tehran, the army staged

a show of force, parading several miles of tanks and truckloads of soldiers through the city.

But while the front columns shouted, "Long live the shah," many in the rear divisions—the lowest-ranking soldiers—chanted slogans in solidarity with the people.

The next morning, Khomeini arrived. As soon as the news came over the radio, cars began honking. Everyone turned on their headlights.

The waiters in the restaurant where I was eating began arguing with the headwaiter over who would be allowed to go see the huge demonstration of greeting.

Thousands of people ran down the streets to Shah Reza Avenue, where Khomeini's procession would pass by.

Along Shah Reza, when the entourage appeared, thousands of fists shot into the air. Chants of "Khomeini welcome" and "Khomeini we are your soldiers, we are awaiting your orders" echoed up and down the street.

One million came to the rally for Khomeini at the Behesht-e-Zahra cemetery.

Many soldiers participated in the demonstrations. I saw four soldiers at one street corner during the march, each wearing a Khomeini badge on his uniform.

Since his arrival, Khomeini has continued to call the present government and monarchy illegal. He has demanded Bakhtiar's resignation, and Bakhtiar has refused.

"We will try to solve the problem through nonviolent means," Khomeini said, "but if the illegal government of

Bakhtiar, with the support of the Americans and British, continues to defy the will of the people and brings in forces from Israel, then we will take other measures to bring it down. . . . If the moment comes, we will get arms from the proper places."

Bakhtiar responded that if Khomeini "passed from words to action, there will be trouble." His martial law authorities have continued to carry out selective arrests of opposition figures. Roving bands of thugs, led by SAVAK (the shah's secret police), continue to attack protesters.

Meanwhile, Bazargan said he was arranging a "dialogue" between Khomeini and Bakhtiar to arrive at a compromise. Bazargan has previously suggested there might be a place for Bakhtiar in Khomeini's new cabinet.

But the most important dynamic here is the deepening political discussion among working people on the nature of the government that they want to bring about.

One group of oil workers has released a statement saying that whatever national council Khomeini establishes must include workers and peasants as well as religious leaders.

Two women wrote a letter to one of the Tehran dailies demanding that women also be included in such a council.

A "people's consulate" that developed in the struggle in Mahabad, in Kurdistan, passed a resolution on the Kurdish people's demands. The resolution says that any future national government must have Kurdish representatives.

"Make sure the political leaders and the Ayatollah know that within the frame-

work of Iran and democracy in Iran, Kurdish people have to have their own national rights," one part of the resolution states.

These proposals point to the centrality of the demand for a constituent assembly. As Iranian Trotskyists explain in the program they are distributing here:

"No government appointed from above can bring freedom to Iran.

"The achievement of democracy, the elimination of imperialist domination, and the winning of real independence is possible only through the struggle of the broad masses. . . .

"High school students and all other sections of society, literate or illiterate, must have the right to take part in the constituent assembly elections. All political groups banned under the shah's regime must have the right to participate in these elections. This right must be extended as well to the soldiers. . . .

"Committees of workers, soldiers, women, and peasants—both those committees that already exist and others that must be formed—could discuss the various issues and supervise the elections to the constituent assembly."

Through their militant struggles, the workers are already developing their own forms of organization.

In many factories, strike committees meet frequently to discuss what action the workers should take.

The idea of opening the books of the companies and nationalizing the industry has been raised at a few of these gatherings.

Students and socialist activists have been welcome to participate in some of these meetings.

One of the questions the workers are discussing is whether to end their strike. Bakhtiar is, of course, demanding this. And the strike coordinating committee set up by Khomeini has urged many of the strikers to go back to work.

This drew an angry response from some leaders of the oil workers' strike. On Febru-

SAVAK Still at Work

TEHRAN—Working people in the United States have been battered with dispatch after dispatch branding the Iranian revolutionary masses as reactionary and fanatical. The shah's government tries to provide ammunition for such slanders.

A case in point was the recent destruction of a red-light district here by a mob of rampaging arsonists said to be supporters of Khomeini.

The invaders entered Shahr Now, as the walled prostitution center is called, torching night clubs and houses with molotov cocktails. Some 500 homes were destroyed—most of them were shacks where prostitutes and very poor workers lived.

The Bakhtiar government had hoped to portray this wanton destruction as symbolic of the revolutionary movement's goal. But as crowds gathered in the area, the feeling was nearly unanimous that SAVAK agents and right-

wing goons had carried out the assault.

The Iranian workers also blame SAVAK for a similar attack on a brewery here.

Ayatollah Taleghani, an influential religious leader, denounced the attack on Shahr Now as a provocation by the government.

"Although it is true that the inhabitants of Shahr Now are victims of our despotic and corrupt regime," he said, "this does not mean that they should be mistreated by our people."

There is justified hatred here for the many symbols of imperialism's grip on Iran, including the fancy clubs built for American businessmen, military personnel, and Iran's rich.

But the Iranian people feel only solidarity with those who have suffered the worst abuses from the shah's system, such as the many women forced into prostitution.

—C.J.

ary 1 Mohammad Javad Khatemi, first representative of the strike committee in Ahwaz, resigned to protest efforts by what he called "nonprogressive" religious leaders to impose policy decisions on the oil workers. He said he would continue to play an active role in the strike.

In an open letter, Khatemi blasted the "oppressive atmosphere in Ahwaz and the usurpation of the responsibilities formerly held by the representatives of the striking oil workers by Ayatollah Khomeini's delegation headed by Mehdi Bazargan."

"Those who think the struggle has come to an end are wrong," Khatemi declared. "They have not understood the character of U.S. imperialism. . . . The enemy is wounded but still has the fulcrum of power remaining in its hands. We must re-

member the fate of Portugal, Argentina, and especially Chile."

Khatemi also said there must be workers' control of the oil fields.

In the impoverished working-class neighborhoods of south Tehran, there are also committees. Every day workers gather in a mosque to discuss the tasks that need to be carried out, such as distribution of food, acquiring medical supplies, and defense. Political discussions also take place.

These initial strike committees and neighborhood committees can play an important role in deepening the struggle, in the absence of an organized labor movement and a mass workers party.

The oil workers strike committee, for example, has had discussions on the need to go beyond local demonstrations and strikes, and to unite and organize the entire population.

In Tehran groups of workers have begun visiting the campuses, where many of the political meetings take place.

The Iranian Trotskyists are urging these struggle committees to join the fight for a constituent assembly. The committees can also demand the rehiring of fired workers, the release of political prisoners, the right to form trade unions. They can begin to provide defense for meetings and for striking workers.

Another crucial step in strengthening the revolution, the Iranian Trotskyists believe, is a united struggle for democratic rights. This includes the legalization of all political parties and newspapers. It means opening up political meetings to free discussion and welcoming all banners and organizations at demonstrations. □

Seyyed-Javadi Jailed in Tehran

TEHRAN—Ali-Asghar Hadj Seyyed-Javadi, a prominent intellectual, was arrested here February 5 for writing what the government calls an insulting article about the armed forces.

The article, which appeared the day before in *Etella'at*, attacked an army general.

Javadi became known in the United States through campaigns to defend his right to free speech and to travel to America, campaigns initiated by the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran (CAIFI).

Here in Iran many organizations have condemned his arrest. These include the Committee to Defend Political Prisoners, Iran Society in Defense of Freedom and Human Rights, Lawyers Association of Iran, Association to Defend Freedom of the Press, and the Council of Professors of Radio and Television.

The Committee to Defend Political Prisoners said: "We invite all political, social, and national groups—all people in general—to join our protest and raise their voices worldwide." —C.J.

How Masses Seek to Win Shah's Army

By Michel Rovere

[The following article appeared in the February 2-4 issue of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*. The translation is by David Keil.]

* * *

TEHRAN—It is Wednesday, January 31, at one in the afternoon. An extraordinary, tense silence just broke a few seconds ago throughout the whole center of the Iranian capital.

All of Shah Reza Avenue is occupied by a military convoy, which is moving toward the Mehrabad airport. Everyone at first thought it was a move by the military to keep the airport closed and prevent Khomeini's return.

The front of the column has come to a stop just beyond the intersection with Pahlavi Avenue, a hundred yards from the university, the capital's beehive of activity. Here, on Friday afternoon and Sunday, clashes with the army resulted in several dozen deaths and hundreds of wounded.

Across the whole width of the avenue, there is a face-to-face confrontation. Thousands of students, who had come to support the demonstration by 1,200 clergymen at the university mosque, bar the way to the troop-transport trucks. The trucks have their tarps off.

Thirty or forty yards away the soldiers, with the memory of the bloody shooting on Sunday fresh in their minds, hold their guns nervously. A third of the trucks carry loaded machine guns in the rear. In the middle of the convoy there are jeeps mounted with recoilless rifles, followed by a half-dozen machine-gun carriers and even two full-size tanks.

And then, the worst is averted. An old woman in a black *chador* [veil] advances toward the officers who are trying to clear the avenue. In her arms is a bouquet of carnations.

The commanding officer hesitates, then finally accepts the red flower offered to him. After him, the soldiers in the first rank do the same.

Then, a mullah who has come out of the university campus organizes a corridor with the help of the mosque's monitors, allowing the troops to go through.

The first units, which have come from the police station, pass by in silence. No one forgets that this is the same spot where a general from this corps was recognized, pulled out of his car, and nearly killed Saturday afternoon.

Then come infantrymen, very young. The first slogans blend together: "The

army, with us! For an Islamic republic!"

The first smiles glimmer.

A soldier accepts a pamphlet of speeches by the "great ayatollah." Soldiers even offer to pay for it.

The crowd, which had been standing in the narrow streets off Shah Reza, ready to flee, becomes more compact, more dense.

Now the trucks, which the Soviets had earlier supplied to the shah, slowly advance among several thousand students.

In front of us a man with tears in his eyes exchanges a wink with us—the open provocation is being defused.

There is delirious cheering as the units



Der Spiegel

of the air force pass by. This is the arm of the services where "the most is happening." Is it just a rumor, or is there a basis in truth?

Everywhere for a week people have been saying that a protest movement has started there, after units were asked to prepare to bomb the cities of Mashad, Qum, and Abadan. Several dozen members of the air force are said to have expressed concern.

It is believed that the officer corps canceled scheduled executions only after pilots threatened in reprisal to bomb the emergency general headquarters east of Tehran where a number of generals have been stationed since the army was placed under a state of permanent alert.

Naturally, these rumors are subject to all kinds of distortion and exaggeration. But the fact remains that the air force is cheered everywhere. The demonstrators on Shah Reza Avenue begin to chant: "Let's go ahead with the air force, the air force is with us!" The soldiers are showered with kisses.

Behind us, the contrast is striking. The drivers of the machine-gun carriers hardly

respond to the crowd's greetings. The tank drivers pass by with their eyes straight ahead and their jaws set.

The tension diminishes again, however, with the infantry units that pass by next. Some soldiers even take up the chant "Khomeini is our great leader." Others accept buttons bearing a photo of the ayatollah offered by the demonstrators and pin them on their uniforms.

The mullah and the monitors get the route cleared after it is blocked again.

Nobody pays any attention to a soldier who waves his arms and asks the demonstrators to disperse, pointing to the end of the column.

A truck is blocked in front of the entrance to the university. Aboard it are only about six or seven men, probably noncommissioned officers.

They are livid with pent-up rage and begin to insult the crowd: "Dogs, you are going to be killed."

The drama comes to a climax in a few seconds. Three of the soldiers turn their assault rifles toward the demonstrators, snap ammunition into place, and open fire.

The crowd falls back.

It is too late. Panic seizes a whole side of the avenue.

People dive toward the side streets, trampling each other.

Ambulance drivers, who had been on hand well before the soldiers passed by, hurry toward the victims. The demonstrators, still caught by surprise, take a few minutes to react. There are dead and wounded everywhere.

Fortunately, the murderous insanity of the last truck does not lead to a total confrontation. Such an outcome would certainly not have displeased the hardliners in the vacillating regime and would have led to a massacre, since the crowd was totally unarmed. The truck flees.

Soon the students rejoin the rest of the column, which has passed the 24th of Esfand Square. They carry placards on which accounts of the events of a few minutes earlier have been hastily written.

After more than an hour of fraternization, there is a quick and harsh return to the awful reality. In more than one truck, soldiers cry and others clench their fists.

Not one rock is thrown, which could have had irreparable results.

In a few seconds, an entire crowd has sensed how close the Iranian army, or at least a part of it, is to the breaking point.

Yesterday morning, the shah's generals, who go back to the period of the 1953 coup, finally, against all their traditions and instincts, had to allow a seventy-eight-year-old exile to return. □

A subscription to *Intercontinental Press* is still a BEST BUY.

Check rates inside cover.

The Italian CP's Withdrawal From Government

By Gerry Foley

The Italian Communist Party's announcement January 26 that it was withdrawing its support from the government of Premier Giulio Andreotti came as no surprise. The CP leadership had clearly been moving in this direction since mid-1978.

Discontent with the CP's defense of the government's austerity policies was building up to an explosive point. In the May regional elections, the party suffered its sharpest decline in votes since the time of the Hungarian revolution. In the Campania region, for example, which includes Naples, the CP vote dropped from 42% in the 1976 legislative elections to 24%. The party also suffered losses in a number of northern industrial cities.

In June, the vote in the referendums on the repressive Reale Law and the law granting governmental financing to political parties, both of which were supported by the CP, showed that the party was losing control over growing sections of its supporters.

According to a poll cited in the February 5 issue of *Der Spiegel*, opposition among the ranks of the CP to the overtly class-collaborationist policy of "historic compromise" rose from 20% in 1976 to 30% in 1978. The West German magazine also noted admissions by the party leaders that the CP was facing an absolute decline in membership.

The CP has reportedly been losing members rapidly, particularly among the youth, who have been especially hard hit by the economic crisis and austerity policy. About 70% of the country's 1.6 million unemployed are under thirty.

Moreover, a number of press reports have cited polls showing that if elections were held now, the CP vote would drop by 10%.

When they found themselves unable to hold back a wave of strikes in November, in particular a militant strike of hospital workers, the CP union leaders began to show signs of panic.

The three main labor confederations, including the CP-led General Confederation of Labor, issued a joint statement saying: "The whole body of public workers, beginning with the hospital workers, has become uncontrollable. If the government does not do something, we are going to have to resort to a general strike."

In early 1978, the CP union leaders endorsed the government's austerity plan. By the end of the year, they were forced to

come out in opposition to the plan's provisions for cuts in social benefits and for ending the sliding scale of wages.

Specifically, the timing of the CP's withdrawal from the governmental majority was dictated by three factors. The new austerity plan drawn up by Andreotti's finance ministry was unveiled in mid-January. A broad conference of delegates of local units of the CP is scheduled for late March. And new contract negotiations

Wage Ceilings Broken

New Victories For British Workers

By G. K. Newey

When union officials agreed to a 16% wage hike February 9, Britain's water and sewer workers became the latest group to break through Prime Minister Callaghan's attempts to hold wage increases to 5%.

The settlement came on the heels of a 20.75% wage increase won by striking truck drivers on January 29.

Nearly 1.5 million local government workers remained on strike as of February 10, demanding pay hikes of up to 40%. The strikes have curtailed government services such as garbage collection and hospital care.

Union leaders representing 100,000 auto workers at British Leyland plants voted on February 5 to recommend a strike to their members. At issue is the company's reneging on weekly bonuses of up to £10 (\$20) that had been agreed to in August 1977.

For the past three years leaders of Britain's unions have gone along with the Labour government's call for workers to sacrifice in order to bring down inflation. Wage increases have consistently fallen below the rate of inflation, meaning a decline in real income.

But growing rank-and-file resistance has forced the Trades Union Congress, the British union federation, to reject Callaghan's 5% limit.

The ranks have voted down settlements they thought too small. They have organized militant picketing, as in the truckers' strike where flying picket squads were a key element in the strikers' victory.

are opening up for unions representing eight million workers. Big struggles are obviously brewing.

In the December 14 *Washington Post*, Claire Sterling wrote that the unions were "not only demanding shorter hours and higher pay—not to mention prodigious sums the state doesn't have for improved medical care, pensions, education and public investment—but plotting a hair-raising course of strikes and slowdowns to prove they mean it."

In bringing down the Andreotti government, the CP did not change its basic policy of collaboration with the Christian Democrats. But the fact that it was forced to make this maneuver indicates a much more fundamental shift—in the Italian working class as a whole. The CP can no longer keep the workers from going on a counteroffensive against the cuts in their standard of living. □

Guardian columnist Peter Jenkins noted that the "workers have awakened to the power within their hands."

Right-wing novelist Anthony Burgess put it another way. British workers, he complained, "are less tolerant, good-mannered or willing to make the system work" than they were.

The capitalist newspapers are involved in a frenzied campaign against striking workers, concentrating their fire on hospital strikers. The *Sunday People* said that strikes at children's hospitals are the most sickening of all the "cruelties" inflicted by union members. The *Sunday Telegraph* and *Sunday Express* reported that members of the public were rushing to volunteer their services at hospitals.

To present the confrontation with unions from deepening, many hospitals have not used volunteers. But to the *Sunday Telegraph* this policy is "appeasement." "Has appeasement no limits," it asked, "even if the sick suffer?"

In the *Telegraph's* view "many, if not most, of those who are on strike are moved mainly by fear of what may happen to them if they defy their shop stewards."

If the ruling class really believes this, it is seriously misreading the mood of British workers. It has been the ranks of the unions that have pushed the strikes forward and won the victories gained to date.

Each victory over the wage ceilings inspires new layers of the working class to push their claims more vigorously. □

Why Pakistan's Rulers Want to Hang Bhutto

By Ernest Harsch

The Supreme Court of Pakistan upheld February 6 the death sentence handed down against former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. He had been found guilty a year earlier on charges of murdering the father of one of his political opponents.

Whatever the validity of these particular charges, there can be no doubt that Bhutto, who ruled Pakistan with an iron fist for six years, is directly responsible for the murder and imprisonment of thousands whose only "crime" was to seek democratic and trade-union rights.

On this count, he deserves to be brought to justice by genuine representatives of Pakistan's workers and peasants, as they move toward liberating themselves from hunger, destitution, and imperialist exploitation.

Advancing the cause of freedom, however, is not the intention of Pakistan's current military rulers. Gen. Zia ul-Haq's aim is to use the execution of Bhutto as a weapon to intimidate all opponents of the military dictatorship.

Zia's plans to execute Bhutto come at a time when the regime faces continued unrest in the country.

The memory of 1977, when hundreds of thousands of workers and students poured into the streets of the major cities to demand democratic rights, is still very much alive. At that time, the mass movement was directed against Bhutto. Zia fears that it could again resurface—this time against the brutal actions of his own martial-law regime.

The overthrow of the shah in Iran and of dictator Daud in Afghanistan, two of the four countries bordering Pakistan, demonstrates the explosiveness of popular unrest in the entire region.

Over the past several months, there have been numerous signs of mass dissatisfaction with the junta and with the rightist parties supporting it.

Students have demonstrated repeatedly around demands for free elections and for an end to martial law. Workers have walked off their jobs and participated in demonstrations to demand democratic rights and to protest against the regime's recent moves to denationalize some sectors of industry.

In early January, industrial workers in the Lahore area held a number of rallies to commemorate the first anniversary of the massacre of scores of striking workers in Multan. They demanded the arrest and trial of the employers and police responsible for the killings, an end to martial law,

the restoration of democratic freedoms, the holding of general elections, and the release of all political prisoners.

Because the masses have seen Bhutto's fate at the hands of the Zia regime for



BHUTTO

what it is—an attempt to terrorize them—demands for his release have featured prominently in many of the recent anti-government protests. This is in spite of Bhutto's own record while in office.

Although he often tried to present himself as a "friend of the masses," Bhutto sent paramilitary forces into Karachi in May 1972 to gun down militant workers; imprisoned nearly 40,000 political activists, many of them leftists, by late 1975; and dispatched the army to Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province to suppress struggles by the oppressed Baluchis and Pathans.

When the urban masses rose up in early 1977 following Bhutto's rigged elections, he declared martial law, arrested 50,000 demonstrators, and had his troops murder between 300 and 400 protesters.

The military tops finally decided in July 1977 to remove Bhutto from office, in the hopes that they would be able to defuse the massive unrest and restore "law and order."

Zia promised to hold democratic elections when he first seized power. But his regime has proved just as repressive as Bhutto's.

In the first weeks of martial law, all strikes, demonstrations, and political and trade union activities were outlawed. Unionists, political activists, students, and anyone else who openly opposed the regime was arrested.

Under the guise of a return to "Islamic traditions," public flogging was introduced for the slightest infraction of martial law. The first public executions in many years were held, according to one government official in order to "educate" the people.

While Zia adopted measures to turn previously nationalized industries back to their owners, police gunned down scores of striking workers in Multan on January 2, 1977. The regime also began to evict tenant farmers from their land.

Press censorship has been imposed and journalists, editors, and publishers critical of the military have been detained and flogged. The promised elections have been repeatedly postponed, with Zia using the Bhutto case as a justification.

Over the past few weeks, as the Supreme Court's decision on Bhutto's appeal neared, hundreds of political figures have been detained, including virtually the entire leadership of Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party, as well as activists to the left of the PPP.

The death sentence imposed against Bhutto is part of Zia's extensive campaign of repression. It is intended as a threat to the masses that the same thing could happen to any one of them.

In this context, Bhutto's execution should be opposed as serving only to strengthen the repressive atmosphere that Pakistan's military rulers are seeking to create.

Amnesty International issued an appeal February 6 urging Zia to grant clemency to Bhutto. The London-based human-rights organization pointed out that it "opposes the death penalty in all cases on humanitarian grounds."

Others, too, have called on Zia to grant clemency. But their motives are quite different.

According to the State Department, President Carter wrote a letter asking Zia to spare Bhutto's life. Similar statements of concern came from Prime Minister James Callaghan of Britain, Swedish Prime Minister Ola Ullsten, and Foreign Minister Andrew S. Peacock of Australia.

The imperialists see the Bhutto case as an opportunity to refresh their "human rights" image. At the same time, they would prefer to see their fallen allies handled a little less roughly, if only as a mark of respect to themselves.

Opposition among the masses of Pakistan to the hanging of Bhutto expresses the interests of a different class—the exploited and oppressed. It is part of their fight to loosen the grip of a military dictatorship the imperialist hypocrites themselves help keep in power. □

AROUND THE WORLD



Free the Four Puerto Rican Nationalists!

Pressure is increasing on President Carter to commute the sentences of the four Puerto Rican nationalists—Oscar Callazo, Irving Flores, Rafael Cancel Miranda, and Lolita Lebrón. The longest-held political prisoners in the Western Hemisphere, the four were jailed in the early 1950s for armed actions carried out in support of independence for Puerto Rico.

On January 8 (the same day it recommended the release of millionaire newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst) the U.S. Justice Department advised Carter to pardon the four nationalists.

This move reflected the rising demands for their release, which have come recently from the College of Puerto Rican Attorneys, the Puerto Rican Conference of Catholic Bishops, the island's legislature, several U.S. Congressional representatives, and even from four former governors of Puerto Rico. On January 21 the Governing Council of the People's Democratic Party (one of the two main bourgeois parties in Puerto Rico) sent a cable to Carter urging the release of the four nationalists.



FLORES

ces to renew our solidarity and support for the four Nationalist prisoners."

Juan Robles Burgos, a leader of the Trotskyist Internationalist Workers League (LIT) of Puerto Rico, declared in a January 24 letter to Carter: "We are tired of hearing over and over again on all the news media your rhetoric about defending human rights. . . .

"The case of the four Puerto Rican nationalist prisoners gives the lie to and exposes the hypocrisy of such sloganeering."

Carter's advisers claim he has not acted thus far because there are differences



COLLAZO

within Puerto Rico, citing Gov. Carlos Romero Barceló's January 8 warning to Carter that the four prisoners might "espouse sedition and violence" and that "their presence in Puerto Rico or anywhere else could constitute a threat to public security."

Robles Burgos of the LIT answered this scandalous argument: "Division certainly does exist: On one side is the unanimous, nonpartisan outcry form the entire Puerto Rican population. . . .

"On the other side is Romero Barceló."

Puerto Rican student leaders in New York City have announced plans for a march and rally at the White House on March 3 to demand the immediate release of the four nationalist prisoners.



CANCEL MIRANDA

Irish Court Frames Up Three IRSP Activists

The longest trial in the history of the Irish state, the case against four leaders of the Irish Republican Socialist Party, ended in mid-December with the conviction of three of the defendants.

The result prompted the liberal Dublin weekly *Hibernia* to say:

"Nobody who values the tradition of the fair administration of justice in this country could feel anything but unhappy with the extraordinary chain of events which led to the imprisonment of Osgur Breatnach and others last week on conviction of involvement in the mail train robbery at Sallins in March 1976. . . . The two-and-a-half-year saga of Breatnach's various arrests, releases, re-arrests and remands . . . is riddled not only with irregularities but with at least one illegality—namely Breatnach's second arrest—which the Special Criminal Court itself acknowledged."

The Special Criminal Court that heard the case is a three-judge tribunal with no jury. It does not recognize most of the traditional rules of evidence or rights of defendants.

The convictions were based solely on statements extracted by torture. The most notorious case was that of Breatnach. Incontrovertible evidence was presented that he had been systematically beaten. Pictures of his bruised body appearing in the Irish daily press caused a national

scandal two and a half years ago. Now he has been sentenced to thirteen years in prison.

Breatnach's codefendant Brian Mac Nally got nine years. The third convicted defendant, Nicky Kelly, did not appear for sentencing. He sent a statement saying that he would not appear until the special courts are abolished.

The fourth IRSP member charged, Michael Plunkett, national secretary of the organization, had been released earlier.

It is essential to continue the campaign in defense of the victimized IRSP leaders to win the right of appeal for them, and their release.

Messages of support can be sent to IRSP, 34 Upper Gardiner St., Dublin 1, Ireland.

'Emergency' Extended in Peru

Peru's military rulers announced February 6 that the "state of national emergency" decreed January 5 would be extended for thirty more days. The official decree said that "the reasons still exist" that led to the original measure.

Under the "emergency," martial law has been imposed, and freedom of press and assembly and the right to be secure against warrantless searches have been suspended. The measures were taken to head off a nationwide general strike planned for January 9-11.

Marroquín Deportation Hearing Set

The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has set April 3 as the date for a deportation hearing for Héctor Marroquín, a Mexican trade unionist and socialist who is seeking political asylum in the United States.

Marroquín fled Mexico in 1974 after being framed by authorities there on charges of "terrorism" and "subversion." Deportation to Mexico could amount to a death sentence.

The INS has turned down Marroquín's petition for asylum despite voluminous evidence of the brutal repression in Mexico presented by his attorneys.

The major news media in the United States has virtually blacked out information on Marroquín's case, despite broad support from such groups as Amnesty



MARROQUIN



LEBRON

International, the National Education Association (the largest U.S. teachers union), the Council on Hemispheric Affairs, and from several members of the U.S. Congress.

But on February 9 the *Washington Post* was forced to admit that Marroquín's case "has become an international cause celebre." The *Post* quoted Marroquín as saying at a February 8 news conference in Washington:

"Human rights, to them [American officials], don't exist for me because the U.S. is friendly with the country I come from, and because of my political beliefs."

The *Post* also reported U.S. Representative Ronald Dellums's comment that Marroquín's "real crime is that he had the moral courage to speak out for human rights. . . ."

Tokyo Cuts Aid to Vietnam

The Japanese government has joined the imperialist embargo on aid to Vietnam.

New Asia News reports that Tokyo's Ministry of Agriculture has suspended shipments of 150,000 tons of rice and delayed action on a loan of 14 billion yen (about US\$70 million). Both aid projects had been agreed to in December after a visit to Japan by the Vietnamese minister of foreign affairs.

After the government's move, commercial Japanese lending institutions announced that they would not respond to any requests for loans from Vietnam.

Vargas Llosa Hits War Fever

Speaking out against the efforts of Peru's military dictatorship to whip up war fever against Chile, famed Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa has declared in a statement published in a Lima weekly:

"The enemies of my country are hunger, unemployment, terrible inequality, low wages and the lack of democracy—and certainly not the Chileans."

The writer added that "the same holds true, inversely, for Chile and all our other neighbors."

1,500 in New Zealand

Protest U.S. Nuke Sub

Chanting, "One, two, three, four—we don't want your nuclear war," 1,500 persons marched through Auckland, New Zealand, on January 19 to protest the docking there of the U.S. nuclear submarine *Haddo*.

The *Haddo* was able to reach port only after steaming through a "peace squadron" of small boats. "The Auckland newspapers displayed much hypocrisy over the peace squadron's activities," George Fyson reported in the January 26 issue of the New Zealand Trotskyist paper *Socialist Action*.

"In their concern for 'safety on the water' these worthies managed to overlook that the whole basis of the protest was

that one of the most dangerous objects in the world—a vessel capable of wiping out millions of people—was entering Auckland harbour."

In other protests against the *Haddo*, 25 persons picketed the U.S. embassy in Auckland, 70 marched in Napier, and 40 attended a rally in Hastings. On January 21, 500 persons gathered at an Auckland rally addressed by Labour Party leaders John Hinchcliff and Richard Northey.

"Northey pointed out that the regular visits of U.S. nuclear warships were in part aimed at conditioning people in New Zealand to accept them," Fyson wrote. "But the visits were having the opposite effect, with more people opposing them each time."

Chadli Named President of Algeria

On January 31 Algeria's National Liberation Front (FLN) named Col. Benjedid Chadli to succeed the late president Houari Boumediene, who died December 27.

Colonel Chadli, forty-nine, had been the acting minister of defense since November when Boumediene, who held that post as well as the presidency, fell into a long coma, from which he never revived.



CHADLI

The choice of Chadli was confirmed in a February 7 nationwide referendum. He replaces the interim president, Rabah Bitat, who is speaker of the National Popular Assembly.

Chadli's nomination came at the end of a five-day congress of the FLN, at which he was also named the front's general secretary.

At the congress Chadli faced a strong challenge from supporters of Col. Muhammed Salah Yahiaoui. Yahiaoui had been placed in charge of revitalizing the largely moribund FLN in October 1977.

Although partisans of Yahiaoui were unable to impose their choice on the congress, their presence was felt there as they launched heated attacks against abuses of the regime and leveled charges of corruption and inefficiency.

It remains to be seen if Chadli's election will result in an acceleration of the process of giving private capital greater latitude in the economy, a process that had already been taking place under Boumediene. Sections of the Algerian leadership, particularly Foreign Minister Abdel-Azziz Boutefflika, are known to favor such a course.

Colonel Chadli participated in the liberation struggle against French rule, becoming a member of the general staff of the Army of National Liberation in June 1961. Since independence he has been military commander of the first Constantine region and, since 1964, of the Oran region. Oran

is Algeria's second largest city.

Chadli participated in the June 1965 coup that overthrew President Ahmed Ben Bella. Since that time he was a member of the Council of the Revolution.

U.S. Boosting Arms Flow to Bangkok

Thai Prime Minister Kriangsak Chamnand announced at a February 7 news conference during his visit to Washington that the Carter administration is speeding deliveries of tactical fighter planes, weapons, and ammunition to Thailand.

"The United States has reassured us and given us confidence that if the situation around us escalates, the United States will not stand idly by," Kriangsak told reporters. "The United States will take definite action. President Carter stressed this point many times."

On February 8 deposed Cambodian ruler Prince Norodom Sihanouk said in New York that Chinese leader Teng Hsiao-p'ing "told me he had been assured by Thailand that Thailand will permit use of certain small ports and of overland routes for the transport of Chinese supplies to the Cambodian guerrillas." Sihanouk was referring to forces loyal to the ousted Pol Pot government that are fighting the new Vietnamese-backed Heng Samrin regime in Pnompénh.

Carter and Kriangsak issued a joint communiqué at the conclusion of their talks, which noted that "the Prime Minister and the President agreed on the importance of an independent Cambodia to regional stability."

The Pentagon provided \$24 million in military sales to Thailand in 1978. Carter is now seeking Congressional approval for \$30 million worth for the present year.

Birthday Bauble for Brezhnev

"At a ceremony in the Kremlin on December 19 Leonid Brezhnev was presented with the USSR's highest award, the Order of Lenin and a third Gold Star medal of Hero of the Soviet Union.

"Making the presentation Mikail Suslov, member of the political bureau and secretary of the CPSU central committee, said it was being bestowed on the general secretary of the CPSU central committee and President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet in recognition of his outstanding services to the party and state, his efforts to strengthen the country's economy and defence during and since the war, for his tireless efforts for peace and on the occasion of his 72nd birthday." (*Soviet News*, January 23.)



BREZHNEV

Steelworkers Strike Biggest Shipyard in United States

[On January 31, Local 8888 of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) struck the huge Newport News Shipyard and Drydock Company—the largest shipyard in the United States.

[The 13,000 members of Local 8888 joined 1,200 marine designers from USWA Local 8417 who had already been on strike for almost two years. Both locals are demanding recognition from the shipyard's virulently antiunion owners, the giant conglomerate Tenneco.

[The following editorial, excerpted from the February 16 issue of the revolutionary-socialist newsweekly the *Militant*, explains what is at stake in the Newport News strike.]

* * *

Employers and labor alike are sizing it up as the Battle for the South.

The strike for union recognition by shipyard workers in Newport News, Virginia, is even more than that. Not since last winter's coal strike have working people North and South, East and West, had so much at stake.

- At a time when big business is out to cripple and destroy the labor movement, the shipyard strikers are fighting for their right to a strong and democratic union.

- At a time when President Carter is trying to cut real wages with his 7 percent guidelines, the shipyard strikers are demanding decent pay no matter what it costs their employer.

- At a time when corporations are telling Black and women workers that affirmative-action plans are too expensive and must be scrapped, the shipyard strikers—half of whom are Black and a growing number, women—are demanding equal job rights now.

- At a time when government officials and employers are ganging up against federal safety regulations, the shipyard strikers are demanding a union so that they can fight for safe working conditions.

Theirs is a battle that deserves the active support and solidarity of all working people.

In recent years growing numbers of workers have turned to their unions as the only organizations they can use to defend themselves against the big-business offensive on every front. The Newport News strike offers inspiring proof that the unions can organize, rally, and lead the millions of unorganized workers as well.

This fight is of special significance for steelworkers. When the workers of Newport News Shipyard voted for the United Steelworkers one year ago, it was the



Intimidation on the picket lines.

biggest organizing victory since the battles that consolidated the industrial unions in the 1940s. With more than 13,000 members signed up already, Newport News has become one of the biggest locals in the USWA.

The employers, for their part, immediately recognized the danger. A victory of this scope in the South could set off an avalanche of determined labor struggles.

So-called right-to-work laws, specifically designed to keep unions out, would be in serious jeopardy, not only in Virginia but in other states as well.

Nonunion workers across the South would be inspired to take on their own bosses.

Workers everywhere would see that victories can be won.

So Tenneco, the giant oil conglomerate that owns the shipyard, refused to negotiate or recognize the Steelworkers. It proceeded to fire 100 union activists. But the shipyard workers stuck it out. And when the strike deadline came at midnight January 30, they hit the bricks with chants of "It's Steelworkers time—it's freedom time."

The provocative anti-union stance of Tenneco is no aberration. Nor is it unique to the South. Tenneco is acting on behalf of all the biggest corporations in the country. Their common goal is to crush union power.

Tenneco brings enormous assets into this fight. It is the nineteenth largest industrial corporation in the United States, with profits last year of nearly half a billion dollars.

Lined up on the employers' side is the full apparatus of government: city cops, state police, the courts, federal injunctions if and when Tenneco wants them, and even the Navy.

The company hopes to isolate and divide the strikers. That accounts for the exaggerated reports of shipyard workers going to work; for the arrests of pickets and the atmosphere of intimidation with police dogs, helicopters, and other military paraphernalia.

But the potential power and strength of the labor movement—and its allies in the Black, women's, and student movements—is even greater.

The employers have organized their side with every means at their disposal.

Working people must organize ours.

Last year at this time the coal miners were battling to save their union, the United Mine Workers.

It was said at the start that the odds were stacked against the miners—what with hefty coal stockpiles and a declining UMWA hold on production.

But the miners showed that odds can be shifted when you stand up with the labor

movement behind you.

While striking miners were organizing meetings to discuss contract proposals, strike rallies, and protests, members of other unions were doing their part.

Unions passed resolutions of support. Plant gate collections and union donations

of \$100 to \$1 million provided the strikers with needed funds. Car caravans took them food and clothing.

Striking miners toured union locals, reaching as many working people as they could with their side of the story.

Big-business efforts to turn public opin-

ion against the miners fell flat. Carter's Taft-Hartley back-to-work order was laughed out of the coalfields. The working class stood united.

That is the kind of solidarity campaign needed today to defend the striking shipyard workers. □

Demand Government Action to Defend Living Standards

Farmers Tie Washington in Knots

By Osborne Hart

[The following article appeared in the February 16 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist newsweekly published in New York.]

* * *

WASHINGTON—*Dump Carter! Parity, not Charity!* These slogans adorned the 2,000 tractors that clogged major thoroughfares leading into this city February 5.

Farmers from across the United States had reached their final destination after weeks on the road. The national tractorcade was called by the American Agriculture Movement (AAM).

Demonstrators came from as far west as California and Oregon, and as far south as Alabama and Georgia, to demand action from the Carter administration to protect their living standards from the ravages of rising production costs. Some farmers were sponsored by a hundred or more others who had been unable to afford the trip. Many who did come say they intend to stay until their demands are met.

The farmers camped in Virginia and Maryland on February 4. The next morning at four o'clock, their tractors—going little more than fifteen miles per hour—began rolling toward the U.S. Capitol. Using four major commuter routes, the farmers jammed traffic during the rush hour. Once inside the city, the tractors blocked Pennsylvania Avenue and the entrance to the Department of Agriculture.

Washington police moved in to break up the blockade. The cops seriously injured several farmers. One protester was tear-gassed and hospitalized in critical condition. Cops arrested more than a dozen farmers.

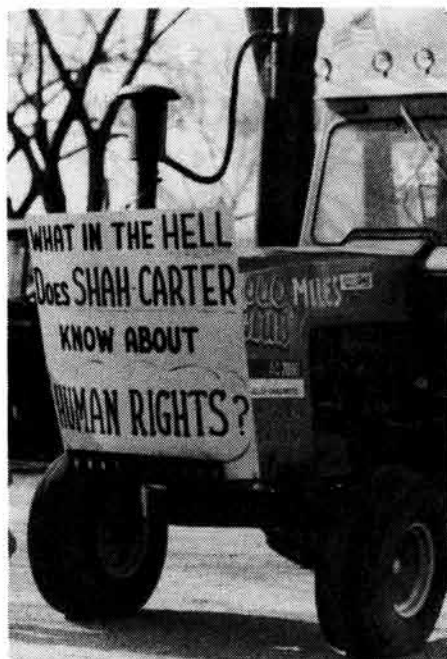
In the early afternoon, the farmers parked their tractors and joined hundreds of their supporters for a rally on the Capitol steps. By then, the crowd had swelled to nearly 3,000.

Alvin Jenkins, a founder of the AAM from Colorado, compared the farmers' determination to that of the people of Iran.

Joseph Lowery, the Black civil rights

leader who heads the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, was introduced as representing "an organization that began the protest movement." Speaking about the common interests of Blacks, the poor, and working farmers, Lowery said, "The common thread of human need ties us together."

Referring to the plight of city dwellers and the unemployed, Lowery added, "You



Osborne Hart/Militant

An angry farmer's question.

can't solve the problems of the city without solving the problems of the farmers."

Throughout the cross-country tractorcade, farmers received support from Black leaders, unionists, and consumer groups. At various support rallies along the way, there were speakers from state AFL-CIOs and other unions—including those representing grocery workers, such as the Retail Clerks and Meat Cutters unions.

This labor solidarity, only in its initial

stages right now, reflects a growing awareness of the common political and economic interests of working farmers and industrial workers. Last winter, groups of AAM farmers provided food for striking coal miners, and the AAM spoke out against the antilabor "right to work" initiative in Missouri last fall.

The AAM is a loosely knit organization of working farmers. Founded in 1977, it has already mobilized thousands of protests to build mass support for farmers' demands. In December 1977, it called a strike and tractorcade on Washington.

This year's tractorcade was several times larger than the previous demonstration.

The AAM's main demand is for 100 percent parity. Parity is a concept that compares farmers' current production costs and revenues to those of the year 1910-14—a period considered relatively prosperous for American farmers. The difference—or parity—between the prosperous and the depressed periods is returned to the farmer through government subsidy. Farmers view parity as a way to combat inflation and rising indebtedness.

Even with full parity, however, it would be difficult for working farmers to meet their expenses. Farm prices have not kept pace with the cost of machinery, land mortgage, and seed. Many farmers must now supplement their incomes by seeking other employment. According to the *Christian Science Monitor*, 40 percent of the net income of farmers was earned off the farm in 1977.

The main demand of the AAM demonstration here in Washington was implementation by Carter of the 1977 Farm Bill, which would guarantee 90 percent parity. The White House and Department of Agriculture, however, claim that this would raise food prices. So they have refused to put the law into effect.

But high food prices are not caused by the working farmers. They are caused by the big food monopolies and agribusiness. Even Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland has admitted that food costs have increased at the processing and merchandising levels—not because of farm prices.

The second national tractorcade has again put a spotlight on the worsening conditions of the working farmer. The farmers, like the miners last year, are setting an example of how to fight back.

They deserve the support of all working people. □

The Opening of the Perspective of Political Revolution

By S.S. Wu

By now it is clear that the period following the end of the Mao Tsetung era, signified by the heroic Tien An Men demonstration on April 5, 1976, is above all characterized by the opening of the perspective of political revolution. Today this perspective is no longer posed only in the correct theories of revolutionary Marxists. It is posed objectively by the fundamental crisis of Maoism, which is simultaneously manifested on all fronts, from ideology to politics, at home and abroad.

Subjectively, the Chinese masses are gradually freeing themselves from the ideological system and trappings of Maoism, and the ideas of socialist democracy are at work in embryonic forms in their political consciousness. It is against this background that we should examine the prospects for political revolution in China and venture to set forth our revolutionary tasks.

The Four Modernizations Is No Panacea

Two years following the downfall of the Gang of Four, reality has disqualified the policy of the Four Modernizations¹ as the miraculous panacea that will rescue the Chinese bureaucracy from the crisis it faces. Domestically, this policy could neither successfully reunite all the components of the bureaucracy ideologically and politically, nor has it as yet been able to rebuild the unity between the ruling bureaucracy and the oppressed masses and curb the independent development of the masses' political consciousness.

Internationally, although China's near-complete isolation has receded into the past and seems like some kind of traumatic nightmare, present Chinese policy is completely incapable of creating an international and regional context favorable in the long run for socialist construction in China.

The Four Modernizations is much more than just an economic policy. It is the main axis around which China's domestic and foreign political and economic policy is formulated.

1. The Four Modernizations was a slogan first presented by Chou En-lai at the Fourth National People's Congress in January 1975, calling for modernization of agriculture, industry, national defense, and science-technology. Shortly afterward this slogan was denounced by Mao and his associates (the Gang of Four), but following Mao's death and the arrest of four Politburo members in the fall of 1976 the slogan was revived as the principal campaign of the new regime.—*IP/1*

The policy of the Four Modernizations marks the second basic and drastic reorientation of China's general line. From the victory of the Chinese revolution in 1949 to the beginning of the 1960s, China's general line was characterized by her alliance with the Soviet bloc and her resistance to imperialist-imposed isolation. The rift and rupture between the Soviet Union and China in the early 1960s ended this general orientation and produced the first basic change of China's general line.

In a situation where imperialism was strong enough to afford a policy of containing China, the Chinese bureaucracy was forced to withstand simultaneously the hostility and blockade both of the imperialist countries and of the Soviet bloc. Reflecting the deep international isolation facing China in that period, the policy of self-reliance was more a moral rationalization than a workable voluntarist policy capable of removing the main objective difficulties confronting China.

Now, the leadership of the Chinese bureaucracy is more frank, admitting that in the late 1960s the consequences of this ultrasolationist and ultravoluntarist policy brought the economy to the brink of collapse. The objective impracticality of this policy forced the Chinese bureaucracy to carry out a fundamental review and reorientation. The deepening difficulties in which imperialism found itself provided a plausible pretext for such a reorientation.

Acting under the threat of multiplying obstacles in Vietnam and international capitalist instability, American imperialism made an approach to China under the Nixon administration; this was on the whole well received by the Chinese bureaucracy. This was clear despite the fact that the complete change in China's orientation could not be put in force until the downfall of the Gang of Four, or more precisely, until the end of the intraparty factional struggle over this reorientation.

Therefore, the character of the general line of the Four Modernizations in its global context is to carry peaceful coexistence with imperialism to its extreme. What China was waiting for was the final approval by American imperialism, which was signified by its full diplomatic recognition. Toward this goal, China had done everything to win the confidence of American imperialism.

China's determination is shamefully expressed by her reactionary position, above all, regarding the Iranian revolutionary upsurge against the shah and her

hostile policy vis-à-vis Vietnam. From Chile to Angola, from NATO to the reconstruction of Japanese militarism, China has proved herself a diehard defender of imperialist interests. That is because, in the final analysis, the foundation of the Four Modernizations policy rests on the continued existence and stability of the world imperialist system. And now that American imperialism has said yes, this turn to imperialism is basically complete.

This is absolutely unprincipled, because the price paid by China for collaboration with imperialism is a completely reactionary policy toward the world revolution. Although speaking objectively this outcome is very unlikely, if the imperialists were able, with China's help, to deal a fatal blow to the world revolution and restore the stability of world imperialism, this would leave China alone, in no position to escape from renewed imperialist sabotage whenever the imperialists felt strong enough to act. After all, the convergence of interests between the Chinese bureaucracy and imperialism is more conjunctural than fundamental. As a workers state, China represents a permanent threat to the existence of imperialism. It is the relationship of forces that determines imperialist policy toward China.

This amounts to saying that the Four Modernizations policy is impractical. For one thing, it is clear that on the world scale the trend of development is headed toward revolution. Unless the world revolution suffers a serious defeat there is no prospect in sight for the restoration of imperialist stability.

Another point: it is not just a question of abstract principle that makes the victory of the world revolution the best guarantee that China will overcome her backwardness. It is a simple fact. Surely only fanatic dogmatists will be against China's import of technology from the imperialist countries; but we must nevertheless bear in mind that this exchange at the same time means imperialist exploitation of China. The present Four Modernizations policy only provides the best framework for the imperialist countries to plunder China, because while the Chinese economy is undoubtedly entering on a process of modernization, it is at the same time becoming increasingly, and exclusively, dependent on the world imperialist system. It is this politically dangerous aspect that revolutionists should most strenuously oppose.

China's present unbelievably reactionary attitude toward the world revolution is

not difficult to understand. It reveals the pure self-interest of the bureaucracy operating unrestrainedly because of the qualitatively weak tradition of the Maoist movement in the disintegrating world Stalinist movement. This makes it easier for China to simply order a shift from an opportunist-centrist axis to a full-fledged reactionary axis. China's break with Albania testifies to the determination of the bureaucracy in this regard.

On the other hand, China's present anti-Soviet stance is also a qualitative shift from the preceding period. It is now no longer a question of counterposing a different political line in the fight against the Soviet Union. On the contrary, Yugoslavia, the forerunner of "modern revisionism," is applauded as the most successful socialist model, and China has for all practical purposes already put into practice the economic and social policies it previously denounced as "revisionist."

It is a question of tactics that compels China to continue her hostility toward the Soviet Union. To win the confidence of the imperialists for an alliance with China, the bureaucracy has to play its Soviet card by escalating the frictions with the Soviet Union. It is with this consideration in mind that China decides to resist Vietnam's "hegemonism" in the Indochina region. This is the naked game of power politics.

The Chinese bureaucracy, in its own interests, is now ready to help the imperialists crush further development of the world revolution. However, from the standpoint of the masses, any delay in the process of world revolution can only mean extended suffering for the Chinese people and the peoples of other countries.

The Internal Crisis of the Bureaucracy

It is now also clear that the Chinese bureaucracy is, to say the least, unable to restore internal unity as yet with the policy of the Four Modernizations. For a ruling apparatus, this is a grave crisis.

The downfall of the Gang of Four did end the factional fights between the Maoists and the other tendencies in the party. However, the aftereffects of the last factional fights, as well as the new factional tensions, have been quick to surface. This is manifested in the first place by a deep crisis of Maoism inside the ruling bureaucracy.

In the realms of politics and economics, the change after October 1976, and particularly after the second rehabilitation of Teng Hsiao-p'ing in July 1977, is so far-reaching and dramatic that it will be practically impossible to assert a full continuity and consistency deriving from the preceding period.

Domestic and foreign policy change require an acceptable review of China's policy since the Great Leap Forward movement. Such reevaluation will definitely run against the interpretation and definition of

Mao Tsetung himself. Without it, however, the whole of the bureaucratic caste, with the possible exception of the top leadership, will quite naturally approach the present policy with reservations, if not with explicit resistance.

In fact, less than a year after the crushing of the top leaders of the Maoist faction, the bureaucracy has already complained of the indecisiveness and suspicion of the

In China today Maoism acts as a state religion . . .

cadres in carrying out the present policy. Added to this cadre crisis is the large-scale rehabilitation of old cadres purged during the political campaigns since the late 1950s. The rehabilitated cadres will not feel secure, nor will the other cadres accept this rehabilitation as politically justified, without a definitive reexamination of the policy of the past twenty years. This cadre crisis is so deep that in August-September of this year, Maoists in Hong Kong frankly admitted that many cadres in China are hesitant to fully implement the present policy and even view it as "revisionist" and "capitalist restorationist."

To solve this crisis, which is one of the leadership's inescapable priorities, requires a reexamination of Mao Tsetung Thought. Because it would be completely absurd on the one hand to criticize the Great Leap Forward, the Cultural Revolution, and the once-glorified "new-born things" of the Cultural Revolution, while on the other to try to retain intact Mao Tsetung's thought and policy. In other words, a policy of de-Maoization is required.

It is over the question of de-Maoization that the present leadership of the Chinese bureaucracy is divided. It would appear that Teng Hsiao-p'ing is in favor of the opening of such a process, while Hua Kuo-feng is prepared only to implement the present policy without attacking Maoism as such. Naturally this division at the top is echoed by a similar division at all levels of the bureaucracy, even if factional groups have not clearly emerged. For example, those cadres who obtained their posts through the Cultural Revolution should have a greater stake in supporting Hua Kuo-feng. On the other side, old cadres who were once purged, as well as the intellectuals, will surely welcome Teng Hsiao-p'ing as their great liberator.

In the process of this new division, one of the big questions on both sides must be the implications of the de-Maoization at the mass level.

In the deformed workers state of China, Maoism's principal role is to serve as the ruling ideology. It is true that the bureaucracy ensures its own continued existence

with a violent, repressive state apparatus. But ideological assimilation is also required. This function is served by Maoism, acting as the state religion. Consequently, weakening this state ideology at the same time weakens the bureaucracy's ideological control of the masses. Hua Kuo-feng appears to be keen in perceiving this, with vivid nightmares of all the historical precedents set forth by the de-Stalinization in the Soviet Union in 1956.

Teng Hsiao-p'ing may be equally aware of this danger, but his practical approach will lead him in all likelihood to place greater weight on the risks of the political awakening of the Chinese masses, calculating that if this is not channeled into a process of de-Maoization it could pose a still more serious political problem for the bureaucracy.

The opening of the philosophical debate



over the criteria of truth in June 1978 marked the beginning of an offensive on this question by the Teng faction. Hua Kuo-feng put up some resistance in September by interfering with the distribution of the first issue of *China Youth*, organ of the Communist Youth League.² But the removal of Wu Te from the post of mayor of Peking testified to Teng Hsiao-p'ing's predominance.

In November, this process could be seen gaining momentum when the Peking City Committee decided on November 8 to lift the lid. Moving before the rest of the bureaucracy, the Peking City Committee reversed the verdict that the [April 1976] Tien An Men demonstration had been a counterrevolutionary affair. At this point it seemed that very soon the whole bureaucracy would sanction an officially orchestrated de-Maoization and perhaps issue a posthumous criticism of Mao Tsetung. There was speculation at that time that Hua Kuo-feng's tenure as chairman would prove to be short lived.

The Weight of the Masses

After the repressive response to the Tien An Men demonstration, the masses were silenced for an entire year. This was not because the repression that followed the April 5 demonstration in Peking and in ten other cities had inflicted a decisive defeat on the masses. On the contrary, the masses were only temporarily driven back. A strong desire for change remained. The silence can be explained by two factors.

First, prior to the death of Mao Tsetung, the Chinese masses were well aware that the end of his life was fast approaching. The common thought was that Mao's death would initiate a change in the society in one way or another. For those people who had illusions in the Chou-Teng faction, this wait-and-see attitude was all the more practical and understandable.

Second, before the death of Mao Tsetung and the end of the Gang of Four, the bureaucracy as a whole, confronted by the

specter of the mass movement revealed by the Tien An Men demonstration, was united to combat any independent political development of the masses. To say the least, the masses would instinctively sense that the situation was very unfavorable for them to take any oppositional action or even to voice their dissent. After the establishment of the Hua Kuo-feng leadership, the masses tended more to wait for the anticipated change and to see the final fate of Teng Hsiao-p'ing.

These two factors explain why the wall poster campaign in Peking on the first anniversary of the Tien An Men demonstration did not loom large. By the second anniversary of the Tien An Men demonstration the masses had a clearer picture of the reality.

In a way, the policy of the Four Modernizations is effective. The masses are pleased to hear that the bureaucracy publicly admits that China is still very backward, and they support the hopes for a modernized China. The improvement in workers' wages and the relaxation of the controls over the peasants are also welcome. To some extent these reforms have improved the living standards of the people. Intellectuals and old cadres are particularly pleased because they are offered material and social privileges. Nevertheless, it turns out that the masses expected more than the Four Modernizations policy originally offered. There are still two questions the bureaucracy has not answered.

On one hand, the bureaucracy did not answer the question of the people's democratic rights. This question is not posed by the people in the abstract. It is posed in the concrete through the Tien An Men demonstration and the repression meted out by the bureaucracy. If the Gang of Four were wrong, why couldn't the masses fight them? Or to put this in a more general way, do the people have the right of demonstration?

On the other hand, with the implementation of the Four Modernizations policy, which at a certain level represents a discontinuity from the preceding policy, there comes also a questioning by the masses of the policy in the "Three Red Flags" period and in the period of the Cultural Revolution.³ They come to question as well the rationale and validity of Maoism as such, upon which the now repudiated policies were based. In particular, the image of Mao Tsetung, who had been sanctified as an earthly god, is at stake too. In other words, the role of Maoism as a viable

3. The "Three Red Flags" was the central slogan issued in 1958. The flags, or central tasks, were "building socialism," promoting the Great Leap Forward, and organizing People's Communes. The 1958 period of the Great Leap Forward has been attacked in the Chinese press since Mao's death as a second example, like the Cultural Revolution, when political fanaticism and extreme repression by the dominant faction in the Chinese CP did severe damage to the economy.—IP/I

ruling ideology is now encountering a historical crisis in assimilating the thinking of the masses and containing the independent political development in the masses' consciousness.

Having failed to respond to these two questions posed by the masses, the bureaucracy was shocked when, at the time of the second anniversary of the Tien An Men demonstration, it discovered that the masses were outspoken in attacking Wu Te, a symbol of the repressive apparatus because of his direct role in dispersing the demonstration.

It was this objectively explosive political crisis that accelerated the factional struggle inside the party. Teng Hsiao-p'ing, who turned out to be on the side of "lifting the lid," must have calculated that without the official introduction of a de-Maoization campaign, the masses might very soon confront the bureaucracy as a whole. In any case, at this point, one of the main axes of divergence inside the party leadership is how to solve the political crisis posed by the masses in their potentially independent development. It is thus very clear that the masses are not satisfied by a slight increase in their living standards and a promise of a rosy future for China.

With the building up of mass pressure in

The Chinese people are looking for socialist democracy . . .

the form of big-character wall posters, the bureaucracy was forced to depose Wu Te in October. This act was carefully planned by the bureaucracy as a concrete step in backing off from the excesses of bureaucratic repression and the introduction of a legal system. Nevertheless, this represents a concession to the masses. And clearly the deposition of Wu Te is viewed by the masses as their victory. In fact, following Wu Te's downfall, the bureaucracy has had to make a visible campaign on the democratic rights of the people and socialist democracy in general.

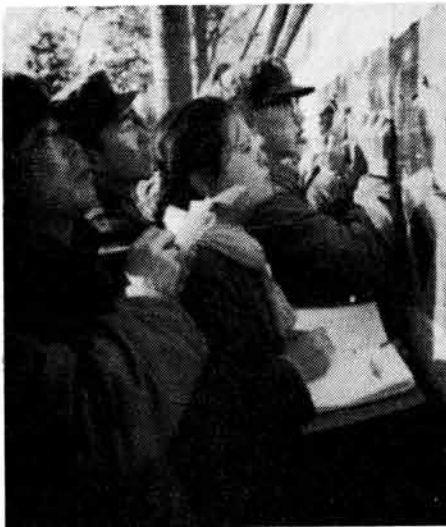
In particular, *China Youth* is especially outspoken on these issues. In November, the Peking City Committee affirmed the revolutionary nature of the Tien An Men demonstration. This sparked off a process in which the masses once again were to voice their grievances.

In the second half of November, the Democracy Wall became a focal point in China. The most important point revealed by the big-character wall posters is the fact that the masses have begun to recognize their own power:

Rise up, people of China! Now is the time to fight against all dictators, no matter who they are. We must judge them and settle accounts with them!

We must smash and denounce dictatorship, so

2. On May 11, the Peking *Kuang Ming* daily published an article entitled "Practice Is the Only Criterion of Truth." Without criticizing Mao personally, the article stressed the use made of "Mao Tsetung Thought" under the previous government as a religious dogma. The majority of the official press reprinted this article at the beginning of June, with the exception of *Red Flag*, the party's theoretical magazine, which continued to praise Mao Tsetung Thought. At the other end of the official spectrum, the newspaper *China Youth* resumed publication on September 11 (it had been suspended in 1966). After 70,000 copies of the first issue were released, the publication was suddenly removed from distribution. When it was rereleased ten days later and copies reached Hong Kong, it could be seen that the publication contained the first appeal for the rehabilitation of the Tien An Men protesters, calls for more democracy in China, and attacks on "modern superstition," the phrase now used in China to refer to the cult of Mao's personality.—IP/I



Wall posters in Peking.

as to obtain democratic rights and democracy. We have to smash the superstitions of the past! We must eliminate the ideological Great Wall of dictatorship of the past few thousand years!

The Chinese people want a true democracy, true freedom and true human rights.

And it is affirmed unequivocally that what is demanded is socialist democracy. The demand reflects two ingredients of the masses' political consciousness: First, the masses are well aware of the fact that the present political reality in China disqualifies any claim of respecting democratic rights and freedom, to say nothing of the realization of socialist democracy. Second, socialist democracy, even in its embryonic expression, is precisely what the Chinese people are looking for.

It is also important to note that in raising their demand for socialist democracy, the masses do not passively wait for the bureaucracy to concede it. On the contrary, the wall posters stress initiatives by the masses. This is clearly expressed in the following passage:

Under the socialist system, the people and masses have become the master of the country. However, this is not to say that in socialist society, without going through any struggle, the democratic rights of the people will automatically be realized. . . . As long as class struggle exists, a struggle for democratic rights is needed. . . . Whoever is against the will of the people and acts arbitrarily, the masses not only have the right to criticize him, but have the right to remove him. The people's rights and freedom of speech, communication, publication, rally, organization, parade, demonstration, and strike should not be inscribed only in the constitution but should materialize in reality in the people's actions.

Mao Tsetung is singled out for attack too. A wall poster asks:

Ask yourself: if Mao was not in agreement, how could Lin Piao have acquired such power? . . . Ask yourself: if Mao was not in agreement, how could the "Gang of Four" have launched the campaign against the "right devia-

tionist wind" and struck down Teng Hsiao-p'ing? Ask yourself: didn't Chairman Mao know that Chiang Ch'ing was a traitor? Ask yourself: if Chairman Mao was not in agreement, how could the Tien An Men incident have been characterized as counterrevolutionary?

At the same time, attacks were leveled by the masses on Hua Kuo-feng, on the general validity of the Cultural Revolution, on the bureaucracy's economic management, and the poor coverage in the press of the lack of democratic rights. As a whole, the poster campaign reached such an intensity that the bureaucracy could not avoid feeling the weight of the masses. This understanding changed the course of the factional struggle inside the party.

Pacification of the Factional Struggle

In the midst of the November poster campaign, the bureaucracy did make a big concession to the masses. On November 21, the Tien An Men demonstration was officially rehabilitated. Hua Kuo-feng himself was forced to come out and declare that this was a "wise decision"; but a poster then 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."

In fact, the masses not only think that the Tien An Men affair should have been rehabilitated long ago. What they are pressing for is a democratic change in the society as a whole, and the belated rectification on Tien An Men does not at all answer this more fundamental demand.

The second concession made by the bureaucracy was to guarantee the establishment of a legal system so as to fulfill socialist legality. But obviously this does not satisfy the masses.

On the night of November 27, more than 3,000 people took to the street spontaneously. The participants took a one-mile-long march. They all shouted for democracy and freedom, even though some of them chanted the slogans, "Long Live Chairman Hua" and "Long Live Vice-

Teng is now discouraging criticism of Mao Tsetung . . .

Chairman Teng!" The following night another spontaneous demonstration occurred, drawing more than 6,000 people. In the march, the main demand was also for democracy and freedom, though this was not spelled out concretely.

These demonstrations show, first, that people are really pressing for socialist democracy, although the precise political content of this demand has not been clarified; second, at least some of the masses are ready to take action for this aim, although comparatively speaking they are still only a militant minority.

This alarming development helped shape Teng Hsiao-p'ing's attitude. Shortly before this, Teng was talking about criticizing Mao; now he was to say: "The great contribution of Chairman Mao to the history of China cannot be described by words alone. Every Chinese understands that without Chairman Mao, there would be no new China." This clearly is meant to discourage the people from deepening their criticism of Mao Tsetung and his policies. The criterion of practice is giving way to mere bureaucratic affirmation in evaluating Mao Tsetung's contribution to the Chinese revolution.⁴ Furthermore, Teng Hsiao-p'ing publicly expressed his disapproval of part of the content of the wall posters, even though this would damage his liberal image.

But this is not all. Teng is especially sensitive to independent mass action, such as occurred on November 27 and 28. Though he must have realized that the bureaucracy is not, on the whole, strong enough to repress such spontaneous actions, he made clear that such behavior should be discouraged. On the question of Hua Kuo-feng, he also stressed in late November that there would be no drastic change.

The change in Teng Hsiao-p'ing's attitude in late November in response to the political development of the masses is significant insofar as it reflects the change in the course of the factional struggle inside the party leadership. In fact, starting from December, the main political catchword of the bureaucracy in all its propaganda network is again "unity." In mid-December, this drive for unity was officially endorsed by reaffirming Hua Kuo-feng's leadership position. Even *China Youth*, which had begun by voicing a seeming "democratic" tendency in the bureaucracy, simply responded positively to the appeal of the top leadership for unity ahead of anything else.

It is now clear that the confrontation with the masses in November led the bureaucracy to rebuild its unity. After all, all factions and tendencies inside the party are, without exception, defenders of the bureaucracy as such. From this, it is not difficult to understand the pacification of the new factional struggle inside the party. Unless something drastic happens, this will remain the main course, because the bureaucracy's first priority is to seek a means to stifle the further independent political evolution of the masses. If this problem cannot be solved, the very existence of the bureaucracy will be permanently threatened. And to resolve this requires, as one of its minimum conditions, the complete unity of the bureaucratic caste from top to bottom.

It should be borne in mind that the

4. This refers to Teng's recent use of the slogan that "Practice Is the Only Criterion of Truth."—*IP/I*

bureaucracy's attempt to discourage the poster campaign in late November did not effectively end it. On the contrary, militant posters continue to appear, although they are fewer. This testifies to the continuous evolution of the political consciousness of the masses and their boldness in airing their opinions.

The present conjuncture can be understood from two angles. On the one hand, the general aspiration for democracy and freedom, and the concrete demand for the materialization of many basic democratic rights, combined with the objectively transitional demands for the right of the masses to elect and recall cadres at all levels, mark the beginning of the masses' struggle for socialist democracy. What is needed in the next period is political clarification of the nature of socialist democracy as such and the road toward it.

Our task as revolutionary Marxists, united under the banner of the Fourth International, is to help in this clarification spurred by the political experience of the masses in their fight for their concrete goals. Through this struggle the bureaucracy will be exposed as fundamentally opposed to socialist democracy, and the conclusion will be drawn that a political revolution is required if socialist democracy is to be a reality.

As it is, at least subjectively, through the raising of concrete demands for democratic freedom and socialist democracy, the political revolution has already been born, even though it is still in its infant stage.

On the other hand, it should be stressed that from the standpoint of the relationship of forces the Chinese people are in a favorable position. This is especially the case in comparison with the relationship between the oppressed masses in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and their ruling bureaucracies.

Yes, the Chinese bureaucracy is still there, with its repressive apparatus. Yes, whenever the masses rise up to press for more radical change, the bureaucracy will resort to open repression again. However, right now the bureaucracy is not in a strong enough position to resort to repression without considering the dangerous political consequences. While mass action

at this moment is not likely, it has now permanently entered the bureaucracy's considerations as a genuine possibility.

If bureaucratic repression cannot basically wipe out the internal dynamic working among the masses, it may face the massive explosion that the bureaucracy fears the most.

An understanding of the evolution of the political revolution should, however, first be sought in the world context. It is true that China is now becoming reintegrated with the world's imperialist countries along the line of a reactionary foreign policy. But the integration itself provides a better framework for the Chinese people to fight for their demands. The Chinese people are already well aware of the poor press coverage of the suppression of democratic rights in China. This gives the revolutionary workers movement a bigger role to play. Every revolutionary movement in the imperialist countries should formulate their Chinese policy and demonstrate their support to the Chinese people. This will undoubtedly be warmly received by the Chinese masses.

It is through this concrete expression of solidarity that the Chinese people, after their two decades of isolation, will come to grasp the fact that socialist revolution in the imperialist countries is of vital importance to them, for the victory of this revolution will substantially help the Chinese people to overcome their political and economic problems. In other words, the workers movement in the imperialist countries, including Japan, can help the Chinese people to develop their internationalism as an organic part of their political consciousness.

The development of the political revolution in China should also be examined in the context of the Asian revolution. Taken as a whole, it should be noted that China's Asian policy is to maintain the status quo, i.e., imperialist domination in Asia. China gives general support to a strong military presence in Asia by American imperialism, as well as to the military reconstruction of Japanese imperialism.

On the other hand, China supports virtually all of the reactionary bourgeois regimes in Asia. Political support is given not only to the ASEAN countries in gen-

eral, but to the reactionary regime of the shah of Iran, which is now facing a deep crisis. Therefore, on the whole, it should be seen that this reactionary policy in Asia creates a grave obstacle for the Asian revolution.

It is true that to date Communist movements in Thailand, Burma, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines still affiliate with the Chinese bureaucracy. China, however, is able to maintain this situation principally through a two-level policy of distinguishing between "party to party" and "state to state" relations. But this policy is bound to run into deep trouble in the case that any of these countries is beset by a prerevolutionary or revolutionary situation. Whenever the question of power is posed in any of these countries, the double-standard approach will be completely inapplicable. In such a situation you must give exclusive support to either the oppressor or to the oppressed, as shown by the case of Iran.

In addition, the implementation of the "dual" policy is effective only to the degree that it keeps these Communist movements officially affiliated to the Chinese bureaucracy. But this affiliation is proving incapable of preventing the development of a crisis inside the Maoist-oriented Communist movements. As one example, the silence of the Philippine CP over the question of the Sino-Vietnamese conflict is suggestive. Again, the official stand of the Philippine CP on the "Three Worlds" theory is also interesting (their position is that the party is still considering the question, without any definite hints to the Filipino militants).⁵

5. The "Three Worlds" theory, the official explanation of Peking's foreign policy, was first publicly stated by Teng Hsiao-p'ing in a speech at the United Nations in 1974 (it was attributed to Mao). It divided the countries of the world into three categories: the first world was composed of two "superpowers," the United States and the Soviet Union; the second world was composed of all other industrially advanced capitalist countries; the third world was broadened from its previous definition as the capitalist colonies and semicolonies to now include the industrially backward workers states such as China and North Korea.—*IP* / 1



Diplomatic whirlwind: Hua visits shah, Teng meets Carter, Hua toasts Tito.

Above all, seeing the radical change in Chinese domestic policy, Asian militants who have hitherto been Maoist oriented are now casting larger and larger doubts over the validity of the Chinese socialist model.

In this framework, the deepening of the Asian revolution, which could provide more favorable conditions for the development of the political revolution in China, requires nothing less than a complete political recomposition of the Asian communist movement. For the first time in the history of Asian communism the material conditions for this political recomposition are ripe. And for the first time in the Asian communist movement, the Fourth International is offered a historical opportunity to fulfill this revolutionary task.

Only the Fourth International can fundamentally expose the bankruptcy of China's double-standard policy vis-à-vis the Asian revolution. And only the Fourth International can point out a revolutionary perspective for the Asian revolution as a whole. In face of the historical crisis of Maoism in the Asian revolution, it is now time for us, revolutionary Marxists, to go on the political offensive and to win over communists in Asia to the side of the Fourth International. And this will be a very important contribution to the evolution of the political revolution in China.

The development of the Japanese socialist revolution is of particular importance to China as well. Because Japan is the only imperialist country in Asia, the Japanese working class will prove to be the most important ally of the Chinese people. If China is to modernize, this is unthinkable

without integrating with advanced Japanese industry. And the Japanese working class can guarantee this help without submitting China to imperialist exploitation and economic/political blackmail.

Factors of the Chinese Political Revolution

To return to China, three factors in the evolution of the political revolution should be considered. First, there is the evolution of the process of pressing for democratic and objectively transitional demands. This will provide the basis for the political revolution to develop. Our task as revolutionary Marxists is to help build these movements, to offer political clarification, and to help formulate a revolutionary perspective. The material basis for us to do this is still very limited. But the correct political answers we give to these questions are bound to broaden this basis.

Second, with American imperialism's recognition of China and its breaking of ties with Taiwan, the political crisis in Taiwan is bound to erupt. As revolutionary Marxists, we support the socialist integration of Taiwan and mainland China. But that is not the end of the matter. We must try our best to dissuade any isolationist tendency in the Taiwanese revolution, which reflects the naïve thinking that by declaring the independence of Taiwan, the Taiwanese people can escape the interference and control of the Chinese bureaucracy.

No! This will never be the case. We revolutionary Marxists should be bold to explain to the Taiwanese people that their liberation requires the accomplishment of

the political revolution in mainland China. In other words, the Fourth International should fight for a perspective of Taiwanese revolution tied to the perspective of political revolution.

Third, Hong Kong is the only place in China where the Fourth International has a base. With the complete abandonment of class struggle by the Chinese bureaucracy in Hong Kong, we revolutionary Marxists have a historical responsibility in the anticolonial revolution in Hong Kong.

The gist of the question confronting the class struggle in Hong Kong, in face of the complete capitulation of the Chinese bureaucracy, is reform or revolution. And this question is posed in a clear-cut form of either colonial bourgeois reformism or Trotskyism, because the supporters of the Fourth International are fundamentally the only far-left movement in Hong Kong.

However, the working class will not come to the side of the revolution unless it is convinced of the necessity and practicability of a political revolution in China. In this regard, the revolutionary movement in Hong Kong is both objectively and subjectively an organic component of the political revolution in China.

At the present time, not only has the question of political revolution been posed, but all the conditions favorable for such a revolutionary development have basically appeared, outside of the control of the Chinese bureaucracy. The Fourth International has been offered a historic opportunity. Now it is time for revolutionary Marxists around the world to fulfill this historic task.

December 17, 1978

Tokyo Times Anti-Soviet Barrage for Teng Hsiao-p'ing Visit

The Japanese Defense Agency announced January 29 that the Soviet Union is building an air base and stationing troops on the islands of Etorofu and Kunashiri, just north of Japan. These are the main islands in Japan's "Northern Territories," part of the Japanese empire occupied by the Red Army during World War II, which Tokyo still claims.

Japanese officials delivered a protest to the Soviet ambassador in Tokyo, demanding that construction on the islands be halted and troops withdrawn, and warning that progress toward "solution of the territorial problem" was a prerequisite for negotiations on the Japan-Soviet friendship and cooperation agreement proposed by Moscow.

The government's protest, along with a proposed parliamentary resolution on the question, have received extensive publicity in the Japanese bourgeois press.

Although the new Soviet facilities, which are visible from Japan, have apparently been under construction for some time, Japanese officials timed their protest to coincide with Teng Hsiao-p'ing's trip to the United States.

Eyewitness Coverage of the Iranian Revolution

Don't miss a single issue of Intercontinental Press/Inprecor! Send for your subscription now!

- Enclosed is \$24 for a one-year subscription.
- Enclosed is \$12 for a six-month subscription.
- Please send information about first-class and airmail rates.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Country _____

Make checks payable to

Intercontinental Press
P.O. Box 116, Village Station
New York, N.Y. 10014 U.S.A.

Cuba's Role in Africa

By Claude Gabriel

To believe the bourgeois media, a major event of recent months has been the repeated attempts by the Soviets to "destabilize" Africa. Could Moscow be trying to establish workers states in certain African countries? The editorial writers for the major media would have a hard time giving an affirmative reply to this question. Their crusade against "destabilization" of the Black continent by the USSR, Cuba, and the "people's democracies" is part of the propaganda aimed at covering up imperialist tyranny.

The newspapers publish maps with fine shades of color ranging from pink to red, showing the inexorable spread of "Marxist countries." For quite some time, however, Western investors have understood that socialist phrasemongering and populist demagoguery do not make a neocolonial regime into a "revolutionary" one. There is no greater foolishness than this masquerade of "African socialist regimes." No serious capitalist or bourgeois politician believes this fairy tale.

With the help of this vast propaganda campaign, the imperialists are trying to represent themselves as the defenders of "peaceful coexistence" against "Soviet expansionism." Their primary target, however, is still Cuba, not only because that is the country that has provided the largest number of troops, but also because Cuba stands as the first workers state in the western hemisphere. To millions of men and women in Latin America, Cuba represents their hope for a more just society, free from starvation, torture, or bloody dictatorships.

Thus, the American imperialists retain much of their old hostility toward Cuba. The attacks that cannot so easily be leveled against their Soviet partner in the SALT talks are focused on Cuba instead. Cuba's policy in Africa has thus become an important element of the current world situation.

The question of whether the Castro leadership is acting independently of Moscow is not a simple one. Answering it also involves answering the question of to what degree Cuba is integrated into the international policy of the Soviet bureaucracy.

The Kremlin and Imperialist Crisis of Leadership

The Soviet bureaucracy's international policy of peaceful coexistence is aimed at preventing any new revolutionary victory, and at blocking any revolutionary perspective. But the relations between the Krem-

lin bureaucracy and the imperialist states remain fraught with conflict, particularly in view of the West's continuing hostility toward the workers states.

Within the framework of peaceful coexistence, the Soviets constantly try to increase their diplomatic and even economic advantages through strengthening their ties with neocolonial regimes, even when this involves openly opposing the interests of the masses. The imperialist crisis of leadership offers them more ample room for maneuver than in the past.

The Angolan civil war, the crumbling of the Ethiopian imperial regime, the new rise of struggles in South Africa, and the armed struggles in Zimbabwe and Namibia are above all the result of the upsurge of the class struggles in the southern part of the African continent. The bourgeois conception of a confrontation between " blocs" and of "Soviet aggression" covers up this basic truth.

In this context, the Soviets may, in fact, try to score some points. This is done, however, with the assurance that the mass struggles will not lead to a socialist revolution, and that the American imperialists will not launch a large-scale counteroffensive.

In the case of Angola, Moscow correctly assessed that Washington could not intervene massively and openly alongside South Africa, and the Soviets were able to assist the MPLA,¹ thereby reinforcing the political authority of its petty-bourgeois leadership.

Inasmuch as following such a policy depends on maintaining a relationship of forces with respect to American imperialism, the Soviets do not always stay on the defensive, sticking to playing a secondary role as a dike against the class struggle. They have a policy aimed at strengthening their influence within the framework of peaceful coexistence.

So, it would be an error to deduce mechanically from the existence of conflicts between Cuba and imperialism in Africa that the Castroist leadership stands outside the framework of peaceful coexistence. The Cuban intervention in Angola unmistakably represented a defeat for the FNLA-UNITA-Zaire-South Africa coalition, that is, a defeat for imperialism. But this is not sufficient to place Havana outside the arena of coexistence. Since the

1. Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola).—IP/I

"détente" does not mean that Moscow can permit the relationship of forces in Africa to shift sharply to its disadvantage, there was no contradiction involved in the Kremlin moving resolutely to block the South African offensive.

The Kremlin, moreover, has recently confirmed this assessment of its policy by explaining that détente means a fair division of spheres of influence: "Détente does not mean that the objective processes of historical evolution must be artificially contained. It does not constitute a safe conduct for rotten and corrupt antipopular regimes, for any and all rights and privileges inherited from the colonial past or obtained through unequal bargains or pacts. . . . If the last outposts of racism and colonialism, the oppressive loathsome legacy of colonial domination that continues to block the progress of the African peoples and creates international tension, could be eliminated more rapidly, this could only be beneficial to détente." (*Le Monde*, June 23, 1978.)

This coy invitation to the imperialists clearly reveals the Soviets' desire to keep the social situation in Africa under control. But they have realized that the only way to achieve this goal is to grant a role without delay to the forces that are now struggling against the most backward aspects of neocolonialism and racism. Anxious not to let Africa flare up in unending struggles, they are keeping careful watch. In essence, they are explaining that "this continent cannot be brazenly monopolized by the West."

While the Western media plays up the "tests of strength" between the East and West, revolutionary Marxists cannot fail to notice how much more paradoxical the African situation really is. The recent accords between the Western countries and SWAPO (Southwest Africa People's Organisation) over Namibia's gaining independence have been accepted readily by South Africa, except for the question of the port of Walvis Bay. These accords, which authorize the keeping of racist troops along the northern frontier of a future independent Namibia, could not have been reached without the assent of the Angolans.²

In Zimbabwe, the Patriotic Front—supported by the "front-line" states and the USSR—has agreed to discussions around the proposed "Anglo-American" settlement plan.³

The Carter administration is toughening

2. Since this article was written, the South African government pulled back somewhat from the United Nations proposals on Namibia, organizing staged elections in favor of the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, which advocates continued relations between Namibia and South Africa.—IP/I

3. In reality, within this front, the USSR and Zambia essentially support ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People's Union), led by Nkomo. The latter's forces are trained mainly in Angola by

its stance toward the South African regime. Carter himself has made an attempt at rapprochement with the Nigerian regime, which is known for its unreserved friendliness toward Western investments, but also for its skillful diplomatic maneuvering between "East" and "West."

Last but not least, Angola and Zaïre have agreed on a resumption of friendly relations.⁴ This rapprochement would not have been possible without an agreement on the FNLC (Front National de Libération du Congo—Congo National Liberation Front) and without the intervention of Washington and Moscow. A few weeks after Carter's diatribes about the invasion of Shaba by Cuban mercenaries, we saw Zaïre and Angola (where a part of the FNLC's bases are undoubtedly located) pledge that they will keep the peace and maintain respect toward each other.

Thus, what is going on behind the scenes should be quite instructive for anyone who would be likely to think, like President Senghor of Senegal, that World War III "began in Angola." The truth is that Soviet and Cuban policy, which fits into the framework of peaceful coexistence, is fully operative on the African continent.

Will the Soviet-Cuban intervention usher in a new dialectic of partial victories? That, at least, is what the recent events in Zaïre would lead us to believe. For there can be no doubt that the FNLC offensive was not supported, even politically, by the Angolans and their Cuban and Soviet allies. Only a few rabid editorial writers in the major media continued to assert such nonsense.

Cuban spokesman Isidoro Malmierca said: "Not only did we not support these actions, but we opposed them, and not for reasons of morality or legality." Clearly, this reflects the idea of a new "stage," in which stabilization of the Angolan state and economy takes precedence over any further extension of struggles in central Africa. The civil war in Zaïre could have jeopardized all the efforts undertaken by the Angolan MPLA to inaugurate a period of "national reconstruction." It would have created so much international tension that the Cubans and Soviets could not have remained in the area for very long without having to get caught up in the confrontation.

Therefore, the struggles against the Mobutu regime can be sacrificed to the interests of the Angolan petty bourgeoisie and Kremlin diplomacy. The pact between Zaïre and Angola, signed in July, as well as the pressure brought to bear by Luanda

the Cubans. The meeting between Nkomo and Smith, the Rhodesian prime minister, in August, also shows how a recomposition favorable to détente is taking place within the front.

4. Neto is said to have agreed to remove Zaïrian refugees from the northern frontier to prevent the FNLC from obtaining support and recruits among them.



Cuban troops in Angola.

to get the Namibian SWAPO to accept the Western plan, were made possible by the Soviets' naïve notion of creating a climate of détente around Angola.

The depth of the diplomatic shakeups in Africa has even led to the beginnings of a rapprochement between the Angolan government and certain Western countries, such as the United States and Portugal. We have reached a stage in Angolan politics where aid from the COMECON countries is not sufficient. However, this has less to do with the extent of investments than with the concern of the new ruling class for diversifying its partners. Long before a type of situation like Egypt develops, or one or another faction in power breaks with Moscow, it is possible to work with both the imperialist and Soviet bureaucrats in building up the Angolan economy.

Thanks to peaceful coexistence, such collaboration may go quite far. For example, the Angolan Vice-Premier Carlos Rochas, has said: "It will be possible to keep better control over the use of advanced technology as a result of a policy of diversifying our capitalist partners. The best example of this is the new mode of operation of the oil companies. . . . In Cabinda, Italian technicians will start up the plywood factory again. At the same time, they will train Romanians, who are responsible for providing technical assistance to this sophisticated unit, to maintain it.

"At the Petrangol refinery, Cubans are under contract to the Belgian Petrofina company [*sic*—C.G.]. In textiles, Swiss and Belgians will arrive any day now to supervise management and training of Angolan professionals, and to take charge of setting

up warehouses for replacement parts, while socialist technical assistants plan the administration. At the Cellulose company, which has been sabotaged and paralyzed since 1975, a team of Czechoslovakian technicians is taking over the plant, which should soon go into a phase of experimental production. The technology is from Sweden."

What saintly collaboration! To be noted with interest is the fact that, contrary to the opinion of the staunch supporters of the "socialist Angola," this division of labor is not accidental, and that the leading financial or technological role most commonly falls to the capitalist countries.

All of this fine company moves in a social atmosphere that Alberto Bento Ribeiro, minister of industry, describes so prudently: "Inside the plants, each department has its supervisor. During the restructuring of the trade-union federation, the UNTA [União Nacional dos Trabalhadores de Angola—National Union of Angolan Workers, the single trade union, tied to the MPLA] commissions were abolished and replaced by trade-union delegates. This has gotten rid of [*sic*—C.G.] factionally motivated demands" (*Afrique-Asie*, June 26, 1978).

A single "Marxist-Leninist" party, and "democratic centralism" extended to the nation as a whole, are not necessarily institutions offensive to foreign investors!

Must we therefore say that the Cubans are puppets of the Soviets, and that their policy in Africa is completely dependent on the decisions of the Kremlin? In the absence of adequate information, this question must be answered in a very cautious way. It is possible, at least, to proceed by

elimination and reply to its most burning aspects.

Six of One, Half a Dozen of the Other?

1. *People's power and committees.* Some political currents have a naïve image of the Castroist leadership, attributing to it a more populist conception than that of the Soviets in its relations with the African mass movement. According to this conception, the Cubans are supposedly helping to set up people's committees, and thus demonstrating their independence from the Soviets. The facts of the matter invalidate this idea.

Both in Angola and in Ethiopia, the committees arose outside the authority of the nationalist or military leaders. Subsequently, a policy of integration/repression was adopted, which meant that the government could achieve legitimacy only by basing itself on "people's power." Institutionalization of the committees went hand in hand with repression aimed at the most radical activists, resulting in the stabilization of the government.

In Angola, as in Ethiopia, either through laws or by forming a civilian "political bureau," the leaders sought to associate themselves with the forms of organization thrown up by the masses, so as to more effectively impose their bonapartist form of rule. From the viewpoint of the presidential palace, the committees are nothing but temporary expedients. The Soviets and Cubans are camping on the steps of the presidential palaces, and their attitude is not much different from those who hold state power.

In Angola, the Cubans are said to have been close to the Nito Alves faction that made the coup attempt in May 1977. But this faction—no doubt more populist and more concerned with the fate of the committees—in no way broke with the general interests of the MPLA leadership.

Moreover, this faction took the lead in repressing the Maoists in these committees. The Cubans, who were interested in stabilizing an MPLA government in order to prevent any breaking of ties, probably did support Nito Alves and his friends for a while. But this support was accompanied by clear complicity in repressing the "far left." When the day came that this "left faction" lost its footing, the Cubans firmly supported the dominant camp of Agostinho Neto. Was such a policy, followed in the heat of clashes between nationalist groups, different from that of the Soviets? It does not seem to be. Several firsthand accounts now offer proof that the latter also flirted with Nito Alves.

In Ethiopia, an analogous situation arose with the development of village and neighborhood committees and the emergence of strong left organizations giving "critical support" to the military junta. There, too, the Cubans were most concerned about the future of the regime and loyalty to their allies. There, too, the Cu-

bans steered clear of giving support to the popular structures as such. Rather they turned their attention on the relations between the junta, which they publicly support, and the civilian political organizations.

The Cubans know that the Dergue can survive only if it solves the problems created by the breakup of the empire, by getting the centralized administration back on its feet, and by putting the peasants back to work. This can come about only if the military can use the committees as a transmission belt. This goal, in turn, can be achieved only by recognizing the authority of the left organizations that control these committees.

Thus, the idea that Mengistu and his

Is there proof of Cuban independence from Moscow?

Cuban allies share is the perspective of a *single party*, a kind of "revolutionary" movement serving as the backbone of society. For Mengistu, his organization, Seded, originally set up by "Marxist" officers, should constitute the nucleus. It seems clear that for the Cubans, the operation is only viable if it includes the Me'isone, the main organization, which went into semilandestinity a few months ago.

Thus, the Cubans do not refuse to intervene openly in the affairs of the Dergue. By sheltering Negede, one of the leaders of the Me'isone, in their embassy, they were taking a calculated risk.⁵ Mengistu's travels to Moscow and Havana indicate that discussions are going full steam ahead.

Moreover, the Me'isone has carefully refrained from burning its bridges to the military. It maintains a "subtle" analysis of the regime, making a distinction between the patriotic elements and the "bureaucracy" within it. The break has never been complete, and the two sides are casting glances at each other to the detriment of the masses and the Ethiopian revolution. The Cuban policy in this imbroglio is still far removed from support to the revolutionary struggles of the Ethiopian workers and peasants. What is involved are only murky transactions aimed at stabilizing a state that is, and will remain, bourgeois.

But does this political intervention by the Cubans in the internal affairs of a country constitute proof of their independence from Moscow, which is more concerned about diplomacy? No. The Soviets are not the least bit inhibited, for their

5. This is not the only country where the USSR may be trying to establish ties with an organization that is not "pro-Soviet" and has a large following to the left of petty-bourgeois nationalism. This is also the case, for instance, with the JVP in Sri Lanka today.

part, and they follow the same lines in practice as the Cubans. We should recall that in 1961, the Soviet ambassador to Guinea was expelled by Sékou Touré for having taken too strong an interest in the left wing of his party.⁶

Clearly, the Soviets' counterrevolutionary support to bourgeois or petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships does not involve passivity on their part. They can, to the extent of their resources, support factions of a nature that could offer them a more stable and lasting alliance. By intervening in Ethiopian politics, the Cubans are not doing anything very original.

2. *Eritrea and the national question in Ethiopia.* We know how Havana has envisioned the settling of the national question in the Ethiopian empire. It is their view that it is necessary to defend the right of certain regions, like Eritrea, to self-determination in the framework of a "united and revolutionary" Ethiopia. Such a conception pays little heed to the opinion of the masses and of the development of liberation struggles. It leaves out of the picture what the social nature of the central state is. Finally, it involves an authoritarian and repressive response to those who demand the right to self-determination and fight to win it.

In the case of the Ogaden, it is interesting to note how big the military involvement of the Soviets and Cubans was. The decisive battles against the Somalians were waged and won by the Soviet-Cuban forces. But in the name of "defending the Ethiopian revolution" against Somalian expansionism, the fate of the Somalian masses in the Ogaden was quite forgotten.

The fact that the Somalian regime enjoyed imperialist support through the intermediary of Saudi Arabia does not eliminate the problem of the Ogaden. Castro, the defender of the military conquests of Emperor Menelik, does not seem to make the slightest distinction between the Somalian regime (his former ally) and the disinherited peasants of that region. The Cuban workers were treated to nothing but stirring reports of military victories.

Military cretinism reached its zenith in *Granma* on March 14, 1978, which published a "summary of the military operations that led to the great victory of the Ethiopian revolution in Ogaden." It was a little military anthology, worthy of a patriotic magazine, showing the "brilliant" tactics of the allied forces in seven maps and nine photographs. The Cuban worker would come away from such reading with a completely reactionary point of view about the national question in the Ogaden.⁷

6. In 1976, a Soviet diplomat in Angola was expelled for having had too many ties with the Nito Alves faction.

7. The military command is made up of Ethiopian, Cuban, and Soviet officers.



Mengistu Haile Mariam visits Havana, April 21, 1978.

Granma

Does the Castro leadership have a different attitude toward Eritrea?

Castro gives us the answer by letting an unfortunate sentence slip out after the war in Ogaden. "So, for all practical purposes, the war on the eastern front has ended." (*Granma*, March 26, 1978.) On the eastern front! Wouldn't the other front be Eritrea? In fact, the Cubans and Soviets did indeed prepare for an offensive in Eritrea. It mattered little to them that they had supported certain Eritrean nationalists for a while. There again, the dialectic of partial victories requires sacrificing everything to the stability of the Addis Ababa government. But, unlike the Ogaden, Eritrea poses more burning issues. A war in Eritrea necessarily involves a high death rate. It would then be necessary to explain to the Cuban workers that several hundred soldiers died fighting against a liberation movement.

The Eritreans are seasoned fighters and strongly rooted among the population. Going up against the ELF (Eritrean Liberation Front) and EPLF (Eritrean People's Liberation Forces) would mean getting involved in a bloody war. The Cubans no doubt preferred to serve on the Ethiopians' rear lines, in fields such as maintaining Soviet weapons and preparing them for

use, troop training, and offering top-level military advice. Getting involved in the direct conflict with the Eritreans would be an adventure for them. Diplomatic reshuffling is still going on in the region, and the liberation fronts know how to maneuver as well.

On the other hand, the prospect of a single party formed out of the Me'isone requires a more flexible tactic from the Cubans on the Eritrean question, since the populist leadership of that organization has always made it plain that it is opposed to a military reconquest of the northern province.

Last but not least, a confrontation between the Soviet-Cuban forces and the Eritrean liberation fronts would cause grave tensions between Moscow and some of the Arab leaderships, such as Iraq and South Yemen. All of this has contributed to a readjustment of Cuban and Soviet policy in Ethiopia. The liberation fronts have paid visits to Moscow. Numerous contacts and negotiations have taken place, particularly in Yemen. But it is impossible to strike an even balance.

At the youth festival in Cuba, the Eritreans had to be included in the Arab delegations. Finally, and above all, it was necessary to prepare for and help organize

an "independent" Ethiopian offensive against the Eritrean people. Thus, in July and August 1978, the Dergue won a pyrrhic victory, forcing the liberation fronts to retreat and fall back upon guerrilla warfare.

Cuba saved face by presenting itself as the necessary mediator between the adversaries. The fronts, forced back onto the defensive and hard pressed on all sides, kept their attacks on the Soviets and Cubans to a minimum. However, revolutionary Marxists, for their part, will remember that the Eritrean masses were attacked by an army given its weapons, logistics, and political credibility by the Soviets and Cubans.

3. *The lineup with the Organization of African Unity (OAU).* As a last-ditch defense, can it be argued that the Cubans were interested from a tactical standpoint in supporting the "progressive camp" of the African countries in order to weaken the imperialist camp? If the Castroists had such an idea, it would mean that they had a high degree of clarity about the nature of the OAU as a bourgeois institution. They should, in that case, firmly expose the fact that the worst kind of confusion has been created around the concept of "African unity."

But it is the opposite that has occurred, and for several months we have seen a shifting by Havana on this question. While during the Angolan civil war we could perceive some signs of independence on the Cubans' part with respect to African diplomatic intrigues (unlike the Soviets), recent events have demonstrated the total opportunism of the Castroists.

The clause in the OAU charter about respecting boundary lines inherited from colonialism is one of the mainstays of reactionary regimes on the continent. However, on the question of the Ogaden, *Granma* launches into a murky historical explanation that could satisfy any African dictator: "Those who are familiar with the situation in Africa [?—C.G.] know that in every African nation there are tribes who live on either side of a border. There are many African states that haven't left the tribal stage completely behind yet [*sic*—C.G.]. Setting the precedent that a country could use force to seize territory which it was claiming would have been disastrous for Africa as a whole. That's why the African states [*sic*—C.G.] have said that there must be no border changes, much less border changes through the use of force." (March 26, 1978.)

This shining example of paternalism and contempt for the African masses is the polar opposite of a Leninist analysis of the national and ethnic question in Black Africa. It should be well established by now that, quite clearly, the problem of ethnic oppression cannot be solved by strengthening the bourgeois leadership's ability to impose centralization. Rather than worrying about borders, a workers leadership like that of Cuba should be concerned with democratic rights. Such an approach would immediately require criticism of the Ethiopian Dergue and the Angolan MPLA.

Forget Nothing, Conceal Nothing

An analysis of Cuba's policy in Africa cannot be limited to merely listing its

similarities with Soviet policy. What is most important is to characterize the practices of the Castroist leadership in their own right. The first element that should guide us is Cuba's open political and military support to bourgeois governments.

A big to-do is made about Angola and Ethiopia. But these two examples are not the most instructive. The following is an example of how Havana forms strong ties with other African regimes without imperialism seeing in this cause for a major conflict.

In the Congo (Brazzaville), where French imperialism dominates, and where the economy is most completely neocolonial, the regime that issued from the 1968 coup "opted" for "scientific socialism."

Once President Nguouabi had been assassinated, as a result of the need for readjusting alliances, it was Yhombi who rose to power. This officer, who is known for his stronger friendship with Paris, must nevertheless come to terms with the different factions in the army, and not dump his Marxist phrasemongering too hastily. Congo (Brazzaville) has a garrison of several thousand Cuban soldiers at Pointe Noire.

Not content with giving such support to a regime of poverty and repression, the Cubans are doing their utmost to prepare for the future. That is why they unblushingly support one Colonel Denis Sassou-Nguesso, going so far, according to some reports, as to serve as his personal bodyguards. This colonel is more favorable to relations with Moscow, and the Soviets are primarily interested in the slow diplomatic shifts in Brazzaville.

However, whether the dictator is Yhombi or Sassou, the Congolese masses are left without any choice. From Dahomey to the Congo, Cuban policy in Africa has proved not to be one of promoting the independence of the mass movement and the socialist revolution.

Castro is now trying to give the impres-

sion that he decided on supporting the Dergue after Mengistu came to power. He thus tries to give credence to the idea that only this "authentically revolutionary" left wing of the military receives aid from Havana.

In reality, *Granma* announced the arrival of Cuban experts as early as December 1976, that is, two months before Mengistu's coup. Cuba no doubt increased its intervention based on a particular analysis of the Mengistu faction, but it nonetheless decided to give aid to the Dergue at a time when the strong man was still Bante.

While keeping up its propaganda about proletarian internationalism, the Castro leadership, to justify its policy, is miseducating the Cuban workers. The newspaper *Granma* has been reduced to using a kind of language that never makes a distinction between the regimes and the masses of friendly countries. Its conceptions of international relations have lost all dialectical aspects, and the USSR is invariably presented as a country "faithful to its traditional policy of support to populations under attack, to revolutionary processes, and to national liberation movements." (*Granma*, March 14, 1978.)

There are probably close to 40,000 Cubans in Black Africa. A large part of this expeditionary corps is made up of soldiers. Maintaining and supplying these troops requires the labor of approximately 10,000 to 15,000 persons in Cuba. In all, more than 50,000 Cubans participate directly in applying the Cuban CP's African policy. How can anyone imagine that such a thing will not have an effect on Cuban society in the not-too-distant future? As a matter of fact, what this amounts to is an enormous drain on the economy that cannot help but lead to a need for increasing aid from the USSR.

Not only is it impossible to imagine that the Cuban economy can bear the burden of the financial consequences of this policy, but the pressure on the Cuban social formation is not insignificant either. Several tens of thousands of persons applying themselves to the "internationalist" tasks of the CP—that is, involved in an incorrect policy of helping to build bourgeois states—represents a factor that may promote differentiations within the working class and the masses. The authoritarianism of the leadership can only grow as a result of a secret diplomacy based in Moscow.

Should we deduce from this that Cuba's policy in Africa means that we have to change our analysis of the Castro leadership? What we can say, at least, is that this foreign policy is an element accelerating the process of bureaucratization of the Cuban state.

It should be recalled how during the Angolan civil war certain bourgeois leaders questioned the correctness of the Western offensive against the MPLA. Since then, with the events in Shaba, Western



Eritrean freedom fighters.

diplomacy is trying to strike a balance between making threats and maintaining consensus with the Soviets. When Cuban spokesman Carlos Rafael Rodríguez declares, as he did in February 1978, that "Cuba is not aiding subversion, but on the contrary, as the American ambassador to the United Nations admitted, is participating in a project of stabilization, of struggle against subversion," even the dumbest diplomat would call for thinking this over.

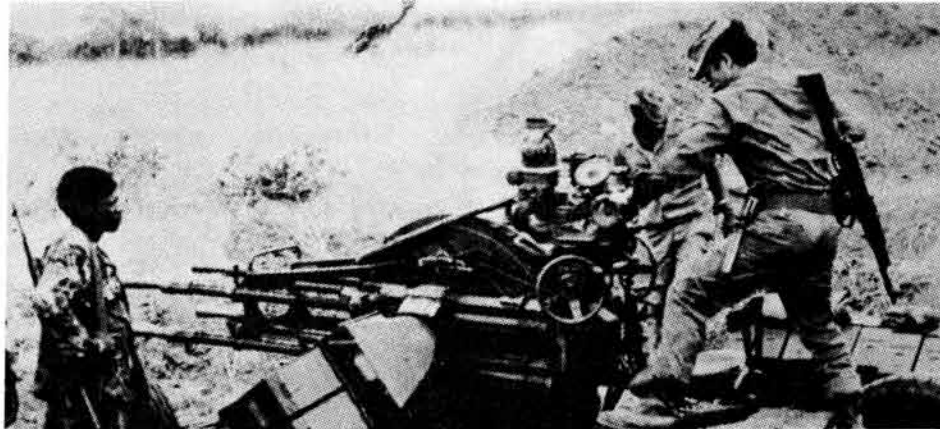
The imperialist leaderships are faced with a rapid development of the social situation in Black Africa. This region is shot through with various conflicts, from the liberation struggle against white rule to the challenging of neocolonial regimes. While the movements involved are massive and militant, they are poorly organized and lack a vanguard leadership. That is why the key at this time to the class struggles in Africa remains the relations between imperialism and the nationalist and petty-bourgeois teams that for the time being are in the leadership of the mass movements.

The error a number of bourgeois politicians recognized in the Angolan case was to refuse to make any concessions and to take a rigid stance, supposedly required by the Soviet and Cuban role. This involved risking the development of a radicalization that could move in an anticapitalist direction. In reality, the imperialists are seeking at the present time to reorganize their rule in Africa. A shift is taking place, both with regard to the imperialists' relations with the indigenous bourgeois leaderships in power and with the liberation movements. Negotiations over a "transfer of technology" and regulation of the price of raw materials, recognition of SWAPO in Namibia, and respectful relations with the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe are some of the familiar aspects of this shift.

In a recent interview with *Le Monde*, Giscard d'Estaing let it be known that in "North-South" relations, he was in favor of the socialist countries teaming up with the capitalist countries to give aid to the Third World. The Western countries are beginning to realize that the Soviet-Cuban intervention in Angola is not a threat to the social order.

Rather than relaunch a new cold war, the imperialist leaderships find it more rational to keep up the economic pressure on states such as Angola and to reintegrate them bit by bit into the normal workings of their system of domination. This policy has already been applied toward Guinea-Bissau, at a time when Mozambique and Angola are about to adhere to the Lomé accords, which regulate the relations between forty-nine neocolonial countries and the EEC.

But the Cuban intervention in Africa gives rise to a major contradiction, since according to the Soviets, détente has been defended by supporting ongoing struggles against backward regimes. There is not



Der Spiegel

A Cuban shows MPLA fighters how to operate an anti-aircraft gun.

always a great deal of maneuvering room. The Dergue was compelled to give arms to the militias and to the committees. The Patriotic Front, to sustain itself, must step up the armed struggle.

Since the revolutionary spiral is not independent of these social movements and struggles, we can imagine the extent to which the different imperialist factions are hesitating and vacillating in their reactions.

The mass movement is always ready to flow through any breach and take advantage of the opportunities it is offered. Angola was a good example of this. Didn't the need to defeat the South African and Zaïrian troops open up a new period in South Africa and Zaïre, with the Soweto uprising and the Shaba crisis? The Cubans, who nowadays find the Zaïrian FNLC quite a burden, nevertheless helped create this new situation by crushing the Zaïrian forces in northern Angola in 1976.

The Carter administration is divided on this question, between Brzezinski, who still uses the formulas of the McCarthy period, and Young, who plays the soft cop. Vance's diplomacy selects whatever tone is necessary. This shift in imperialist tactics could not be visualized without the complicity of the Soviets.

Claude Cheysson, a member of the Brussels Commission of the EEC, recently displayed glowing optimism on these questions. "The only criterion we can see is how good their administration is, whether it is socialist or capitalist. We're making a lot of headway in Ethiopia and Guinea (Conakry), probably because we are by far the biggest providers of aid to those two countries. . . ."

"Where aid for development is concerned, the USSR and its partners suffer from a terrible handicap—they are not yet equipped to really take part in developing the Third World. Financially, their total contribution is limited, it is said, to be \$500 million a year, while the oil-producing countries contribute \$5 billion, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, \$15 billion. . . ."

"They are also able to give a swift and efficient answer to military problems, as they did when Angola had reached the point of collapse. . . . It might be said that

Angola's disappearance as an independent country was averted thanks [*sic*—C.G.] to the Soviet intervention, which was organized in a way that no Western country would have been able to match under the circumstances."

Cheysson, observing that "to reduce all of Africa's problems to destabilization, or to the conflict between East and West, is an untruth," adds that, to his way of thinking, this fear of the Soviets in Africa is not only "an absurd oversimplification, but such a remarkable deception that I am sometimes led to wonder if it isn't deliberate." (*Nouvel Observateur*, August 5, 1978.)⁸

General Akuffo, head of the pro-Western military junta that now controls Ghana, declared, "Frankly, we do not think that the presence of Cuban troops in Africa constitutes a danger. From our point of view, the existence of countries on this continent where the white minority has usurped power is a much heavier threat hanging over our independence and security." (*Le Monde*, August 2, 1978.)

Only the extreme right-wing French politician, Jacques Soustelle, worries about this. But he expresses his concern in terms that confirm what sort of debates are going on within the bourgeoisie: "According to reports that have ceased to be confidential, the sharp turnaround in American policy fits into a general plan—a kind of African Yalta. . . . Certain economic circles, so they say, are dreaming of doing good business with the African Marxist countries." (*Le Monde*, July 9, 1978.)

That is where the real stakes lie. Peaceful coexistence is also having its effects in Africa. The Cuban leadership basically respects this framework. The duty of revolutionary Marxists is to denounce these practices. The defense of the Cuban workers state against imperialism will be that much clearer. □

8. The EEC provides \$200 million in assistance to Ethiopia in the framework of the Lomé accords, and \$11 billion outside the pact on an individual basis. Claude Cheysson of the EEC explained with regard to the Cubans in Ethiopia: "Even if a nation is not organized the way Mr. Debré (a French Gaullist politician) would like, it can still reject outside intervention."

Cuba—Twenty Years of Revolution

By Jack Barnes

[The following talk was given by Jack Barnes to a rally in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on December 31, 1979. The gathering of more than 600 people celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the victory of the rebel forces led by Fidel Castro over Fulgencio Batista's dictatorship. The rally was a highlight of the eighteenth national convention of the Young Socialist Alliance.

[Jack Barnes is the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. He visited Cuba in 1960, as the revolutionary regime was instituting the sweeping nationalizations that transformed Cuba into a workers state.

[We have taken the edited text of the speech from the February issue of the *International Socialist Review*, monthly magazine supplement of the *Militant*.]

This celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Cuban revolution is a unique occasion. In the course of modern history, twentieth anniversaries of revolutions have not often been joyous occasions. Just the opposite.

Twenty years after the first American revolution was won, this country was in the grip of the alliance between the slaveholders and the mercantile capitalists. They had imposed their constitution on the country and consolidated their rule.

Twenty years, a generation, after the second American revolution—the Civil War and its aftermath—Radical Reconstruction had been completely smashed. Reconstruction, in which Blacks had fought for and won a large measure of equal rights and political power, was overthrown by force and violence. The Black leaders who had emerged were suppressed. Jim Crow was being enforced and institutionalized. American imperialism was raising its ugly head. The labor movement in the United States had been driven back. This period in our history marked the end of any progressive role whatsoever for the American bourgeoisie, or any of its wings or parties.

In France, twenty years after 1793, the crest of the French revolution, Napoleon's rule had wiped out the democratic gains of the movement. All the popular leaders of the revolution had been murdered, suppressed, or had made their peace with reaction. And Napoleon's reign ended shortly thereafter with the outright restoration of the Bourbon monarchy.

It is not just these bourgeois revolutions

whose twentieth anniversaries have been less than joyous occasions. This is equally true of the proletarian revolutions of our period.

What was the twentieth anniversary of the Chinese revolution like? What was the state of affairs in China in 1969?

Now the world is learning part of the truth about the arrests and exile of hundreds of thousands by the Stalinist bureaucracy in Peking. We are being told of the murder of oppositionists, the holding down of the standard of living of the masses, and the sending of the youth by the millions to forced exile in the countryside. The regime was following a foreign policy aimed at one, and only one, objective: to maneuver to get close to Nixon, to open up relations with U.S. imperialism. And to do that they were—and are—ready and willing to help imperialism crush revolutions.

What about the twentieth anniversary of the Russian revolution, the mightiest revolution in history?

By 1937, the entire leadership of the Bolshevik revolution had been murdered or was on the verge of being murdered by those who had betrayed the revolution. Stalin's monstrous Moscow trials and the massive purges were in full swing. The Gulag had come into being and was growing, imprisoning the best proletarian fighters.

Relations between the countryside and the city were at a low point. The regime brutalized the peasants. Far from having pride in the national diversity of the Soviet Federation and respect for the oppressed nationalities, there was the rise of national oppression and crass Great Russian chauvinism.

The Soviets, the organs of workers democracy, existed only in form. Stalin ruled through terror and police-state tactics.

The internationalism that had been the hallmark of the Bolshevik Party under Lenin and Trotsky was destroyed. Stalin opposed the attempts of the colonial people to liberate themselves from imperialism if their fight was against the "democratic" imperialist powers with whom Stalin was seeking alliances. Twenty years after the Russian revolution Stalin was consciously and cold-bloodedly knifing in the back the workers' revolution in Spain.

The general staff of the once-mighty Red Army had been beheaded, gravely weakened, and virtually immobilized. The

entire bureaucracy prayed that they would never have to use it even to defend their own privileged caste rule.

Far from there being any internationalism left, the policy of the leadership could be—and was—summed up in one phrase: "Socialism in one country." The bureaucracy had no desire to extend the revolution. Just the opposite: their sole desire was to extend relations with the bourgeoisie in powerful countries, and they were willing to carry out any betrayal to accomplish this.

Far from telling the truth to the Soviet people about the needs of the revolution, Stalin institutionalized the lie. A privileged caste, one of the most rapacious ruling groups in the history of humanity, was in total power. Far from a beacon to revolutionists round the world, as the Leninist regime had been, the Soviet government was a center of conscious counter-revolution.

Those were some of the facts that had to be stated on the tragic twentieth anniversary of the Russian revolution.

A Living Revolution

So this is a unique occasion. What can we say twenty years after the victory of our revolution in Cuba?

Far from the revolution devouring its leaders and children, the revolutionary leadership that brought the revolution to victory remains intact, with the exception of Camilo Cienfuegos, who was killed in an airplane crash and Che Guevara, who died on the field of battle in Bolivia.

Far from turning toward Stalinist-style "peaceful coexistence" and détente, the Cuban leadership says openly, we will never trade away our support for the Puerto Rican independence struggle; we will never bargain over our sovereign rights; and we will never trade away our right to respond to revolutionary opportunities around the world with any means necessary—including the Cuban armed forces if we are asked.

Far from devastating the countryside and beheading the proletariat, the revolutionary alliance between the workers and peasants that has been key to the Cuban revolution remains on solid foundations. The alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry in Cuba is the firmest on the face of this earth.

Far from fostering the development of a privileged caste, a distinct, consciously

counterrevolutionary grouping lording it over the rest of society, the Cuban revolution continues to advance an egalitarian consciousness, although serious bureaucratic deformations and privileges haunt the revolution.

Far from having gigantic concentration camps and spreading Gulags, Cuba is the only workers state that allowed a delegation from Amnesty International to tour the country. The delegation visited the prisons and was allowed to talk with the prisoners. And they received the full cooperation of the Cuban government.

They did have some criticisms—such as the Cubans shouldn't have executed so many of Batista's torturers. They also had some criticisms that seem correct—for instance, that there should be clear rules on how a sentence can be reduced for good behavior, to avoid arbitrariness.

But the Amnesty International team reached an extremely important conclusion: they did not challenge the Cuban government's classification of political prisoners as counterrevolutionaries who are imprisoned for specific *acts* against the revolution or their membership in armed counterrevolutionary organizations. Amnesty International does not consider these people "prisoners of conscience."

And now Castro has told Carter point-blank: These criminals are *your* pupils. If they want to live in the United States, you take them!

Extend the Revolution!

And why are the Cubans in Africa? They are in Africa because they are attracted by the Black African revolution—just like every other revolutionist and everyone of African descent throughout the world. They sense the coming show-down in Black Africa, and they are determined to be a part of it and to aid it.

The Cubans responded enthusiastically to the Ethiopian revolution. The scope and significance of the events that have unfolded in Ethiopia are misunderstood by all kinds of socialists in this country.

But the Cubans are not making that mistake. They identify with the Ethiopian

revolution down to the marrow of their bones. They know that the land reform, the elimination of feudalism and slavery in one of the last empires of that kind, the breaking of the tie between church and state, the beginning of the eradication of illiteracy, the nationalizations—all this marks a deepgoing revolution in process, one of the most profound upheavals that continent has seen.

The Cuban revolutionaries have responded to these revolutionary acts.

But above all, the Cubans are in Africa for one simple reason: They are there because for them there is one law above all others: Extend the revolution.

What is it that explains the unique character of this revolution and this revolutionary leadership? We have never seen a revolutionary leadership in power for this length of time. We have seen only one greater revolutionary leadership in power—the central core of the Bolshevik Party.

Bypassing Stalinism

The first thing is that the Castro leadership led their revolution over the objections and opposition of the Cuban Communist Party. They bypassed the Stalinists and bypassed Stalinism. They acted as revolutionists and in doing so proved to the whole world that the Stalinists are not fated to stand at the head of revolutionary upsurges. They proved that the Stalinists are obstacles in the way of a revolutionary leadership and have to be dragged along by the nape of the neck.

This was completely conscious on the part of the Cuban leaders. They built the July 26 Movement in opposition to all other existing organizations in Cuba. The bourgeois liberals had their own formations, which the Fidelistas broke from decisively. The Stalinists and the standard American-type corrupt trade-union bureaucrats had a stranglehold on the Cuban labor movement.

In order to lead a revolution, the Castro team had to find a way around these obstacles. And they did.

The second thing that we have to note is

the political character of the Cuban leadership. There is a great myth that the Cuban revolutionary leadership was simply the *barbudos* in arms, the guerrilla army. This was the image projected by people like the French journalist Regis Debray.

But this was not the most important aspect. The Castro leadership were political people, just like we are political people. They think politically right to the very end. Military tactics were always subordinated to political strategy and aims. From the beginning, there was an interplay at each step of the revolution between political initiatives by the Castro leadership and initiatives in the streets, in the factories, and on the land by the Cuban masses—back and forth, driving the revolutionary process forward.

The Castro leadership began their struggle not by taking up arms, but by doing something we emulated twenty years later—they filed a suit against the government. When Batista made his coup in 1952, Fidel went to court. He said Batista had violated the constitution.

How Batista Was Defeated

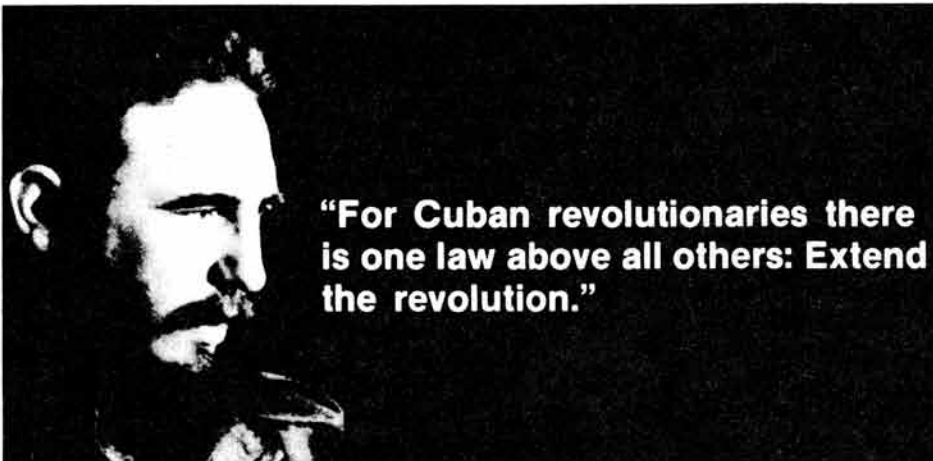
We demand some relief, said Fidel. Namely, throw Batista out of office and jail him. And if this court doesn't take this elementary step, it means that this court is totally corrupt and entitled to no respect as a court of law. It means that the masses will have to take things into their own hands, and this court will not be fit to pass judgment on the actions we must take. In this way, they established before the masses the legal and political legitimacy of the struggle they were preparing to undertake.

And they went forward from there. They were always willing to act—above all with the gun. That's what set them apart from those who merely talked revolution.

But they were always thinking politically. They always explained to the Cuban people what they were doing and why. In 1956, Fidel announced from Mexico that they were going to return to Cuba to start the fight again before the end of the year. They were considered fools for doing this. It was viewed as silly military tactics. But they rarely did things for reasons of military tactics. They did things for reasons of political strategy.

In the mountains they did not primarily carry out brilliant military tactics. In fact, there was never a pitched battle between the Rebel Army and Batista's army. The fall of Batista was not primarily the result of military action.

The Rebel Army carried out propaganda in every way possible. They talked to peasants, and they set up Radio Rebelde in the mountains to transmit their program all over the island. They published newspapers. They would fight to get interviews in the *New York Times*. They fought to organize the urban working class. They even seriously considered sending Che to



"For Cuban revolutionaries there is one law above all others: Extend the revolution."

Santiago to lead the urban resistance. The July 26 Movement had underground operations in cities throughout Cuba.

They didn't defeat Batista militarily. They won the hearts and minds of the Cuban masses, and this totally demoralized the Batista army. In the end, it was no longer an effective fighting force.

Twenty years ago, the Rebel Army walked into Havana unopposed, after having called a successful general strike that tore away the last shreds of the Batista regime. They arrived in the capital after a leisurely political stroll across Cuba lasting almost a week. They mobilized thousands as they went from city to city on their way to Havana.

They accomplished all this by acting as revolutionists, by telling the truth to the workers and peasants of Cuba. They knew that arming the people with the truth was decisive to the victory of the revolution.

And on this basis they went so far as to establish the first workers and peasants government, the first workers state, the first successful socialist revolution, in the Western Hemisphere.

A third thing for us to note is the capacity of the Cuban revolutionary leadership to stand up to the might of American imperialism. Cuba is a small country with a population of 6 million at the time of the revolution, no great strategic resources, no great military leverage—yet it has defied American imperialism for two decades.

They defeated Kennedy's invasion at the Bay of Pigs in April 1961. A year later, they made one of the boldest political moves of the century.

They talked the Russians into giving them nuclear arms, because they knew that another massive, American-organized invasion was being prepared. They had an important decision to make.

This is what they thought: An invasion that destroys and crushes the Cuban revolution will set back the worldwide fight for socialism. It will change the whole relationship of class forces on a world scale. It will be the green light for reaction to drive ahead in the Americas, in Asia, in Africa, all over. The *yanqui* imperialists are absolutely ruthless, they will not hesitate to use their power to incinerate our small country. The one way we can probably stop it this time for certain is to get nuclear weapons.

That's exactly what they did. And that was the heart of the Cuban missile crisis. But Kennedy backed off. Kennedy and Khrushchev made a deal—without consulting the Cubans—that the United States would not invade Cuba and the Russians would pull the missiles out. That was the end of the immediate threat of nuclear war, and the end of the immediate threat of the destruction of the Cuban revolution by a U.S. invasion.

The Cubans never forgot this lesson.

Their greatest grievance against the

Stalinists in Moscow and Peking was their refusal to come to the defense of the Vietnamese revolution against the imperialist onslaught earlier and with more arms. The Cubans published and spread far and wide in many languages the speeches of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara in which they fervently argued that aid must be given to the Vietnamese revolution.

Che explained that if Vietnam was declared an "inviolable part of socialist territory" where any attack would be treated as an attack on the Soviet Union, there would be no Vietnam War and there would be an end to the horrible brutalization of the Vietnamese people.

Because of their response to historic tests like this, Uncle Sam knew the Cubans were not counterrevolutionary Stalinists—even if some so-called socialists in this country couldn't figure that out.

Role of Soviet Aid

The fourth thing for us to note is the role of the Russian revolution in making it possible for the Cuban revolution to survive.

Economic aid, oil, a market for sugar, and finally arms—this assistance was essential to the Cuban revolution. Without these things it would not have been able to withstand the war of aggression, the blockade, the invasion organized by Washington.

Now you notice that I said the role of the *Russian revolution*—not the Soviet bureaucrats. The aid was available because of the victory of the Russian masses in 1917, a victory that remains alive despite the Stalinist bureaucracy that rules in the Kremlin today.

However, the Stalinist bureaucracy controls this aid, and the aid isn't given freely to Cuba. The Moscow traitors demand a political price be paid for every barrel of oil, for every machine gun, for every credit granted.

This put continuing pressure on Cuba. It led the Cubans to take many wrong positions, positions with which we strongly disagree. It led to silence about all sorts of crimes of the Stalinists around the world. It contributed to Fidel's defense of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

It was inevitable, given the relationship of forces, that the Cubans would be forced to pay a political price. Some price would have to have been paid by the best and most conscious revolutionary leadership.

What was inevitable was the price, and the damage resulting from paying this price. What was not inevitable was the Stalinization of the revolutionary leadership. That has not occurred.

The final thing we should note is that the political stance of the Cuban leadership has remained constant since the beginning. It has not changed.

Everything I was taught when I was down in Cuba twenty years ago remains the basic political line. They haven't

changed either the strengths or the weaknesses of their line.

They believe that the only real revolutionists are those who *act* to advance the revolution. They don't really care much about what you say. They care about what you do.

Now, on the whole, this is not a bad approach. It is much better than the opposite stance. But there is a political weakness in it, because it tends to ignore theory, to downgrade the importance of the hard-earned accumulated political lessons and experiences of the workers movement.

Another aspect of their outlook is their belief that the revolution in the advanced imperialist countries is far, far off in the future. They simply do not believe it is possible to think seriously about victorious revolutions in France, Britain, West Germany, Japan, or the United States. They do not believe it is possible in their lifetimes, or their children's lifetimes. They don't believe in it, don't think about it, and consequently don't do many things they could do to advance it.

Another weakness we have to recognize is that the Cuban leadership never developed a Leninist-type organization, with the right of minorities to argue for their point of view in front of the entire membership. This did not change with the institutionalization of the party.

The Cuban revolution occurred without the creation of large-scale democratic committees of the working masses—what the Russians called "soviets"—that could organize the society effectively, settle differences in the most efficient way, and mobilize the masses to do everything possible to extend the revolution to other countries.

The party and the government got all mixed up together as a result. Fidel acts at one moment as the head of state, another as the foreign minister, another as the head of the party, and another as the guerrilla trainer.

From the beginning, they would remain silent about reactionary actions of some governments, such as Mexico's, that maintained friendly diplomatic relations with Cuba. They have often taken an uncritical stance toward governments that take some anti-imperialist stands or actions, as in Chile under Allende and Peru under Velasco.

They fail to understand and take the right line on questions like the Eritrean national liberation struggle. Fortunately, the Cubans have sharply differentiated themselves from the all-out support offered by the Kremlin to the Dergue's war against the Eritreans. However, they have failed to come out in favor of the right of Eritrea to independence.

So these are some of the weaknesses of Castroism. They have been there from the beginning of the Cuban revolution. And they have not been surmounted yet.

But beneath all these weaknesses is something much mightier—the tremend-

ous egalitarian thrust of the revolution; the uncompromising belief on the part of the entire leadership that made the revolution that one must *act* on revolutionary beliefs; their willingness to tell the truth to the world as they see it; and, most important, their refusal ever to give up the fight to extend the revolution as the key to everything.

Never for one minute have the leaders of the Cuban revolution been interested in the line of "peaceful coexistence," that is, the total subordination of the interests of the world revolution to seeking diplomatic and economic deals with imperialism. None of the leaders of the Cuban revolution have ever gone for this.

They have known from the beginning that the only hope they have in the long run is the successful extension of the Cuban revolution. And that helps to explain the uniqueness of this anniversary celebration.

We Trotskyists have learned quite a few things from the Cuban revolution and from its leaders.

I realize now that I oversimplified it when I was younger. If people responded positively to the Cuban revolution, I thought they were potential members of the Young Socialist Alliance. If they responded negatively, I didn't think they were worth much, and, frankly, didn't want them in the Young Socialist Alliance.

Now I have learned that you can't organize that way because every once in a great while you miss someone who might have made it as a revolutionary. But I still think it's not a bad method, in general. We used the same approach with the rise of Malcolm X, and the new wave of feminism, and the beginning radicalization of the American working class, and it didn't turn out too bad.

What we learned to do was to recognize a revolution and to recognize a revolutionary leadership. Now, that sounds simple. Any fool should be able to do it.

But many people who considered themselves not only progressive-minded, but even socialists and revolutionaries, were incapable of that. Faced with the living reality of a revolution, with all its contradictions and imperfections, some people couldn't recognize reality for what it was. It didn't match exactly the schemas they had learned from books.

Jim Cannon, the founding leader of the Socialist Workers Party, considered it the number one test of our movement that we take the right stance toward the Cuban revolution.

In letters to Farrell Dobbs and Joe Hansen, he expressed the judgment that the leadership of the party had proved it not only knew how to recognize a revolution when it happened before our eyes, but we had recognized a revolutionary leadership and had shown how to fight shoulder to shoulder with them against our common enemies.



Evelyn Kirsch/Militant

"Che's slogan, 'Create two, three, many Vietnams,' was not just rhetoric."

We made a bloc with the Castro team against the Stalinists from the beginning. We did that because the Stalinists have been the number one internal enemy of the Cuban revolution.

There have been, and are today, two basic wings inside the current Cuban Communist Party: the Castroist wing and the Stalinist wing.

We made a bloc with Castro against the Cuban Stalinists in the fight against the bureaucratic course of Anibal Escalante in the early 1960s, and later in the conflict with the Stalinists internationally over defense of the Vietnamese revolution and the Cuban leadership's efforts to extend the revolution to Latin America.

We learned how to bloc with Castro against the Stalinists in the fight to defend and extend the revolution. And that conflict between the Castroists and the Stalinists is still going on.

So we learned quite a bit. And we were fortunate, because revolutions led by revolutionary leaderships haven't come along very often.

Everything the Socialist Workers Party and the YSA did in defense of the Cuban revolution was done from the point of view of building our movement. This is not a contradiction. Not at all. We were always convinced that everything that helped strengthen the YSA and SWP also helped strengthen the Cuban revolution, and that everything that aided the Cuban revolution aided the party and the YSA.

We also learned the difference between real-life politics and textbook politics. We learned to recognize real forces and real processes and real revolutionary contradictions when they were messy and didn't live up to the letter of our norms.

We learned a lot about Stalinism and Trotskyism by watching the way the Stalinists try to subvert the Cuban revolution

and the way the Trotskyists defended it and tried to extend it.

We discovered that the real line to be drawn is the line between the revolutionists—meaning Castro and those around him, including us—and the counterrevolutionaries on the other side, including the Stalinists and the so-called "Third Camp" social democrats.

Where Petty-Bourgeois Socialists Went Wrong

We also learned that we had to get rid of any kind of fatalism, which in politics is just another word for cowardice. You have all heard this attitude: "Well, Cuba is just a little island, it doesn't have a Trotskyist leadership, so it's only a matter of time before they are swamped, overthrown, or degenerate and become Stalinists. So why bother ourselves too much about defending the Cuban revolution? It's only a matter of time."

That sounds sickening to us, but that is the standard line of group after group of petty-bourgeois socialists.

I had read, in Lenin's writings, about petty-bourgeois socialists. I used to think it was some kind of curse word, an epithet. But I sure found out what petty-bourgeois socialists were, what petty-bourgeois revolutionary phrasemongering is. We all learned that in the struggles to defend the Cuban revolution.

There were quite a few people who considered themselves socialists but didn't recognize the Cuban revolution as a socialist revolution. I assume many of you here tonight have never heard of them. They were known as the Young People's Socialist League (YPSL). They have modern day clones like the Spartacist League, wings of the Maoists, people you run into today.

In the early days of the Cuban revolution, the YPSL had quite a bit of influence

on a number of campuses. In some cases we had to argue for and physically defend our right to carry picket signs in demonstrations that said, "Hands Off Cuba!" The YPSLs tried to tell us that signs had to say "All Hands Off Cuba." They drew an equals sign between the Soviet aid for the Cuban revolution and Kennedy's attempt to invade Cuba and crush the revolution.

To them, the Russian revolution was dead, the Soviet Union was not a workers state. There was no socialist revolution in Cuba, nor was there any revolutionary leadership there, and that was that.

Meany's New Anti-Cuba Move

A few days ago, George Meany made a big announcement that the AFL-CIO was going to boycott Chilean goods. This was presented as a progressive step. He was congratulated in editorials by the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* explaining that this was an unfortunate but necessary step to secure human rights in Chile. But when you read Meany's statement more carefully, you discover that his action is really an attempt to tighten the imperialist blockade of Cuba.

Meany is sending delegations to meet with counterparts of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy all over this hemisphere and in Europe to make the final plans for the hemispheric boycott of Chilean and Cuban trade. So the boycott of Chile is just a fake cover for the Cuban boycott.

I mention this here because some of Meany's speechwriters were leaders of YPSL in the late 1950s and early 1960s, whom we in the YSA battled over Cuba. Their line during the Bay of Pigs invasion was very simple: they defended it publicly. They urged socialists to align themselves with the "democratic trade-union" wing of the invading army!

We also learned how to combine understanding of reality and our norms. Reality was very rich and complicated in Cuba.

You didn't have cardboard figures such as you find in allegorical novels—figures like Betty Good, Bobby Bad, Willie Wise, Lucy Lustful, and people like that. These are not human beings but cardboard figures representing an idea or passion or tendency.

That's how most petty-bourgeois socialists look at a revolution. But we knew the Cuban revolution, we knew the Cuban revolutionists, and we knew the Cuban workers. We knew they were real flesh-and-blood people and a lot more complicated than Betty Good and Bobby Bad.

We learned that reality came first. Our task was not simply to understand reality but to participate in it and try to change it, move it forward, working with everyone moving in a revolutionary direction.

Revolutionists of Action

The Cuban leaders were revolutionists of action. In one of Trotsky's discussions

with members of our party at the end of the 1930s, he predicted that the next great revolutionary leaders would not be great theoreticians like Marx, writing things like *Capital*. We are in an epoch now where we will see great revolutionists of action come forward, and we must come forward and meet them.

That's what we saw in Cuba: an installment on that promise by Trotsky. At the 1961 convention of the SWP, Morris Stein, one of the experienced veteran leaders of the party, explained to a minority grouping inside the SWP that was opposed to recognizing the realities of Cuba that the Castro leadership team was superior to the Bolshevik leadership, once you leave aside Lenin, Trotsky, Sverdlov, and people like that.

That was what we were dealing with historically, that is what our responsibilities were, and are.

On the other hand, we also learned the great value, irreplaceability, and strategic importance of our norms. It is only by having the right strategy and the right norms, only by absorbing theory *politically*, that we can successfully defend and extend the revolution.

In the very first report that Joe Hansen gave on Cuba for the SWP Political Committee, we pointed to three central political questions:

First. Over time, it is absolutely necessary for forms of proletarian democracy to be developed in Cuba if the revolution is to continue to advance.

Second. The fight to construct a revolutionary party along Leninist lines on a national and international scale is crucial to this process.

And, third, the key to everything is to participate in the fight to extend the Cuban revolution and to defend it against American imperialism.

This third point is also the key to helping the Cubans to understand the first two points. Maybe I can explain what I mean by telling you how I became a Trotskyist.

When I first met our movement, I didn't thoroughly understand the role of soviets, the exact character of workers democracy, the nature of a workers state. These were all somewhat abstract questions.

I didn't fully understand the role of a Leninist party, a Trotskyist party. I don't think most of us do when we first come around.

But I understood one thing. I knew there was no one in this country like the SWP and YSA for defending the Cuban revolution—a real socialist revolution—and fighting to extend it right into the United States. And I said, that's my party, that's my organization. After that, I learned the other things as I went along.

And that is the way the Cubans will learn about those questions. The only way. They won't listen to anybody who sits on the sidelines and flaps their gums. They *watch*. And the time will come when they

will listen to revolutionists who show in deeds that they are worthy of respect and worth listening to.

It would be faster and better if there were another way—but there is not. That's the only way the Cubans—not just the leaders but the Cuban revolutionists as a whole—will be convinced.

How Trotskyists Defended Cuba

It really came down to understanding the most important fact of all: the Cuban revolution is *our* revolution. Our fate and their fate are totally intertwined.

The YSA wrote several genuinely heroic chapters in defense of the Cuban revolution.

The first stage is one I'm sure most of you know about. That was building the Fair Play for Cuba Committees and turning the YSA into the propagandists and tribunes of the Cuban revolution.

We did everything we could. We showed slides. We walked picket lines. We sold pamphlets. A few of us wore militia hats and committed one or two ultraleft excesses. We went to the workers and farmers of the United States with the message of the Cuban revolution. That was harder to do then than it is today. The country was not that far out of the McCarthy era. The radicalization was at its bare beginning with the sit-ins against segregated lunch counters in the South.

We went to a lot of churches. We discovered that if you got the use of a church and showed slides about this island and how the conditions of the people had been improved as a result of the revolution, some workers came, some students came, and in Minnesota some farmers came.

We figured that any student or worker or farmer who was interested in Cuba was a prime candidate for recruitment to the revolutionary movement.

We also learned about Black nationalism from the Cubans. We learned about it even before we learned from Malcolm X and from the changes going on in the Black Muslims. Of course it was only with the rise of Malcolm X and the split in the Nation of Islam that we really were able to grasp completely what Trotsky had tried to teach us a long time ago about Black nationalism.

But the Cuban revolution played a big role in opening the doors for us. From the beginning, the Cuban revolution had an Afro-Cuban side that was deep-going and had a big impact in this country among Black people.

Impact on U.S. Black Community

Of course the colonial revolution, the upsurge of the nonwhite masses against their oppression, struck a deep chord among Afro-Americans. But Cuba had a special impact because it was a successful revolution, because of the role that Afro-Cubans played in it, and because of the determination with which the revolution-

ary government abolished race discrimination.

When Castro came to New York in 1960 for the session of the United Nations General Assembly and moved from a midtown hotel to the Hotel Theresa in Harlem, it had an impact on the entire Black population.

The founding supporters of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee included some of the most prominent of the Black nationalist intellectuals, poets, and musicians in this country.

Robert F. Williams, a revolutionary-minded Black nationalist and civil rights leader from North Carolina, and Socialist Workers Party leader Ed Shaw carried out joint tours in defense of Cuba and of the Black struggle.

So this was the first stage of our defense of the Cuban revolution. It was an exciting stage. We printed Castro's speeches. We published *The Truth About Cuba* by Joe Hansen. We campaigned for Farrell Dobbs—the only presidential candidate who told the truth about Cuba and socialism.

We picketed and marched. We fought with those spineless YPSLs. We held meetings at churches. We had forums. We sold the *Militant* and the *Young Socialist* everywhere. And we recruited to and strengthened the SWP and the YSA.

There is a second stage that more of you are familiar with, although you might not think of it this way. This was the period of the Vietnam War. This is a side of our defense of the Cuban revolution that we don't talk about enough. Everything that we did to oppose the U.S. war of genocide in Vietnam was a concrete fight to defend and extend the Cuban revolution. The Cuban leadership understood their stake in Vietnam completely.

Che's slogan, "Create two, three, many Vietnams," was not just rhetoric. This was the conscious line that the Cubans always

held. They understood that only by extending their revolution, only by having heroic people like the Vietnamese standing up and fighting, only by putting everything on the line, could they defend what they had won and extend it further. That is what they believe. And so do we.

Che Guevara gave his life as much in defense of the Vietnamese revolution as of the Bolivian revolution. And what you accomplished, along with millions more like you who marched and rallied against the war, was to buy time for the Cubans while we fought—successfully—to win over the American people to oppose that war.

The Vietnamese revolution bought the Cuban revolution some crucial time, a breathing space, to overcome some of their economic problems, to combat the blockade, and to be ready to move into Africa in solidarity with the battle against apartheid and imperialism when the opportunity opened up.

Now we are in a third stage. We have to take the lead in direct defense of the Cuban revolution and in defense of the emerging Black African revolution. It is the same fight.

This is the continuity in our defense of this revolution going back twenty years.

Cuba is right at the center of world politics. It has been from the day the revolution triumphed, and it will be until that revolution is defeated or we prevail. It is at the center of everything, because the existence of a workers state with a revolutionary leadership poses a permanent challenge to all that is reactionary, all that exploits and oppresses, and to all the privileged bureaucrats in the world.

Cuba and U.S. Politics

The Cuban revolution and the attitude we take toward it remains the acid test for revolutionists.

And because the fate of the revolution in this country is so intertwined with the

Cuban revolution, we should realize thoroughly how horrible a defeat in Cuba would be for us. A defeat of the Cuban revolution, or the Stalinization of Cuba, would be a terrible blow to the world revolution.

For twenty years we have understood the interpenetration of the Cuban revolution and the coming American revolution. We can see this growing more concrete every day.

Think about the overtures Castro is making to the Cuban Americans and the significance of this.

This is a bold, audacious, political move against the Carter administration's hypocrisy about human rights. But more than that even, it is a small but important move into American politics—a first for the Cuban revolution.

At the very beginning, the Cubans had the idea that maybe someone in the United States would go up into the Appalachians or somewhere and do it here like they did it in Cuba. They gave Robert F. Williams—who lived in exile in Cuba for many years after being framed up on kidnapping charges in this country—a radio station to beam messages to Mississippi and Alabama. They were ready to help train guerrilla fighters, but of course nothing ever came of this.

The Cubans never tried to use their strength and leverage to influence the U.S. labor movement. They wrote it off. But times have changed.

The current dialogue with the Cuban community in the United States involves thousands of Cubans who are in this country to stay. They are divided by class. Many work in factories, they go to schools, and they are moved by the same things in the class struggle that affect you and every other worker. They also find *latinos* aren't treated equally in the land of Carter's human rights hypocrisy.

The new relationship emerging between Cuban-Americans and the Cuban revolution is going to mean a change in the attitude of a section of the American working class to the Cuban revolution.

And a new stage is opening up in the Cuban revolution's relations with Afro-Americans. Afro-Cubans are fighting in Africa, and they are watched and cheered on by Afro-Americans. If an upheaval takes place and Cuban troops are called on to help and do battle for the freedom of Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa, I am convinced that Afro-Americans and other American workers will go over there to join the fight. You will see international brigades fighting for the liberation of Africa.

Just use your imagination and think what will happen when those battles begin—the attitudes and feelings this will inspire in millions of people.

So we don't change a single, fundamental thing in our position after twenty years. We celebrate. We defend this revolu-



Ross Dowson

tion with all our heart. And we fight to extend it.

We recognize the revolutionary character of its leaders, and we make a bloc with them against their enemies abroad and against the Stalinists at home. The Socialist Workers Party, the Young Socialist Alliance, and the Fourth International will influence the Cuban revolutionists by showing in action what revolutionary Marxist politics is.

A Missed Opportunity

The world Trotskyist movement must accept the responsibility for missing two great opportunities to influence the Cuban leadership. The first was right after the victory over Batista. Unfortunately, in Cuba Trotskyism was misrepresented by a group that followed a cult leader named Juan Posadas. Their specialty was passing out leaflets demanding a march on the Guantanamo naval base, while the Cubans were trying to consolidate the revolution.

They denounced the leaders of the revolution for not being socialists.

I will always remember one night in that summer of 1960 in Havana. A few nights earlier Fidel had spoken to a gigantic meeting in Havana. He had announced that they were going to nationalize every piece of American-owned property in Cuba.

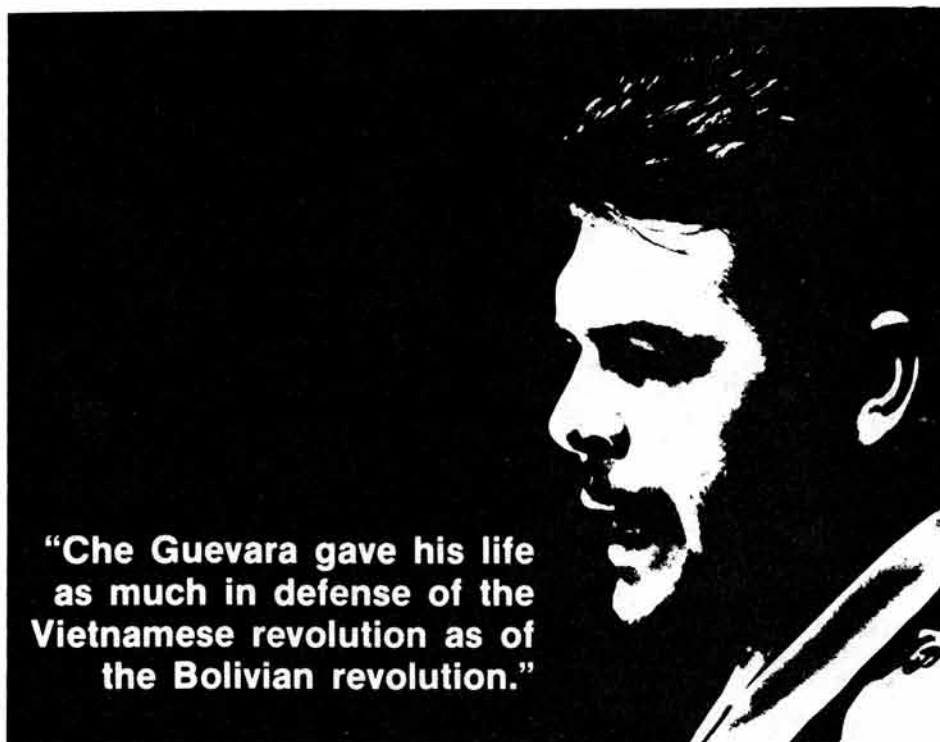
On this particular evening there was a big meeting at the Blanquita Theatre. There Che Guevara told a gathering of thousands of students from all over Latin America that this was the beginning of the *socialist* revolution in our hemisphere. This was the first time a central leader of the Cuban government had described the revolution in those terms.

The Posadistas were out there again, denouncing the Cuban leadership for not being revolutionary enough.

Fortunately, there were people like Peter Buch, Pedro Camejo, Eva Chertov, and Suzanne Weiss in Cuba at the time, so I learned that there was quite a difference between Trotskyism and the Posadista insanities.

But the Fourth International lost an opportunity to influence the Cuban leadership as much as it could have because of the character of the Cuban organization that called itself Trotskyist. This resulted, in part, from an unnecessarily long and brutal split in the Fourth International. This split, which wasn't healed until 1963, weakened the world movement, and blocked the international leadership from using its full strength to influence the Cuban Trotskyists.

There was a second missed opportunity. This was the period from about 1967 to a little more than a year ago. During this time a majority of the leadership of the Fourth International themselves turned toward a strategy of guerrilla warfare. The Cuban leadership was trying to think out how to move forward in the aftermath of



"Che Guevara gave his life as much in defense of the Vietnamese revolution as of the Bolivian revolution."

the collapse of the guerrilla orientation in Latin America, symbolized by the defeat in Bolivia and the death of Che. At that very moment, several sections of the Fourth International were speeding right past the Cubans in the opposite direction.

The Trotskyist movement was giving the Cubans an outmoded answer that the Cubans themselves were trying to move beyond.

It took some years and much discussion, but the Fourth International has now rejected these errors and puts forward a revolutionary strategy for Latin America that does provide correct answers to the questions the Cubans were weighing. But valuable time was lost in this process.

But now we have opportunities like we never had before. We have opportunities because the one thing above all is that the Cubans watch politics, they watch revolutionists, and they watch revolutionary activity.

The changes coming in this country are a great opening for deeply influencing the Cuban revolution. The rise of working-class struggle in this country and the role Trotskyists will be playing in it is going to spark some new thinking in Cuba about the revolutionary prospects in the imperialist countries.

Learning From the Cubans

So this is a unique, happy anniversary for the Cuban revolution, and for the twenty years we have been fighting shoulder to shoulder with the Cubans.

The Cubans have done a few things for us and are still doing some things for us.

They have inspired us with confidence in the power of the proletarian revolution. Think about the powerful forces that are

actively working, and have been actively working for twenty years, to crush that revolution. Think of what they have stood up against—and what they are still standing up against.

A little island, a superexploited country a few miles away—opened the socialist revolution in our hemisphere!

They taught our generation that our class can take over and run this society. They taught us that you should be proud of your African heritage, your *latino* heritage, because it deserves pride.

They showed us that the mobilization of the working class and its allies, under a leadership that is conscious, that tells the truth, is more powerful than the mightiest economic and military power that has ever existed on the face of the earth.

They demonstrated in practice that the Stalinists are not ordained to be at the head of every revolution, to smother it, derail it, betray it. We are in the epoch of revolution, not counterrevolution.

At the Bay of Pigs, in Bolivia, and in Africa—the Cubans have taught us how to fight, how to live, and if necessary, how to die for the liberation of humanity. And they showed us that Che was absolutely right when he said that the uncompromising revolutionist is motivated by great love.

And they taught even those of us who are ignorant of Spanish the meaning of one word in Spanish that we must know—*Venceremos*, we shall win.

In exchange for all this, we only owe them one small thing. That is to organize a revolutionary movement capable of leading the American workers to do exactly what the Cubans did. And that is what we will do. □